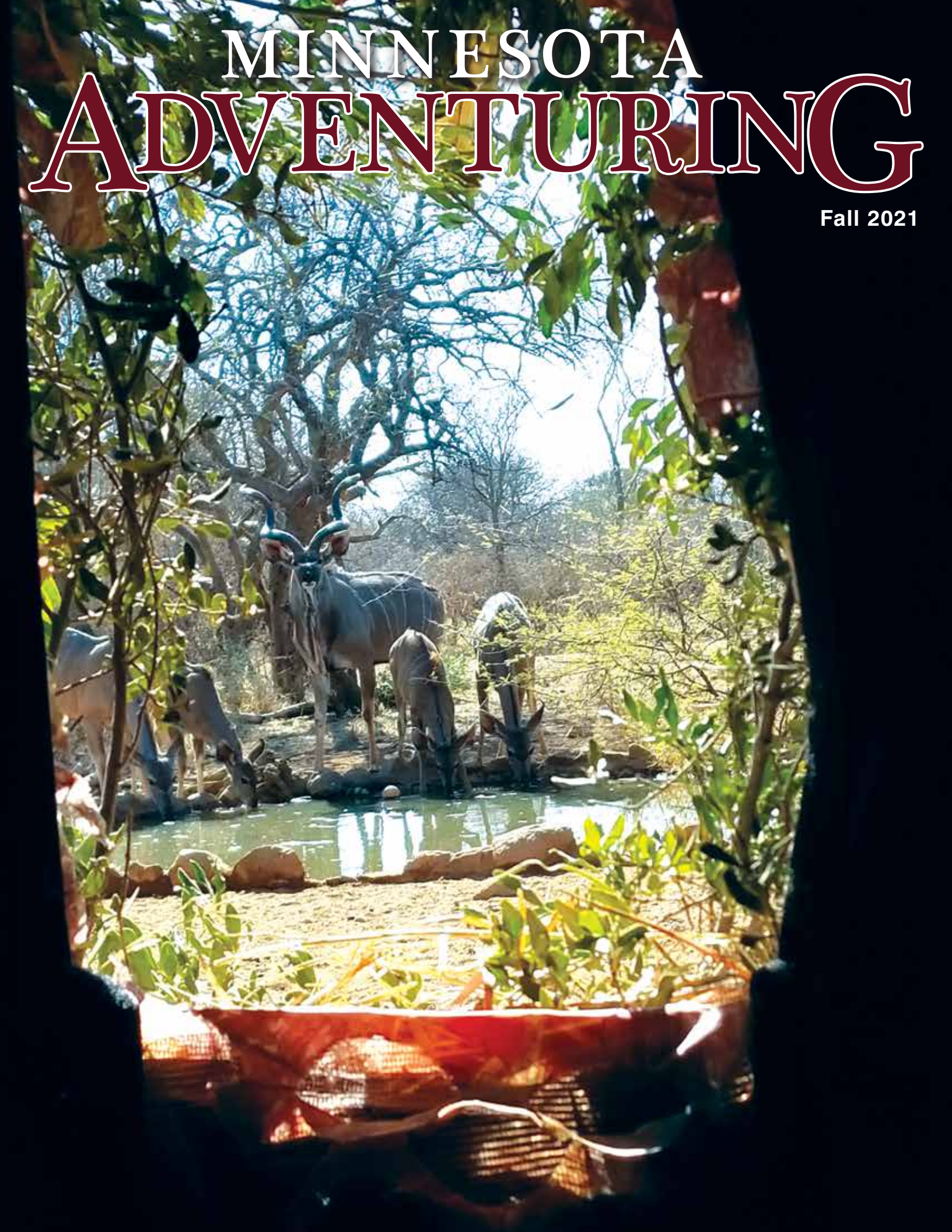


MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

Fall 2021



▽ Editor's Letter

My high school English teachers would still be shocked that I am writing this column let alone being editor of anything. Why, you say? Because I could not write to save my soul (not saying I am great now). I always loved writing stuff down, however, even if it was horrible or bad punctuation or style or whatever. What I am saying is, "this is a great job and I enjoy gathering stuff to put on the pages." And I just wanted to say, "Thank you all for putting up with me doing this!"

This issue is all about Africa. Since the borders opened back up there were previously booked trips that were able to happen in 2021 which is awesome. Africa is and will always remain one of my favorite places in the world. Yes, to the critics, I know Africa is a big continent but so much of it is awesome. The smells, the air, the animals, the food, the everything. I mean it when I say, everyone should go there, anywhere i.e., South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique or Botswana at least once. So, enjoy the stories.

I will continue to ask and ask for pictures, feedback, stories, content, ads, etc. This is your magazine. This is your community to tell that story, share that picture and let all of us know what you are doing because we all want to know. Really. As much

as you wait by the mailbox for the next issue of Minnesota Adventuring, those people in the stories you are reading want to see YOUR pictures. So, please share them with us.

My fall report is zero. I spent the month of September chasing whitetails, pronghorn and elk in three states. I spent eight days in northern Colorado doing something I never thought I could do. I climbed and climbed each day and logged over 6,000-vertical-feet one day hiking just one way. It was like walking out of a *Field & Stream* magazine of the past. I will tell the story in a future article.

I then added on my two home states, Minnesota and Wisconsin, in October and still at zero. It is becoming almost laughable that I cannot even find a doe to harvest for the freezer. But I am not giving up yet. I will keep trying until the end.

With an African-themed issue, I am changing my photo to something African. Be safe out there. See you at the Wild Game dinner in December.

Tony Roettger, Editor



MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

MINNESOTA
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FIRST FOR HUNTERS

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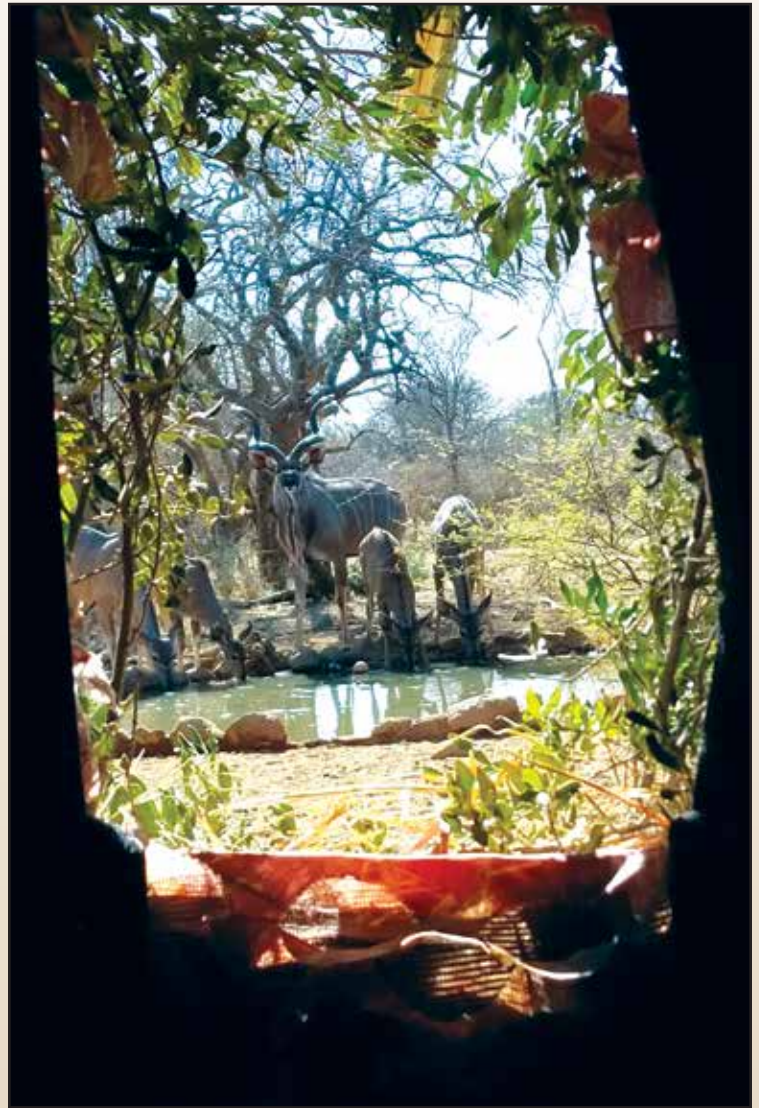
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Cover photo credit: Tony Roettger. View of a waterhole in the Waterberg Mountains, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Capture a Moment on Film.

