



**Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.**  
Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia

## RIDGE Newsletter June 2014

To the members,

When I started writing this, I was sitting in a spike camp, with finally a chance to write a newsletter. It was the 9<sup>th</sup> of June and as Judy and I sat on a far hill on one of the RIDGE ballot block that afternoon, we listened to the stags roaring and watched a big 4x4 roar and follow a mob of over 20 hinds. If you are scratching your head about now, you are not alone.

Although we had some stags follow the rule-book and start to roar in late March, they soon found that the hinds were too low in condition from the previous months of drought conditions and were more interested in regaining their health than any “romantic” interludes. (hard to describe a red stag as romantic!) This caused us big problems for a Ballot which is organised months ahead as we simply didn’t/couldn’t get the timing right. The best roaring we heard was after our ballot normally ends and as I mentioned, it is just winding up now.

For all those hunters that travelled a long way, put up hard earned dollars and time, not to mention the effort they used to try and “walk one up”, I can only extend our apology on part of AWCA, the RIDGE executive and the landholders for the poor start to the season. This said, I must commend the majority of our members on their attitude, their lack of complaints and their successes which overall, made this still a very successful and enjoyable season for most. Those that did complain (only a few) might be better taking up lawn bowls or something less demanding than deer hunting as you sometimes simply have to take the good with the bad.

With Kurt, Esther and Brent unable to come back and help this year with the ballot, and a record number of last minute “no shows”, it was a very hectic season for Judy and I. We did our best but that was not good enough for some so now from an AWCA view-point and in the best interests of our landholders, we will be changing a few things for our 20<sup>th</sup> Ballot season, 2015. We will work with the RIDGE executive to improve the efficiency of the whole process, rewarding long-standing members for their support as well as redefining the rules and restrictions.

What just a few of our ballot hunters fail to recognise, is that neither Judy and I or the landholders **have to run this ballot, we actually run it because we believe in the system and recreational hunting.** Other options such as those proposed by Government such as eradication or pet meat/HC shooting are there but we choose to remain with this system. For me personally, it has meant no red deer hunting in NZ, no hog deer hunting in Victoria, no fallow deer hunting in Tasmania and no Wapiti hunting in Fiordland as I have been so tied down with the ballot for 20 years.

When I was critical of a few hunters for leaving gates open during the ballot (which caused huge issues for the landholders), instead of a simply apology, we received criticism for our service to members. Not digging a toilet hole, not collecting their firewood, a rattling sheet of tin on a roof etc were our sins and we have taken these comments as a complete slap in the face. I ask you all to consider what you would do



## Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.

Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia

---

if placed in the same situation and either support the few or support us. The future of the ballot as it stands is now in the hand of members.

### **Late Newsletters**

I must apologise for the delayed newsletter after sending out a Newsflash in May and promising the newsletter in a week. The ongoing saga of the wild deer issue has robbed spare time from me lately with over 20,000 words written within carefully detailed letters to MP's just in the past few months as well as a number of meetings. With our secretary Gary absolutely tied down due to a serious injury suffered by his better half Diane, he has been unable to find much time either as he has been honing his nursing skills for months now. We hope things are getting better on the home front mate.

### **Promotions**

Judy and I have been editing footage for up to 20 hours per week (usually late at night) in an attempt to improve the promotion of the Ballot, RIDGE, QDM and our personal business AWCA. The executive have been very supportive and helpful with this and we hope to inform you all very soon of the fruits of our endeavours.

### **May RIDGE Meeting and Hunter Education Weekend**

#### **2014 Red Deer Ballot**

As usual it was great to see so many junior hunters attend with their parent/s. Kate Pianta did a sterling job keeping up with the brisk pace of her Dad Justin and was a pleasure to have around camp. Stuart Robben took his first stag, a mighty old 3x4 while hunting with Dad Greg, well done mate. Oscar Ortiz Jnr was up with me for a few weeks and was a big help around camp. When he was joined later by his brother Archie, sister Jessie and folks Julie and Oscar, it made for a great atmosphere around camp for our QDMA visitors, Willis and Kathy McGee from Alabama.

Willis hunted hard with me to take a very nice forked nine pointer (9yrs old) a very respectable fallow stag and an 11yr old cull 2x3. With Kathy and Judy providing support and encouragement, their visit was action packed as we got hunters into their blocks, helped out others where time allowed and hunted hard ourselves. Willis is a seasoned Whitetail deer and Turkey hunter back home and a strong supporter of QDM principles so our efforts through RIDGE were fully appreciated. We look forward to having them back again one day.



**Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.**  
Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia

---







**Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.**  
Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia





**Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.**  
Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia

---







**Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment Inc.**  
Supporting Sustainable Deer Management in Australia

---



Best regards,

Clark McGhie  
RIDGE President.