

# THE JUNIOR SHOOTER

AN INTRODUCTION FOR JUNIOR SHOOTERS & HUNTERS

Issue 11



**WIN**  
Wolf-Eyes pen & Year of  
the Hunter cap packs



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## Editorial

**Bob Green**  
SSAA National President



**W**elcome to Issue 11 of *The Junior Shooter*. We kick off this issue with an overview of the different laws and regulations required for junior hunters in each state and territory. Just like firearm laws, hunting rules vary depending on which state you are in, so read up, ask questions and make sure you do the right thing in your area.

On page 6, SSAA and Olympic Games shooter Will Godward shares some tips for shooting from the off-hand position - a position that is tricky to master, but is common to many rifle shooting competitions, as well as useful for in the field.

Young hunter Matt Fox talks about a successful rabbit hunting trip he recently went on with his father. Matt's story demonstrates how effective hunting is for wildlife management, especially when done in a team environment, and how enjoyable an activity it is.

Enjoy this issue of *The Junior Shooter* and remember, if you have young family members or friends who are interested in learning more about recreational shooting, pass on this newsletter and encourage them to check out the SSAA's juniors-only webpage at [www.ssaa.org.au/juniors](http://www.ssaa.org.au/juniors)

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# Hunting in your state and territory

by Media Officer Rachael Andrews

**I**n 2013, the SSAA is celebrating the Year of the Hunter and talking about what important roles our hunters - including our junior hunters - play in Australian society. Because firearm laws change between the states and territories, we've had a close look at the legislation and taken the mystery out of what you can do in the field.

## Western Australia

In WA, the laws for juniors are pretty simple. As long as you are supervised by a person licensed for the firearm you are using, you're allowed to go hunting. The state does not require a fee or permit for hunting, but does require you to have permission from the landowner of the property you are shooting on.

Unlike other states, WA does not name any specific 'game' species with seasonal restrictions, meaning feral animals including rabbits, foxes and pigs can be taken at any time.

## Northern Territory

In the NT, juniors can shoot at a target shooting range under a Junior Club Licence if they meet a number of requirements and are aged between 12 and 17 years.