Minnesota Adventuring is looking for cover photos. You are invited to submit your hunting or wild animal photos. Cover photos need to be portrait or vertical orientation. Email your photos with descriptions to editor@minnesotasci.com.

MINNESOTA ADVENTURING

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MINNESOTA ADVENTURING welcomes advertisements, articles, hunt reports, and photos from Members of the Minnesota SCI. Submissions should include Member's name, address, and daytime phone number and be sent to editor@minnesotasci.com. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

No attempt is made to verify the accuracy of hunt reports. Advertisements in the Minnesota Adventuring are not to be considered endorsements by the Minnesota SCI.

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▽ President's Message

It's the best time of the year. Hunting season. I've hunted waterfowl and grouse and I'm getting ready for deer season. The results have been mixed and, to be honest, it's been another tough year, but I have put game in the freezer. It's all about the hunt and the experience and those have been great!

I am also starting to plan for out-of-state hunts. I'll re-book with some outfitters I know and am looking forward to the Expo to find new outfitters to explore the great outdoors. It's always exciting to book a new hunt in a new area. The outfitters at the Expo are outstanding. This year's Expo will again be at the Marriott on Feb. 25-26, 2022. Expo planning is on track. The items for the Live Auction, Raffles and Games, and Silent Auction are better than ever. Mark your calendars and make your plans to attend now.

I am also looking forward to the Christmas Party and Wild Game Dinner on Dec. 13. It's a rare opportunity to be able to sample different kinds of wild game at the same time. They are all expertly prepared by the chef at Mendakota. If you have had better luck hunting than I have this year and your freezer is bulging at the seams, you still have time to donate to the dinner. Donations are being taken by Scott Clinton at Wild Concepts in Hastings.

Call ahead at 952- 217-6005 to make arrangements to drop off your donation (Thanks, Scott). Thanks in advance and hope to see you there. The Spring event got rave reviews – you don't want to miss this.

We have tickets available for three outstanding raffle hunts – a 2022 free-range Audad hunt in Texas, a 2023 Gold Medal Red Stag and Bull Tahr hunt in New Zealand and a 2022 Kodiak Sitka Blacktail, Sea Duck and Red Fox hunt. There are a limited number of tickets, and the winners will be drawn at the Wild Game Dinner. See our website for details.

We are going to continue to have a past president's table at our events. This is an opportunity for you, the members, to stop by, introduce yourselves and meet the people who have made this the great chapter that it is or just reconnect with old friends.

Hope you have a great Fall and successful hunts. Looking forward to seeing you at the Christmas Party and Expo and sharing stories of this year's hunts.

Stay safe and hunt hard!

Don Lynch, President



The Diversity and the Dik-Dik of Damaraland

By Dave Bigler

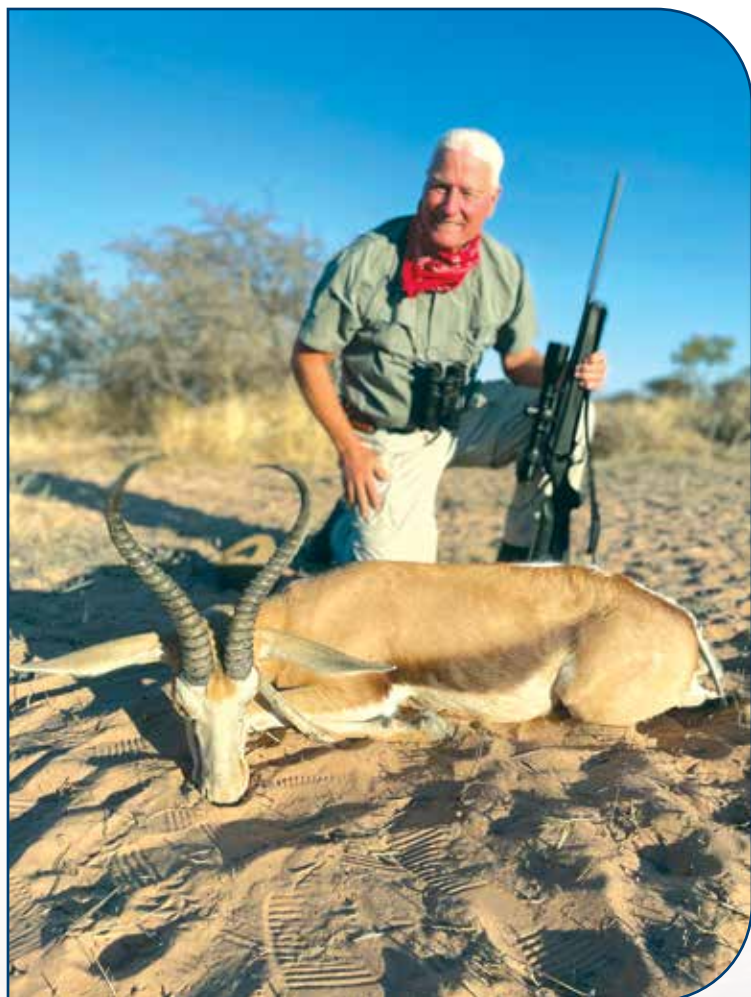
My first African Safari was 20 years ago, and I have been infatuated with hunting on the Dark Continent ever since. For me there is nothing better than hunting the numerous species of Plains Game found in the southern half of Africa. After 11 Safaris and over 30 animals now adorning the walls of our home, my wife Lee calls it an addiction! I'm sure many of you can relate.

A couple years ago my good friend and Professional Hunter, Pieter Viviers of Marupa Safaris convinced me to pursue collecting the Tiny Ten. To accomplish the goal of successfully hunting the pygmy antelopes would require traveling to different provinces within South Africa and Namibia. This was a challenge I couldn't pass up and an opportunity for me to further explore more of Africa.

I had always wanted to hunt Plains Game in Namibia and the quest for the Damarland Dik-Dik, one of the smallest of all the pygmy antelope. This would take me to this uniquely German-influenced region of Africa, Namibia. This is a beautiful nation which, generally speaking, has mountains running north and south through the center of the country. Two large deserts border the central mountain ranges. To the west the Namib Desert runs all along the entire Atlantic Coast and the Kalahari Desert extends from the eastern slopes into the countries of Botswana and South Africa. Our hunting party of 4 would be based in the central portion of the mountains about 3 hours north of the capital, Windhoek,

at the base of Mt Etjo and near the town of Otjowarongo. This area is one of the most beautiful places I have ever traveled.

