

## BUSH STALKING FOR DUMMIES

A few years back I wrote this and seen as though someone asked what definition of bush hunting is...I sort of feel its relevant...  
we have some absolute bush stalking machines on this forum...even if they do use EBRGs they still manage an animal most times they go out....  
If you ever get a chance to go out with one of these gurus...shut up and watch/listen and you will learn lessons learned the hard way over years.  
Hope it helps someone trying to work out how to get the first deer or even a nudge in right direction for a tops /open country hunter.  
30 years of doing it and I'm still learning.  
Milky

Posted: Sat Apr 23, 2016 6:28 pm

After having a great week stalking recently it occurred to me that the method I used/use may be of interest to others and if I can convey it correctly a learning aid for new hunters...a big ask but here goes anyway.

First up you cant drink whiskey from a bottle of wine.  
If there are no deer in an area you are wasting your time and energy doing a full on stalk of barren ground, find an area where you have fresh sign eg poohs on the ground, foot prints/spoor, tree rubbing or evidence of grazing and THEN get into mouse mode.

WIND is vital or fatal depending on your ability to read it, a red deer has been said to smell you from over a mile away, so hunting with a breeze blowing up ya jacksee is not going to be very productive (besides which those baked bean farts will linger longer) there are different ways to find/check the wind, wet your finger and hold it up to find which side gets cold, shave hair from behind your ears to feel breeze, powder puff bottle, piece of cotton tied to your barrel (Suz??? was this why your lot added feather to bow???) a quick flick of the trusty Bic flick..cigarette lighter to you non down unders, drop hand full of leaves or dust.

Which ever method you use hunting into the wind is best as it keeps your scent away from quarry, you CAN hunt across the wind eg sidle around contour of land with a breeze blowing uphill (thermal breeze on sunny day will do this) but you will be scenting up area above you so eyes need to cover area in front and above you well, main area to find game will be below you, which leads nicely onto how to see game.

I put up a poll on another forum recently to see how other people got a 100% positive ID of an animal (due to recent hunting accidents)  
Biggest % of guys use 3 or more things to do this.  
personally I normally spot colour. I'm looking for/movement/horizontal solid line or

something just "out of place" which then gets double checked....and triple checked if ticking boxes at that stage.

Seeing head and neck of live animal doing LIVE animal things is MY PERSONAL final box to tick off.

with modern electronic callers getting better and good old cow horn magic in right hands sound is OUT as an ID factor...other than to start process of checking something out, that includes roaring/croaking/bugling and general moving around noises like brushes rustling, foot falls or antler rattling.

They are great to get your attention and focus it but not enough to tell what it is you are hearing...it could be a human..in fact it is a human until you can 100% tell otherwise..right that's enough on that one FOR NOW.

OK so we are walking along with wind right and some fresh deer sign on ground...but HOW are you walking???? A heavy booted plod just wont do old chap...wont do at all.

Take a break from keyboard, go outside in bare feet and walk across ashfelt/tarseal/stoney road, you will find that you cant walk heel toe heel toe any more as it hurts.

So you will by default start to place your foot flat..well sort of flat, outside of foot touches first then rolls down till big toe hits, your foot is down then your weight goes to that foot and then and only then will back foot move and repeat sequence. same go for crossing a river, each foot goes down and solidly grounded BEFORE other one moves.

When I'm in hot sign its 3 steps then stop and look....another 3 and look again etc etc etc if you in really hot sign and think you going too slow well Mates SLOW DOWN SOME MORE and then you are still going too fast.

deer live there all the time, if you sitting in lazy boy chair in your lounge reading a book or eating a ham & cheese sammie and some one walks into your house you would know it straight away wouldn't you????? same goes for a deer except they know if they not really alert they will get one way trip on back of ute.

OK so we have:

1. find area of sign
2. wind
3. walk slow

Feeding area, sleeping/bedding area or moving between the two are main places to find your quarry

food is where you find it bedding will be warm with light breeze to carry scent to bedded deer and be close to heavy cover...usually.

Down here down-under we have warm faces on North side of ridges being best bets as warmer = more plant growth and better bedding areas.

That will do for now...have a read and feel free to ask questions and Ill have a think on what

Iv'e missed  
clothing and footwear come to mind.

Clothing, well if you have the \$\$\$\$\$ Swazi is really good stuff, made by a hunting man for hunters, tested and it works and lasts but as said it costs, me I'm a cheap bugga and have a real mix n match wardrobe of polar fleece garments from all over the place, normally bought cheap by SWMBO on trade me auction site.

In warm weather its polyprop short tights (think above the knee long Johns) with rugby shorts over top..to protect/preserve modesty and usually a polyprop top or fleece T shirt. In colder whether we "layer up" eg keep adding layers till we warm enough and top it with a shell layer

if in the bush quietness is paramount so fleece is king.

back in the day it was the good old Swanni or Lambs woolen coat but now fleece wins out as its so much lighter and dries quicker.

A hat of some sort, fleece gloves and a fleece neck warmer top off my list of clothes.

Boots are a personal thing, lace up rubber gumboots win hands down for me.

After years of sore red feet from hunting in leather boots my Brother got me onto Bullers and I haven't looked back since. I've got a reasonable pair of leather hunting boots and they do the odd day trip in hot weather but gummies are the shit in the bush, really easy to step quietly and they grip well so you don't spend half the day falling on ya bum and other half picking ya self up again.

On my last trip I would find area with sign and follow any spoor/marks present if wind was right or just wander along SLOWLY in direction of travel taking path of least resistance picking the deer trail where possible.

Rifles are again personal choice but for my money big n slow beats light and fast projectile wise (that said I've hunted successfully with 223rem)

A good old 308 is still hard to beat.

But scopes are a different matter your 4x16 ziess or 8x24 might be the ducks nuts out in open country where long shots from rest are the norm but in the scrub the lower the magnification the better with 4x being MOST you want and lower still is better. My rifles wear vari-powers with 3x as lowest and another rifle a fixed 4x.

I tried mates smit n bender and it was plurry hopeless, even on lowest power the field of view was like peering down a drain pipe!!!!

He who moves the least sees the most!

The early bird gets the worm!