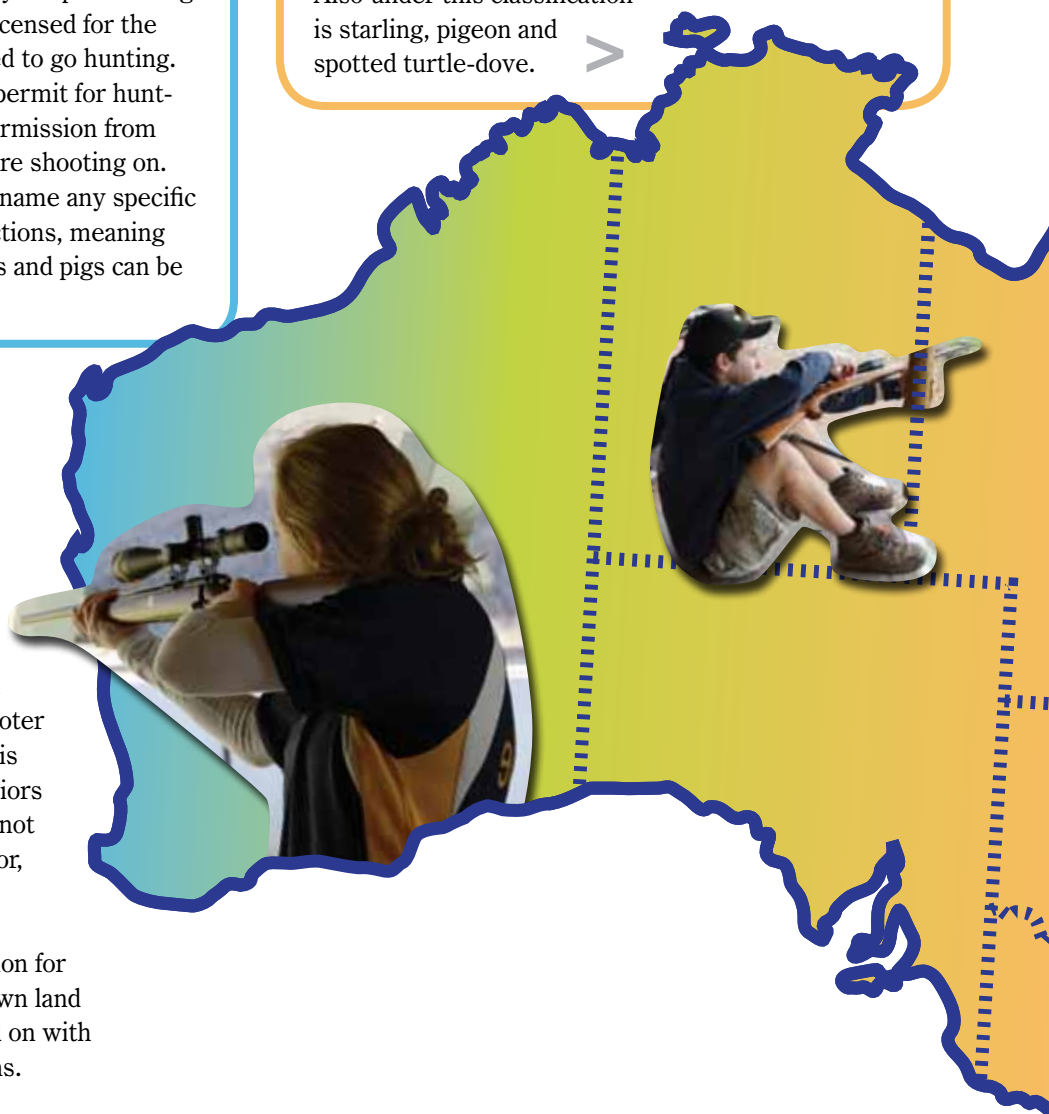
However, regulations are a little stricter for junior hunters. Those aged between 12 and 17 years can hunt under the supervision of a licensed shooter and will be classed as a 'nominee' by this person. There is a maximum of two juniors per licensed shooter, and if the adult is not the parent or legal guardian of that junior, a parental approval form must also be completed.

The NT requires landowner permission for hunting, and there are also areas of crown land and Aboriginal lands that can be hunted on with the appropriate permits and permissions.

## South Australia

In SA, juniors are classed as being between 10 and 17 years and can hunt under the supervision of an adult with a firearms licence. Hunting is allowed on private land in South Australia with the permission of the landholder. Juniors are also able to apply for waterfowl permits to hunt game species such as quail and duck during specified open seasons.

In SA, hunting laws allow for year-round hunting of 'feral' animals including goat, pig, camel and deer. Also under this classification is starling, pigeon and spotted turtle-dove. >



## Queensland

Queensland's firearm laws allow juniors between 11 and 17 years to hold a Minor's Licence and hunt while supervised by a licensed adult. Once you meet these requirements, you are able to hunt under supervision and with permission on private property.

Animals including dingo, feral cats, hog and fallow deer can be hunted at any time in Queensland and there are no species covered by a specified hunting season or bag limit.

## New South Wales

In NSW, a Minor's Firearm Permit allows juniors between 12 and 17 years to go target shooting and hunting. This means that under the supervision of someone holding a firearms licence, you can hunt recreationally. However, you must also have the correct permissions. In NSW, hunting can occur on private property with landholder consent, and in declared state forests and on crown land if you hold the relevant permit known as a Restricted NSW Game Hunting Licence.

Hunters in NSW can take a number of animals year-round including cats, goats and foxes, while some 'game' species such as deer can only be taken at certain times of the year.

## Australian Capital Territory

In the ACT, firearm laws allow juniors between 12 and 17 years to hunt on a Minor's Firearm Licence. Hunting in the ACT is limited to private properties with permission to hunt from the landowner.

Animals classified as 'feral', including goat, fox, rabbit and cat, can be taken at any time in the ACT.

## Victoria

Victorian hunters aged between 12 and 17 years can apply for a Junior Firearm Licence and are able to use firearms, either on the range or in the field for hunting, providing they are under the supervision of a licensed adult and the correct hunting permissions have been gained from the relevant landowner.