We selected Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris as our outfitter. Annette Oelofse and son, Alex, have been hosting hunters since 1975 with exceptional distinction



and success. One of their earliest clients was John Wayne. Their private property consists of over 90,000 acres, and is home to four of the Big Five in addition to the vast and diverse amount of available Plains Game. (Buffalo are not permitted in this region of Namibia to protect the cattle ranchers from bovine diseases associated with the buffalo.) While hunting Plains Game, we daily encountered herds of Elephants, Rhinos and Lions. In fact on several occasions, we had to modify our stalk because these animals came between us and the game we were pursuing. This added an extra dimension and thrill to our adventure! And I was fortunate to see my first two Leopards while traveling through the Okonjati Pass one late afternoon! This is truly a magnificent property to hunt and explore.

To find the Dik-Dik, we focused on the rock outcroppings at the base of the small mountains found on the property. This diminutive antelope only weighs approximately 10 pounds, and 3-inch horns are considered a fine trophy. Their size alone makes it difficult to find and their hide of gray, green and brown coloration almost perfectly camouflages them in the rocks and grassy flats of their feeding areas. After a day and a half of learning how to spot them, we finally found a suitable trophy to pursue. With rifle and shooting sticks in hand we began a slow and methodical stalk through the knee-high grass and the Camel Thorn brush. It was a cat and mouse game for over 30 minutes. Several times I had the gun on the sticks ready to squeeze the trigger when the tiny antelope would dart off 30 - 40 yards to hide behind another shrub or grass clump. Finally, he remained still long enough for me to place a shot and I had my Damaraland Dik-Dik. Patience and perseverance had paid off!

In addition to the Damaraland Dik-Dik, our hunting party took a total of 45 animals including Kalahari Springbok, Roan, Kudu, Impala, Blue, Black, and Golden Wildebeest, Warthog, Steenbok, Grey Duiker, Blesbok, Baboon, and Jackal. The Namibian adventure was an exceptional hunt and one I will forever treasure.





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▽ CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Minnesota SCI Triple ONLINE Raffle

September 13, 2021 through December 13, 2021

Win a fabulous hunt in West Texas, New Zealand, or Kodiak Island Alaska

Tickets purchased online www.minnesotasci.com/events/sci-triple-raffle

Winners drawn at Wild Game Dinner December 13, 2021

Minnesota SCI Wild Game Dinner

December 13, 2021 • 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Mendakota Country Club, 2075 Mendakota Drive, Mendota Heights, MN 55120

This year's event will include a silent auction, raffles and door prizes.

46th Annual WORLD HUNTING EXPO

February 25-26, 2022

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Out of the Darkness

Why Hunt Africa? Why Not?



Africa – A place since I was young, I had an attachment to, but not sure why. On an episode of Jim Shockey’s *Uncharted*, I once heard him make a statement, “When you’re younger, you put all this pressure on yourself and just want the animal the more you hunt, it becomes how you get the animal, everything must be harder than easier. Then it becomes the why? Why are we coming all this way to hunt?” I believe these words have helped me in understanding the why of Africa.

The Dream

Africa has been an adventure I have perseverated since I can remember. A dream that started in my youth while watching Jack Hanna’s *Animal Adventures*. The dream at first did not consist of hunting the Dark Continent, but to just visit and experience the wildlife. As I grew up, began hunting and building the desires of hunting, the dream turned into not just visiting, but experiencing the culture and the landscapes, and hunting the animals that exists within. A bucket list trip, an adventure that most people in my inner circle would not take due to the misconception of dangers, travel concerns and/or affordability. Some of these concerns followed me, thinking and planning that IF Africa would become a reality to me, it would be in the later years of my life.

The Booking

My first trip to Africa started with a conversation with a great friend and hunting partner, Nic Edlund. He asked me while on a western hunt for mule deer what my dream hunting adventure would be. The answer came quick ... Africa. The follow up was, “For what?” I

“Why is it you can never hope to describe the emotion Africa creates? You are lifted. Out of whatever pit, unbound from whatever tie, released from whatever fear. You are lifted and you see it all from above.” – Francesca Marciano

didn't have that answer immediately. I just knew I wanted to go to Africa for the adventure and experience. After some research, I found a little about Safari Club International and some of the events that are held within our area. In the weeks leading up to the event, we discussed the auction items we were interested in and to what value we felt they were worth. Nic and I attended the 44th annual Minnesota SCI World Hunting Expo in February 2019. Our initial idea was that we would talk to some outfitters, maybe meet some people that have traveled to Africa and get to see the costs that these hunts go for on the live auction. I took some time to meet with a few outfitters and really like what I saw from Marupa Safaris. We were fortunate enough to purchase a 10-day hunt for 10 animals with Pieter Viviers and Dolf Vanwyk of Marupa Safaris.

The Planning

We were given the option to come in the fall of 2019 or in 2020. We picked 2020 due to us having prior hunting trips planned for 2019. In January 2020, everything was good to go for our May safari and then the world turned upside down. Panic and fear set in over the coronavirus pandemic. States were shut down, flights canceled and it seemed to me humanity was pitted against each other and divided. We rebooked for July with the same result, pushed it off to April 2021 and again just weeks before taking off it was canceled. We rescheduled for the end of July knowing that if it couldn't happen, we most likely would have to wait a few years to go.

Nic and I tend to do the DIY style hunting in the states. We have never been on a guided hunt, and we have never been on an international hunt, let alone plan one ourselves. We wanted to take our own firearms with us, so that narrows down the flights you can take without having any possible issues to or

from your destination. With Delta Airlines giving us the short notice cancellations for the direct Atlanta-to-Johannesburg, South Africa route, our last plan was to try United Airlines' route from Minneapolis to Newark, N.J., to Johannesburg. This route was new to United as it was planned to start in mid-2020 but due to COVID it started in June 2021. COVID testing was difficult to plan as most facilities will only test if you have symptoms. The Minneapolis airport has a testing facility that can get you results within 72 hours or for \$220 you can get results for the required PCR test in 30 minutes. We elected to go the Vault testing route and if our results were not back by our arrival at the airport, we would pay the money to get the fast results. That was not needed as my results came within the same day and Nic's came the next morning.

For firearms, we utilized the help of Marupa Safaris in assisting to get our gun permits. We provided them a copy of our passport, flight itinerary and customs Form 4457. Marupa Safaris also has an invitation letter that helps with some information that is needed for the completion of the SAPS 520 form. A few lessons learned that I hope will help someone looking to take this adventure: Ammo is not limited but weight is (no more than 5 kg), so make sure you have your gun case locked with locks and only you have the key (non-TSA). Taking guns with us was a huge concern, but with a few simple things done correctly and the help of Pieter, everything was easy and painless.

Through the help of Pieter Viviers, Dolf Vanwyk, Dave Bigler and the internet, we got most of the questions answered that we thought to ask. I want people to know that it can be done on their own but having the support of a good outfitter and someone back in the states to answer questions or concerns make it easier. Nic and I would be more than happy to discuss or help anyone that is unsure of traveling to Africa during these COVID times.



“It’s always something and that’s the cool part. You can’t anticipate it, you just react, face the challenge, meet it and in the end the accomplishment is that much greater.”

