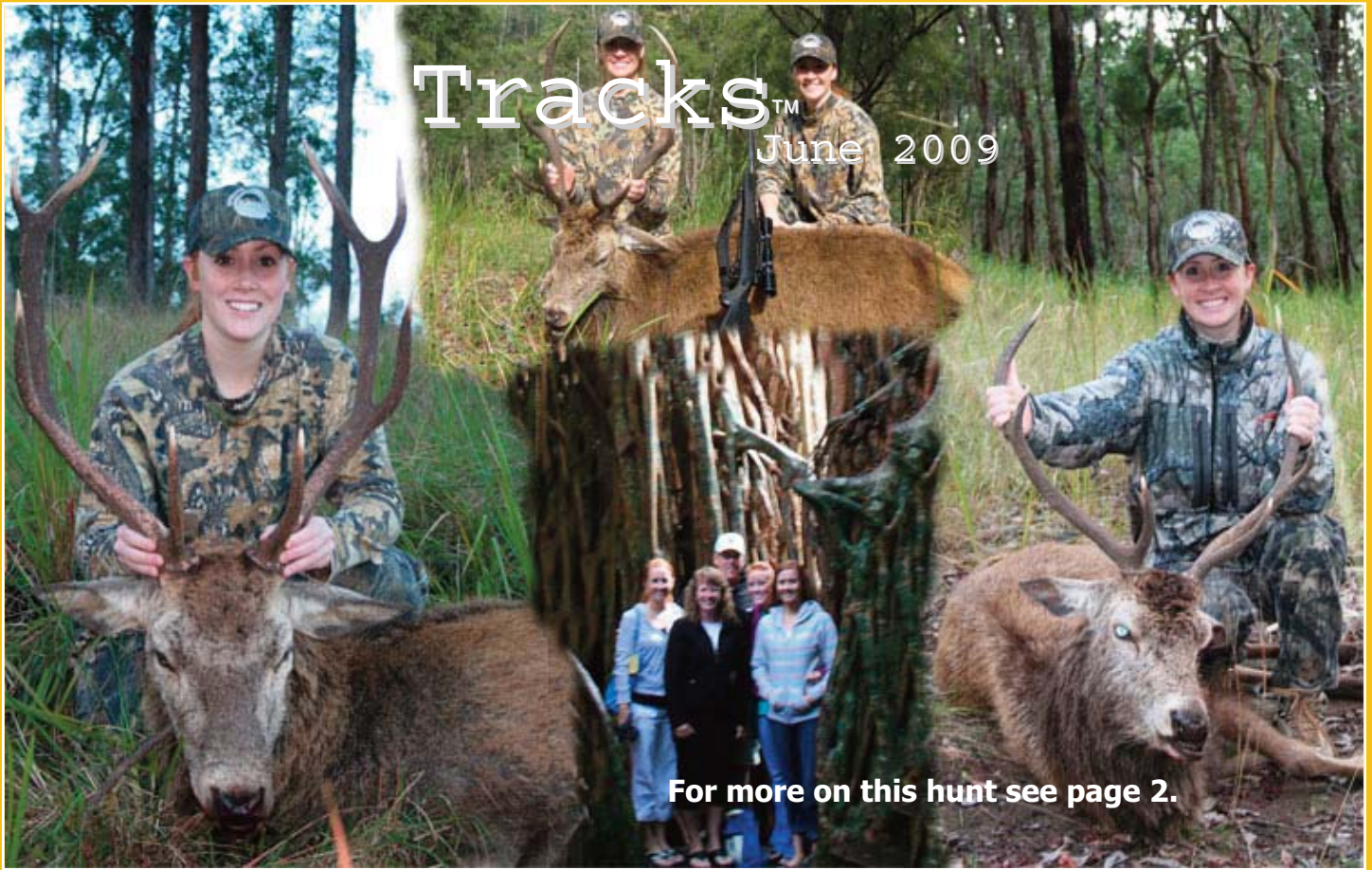


Tracks™

June 2009



For more on this hunt see page 2.

Australia...Quality Family Time (Scott Marvin - MN)

I had a school teacher once who told me that there is more to life than hunting and fishing. Of course, being young and immature I had no clue what she was talking about. Funny thing is, much later in life I still am not certain I understand her comment. I do appreciate her effort though and will give her an "A" for that.

Fortunately my three daughters were influenced differently. They realized the value of education and the importance of hunting and fishing at the same time. They blended them both together to create the perfect world of school and the outdoors. The girls, now at ages 20, 24 and 24 have met the challenge of balancing school, sports, band, college, part time work with their love of the outdoors and the therapy it provides. It was because of them that we left the academic world behind and heading to what is likely our last family hunting outing. Fresh from two college graduations and with two jobs on the horizon and the youngest daughter rapidly approaching her sunset years of college, we traded books for passports and headed to Australia.

Our destination was an outfitter of Outdoor Connection who provides two types of experiences. A mainland lodge and private hunting grounds as well as a remote island rich with game and surrounded by whales and warm ocean winds. Our goal of the trip was to experience Australia through this outfitter followed by some touring.