Hunters in Victoria can take 'pest' species such as feral dogs, pigs and goats at any time, and deer and waterfowl on specified open seasons with bag limits. There are tests for these hunting seasons and juniors can take part.

## Tasmania

Tasmanian juniors are able to hunt under a Minor's Permit when aged between 16 and 17 years only. The Minor's Permit requires that you are under the supervision of a licensed adult when handling firearms, and parental permission is required if the supervisor is not the guardian of the minor.

Tasmania's hunting laws allow 'pest' animals such as rabbits, hares, foxes, pigs and goats to be taken at any time, and a number of 'game' species to be taken during a specified open season.



## Get yourself in the field

Your SSAA state or territory branch can help advise you on how to get your relevant permits to hunt and shoot in your area, while SSAA's Licensing & Security website includes the contact details for your state's firearm registry. For more information, visit [www.ssaa.org.au/licensing-security](http://www.ssaa.org.au/licensing-security)

# My first hunting trip with Dad

by Senay Wilson

**M**y excitement was building as we drove out of the driveway for our five-hour drive west. I was hoping my first hunting trip with Dad would allow me to shoot my very first feral pig. The rifles were all packed safely in the back. Mine is a .222. Grandad passed it down to Dad and Dad has now passed it on to me. With Federal Premium Power-Shok 50-grain bullets bought for my 14th birthday, I was ready. I couldn't wait to load my rifle and go on a real hunt with Dad.

We were an hour into our drive west when we met up with our friends who were joining us on our trip. This was Josh's and Lara's first big trip west. The excitement levels were now through the roof. After a quick hello to our friends, my brother and I jumped back in the four-wheel drive, ready for the rest of the drive.

Four hours later, we finally hit dirt road and a gate entering the property. We were all super excited and happy to finally be at the property. My dad Mark and his mate Ben were telling us kids where all the good spots were to find pigs. They'd been to the property many times before, so they had a pretty good idea where we might find some pigs later that night when we went spotlighting.

We finally reached our camping spot and set up camp. Everything was now unpacked, so we were ready to have a wander around the property and check out some of the wildlife. Dinnertime quickly arrived and soon after, it was dark. It was time for some spotlighting!

On the first night, we discovered there wasn't much out. This was a little disappointing, but we still had lots of fun. The second night, we saw a medium-sized pig that Dad nearly got a crack at, but sadly, it got away.

On the third night, Dad decided we should try one of the far paddocks where there was a big cattle feeder. It was my 'time to shine' and I was ready with my Brno Fox .222. It was loaded, but had the safety set. We saw a mob of 10 to 13 pigs of different sizes. Dad put the pedal to the metal and chased down the pigs. They quickly scattered across the paddock and Dad was yelling "Left pig! Left pig!" as he hit the brakes.

I spotted a big boar at the back left of the mob, so I quickly rested the .222 on the truck's mirror, looked through my scope, pushed the safety off and squeezed the trigger. At first, I thought I'd missed it. It was a difficult shot because



Senay Wilson with her Brno Fox .222 rifle, top, which she used to secure her first pig. Her family and friends, who were also on the trip, were obviously pleased with her achievement too.



he was on the run and it was under spotlight, but then Dad pointed out that I had shot the pig in the hindquarters and he was doing 'circle work' before he fell over. I couldn't believe it - I'd just shot my first feral pig! I was so happy and so proud of myself. You couldn't wipe the smile off my face.

I put the safety back on my rifle and we all quickly jumped out of the four-wheel drive to check out my big boar. Dad quickly grabbed the camera and took a few photos for me. After all, this was my first pig!

The weight of the pig was around 60kg. I couldn't believe all the hard work I'd put in at the rifle range over the past few years had finally paid off. However, shooting targets isn't the same as shooting a feral pig. Words couldn't explain just how happy and excited I was. I was shaking like a leaf from all the excitement and adrenaline running through my body. What a rush!

My dad had a big grin on his face too and said he was very proud of me. I couldn't have wished for a better night. It was the most awesome experience I've ever had and one I'll remember forever. This was exactly the experience I'd hoped for when planning my first hunting trip with Dad.