– Jim Shockey

Turning the Dream into Reality —

My wife and son dropped me off at the Minneapolis airport on Monday July 19 around 7:30 a.m. I was worried how long it would take to get through everything not knowing how traveling via airplane with a gun would go. Within 30 minutes, I had my bags checked, guns inspected and processed and my boarding passes in hand. A few things that will make this go faster is having clear copies of your COVID test results (within 72 hours of departure from your international flight for South Africa) and your customs Form 4457. Nic showed up just as I cleared my guns and I walked through the process with him and within 15 minutes we were headed to TSA pre-check. All the worries and concerns of guns, ammo, COVID and international flights was all just that ... worry. We made it through security in less than 45 minutes.

Nic and I headed to the bar for a drink and conversation. Our flight from Minneapolis to Newark was uneventful and on time. We spent most of our six-hour layover in the United Club, which I highly recommend to anyone with a lengthy layover. We arrived in Johannesburg around 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday July 20, too late to leave the town of Joburg due to civil unrest and the imposed curfew, but nonetheless, we are in AFRICA! After going through the airport, collecting our luggage, meeting up with one of Marupa Safaris professional hunters GC Du Plessis and getting our guns cleared, we headed to a house in Johannesburg to stay for the night. Here we were met with smiles and laughs by our good friend Dolf Vanwyk. After some dinner and a few drinks, everyone was off to bed as the morning will come fast. I whisper to myself for the first time, “Goodnight Africa.”

Day 1 started around 5:30 a.m, with loading the trucks and filling out some paperwork before departing Johannesburg and heading to the Northern Cape. After a five-hour drive, we arrived at Marupa Safaris’ beautiful lodge outside of Kimberly, South Africa. We quickly unloaded our gear, ate a fantastic lunch, and went to ensure our rifles were still zeroed. Once completed we took a drive around the property spotting numerous game,



including Wildebeest, Roan, Sable, Giraffe, Zebra, Springbok, Duiker, Kudu, Nyala, and the list goes on. Right before sunset, Nic was able to harvest a beautiful Impala ram and we ended the night on a high note.

Days 2 through 5 gave us lows in the upper teens and highs in the lower sixties, with night three being a full moon. On the morning of day two it snowed! On days two and three, we had ice on all the water holes in the morning. Not the “typical” Africa weather I believed we would encounter. Though both Nic and I wanting time to slow, yet having the feeling that we had so much time, it flew by. I remember always telling Dolf to slow down, we have plenty of time. We just wanted to enjoy our first experience in Africa, but Dolf kept explaining to us that our list of animals was big and that once you get past day 5 it will be over before you know it, and he was right! In the first half of the safari, Nic shot an Impala ram, two Black Wildebeest, Common Springbok ram and an awesome Gemsbok. I was able to harvest an Impala ram, Black Wildebeest, Common Springbok ram, Zebra, Steenbok and Gemsbok. We hunted multiple properties and got to see some fantastic game.

Days six through nine gave us some of the same weather but slightly warmer. These days brought Nic a beautiful Copper Springbok ram, another Common Springbok ram and a Blesbok. I was able to harvest a Copper Springbok ram, a White Springbok ram and a Black Springbok ram to finish the Springbok Slam. Hunting for us seems to include a shot at a Jackal or a Caracal if presented.

On Day 10, we headed into town to get the COVID test needed for our return to the United States and then came back to the lodge to hang out. That afternoon the three of us were joined by Pieter and we headed out to try to find a Jackal. Dolf ended up shooting a nice Warthog. After some photos, we loaded the Warthog and continued the search for a Jackal. At dark, we headed back to the lodge for dinner and drinks. The next morning, we met at the lodge, ate breakfast, discussed our trip, and settled with Pieter before taking off to the airport after verifying our COVID test results. Our trip back to the states was uneventful.

Conclusion

I wanted to write this article for a few reasons. First, to let people know how attainable Africa can be. I believe Africa can be as expensive and extensive as you want to make it, but it doesn't have to be. There is this belief with most people that taking a hunting trip to Africa is so expensive that most people just never investigate it or wait until they are in the later years of life. My only regret with this trip is that I didn't do it 10 years ago. Coming from a couple DIY guys who have never been on a guided hunt before, this was an amazing trip all the way around. The staff at Marupa Safaris was top notch, we left feeling as we were not clients but part of the Marupa family. From daily laundry to room keeping, the facilities were spotless. The food was awesome from the start of your day to the end of your night. I joked around with everyone in camp that I felt everything we did was scheduled



“When you leave Africa, as the plane lifts, you feel that more than leaving a continent you’re leaving a state of mind. Whatever awaits you at the other end of your journey will be of a different order of existence.” – Francesca Marciano

around the eating schedule. The lodge and facilities were top notch, beautiful and spectacular. From the main lodge to your private sleeping quarters, to the outdoor facilities, everything was clean, well-kept and in perfect working order. As far as quality of animals go, I never once felt that we didn't have a chance at something of size and quality if we made the decision to go after it.

The second reason is to let people know that travel during these “pandemic” times can take place. In all reality, it wasn't that hard. It took some organization and preparedness but looking back I would do it 10 times over again to experience what we were able to experience. Again, as stated earlier, if you have any question or concerns about travel during the COVID pandemic, Nic and I would be more than happy to let you know what was needed on our end. If you have questions of Marupa Safaris, I would also be more than happy to answer them.

Wisconsin Finalizes Wolf Season

By Tony Roettger

The ever-controversial wolf seasons across the United States is once again making news with our neighbors in Wisconsin. The wolf season has been set for November 6, 2021 until February 28, 2022 or until harvest zones are closed due to quota being met. The statewide quota for 2021 is 130 wolves. This quota will be broken out as: 74 wolves for licensed Wisconsin hunters and 56 to the Ojibwe Tribe based on treaty rights.

Per the Wisconsin DNR site (<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/hunt/wolf/index.html>) "The Department set an objective of no significant population change based on the consideration of all of the relevant factors set forth in statutes and in our administrative code and asked agency scientists to determine a quota to meet this objective using the best available science. Prior to setting the quota, there was an extensive public input period followed by thorough review of the information gathered."



