

NorthCountry News

\$3.00



Alaskan Brown Bear



New Zealand Fallow Deer



South American Red Stag

North Country News

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Bow Hunting South America

By Paul Korn from A1— Archery in Hudson, WI

When attending last year's SCI North Country Bow Hunter's fundraiser, I knew very little about Argentina. After a short discussion with Eric Merideth (of Rocket Broadheads) that evening, he convinced me item #32 on the silent auction was a hidden treasure. I ended up winning the bid on this eight-day South American Water Buffalo hunt. The donor of the hunt was Gonzalo Llambi of Cerri Indio Safaris. His 25,000-acre family estate is located near Tandil, Argentina (four hours south of Buenos Aires). Immediately after the auction, the planning started and I decided to go this year. Good friend and A-1 Archery employee, Jim Obermueller, joined me for the hunt this past May 2004.

Gonzalo Llambi is a professional in agriculture science and a professional hunter. He is a seasoned outdoorsman who has been hunting since a very young age. Gonzalo's hunts are conducted on his family's estate. His family is the owner of Acelain; an old Estancia created in 1902 by his great grandfather, Enrique Larrea, a famous writer. In the early 1900's his great grandfather facilitated the planting of over 1,100 acres with trees on the estate. The land is mainly flat farmland so the addition of trees helped to change the landscape. In addition, a man-made lake was created in the path of a small river. The land is now breath taking with the incorporation of trees, water, and surrounding cropland.



In 1993 Gonzalo created a hunting lodge from the first original building that was erected on the estate in the early 1900's. Gonzalo, as he advertises, was our personal guide for the hunt. His staff was very professional and his operation is well run. Our hunt was conducted similar to an African Safari. Daily fees are paid for each day of hunting and trophy fees are paid for animals that are harvested or wounded. The accommodations were

also similar to what I have experienced in South Africa. Daily amenities included three full meals, new bedding, and clothes laundered. The biggest difference, from what I have experienced and heard about Africa, was the great rapport between the outfitter and the staff of trackers, skinners, cleaners, cooks, and helpers. Everybody worked as a team, got along well, and joked with each other. This really made the hunt much more enjoyable for Jim and I. Our hunt was very successful as we took several big game animals while experiencing the hospitality of South America.



The hunt started off with excitement right away on the first evening. We didn't have much time after our trip from Buenos Aires. However, right before dark, Jim and I set up about 35 yards apart in a draw that led to a feeding area. Jim connected with a perfect shot on a beautiful Black Buck to start off the trip. The next morning found us after Water Buffalo on the plains in grassy fields. After several blown stalks, we were finally able to get within 50 yards. I scored with a nice vital shot and had my first South American trophy. During this eight-day stretch, we hunted Red Stag, Wild Boer, Feral Goat, Black Buck, Water Buffalo, Capybara, Samoli Ram, Axis Deer, and predators.

Going in May really put us past the rut for all the animals so the method of spot and stalk was used to harvest most of our game. Almost every afternoon we sat on the edge of fields for Axis Deer, Red Stag, and Black Buck to try and ambush them. After dark we hunted for predators, Puma, hogs, and Capybara. The method used was to spotlight large crop fields from several hundred yards away and locate game feeding in the fields. Then we would shut the vehicle off and walk in the dark towards the animal. A small flashlight was used sparingly to help guide us towards our target. The first time we did this was for Jim's Feral Hog and it was an experience that is hard to explain. It was pitch dark, we were walking in

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soybeans, and all I could see was the silhouette of Jim's head in front of me. I kept thinking this will never work—I bet the hog ran away long time ago. Minutes later Gonzalo turns on his flashlight and slowly scans the field. There is the hog about 50 yards away feeding. I really could not believe he was still there and unaware of our presence. We walked another 20 yards and Gonzalo whispered "get ready". Jim drew his bow, Gonzalo turned on the small light and I watched a perfect 30-yard shot to the boiler room! Wow—the hog squealed, ran a big circle, and died before our eyes. Hunting like that was really exciting and different from anything I had ever done.

I also killed a hog and Capybara using this same hunting tactic at night. A Capybara is the largest rodent in the world and rarely comes out unless it's dark. These animals are amazing as they look like a large beaver with a short stubby tail and webbed back feet. The Capybara that I took was feeding in a grass field by the water's edge and we spotted him from about a half-mile away. We simply walked towards the Capybara in the dark, checked a few times with the light, and got within 25 yards for a killing shot. My Capybara weighed over 100 pounds and has a skull that green scores 15-5/8 SCI inches—talk about a super-sized rodent!



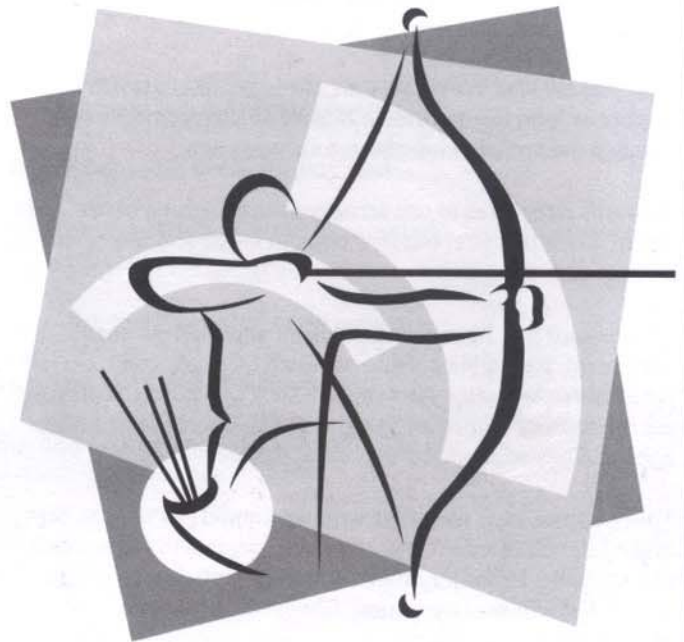
Since we were done hunting big game, we got in on some bonus action on the last day and experienced some Argentina wing shooting. We borrowed a couple of shotguns from Gonzalo and headed to fly zones between roosting and feeding areas. I couldn't believe the action as the doves and Wood Pigeons flew in small groups non-stop for the most part of the day. We shot pretty much steady for several hours until our shoulders were bruised from the kick of the gun. By the end of the day we had over 300 pigeons and 50 doves!

If anyone is interested in hunting Argentina, I would highly recommend Cerri Indio Safaris. Gonzalo has an excellent operation and is also a sponsor to our club with the donation of this hunt.



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