# Shooting from the

by Will Godward

**S**ince the beginning of sports shooting, the standing/offhand position has been the most commonly used but also the hardest of all shooting positions. In military situations, the offhand position allows for the greatest agility. It takes critical time for the soldier to position themselves correctly and move to another location. In the field, standing can be the only option time allows you to take the shot, and it needs to be done with the same accuracy as lying down.

In the Olympic Games shooting events, four out of five rifle finals are shot in the offhand position. Why? Because it is the hardest position to master and has the greatest variables. Being a strong offhand shooter will give you confidence and an advantage over your fellow competitors. Whether you are shooting Air Rifle competition at 10m, or a centrefire Rifle Metallic Silhouette event at 500m, the same concepts and principles apply.

## The shotgun position

The shotgun position is most commonly used and seen in the field. This position uses the most muscles, with around 80 per cent of the weight of the rifle supported by the forearm. It's a hold that is very effective for agile movement, which is why it's used in Olympic shotgun competitions and not an Olympic rifle position.

Using this position requires the shooter to grip more in the forehand and on the pistol grip. The shoulders are usually almost square to the target, which is needed to counteract the weight of the rifle. Your pistol grip elbow is also at a 90-degree angle. This is needed to allow for agile movement because your muscle tension is higher because you are holding the rifle. Your feet are positioned shoulder-width apart and about a 45-degree angle to the target. It is almost like a boxing stance, without the need to be light on the feet.

An Olympic event where this position was most effective was Running Target, which requires you to be very upright. The competitor needs to be able to rotate and track a target at a high level of precision. The key to this position is a strong core, which is needed to keep the shooter steady but agile in the upper body.

This style can translate directly to the hunting field, as it allows the hunter to follow any running target animal through their sights, keeping a solid body position and only moving the upper body to keep on target. If you were to use a position where the forearm was closer to your body, the muscles would have a slower reaction time, counteracting any errors in your hold. However, this position is extremely beneficial if you are looking for precision in a static competition.

**Practising the offhand position and returning to the basics of balance every now and then will help you improve your scores and win your competitions.**



# offhand position



## **Target shooting position**

The target shooting position is, as the name suggests, the most effective position to achieve high scores in a static competition. The goal is to create a body structure to support the rifle, being as still as possible. It requires using the least amount of muscle tension as possible and relies on your bone structure for support. A strong core stability is also needed to keep the structure in place and being able to endure many hours in the same position. This depends on what discipline you are shooting, but being able to stand in the same position for almost two hours without feeling fatigued is the key to high scores.

In this position, you are supporting the rifle on your bone structure. To do this, you need to have the forearm elbow on your hip facing the target. If you are unable to place it on your hip, the side of your body will work, but it uses about 15 per cent more muscle tension in the forearm. The key point to this position is balance. All aspects need to be in balance, whether that is bone structure, muscle tension, breathing, rhythm or feet. Imagine a line coming back from your target. Position your feet standing exactly sideways to the target on the line, then imagine balancing on the line. This is a textbook position set-up. >

## Feet

For any new shooter, it is good to start with your feet about shoulder-width apart. As you develop as an offhand shooter, this can vary greatly. Some shooters have their feet very wide apart, which is seen more in the western world. This position gives a feeling of a lower centre of gravity, but you can lose the skill of adjusting quickly to your errors in your hold. It can also be hard to counteract wind against your body. Having your feet closer together, which has been successfully developed in Asian countries, produces some amazing results. This position works well, but it depends on your body makeup.

Overall, there will be a variance to your feet position, depending on your weight, height and feeling as you develop. The main thing to remember is to keep everything in balance. Once your feet are in line with the target, the rifle will sit directly over this line, creating a forward and back balance. This balance can be held and maintained by 'locking' your ankles and controlling the muscle tension in your feet, but mainly your toes. You should be able to feel the weight distributing across the balls of your feet, but the toes control the finer muscle movements. A good training technique is to practise holding the rifle barefoot. Your feeling on your feet muscles will be exaggerated and a better understanding will be gained of how to control them.