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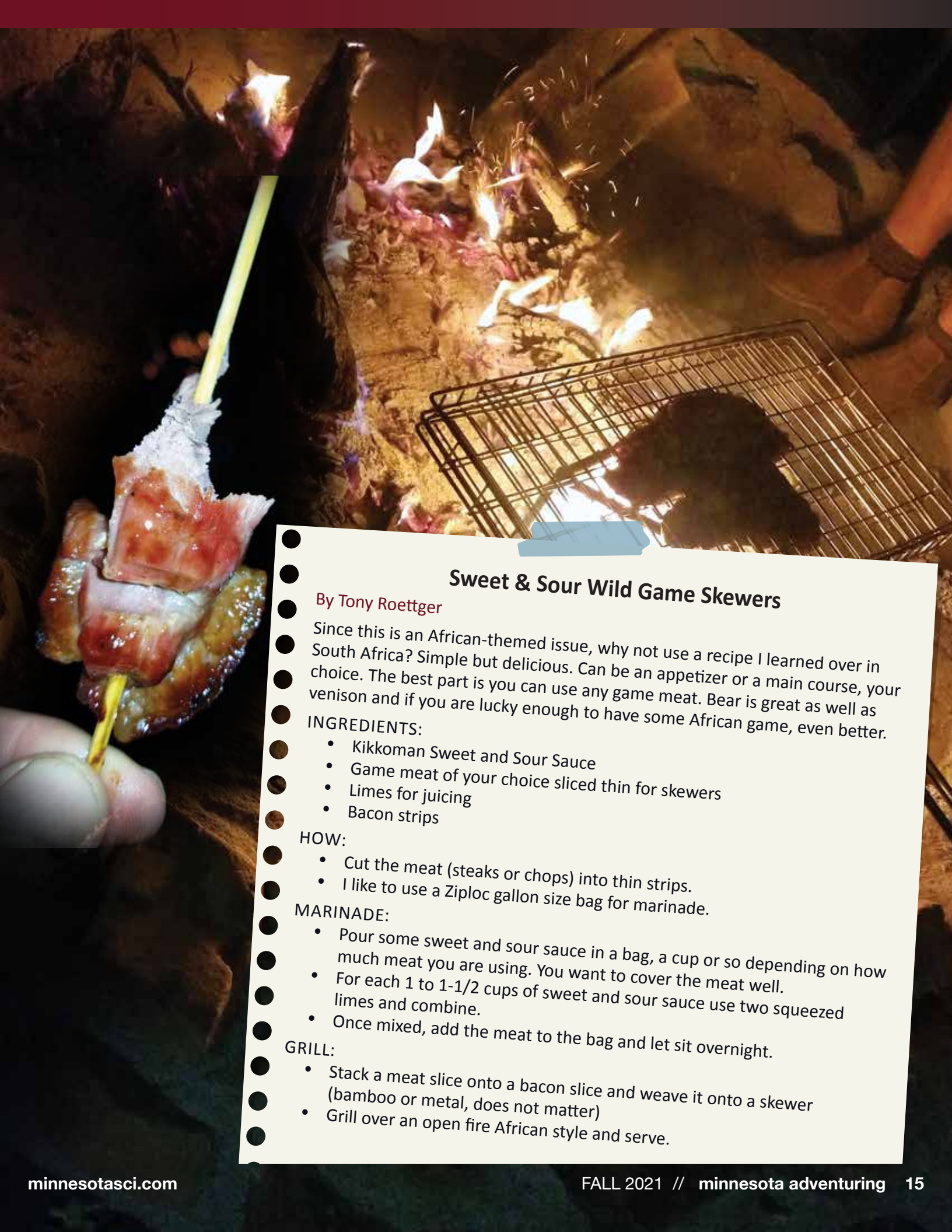
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Sweet & Sour Wild Game Skewers

By Tony Roettger

Since this is an African-themed issue, why not use a recipe I learned over in South Africa? Simple but delicious. Can be an appetizer or a main course, your choice. The best part is you can use any game meat. Bear is great as well as venison and if you are lucky enough to have some African game, even better.

INGREDIENTS:

- Kikkoman Sweet and Sour Sauce
- Game meat of your choice sliced thin for skewers
- Limes for juicing
- Bacon strips

HOW:

- Cut the meat (steaks or chops) into thin strips.
- I like to use a Ziploc gallon size bag for marinade.

MARINADE:

- Pour some sweet and sour sauce in a bag, a cup or so depending on how much meat you are using. You want to cover the meat well.
- For each 1 to 1-1/2 cups of sweet and sour sauce use two squeezed limes and combine.
- Once mixed, add the meat to the bag and let sit overnight.

GRILL:

- Stack a meat slice onto a bacon slice and weave it onto a skewer (bamboo or metal, does not matter)
- Grill over an open fire African style and serve.



CHRISTMAS PARTY WILD GAME DINNER



**Monday
December 13, 2021
6:00PM - 9:00PM
Mendakota Country Club**

If you want to treat your palate to exotic flavors, then be sure to attend the Minnesota SCI Wild Game Dinner. This year's event will include a silent auction, raffles and door prizes.

www.minnesotasci.com

**Register
Online**



CHRISTMAS PARTY WILD GAME DONATIONS

All of the wild game items are donated by our Members.

Donations are being accepted by Scott Clinton of Wild Concepts at 7470 150th Street E, Hastings, MN, please call 952-217-6005 to make arrangements. If you can't make it to the drop-off site, call Don at 612-483-8415.

EXIBITORS:

No refunds or cancellations, however, Minnesota SCI reserves the right to cancel any tickets and refund the ticket price.



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Starting **Monday, September 13, 2021** at 9:00 PM CDT
through **Friday, December 10, 2021** until 11:55 PM CST

Winners drawn at Wild Game Dinner December 13, 2021

Tickets will be sold in person during the Wild Game Dinner at Mendakota Country Club Monday, December 13, 2021 from 5:00pm until 7:45pm. Winners will be determined by random draw with live audience at 8:00pm.

HUNT #1:

2022: 3-Day 1-Person Free Range Aoudad Hunt in West Texas

TICKETS \$50 EACH OR A \$100 TICKET PACK (3 TICKETS)

Prize value \$5,500. Maximum of 250 tickets sold for this hunt.

HUNT # 2:

2023: New Zealand 6-Day 5 Nights Red Stag up to 400-inches
and 1 Bull Tahr Hunt

Includes daily rate for one hunter, trophy fees for red stag and bull tahr,
private accommodations, transport from Christchurch airport.

TICKETS \$100 EACH

Prize value \$15,000. Maximum of 250 tickets sold for this hunt.

Additional hunters welcome at \$450/day, additional non-hunters welcome at \$250/day.

Hunt dates: May through July 2023.

Not included: Accommodation before/after hunt (not required but can be arranged).

Upgrades and additional species as per pricelist. Helicopter transportation for Tahr hunt (\$2,000). Trophy preparation, crating and export. Gratuities.

2ND-PLACE PRIZE: Mauser M12 Pure Rifle in .300 Win Mag

Prize value \$1,500.

HUNT #3:

2022: 7-Day 1x1 Kodiak Island Alaska Sitka Blacktail Deer, Sea Ducks,
and Red Fox Combo

Hunt includes meals, lodging, guide.

TICKETS \$50 EACH OR A \$100 TICKET PACK (3 TICKETS).

Prize value \$5,000. Maximum of 250 tickets sold for this hunt.

Hunt dates: August through December 2022.

Not included: Licenses, tags, and float plane ride to the lodge.



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

Don Lynch, Minnesota SCI

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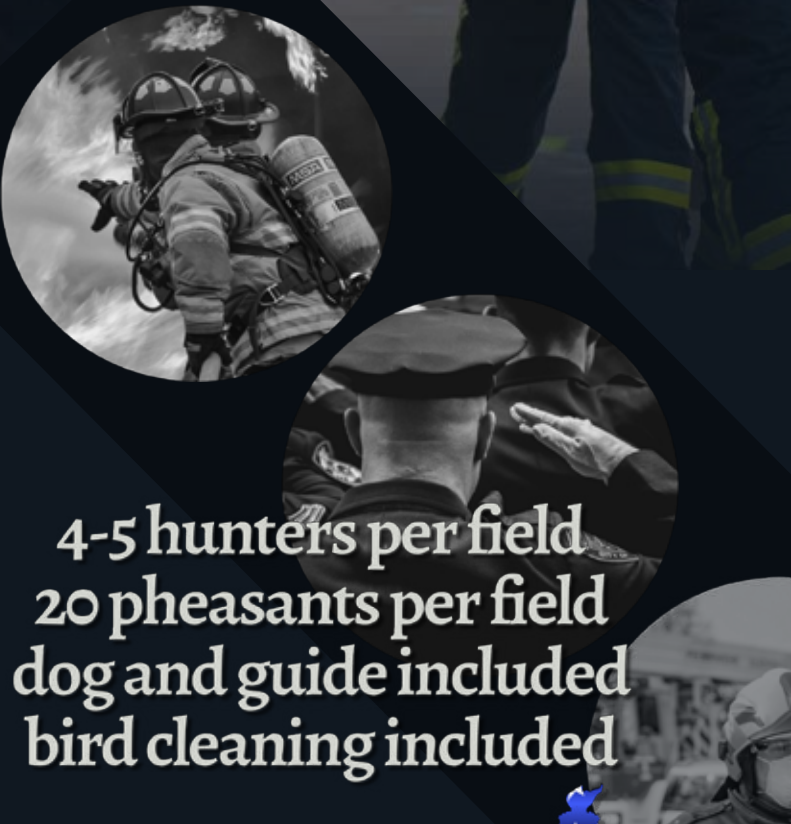
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OUR African Adventure