We flew into Sydney and transferred to a domestic flight that carried us to Brisbane. Luggage in hand, we met our outfitter and loaded into two vehicles for the two hour trip to the lodge. Our travels took us from the heart of Brisbane into a small mountain range of interior Australia where we stayed awake long enough to grab a bite to eat and locate our beds. The morning saw us gathered in the dining room of the lodge as the sun chased the fog from the treetops

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FIRST ALASKA BLACK BEAR CONT. (AH14)
ALASKA BROWN BEAR SPECIAL (AH14)



First Alaska Black Bear

(Bruce Rowe OC - WI)

"Back up the boat, there's a bear right there," a couple of us whispered. Randy, the guide, backed the boat up and pulled up to a shoreline that had huge, sharp rocks that we had to climb on to on that point to see the bear. The first one out of the boat was the guide with his binos. We followed as close as we could without rushing and falling into the water. We snuck up on the rocks and glassed the bear that was feeding on the grass that had just started to grow in Alaska. The guide said, ". . . bear looks good. I think we should shoot him." Ray, my Dad, moved into position on a rock with the guides pack under the gun and tried to get as much of the gun on the ground as possible as it was about a 200 yard shot to the bear. The bear continued to feed and moved around on the shore line. Ray readied his gun and as the bear presented the shot, the .325 short mag filled the air, the bear rolled all the way over and without missing a step started to run out of site. We talked about the shot for a short time and went back to the boat, loaded up the boat again and drove to where he had shot the bear. We didn't need to look long. He fell only about 30 yards from where he was shot; a beautiful long-haired, black bear with no rubbings on it and huge paws with hair still between the toes. Randy, the guide, said he would go over 6'6" and had about a 17 inch head. A trophy bear is what he called it. He said you would be crazy to pass on a bear of this size and with this wonderful of hide. So in an instant, Ray's hunt was over on the 1st night. This was his first black bear and this was very exciting for all of us.

The hunt continued the next day with no sightings of bear, but we saw some of the most beautiful country in the world. I told Randy, the guide, that the trip is so much about seeing this wonderful place called Alaska. He agreed.

The 3rd day came with high expectations and not to be disappointed. We went for a skiff ride through the ice fields to the glacier and into a lake called Glacier Lake. The water was really a funny color blue and there was ice floating around in the lake. Randy had seen some really nice bear on the shoreline of the lake. There were no bear on the lake shore that day but it

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of the surrounding valley. Seeing Blackbuck, Rusa and Axis from the lodge chased away our jet lag as well. It was time to find the Land Rovers and start hunting!

Our hunting forays were exceptional for a number of reasons. We were there to hunt but we were there for the whole experience as well. Red Stag beckoned us at different times but were put on hold as we marveled at Kangaroos and Kookaburras. From a harvest perspective the girls took three management stags while the true trophies were recognized in the journals each of us carried. The sunrises and sunsets, the family of the outfitter, the water buffalo that turned towards us out of curiosity and were immediately given great respect not to mention the variety of animals, the lodge facility, and the accents of our hosts and the appreciation of being fortunate enough to experience this event as a family.

As the end of our hunt came to a close, we shook hands and gave hugs with our new Australian friends and family. It was time to say good bye to the hunting and hello to touring. We switched camo for tourist clothes and headed towards the ocean. I have to say that the opportunity to experience a trip that provides such an excellent hunting option combined with what the country has to offer is something any family would remember for a lifetime. Australia can do that for you and what a ride it is. Literally from looking through your scope one day to snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef the next. Rainforest tours, Koala Bears and more Kangaroos to a Croc show... Australia has it all.

This potential for a trip like this to have something for everyone is real. From hunting, to shopping, dining, snorkeling, educational trips, touring rainforests, history, vineyards to munching on a "Roo Burger", there literally is something for everyone. Australia beckons...don't pass it up!

For more information about AUH2, contact your Outdoor Connection franchise owner.

COSTA RICA'S ZANCUDO BAY

3 DAY/4 NIGHT - PACKAGES STARTING AT \$1,495

INCLUDES: TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM LODGE FROM SAN JOSE, MEALS, ACCOMMODATIONS, GUIDE, BOAT, MOTOR, TACKLE & GEAR, FISHING LICENSE AND BAIT.

CRF2

ARCHERY NEW BRUNSWICK BEAR & DEER

BEAR ONLY - SEPT. 14-26, 2009 \$1,800

BEAR/DEER COMBO - OCT. 5 -25, 2009 \$2,000

INCLUDES: TAGS, TAX, TROPHY FEES, MEALS, ACCOMMODATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM FORT ST. JOHN, B.C.

NBH3



Five Star Northern New Mexico Lodge

(Scott Wallin OC - NM)

Northern pike? Northern pike in New Mexico? Not only northern pike, but rainbow, brown and brook trout. Speaking of New Mexico you have to mention the elk, deer, Merriam's turkey, black bear (lots of color phases) and mountain lion.