## Hips

The next key is your hips, where your main body weight is supported. Aligning your hips to the target is just as important to balance and shot release as the position of your feet. Over the years, you can have periods of low results. Sometimes, this could be caused by a small problem such as your hips, so always check the basics of your position.

## Hold

Holding the rifle with the forehand to produce high results can be achieved by different methods depending on your discipline. The most common position, and one I use effectively, is the palm position. This hand position allows for a large platform to support the rifle. This position is very effective when shooting heavier rifles, as it doesn't have an influence on the hand. Using this as a base, you can structure your fingers around the rifle, creating a grip feeling. Though, keep in mind that more tension in your grip will work against you under pressure.

If you are using a standard hunting rifle stock, you will need to work around this. Also, some disciplines such as Field Rifle or Rifle Metallic Silhouette have rules as to the dimensions of the rifle. In most cases in standard rifles, the forehand is not as low, which doesn't allow for a palm position.

## Head

To create a greater sense of balance, the rifle needs to be higher, which in turn, creates a balanced head position. This can be achieved by shooting on top of a fist or fingertips position. To achieve high results in this position, tension is needed to lock the wrist and fingers. If rules allow, a glove in the fist position can give comfort during your match. Overall, the forearm hand in offhand is like using a front bench rest bag. During the shot release, it needs to be totally motionless. The shooter only needs to use around 20 per cent muscle tension to hold the rifle in place and under perfect precision.







## Ears

The key to your balance comes from your ears, so even if the position of your feet and hips is perfect, it won't work if your head is not in balance. The head position needs to be in line with the target. Using the imaginary line again, imagine the line running directly down the centre of your face. Using this concept will give you an understanding of where your head needs to be. This can vary slightly depending on your comfort, but you can use this as a base.

## Eyes

During all of this, you need to be seeing the target clearly. Your eyes give the visual interpretation to how your skill of balance is. In everyday life, you use both eyes to create and control your balance. Then why wouldn't you keep them both open during shooting? Keeping both eyes open not only creates better balance, but it also reduces tension and fatigue across the face.

For beginners, keeping both eyes open makes them go a little cross-eyed or start seeing double. An easy way to fix this is by using a blinder to cover the non-shooting eye. I would not recommend an eye patch because this creates the same feeling as closing your eye and cuts out a very important part of balance - light. Instead, a piece of milk carton over your non-dominant eye is effective and big enough to cover the target, but small enough to allow light around the eye. Many shooting glasses companies offer a factory-made headband with a blinder.

## Stock length

Most shooters would have seen the textbook set-up for the length of pull distance between the butt of the rifle and the pistol grip. This distance in relation to the body of the shooter is very important. The finest motor skills to create your hold are developed here. The textbook set-up is to place the butt of the rifle in the inside of your elbow and allow your hand to rest on the pistol grip. The stock should be the right length so the hand rests naturally on the pistol grip, and your index finger on the trigger. You use this approach to not overstretch or cramp the muscles in your arm. If you do, then it can affect the most important part of the shot - the trigger release.

## Summary

Attaining the perfect trigger release is not going to be achieved by looking through the sights. The time spent preparing your body mentally and physically before the shot is the most important. You will see many of the top shooters taking longer to place their head on the cheekpiece. This is because they are making sure they are creating the perfect balance and feeling needed to fire the perfect shot.

To become a champion in the offhand position you need to work on the basics in your position and then trust that you have the perfect position for you to achieve your goals. Be confident in your abilities and take the shot!




## What to do with an old safe?

I recently upgraded my gun safe and before I had time to decide what I was going to do with the old one, my eldest grandson Jack, aged nine, said he wanted it put in the room the grandkids stay in when they visit us. It was then filled with all his Nerf guns and foam darts, with the magazines all safely stowed away in the 'ammo locker', just like the big boys.

It seems it is never too early to instill good safety habits into the next generation!

Trevor Smith, Vic



A long-range hit on the rabbit brought in a fox that also fell to the .22-250 Ackley Improved.

# Bunny heaven

by Matt Fox

**A**s we headed up to our favourite rabbit spot, we pondered whether the grass would be as long as it had been the time of our previous visit six months earlier. The rabbits were so well concealed that we had great difficulty seeing them even under the spotlight.