By Tracy Samuelson

CHAPTER 2

As we peep over the edge of the dry creek bed we see the two old buffalo bulls feeding. We watch them as they feed towards us. Being a bowhunter, I need a close shot for good penetration. Then, just like that the wind swirls, and off they go like often happens chasing cape buffalo. Hunting in the Drakensburg Mountains is no easy feat especially with archery equipment and the constant swirling winds.

Back on the buffalo's tracks, we find the two bulls coming out of a deep ravine heading back over the top of the mountain. One of them beats us over the top. As we sit in the tall grass making a plan, I spotted another bull in the bottom of the ravine where the other bulls came out of. He was standing in the thick brush, just then, he lay down. We decide to go after the other, now single bull. After stalking and belly crawling over 300 yards we were able to get within 18 yards again. The bull lays down in the tall grass. We sat and waited for him to stand but again while the wind swirled again, causing him to run off.

New plan: we decided to go back after the one in the thick bush. As we got in close behind him, I ranged him at 21 yards. My professional hunter, Mark Comins with Chumlet Safaris, looks him over and said he is old and has hard bosses. Again, the wind swirls and the bull stands up, turns quartering towards us, and

looks directly at us. I draw my bow and bury my arrow into his left front shoulder. He turns and runs off.

CHAPTER 1

After a year delay due to Covid-19, we are finally on our last flight flying into Kimberely, South Africa. We meet Tyrone Milne, owner of Chumlet Safaris, at the gate. This is our fourth trip with Tyrone and he has become a very good friend over the years. I knew this trip would be nothing but top-notch as usual. For the first half of the trip, we stay at the same venue as a few years back, but this time stayed in the newly constructed tent camp. What a great experience. We got settled in at camp, had a fabulous lunch (as always), grabbed our bows, and headed to the shooting range to make sure our sites are still on after the trip. Right on, now here we go off to see what we can see.

Covid and no hunting for a year allowed there to be great trophy quality with the animals. Over the next few days, we took some great animals including a huge black wildebeest. Kim shot a great waterbuck, black Impala and a springbok. I took a nice gemsbok and a 29" Golden Wildebeest.

On about our 5th day we set up a blind and brushed it in on a waterhole to try and catch a big warthog that had been coming there to drink. Three years before, on this same waterhole, I shot one of the oldest waterbucks that Tyrone had ever seen. It was only 22" but ancient and I was over-the-moon thrilled to have



shot this trophy. As we sat there waiting for the big pig to show up I noticed two waterbucks coming towards us. The closer they got I realized how wide and long one of them was. They stopped to drink some water. Now I know I already have a very nice waterbuck but this one was huge. I asked Mark, my professional hunter if I could shoot him if he turned broadside. Of course, replied Mark. Just then, guess what? He turned sideways, I quickly drew back my bow and let an arrow fly. The big bull jumped the string a little hitting it slightly high but still fatal. After a long track, we found my 30 3/4" stud of a waterbuck.

On our 6th and last day at this camp, we did lots of spot-and-stalk on springbok with our bows with no success. One of our priority animals was a springbok so we decided to grab Mark's gun and see what we could find. I was able to shoot a great springbok. As we were glassing to find Kim one, we spot a giant a long way off. We made a plan and off we go. We stalk to about 200 yards and she makes a perfect shot, dropping it in its tracks. We could see through the binoculars it was big but when we walked up to it we finally realized it was a huge springbok. What a great way to end the day and our safari on this property. We got back to camp and packed everything in preparation for the trip to our next destination. The next morning, we loaded the truck and hit the road, driving 5 1/2 hours to our next camp in the Drakensberg Mountains. What a beautiful place it was, WOW! Our priority animals at this camp are buffalo, bushbuck and nyala.

After settling in and switching my bow sights and arrows in preparation for the buffalo hunt, we drove around setting up cameras in search of bushbuck and buffalo. Man, were there buffalo on this property. They roamed over 15,000 acres in the mountains with so many draws and ravines for them to hide. There are many places you don't want to shoot animals because of the sheer rock walls and cliffs making it difficult to retrieve animals. I grabbed my buffalo arrows and off we went in search of a buffalo. Spotting a lot of animals but no hard bossed bulls. Then off in the distance, we spotted two hard-bossed bulls.

CHAPTER 3: *The Story Continues*

After my first shot, the bull turns and runs up the opposite hill, stops and looks back not realizing what just happened. I quickly nocked another arrow but before I know the range he takes off running. We followed him over the hill, and he still didn't realize what happened as we were walking slowly as if he was in no danger. We snuck in closer to about 40 yards and launched another arrow into the beast. We marked our location and pulled back to get the truck, tracker,



and Sniper, the dog for some serious tracking. Mark made a plan and off we went. It didn't take Sniper long to find the bull and a few more well-placed arrows and the rest is history. Both Mark and I were clueless as to how big this buffalo was until we walked up to it. I was completely speechless. After getting him loaded and back to camp we grabbed our tape, he measured 46-4/8" wide with 15" bosses and had a gross score of 121-5/8". What a fantastic old bull.

The next few days consisted of looking for bushbuck and possibly a baboon. We have always wanted to bring home a baboon and this trip we were able to find an ancient old baboon with no upper canine teeth left. Another great trophy. The next morning, we started out driving to check the cameras to see what was coming into certain locations. Before we arrived at our first camera Mark spotted a bushbuck walking on the hillside. We made a stalk across the ravine and up the hillside but before we could get close enough to shoot the wind shifted and he spooked and ran. We



quickly backed out and came in from a different direction. We stalked to 27 yards from the animal and the shot placement was perfect enough the bushbuck only went about 10 yards. We were so excited to shoot a bushbuck with a bow, after many high-fives and several pictures we loaded him into the truck and headed back to camp. On our way back to camp we couldn't believe what we saw, another bushbuck ram along the brush line of a ravine. Mark says, "Kim, are you ready?", and he immediately makes a plan. Kim grabs her bow; they stalk in close enough to take home the second bushbuck. What a great accomplishment, husband and wife each take a bushbuck with a bow within an hour of each other and a few miles apart. Kim's bushbuck was ancient but what a trophy! I was told many years ago by one of my best friends that a picture needs to tell the story with no explanation. I think our bushbuck picture tells that story. We took our trophies back to camp and had a quick bite to eat. We glassed for a few hours from one of the hillsides and there it was, a giant nyala. Of course, it was halfway up a super steep hill. We crawled for a while and got to 49 yards from the giant. We had another nyala watching us, so we figured we had to shoot or risk them running further uphill and out of range. She drew back her bow and released an arrow. The giant nyala didn't go 10 yards before falling over, and, yes, right into a small ravine. We were in awe when we got up to it. What a monster, measuring out at 29-6/8".