This northern New Mexico lodge sits at 6,500 feet above sea level. The lodge is a two story building with a beautiful view of New Mexico's mesa's. All of the bedrooms are downstairs and just a few feet from the dining area. The interior of the lodge is wood with wildlife mounts though out. The rooms are also decorated with mounts and the rooms include coffee makers, microwaves, refrigerator, satellite TV and air conditioning.

The lodge manager is also an executive chef. He was employed by the Oklahoma Governor for eight years. The meals rival any up scale restaurant and you will not ever walk away hungry.

The wildlife manager is very passionate about his job and the health of the wildlife on the ranch. He is very knowledgeable about the wildlife, the ranch and the history of the area. He is also the main guide on most of the hunting and fishing trips.

The morning of our first day found us touring the "high country" of the ranch. The elevations here are between 9,500 and 10,000 feet above sea level. Three high country lakes are present with the largest being close to 20 acres in size and stocked with rainbow trout (keep only what you can eat during your stay). The largest lake has a cabin that will sleep 12-14 comfortably with one other lake with a cabin that will sleep eight. The cabins are very clean and have propane lights, heat, stove and refrigerators. A john boat is provided at each lake.. These lakes are all located within 45 minutes of the lodge. Secluded but easily accessible, and are great for family trip or a guys weekend away. You are on your own here, however a ranch employee will check on you daily to help ensure your safety.

We also dropped back down in elevation and toured three small lakes each under three acres in size. These lakes do not have cabins but a shade shelter is present.

After lunch on our first day we fished just a short distance from the lodge at the "lagoons". The lagoons are a series of four small ponds that hold Northern pike (catch and release only). Even in the high winds that were experienced during this day, a couple of 4-5 pound pike were caught with some larger hooked but not landed (Due to New Mexicans' not being used to landing a fish with teeth).

Our second and last morning found us again at the lagoons trying to fish before the winds came up. Several pike were caught in the 24"-30" range. With OC's corporate representative, Angie Merkel leading with the largest catch of the day until the last cast of the day. On the last cast of the day by Hal Graff (OC IL), the caught 36" 12 pound pike.

Just as a note, the state record pike was caught only a couple of hundred yards from where Hal caught his!!



This is an operation that is dedicated to customer service. Customer service is practiced by the upper level management on down in how they treat their clients to the way they are dressed. The prices for the high mountain cabins are very reasonable.

Great price, secluded but easily accessible.

For more information about **NMHS/NMF1**, contact your Outdoor Connection franchise owner.



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wasn't long and we were in another bay where a black bear came out to feed in the tall grass and we had the opportunity to watch him. He was a good bear, but the outfitter took out his spotting scope and could see a rub mark on the bear so we passed on it. That was the 4th bear we had seen in 3 days. There still time to hunt that day so we moved into a bay that had granite walls and waterfalls that towered hundreds of feet in the air. We drove slowly glassing for bear and at about 10:30PM we spotted a bear that the outfitter needed a better look at. We drove to shore, the spotting scope came out again and he looked for a while and said he felt it was a good bear, so we loaded up the boat again and started to drive very slowly in the boat toward the bear. We parked the boat and waded to shore and moved along the tree line to a rock that presented a good rest. The bear was acting very strange. He was standing on his hind legs and pawing at the pine trees on the wood line, then he would disappear for awhile and then would come back out. I got laid down with a .300 ultra mag for the shot. When the bear came back out, the outfitter said he was 252 yards away. When the bear turned broadside, the shot rang out and the bear fell in a creek and jumped up and landed in the pine needles by the creek. We walked to where he disappeared and found him 20 yards from where I shot him. Success at 11:30PM! The hour of the kill still seems strange to me now that I am home and back on schedule. Ray and myself had killed a beautiful Alaskan black bear and these where our first black bear ever.

Everything on this trip went like clockwork and the experience of lodging on a boat and hunting with a skiff was unforgettable.

For more information about AH14, contact your Outdoor Connection franchise owner.

Alaska Coastal Brown Bear

(AH14)

WAS \$14,000 **NOW \$12,000**

10 day, fully guided, 1X1 Alaska peninsula brown bear hunt. These hunts are conducted from fly-in, heated tent camps which are situated bordering the McNeil Refuge & Katmai Preserve in GMU's 9A & 9B.

3 Spots Open, Each Date:

Sept. 20 - 29, 2009

Oct. 1 - 10, 2009

Oct. 12 - 21, 2009

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The Worldwide Hunting and Fishing Authority™

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GREG RAY

Tulsa, OK

918-407-2586

g_ray@cox.net

www.fishandhunttheworld.com

Outdoor Connection's Partners



Tracks is composed by
Outdoor Connection, Inc
424 Neosho
Burlington, KS 66839

Tracey Splechter, Editor
Marc Glades, President

Questions or feedback?
Contact: tracks@outdoor-connection.com
<http://www.outdoor-connection.com>

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