We arrived at 5.30pm and immediately unpacked and kitted up. We were walking among our favourite warrens by 6.30pm, shooting bunnies until sundown, before returning to camp for a drink and an early dinner. We broke out the spotlight and racked up many bunnies, making for a successful evening's hunt before turning in around 9.30pm. Our total was close to 30 for the afternoon and evening. This wasn't bad at all, we thought, and our hopes were high for a great three days ahead.

## An early start

We rose early with the obligatory cuppa around 4.50am, ready for a long walk around the rabbit warrens that litter almost every water-hole, spring and creek around this 11,000-acre cattle farm. The soils on the property are particularly sandy and the rabbits just love the ease with which they can dig and spread their warren systems underground. Almost every bare patch of soil revealed another active warren as Dad and I, together with our faithful old Labrador Bud, walked and took plenty of bunnies. Dad and I agreed that we never get tired of hunting; it's just a fabulous activity.

We then drove out the back to where we had been the night before and found that the rabbit activity was still high. Creeping around fallen trees and using rocks for cover, we went about plinking bunnies from various distances. We were using .17HMR rifles and boy, were they effective, as the rabbits simply don't flinch once hit! We shot many bunnies through nooks and crannies, under trees and in open fields. But then it came to 10am and the bunnies must have begun to feel the heat and went underground until the cool of the afternoon.

Dad and I decided to set up the 'artillery' for some longer distance bunny busting. This was going to be varminting at its best. Dad acquired a .22-250 Ackley Improved rifle built on a Sako L461 action with a Tobler No. 6 profile stainless steel fluted barrel. The rifle had been built by Tobler Senior some 10 years ago before the great gunsmith passed away.

We know of a unique location where we can set up in an elevated position and fire downrange at warrens at 150, 250, 300 and 550 yards out. Dad and I take turns at spotting while the other adjusts for range with the RR2 rangefinding reticle on the Nightforce 5.5x22 scope. We caught the last few bunnies basking in the sun just before shooting them on the tops of their warrens and then calling it a day. Because of the distance, the bunnies don't know where the rounds are coming from and get confused and run around stunned. That's when we can take many off one warren. Shooting from afar means our shots need to be even more considered, but with a precision rifle and correct weather conditions, we take a good number of rabbits.



**Ian Fox, left, and Matt Fox both used rifles chambered in .17HMR to reduce the local rabbit population.**



## Untouched hunting grounds

Our afternoon bunny hunting was as good as we have ever known. We found an untouched patch on the outskirts of the property and consistently shot bunnies for two hours. We started at the bottom of the valley and worked our way to the top. Behind every rock and alongside every blackberry bush was a bunny. We were careful to approach these obstacles quietly so as not to startle any targets. After the first hour, Dad and I had shot around 30 rabbits between us.

As we jumped back in the car and headed further up the hill, we noticed how remote and untouched this area was. The rabbits were not gun-shy, nor did they look as though they had ever been shot at before. I picked off seven from the passenger side window with the .17HMR, and as the silhouettes of bunnies began to slow, that was our signal to head out on foot.

I took the high approach over the rocks and down the far side, while Dad took the low approach with Bud to the bottom of the valley and worked his way up. During two hours of hunting, we had brought our bunny count to more than 60. Meeting back up, we went over our favourite shots. Dad had nailed a 70-yard standing head shot on one bunny in between fallen logs, and I had made three head shots in succession. This was turning out to be a memorable trip.

As we took cover, Dad began to blow on the fox whistle, which seemed to bring out more bunnies. As we moved back to the car, we shot 12 rabbits in the grass, then seven off one warren, then another three by the gate. It was beginning to feel like it was three years ago in the drought when the grass was low and there were bunnies everywhere.

## A night for the spotlight

As we looked up at the quarter moon, we could tell this was going to be a great spotlighting night. At 12C, the temperature was quite warm for 7pm and our hopes for getting a fox were high. However, after 30 minutes of driving, we were beginning to think that the foxes were all gone. But sure enough, just when you least expect it, there's a fox! I was out of the car in a flash and took him through the chest, dropping him on the spot. He was probably only 50 yards away, but the .17HMR did its job. We hung the fox in the nearest tree and continued on our way.