A once in a lifetime day, I will never forget and it all happened with the best hunting partner I could ever ask for, my wife.

The final day of adventure we toured the property and drove quite a way up the mountain to what they call bushman rock. We viewed an old bushman painting on the rocks that have been there for ages. We sat and enjoyed the view before heading back down the mountain. On the way back down the mountain, Mark spotted a herd of zebra. We parked below a hill and stalked back up to



the herd, Kim was able to check another one of her animals off her list. We went back to the truck to drive up the hill to retrieve the zebra and on the way, we spotted a warthog. I was able to take the warthog off my list. We loaded both animals and took our last trip back to camp with our trophies. We took a total of 16 animals during this trip. What a trip, another trip-of-a-lifetime, each trip better than the last and already planning the next.

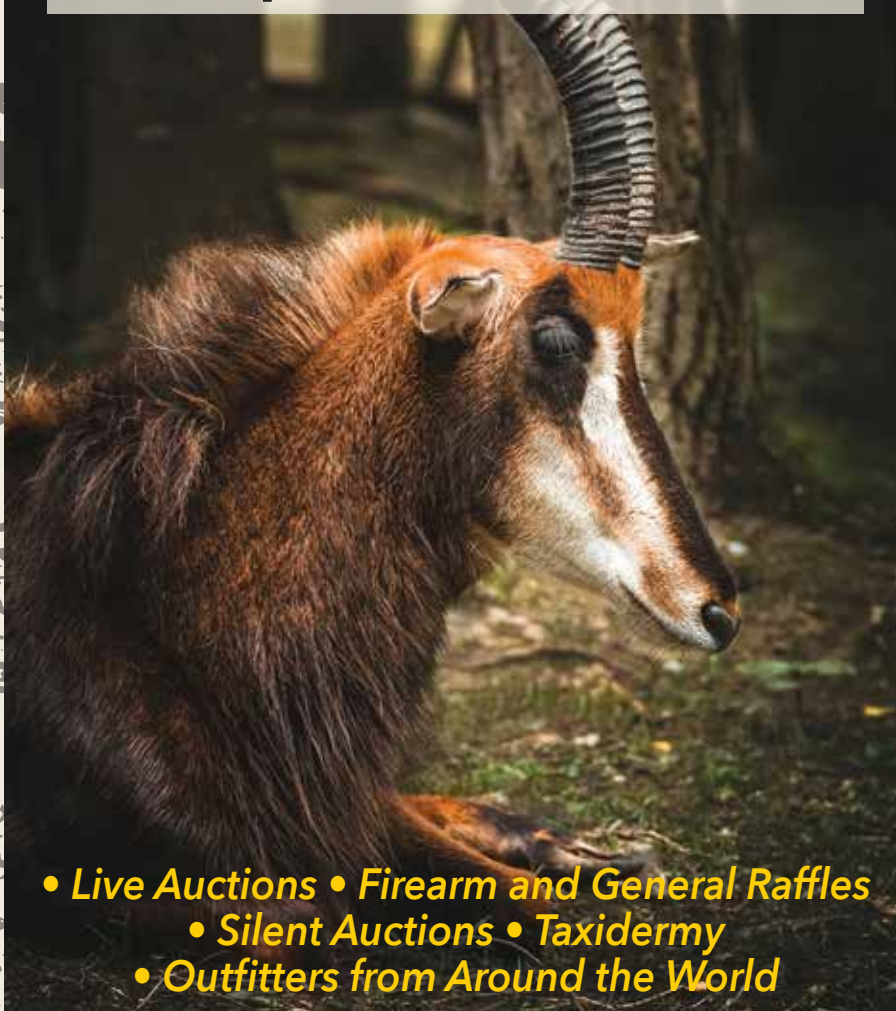


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Schedule of Events

PUBLIC HOURS:

Friday, Feb. 25: 2:00pm - 10:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 26: 10:00am - 5:00pm

Public Hours are free and includes access to Exhibitors, Raffle Areas, & partial time for Saturday Silent Auction

PAID HOURS:

Wrist bands will be required both nights.

Friday, Feb. 25: 5:00pm - 10:00pm

- Registration starts at 5:00 p.m.
- Dinner and Live Auction start at 7:00pm
- Cost: **\$50** per person (general seating) or **\$400/500** per table of eight/ten (reserved seating)

Included in price is all public access plus the Friday Live and Silent Auctions and Buffet. This is a CASUAL event.

Saturday, Feb. 26: 4:00pm - 10:00pm

- Registration starts at 4:00 p.m.
- Formal Dinner /Live Auction at 7:00pm
- Cost: **\$100** per person (general seating) or **\$800/\$1,000** per table of eight/ten (reserved seating).

Included in price is access to the Saturday Live and Silent Auction, Exhibitors, Raffles Area and a 3-Course Plated Dinner.

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Impala Madness

By Tony Roettger

I talked him into going with me along with my mom in August of 2009. Dad even went out and bought a new PSE bow and practiced and practiced some more. Dad went every day to the blind with me during that trip. He even let down after drawing on a warthog one evening while sitting in a water hole. All he could say was, “Gray thing, gray thing!” in a whisper. I never saw the “gray thing” come in until he pointed it out because I was so excited for him to shoot that warthog. He was looking at gemsbok. He knew how badly I wanted to harvest one so he let down his draw so I could take the gemsbok.

All dad wanted to hunt was a warthog and an impala. Both animals were scarce on that trip with Limcroma Safaries; a few small warthogs and no impala were seen for six days but on the second to last day of the hunt at a new blind there was an impala spotted coming to drink. We waited for a while, birds pecking at the one-way glass window, a group of mongoose came to drink as the sun warmed the morning air. Finally, there they came, a group of impalas. Three nice rams in the group. They did not drink but they did lick the salt.

After sauntering in as impala tend to do, they began to just mill about. One of the rams with narrow tips offered a good shot at 29 yards.

A distance very doable for my dad.

I was filming the hunt; dad drew his bow; settled the pin and “Thwack!” and the words “Oh shoot” fell from his mouth.

Heartbreak...I saw the arrow go over that impala’s back. Turned out dad couldn’t see the pins due to the combination of blind angle and the position of the sun which blacked out his pins. He settled where he thought it should be, turned out it was not right. Broke my heart to watch and then sit in that uncomfortable silence.

The impala is the “McDonalds” of the bushveld. They even have an “M” on their backsides you can see as they walk away. They are supposed to be easy to get. They are supposed to be all over the place. They are inexpensive animals to hunt and not something that becomes an obsession for a person. But they became an obsession for me that year. No way were these bottom-of-the-food chain animals going to outsmart me again. I put them on the top of my hit list for the next time I get to Africa.

As it turned out, these



snacks of the bushveld became a pain in my #\$\$ for years. When I say years, I am talking a decade. The second time I went to Africa I at least saw some impala. On day four of this trip, the morning was turning to noontime when a very nice impala came into the water hole. Looking back, I am not sure how big it was, but I would say around 25", maybe more, which in terms of Impala - you shoot those. They are big - not like a 200" whitetail but like a solid 170" whitetail for comparison. He finally came to drink and offered me a shot. I drew my bow, I tried to aim and "thwack!" Like a moron, I hit the trigger, and off the arrow sailed over the impalas back followed by the impala running off never to be seen again.

I never saw another impala on that trip. That was 2011. Added fuel for what will not be the end of the madness.

2015 came with a trip back to the Limpopo province of South Africa. A new outfitter - Marupa Safaris - a new adventure and new company joining me.

This adventure, however, came with nasty weather. Rain, cold, wind, sleet, and overall horrible hunting. The rains came early and in small portions that year meaning they did not come later resulting in the aquifers drying for the following years. We harvested some animals, but I never saw an impala at a water hole. Strike three on impalas.

2017 came with a trip back to Limpopo and Marupa Safaris. The weather was great. The drought was still in effect but there were animals about and they were using the water available to them. I saw many impalas, and this is where the story really begins to hit bottom...rock bottom. My archery catapult into a massive slump and the realization I had to face and fix my horrible target panic that had been evolving over the course of a few years. During this trip, I shot at so many impala and botched shots I completely lost count at around seven. I did not wound any, but I did shave some hair off and get close. I was a mess; I was frustrated and had hit rock bottom with my bow. I could not draw and settle a pin without just rushing, punching the trigger, and/or just getting stuck in a frozen state with my movements. I was having an overall brain melt. If you have ever suffered from this to the degree I had or even a little, you know what I am talking about.

Now, I do not blame the Impala as a species, but they did not help. In many ways, I should maybe thank the impala as they made me realize I had an issue that had to be fixed immediately. I had to face it and fix it most importantly and I was not sure how. The "how" will have to be another story as this is about the impala. I also did get my head marginally right to harvest a couple of animals on the 2017 adventure but no impalas.

2019 came with a new, refreshed and complete change in my mental presence. This came with a lot of work and putting myself in uncomfortable positions to "fix" my problems. The damage done to my shooting was, to a certain degree, permanent. As I pulled out my bow in the African air, the same setting that completely crushed all confidence in my ability to shoot a bow left me feeling all the anxieties I had when I left two years prior. I had to "get my mind right" as the warden said to Luke in *Cool Hand Luke*.



As luck would have it, my first experience in the blind was with my PH Pieter, GC and my wife in the same blind I missed over seven impalas two years prior. I hate people watching me shoot my bow to start with, now I have three people in the blind watching me. When your thoughts are, "Please no animals come in because I do not want to screw up in front of these people!", that is not a good start to a hunt. To top it off, an impala came in. A nice 23" impala. What happened? He did not give me a shot. I was relieved. That left me sad as I was still fighting my demons.

The next day some things were going on in camp with a water pump burning out, Kate was heading to the school to visit kids and GC was the driver for her. Pieter asked if he could just drop me off in the blind with a cooler of drinks for the morning and they would get me at lunchtime. I was totally accepting of this. If anyone was going to fix me, it had to be ME, and what better way to do it but to be alone with my thoughts and actions.

I sat for a while and had a few animals come in. Giraffe, wildebeest, gemsbok, eland, and waterbuck. Then finally as the morning air warmed the impala showed.

Many ewes and little ones but finally a decent impala showed himself. I felt the anxiety, I felt my breathing deepen and quicken, and here was my moment to shine or not. The impala made a few attempts to drink and as they do, they get skittish at the water. Finally, he came all the way around in front of me and then to the left me with a frontal, which I won't take. But as he turned to his right, he was looking to the left, I drew my bow, heart pounding, trying to find my pins, the blackness overcame me, and I punched that trigger. As I felt the overcoming of anxiety rushing over me and of course the shot and "thwack!" MISS.

What an idiot I am, I did it again.

I sat down, disappointed in myself and sad. That sick feeling in my stomach and the thoughts in my mind were...well, I am sure you can imagine. As I sat, I made a pact with myself, I had to get over

this thing and it had to be now; continuing with this issue any longer was going to end my bowhunting future. The animals were all gone now. I decided to walk out, find my arrow, and make sure no blood was on it; there was nothing, not even hair. I went back in the blind, nocked another arrow and waited while drinking a delicious South African Coca-Cola.

I sat for a good hour and then another group of impala came in. Similar to before the ewes came in first. Drank some water as did the little ones. Then I saw him, a nice impala, not a great one but a shooter impala. Heavy horned 22" or 23" long and just nice. He never came in to drink. He walked around and just never really wanted to drink. He milled about in the rear of the herd. I grabbed the range finder because I needed to make a play to harvest him and where he was, was not at the water. He was far left of the blind at a hard angle to shoot at. I waited a long time, and I was feeling different, better; like I had hit rock bottom and now only had one direction to go...up. Let's be honest, the worst thing that could happen is I miss another impala. At this point it is beyond sad; it is ridiculously funny.

The impala came in a little bit closer, then turned and started walking away. I immediately went into a zone. I drew my bow with confidence, I knew I could take a walking, quartering away shot and this ram wouldn't go far at all so that is exactly what I did. Drew, aimed for opposite shoulder, 24 yards, and "Thwack!" I saw the arrow coming out the opposite shoulder; the ram ran off and within sight of the blind he was down in a cloud of red dust.

I said a prayer in thank you to God that morning. I was reborn. As I finished my thank you prayer, I opened that cooler, grabbed another Coke® and sat with the biggest smile on my face and enjoyed every second of the moment. I still see the shot, the arrow in flight and the impact.

No more animals came in that morning. At lunch, the boys showed up – two of the PH's, Dolfe and Pieter, along with my friend Chris Vitek. I told them I missed one and they had a look of, "oh man" as they all endured the slump with me on the last trip two years prior but then I told them to look out over there beyond that stump where a beautiful, red impala laid.

The next day was a trip up into the mountains to look for bushbuck and mountain reedbuck. The air was cool as normally is in July. We saw a beautiful kudu bull and some kudu cows. Then a few impalas came in. A really nice, heavy horned impala that was

just the type of impala you cannot pass on.

Pieter said, "You must take that one." so I drew and shot. The impala ran off and there we sat. Another great impala in the salt. We sat, had a Castle beer and chatted before we went and found him to take some photos.

That afternoon we sat enjoying our time in the field when we saw more impala, giraffe, kudu, rhino, and other animals. One group of impala had some nice rams in it but in the rear of the herd in the bush, we saw a good impala along with a giant impala. I asked Pieter, "Did you get a good look at that one behind it? I think it is giant." Pieter grabbed the binos and the look on his face was priceless.

He was at a loss for words. He then asked me, "Have you ever seen one that big?" I had to chuckle as I am not the PH and my answer was a simple "No." This thing was so big it is hard to explain and there is no way anyone is going to believe us when we tell them. I wish we could have got pictures, but we were so focused on finding a way to shoot it the pictures never happened. This impala easily would have been a top 10 but most likely a world record; no joke.

It was over 30" long with heavy mass that carried through. It could hardly get through the bush it was so big. The horns looked like a meter or yard stick bent into the shape of impala horns. Unfortunately, he was never seen again and we were unable to get a shot at him. The other PH's still do not believe us.

A couple of days later we built a new blind up in the mountains maybe 10 miles from where I harvested the second impala of the trip. As luck would have it, we saw a lot more impala. One came in with no cares in the world and I was pretty positive it was over 25" to which Pieter agreed with me. I don't think Pieter thought I had any intention of shooting it but in my world, you do not pass on 25" plus impala. As the shot sequence shows below, it was a good shot and a beautiful film job by Pieter. Note the arrow passing through and landing in the water. I was elated, to say the least, to have such a beautiful third impala.

To conclude this long story: I have overcome the impala curse. I feel very good that in the future I can make a clean shot on an impala.

My confidence...for now, has been restored. The last impala ranks #46 for archery and #71 overall in the SCI record book. I was in fact a very nice impala.



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