Soon, it began to be all about the foxes, and around every corner, we saw eyes after eyes. But the foxes were edgy; they weren't hanging around and most of them were pushing 200m. We swapped Dad's .17HMR for the .22-250 and were soon despatching the longer range animals. After identifying a fox, I turned off the car and the lights and sat quietly while Dad set up. I turned the light back on and instantly picked up eyes. Dad didn't hesitate: "Bang!" The shot went out and the fox went down. Dad paced it out to be 325m, which is not a bad quick-reaction shot from the hood of the car in the dark.

Later that night, we picked up more eyes and after taking aim with the .17, I noticed it was a feral cat. He was walking slowly over rocks, so I waited for the right time to shoot, then did so, downing him instantly. I hung him in a tree too.

Around the next bend, we saw another fox. It was Dad's turn to shoot, so I pulled up the Hilux swiftly and turned it broadside. The shot sounded like a good hit, but because the grass was so high, we were unable to find the animal. We decided we would come back later to retrieve it. We headed back home and by this time, it was 10.30pm and we were exhausted. Our day started at 4.45am and we were ready to get up early and do it all again tomorrow.

A man wearing a patterned cap and a light-colored shirt is holding a rifle. He is looking towards the camera. In the foreground, a white dog is looking at a piece of meat. The background is a grassy field with trees.

## Checking the equipment

As it approached dark, we turned on the spotlight and headed back towards the house. As we drove up the road, we caught a pair of eyes - a fox! I aimed up again, had him lined up, steadied myself then fired. Again, another miss! 'What was happening?' I stopped to think: I didn't flinch, I squeezed the trigger smoothly, everything was right. Dad said "Why don't you clean the rifle?" So that's what we did. Because of the high number of bunnies we'd taken in such a short time, the barrel was filthy!

We were soon back in the truck and onto some more bunnies. I knew the cleaning had done the trick because I shot 15 bunnies in a row. 'Wow, this patch is awesome!' I thought. 'We're definitely coming back here in the morning.' On our final gate before home, we had shot around 20 bunnies before Dad picked up another pair of fox eyes. I sidled to the window and leaned out of the car. 'Bang!' and down she went. As I went to retrieve the fox, Dad picked up another set of eyes on his side of the car and downed a fox of his own.

After a rough afternoon, we were rewarded with many bunnies and a pair of foxes. This was the result of not calling it quits when our aim was off and morale was down, but in reassessing the issue and finding a solution.

## Dawn success

We rose at 6am and were out at dawn, picking off rabbits sitting over their warrens and moving between the grass. We soon passed where Dad had shot the fox the night before, so jumped out of the truck and used Bud to track him down. Sure enough, there he was, exactly where Dad had shot him. Looking back up to the car, it was a longer shot than we'd thought. Dad paced it out to be 180m, but was a very good shot, as he hit the fox through the heart.

After two hours of shooting, we pulled over and decided to make some further adjustments on the .22-250. We set up a target on a tree at 100m and began shooting. We had to adjust the scope two clicks up to get the desired 1" high at 100m. After adjusting, we headed to a longer distance warren and Dad began consistently nailing rabbits at 250m. Dad took three and I took two. We then moved to a further warren and hit rabbits up to 385m. I thought this was impressive, as they're such a small target. The gun was now set and so were we!

## Hits...then misses

That afternoon, we headed back out to the same patch we shot at the previous day, but decided to work the opposite side. On approach, I spotted a fox hunting and quickly got into position. I took aim and fired, expecting a hit, but I cleanly missed and the shot went into the backdrop. 'What?' I was livid, having missed a sitter. 'I *must* have missed it,' I thought.

We moved on to the bunny patch and went to work, but the accuracy was down from the day before. I had cleanly missed my first three bunnies and was starting to doubt myself. It wasn't just me; Dad appeared to be in a form slump too. As we racked up only around 10 bunnies for the arvo, our confidence was shaken.

Ian Fox, his dog and the Ackley Improved made short work of this bunny at just more than 200m.

## A team effort

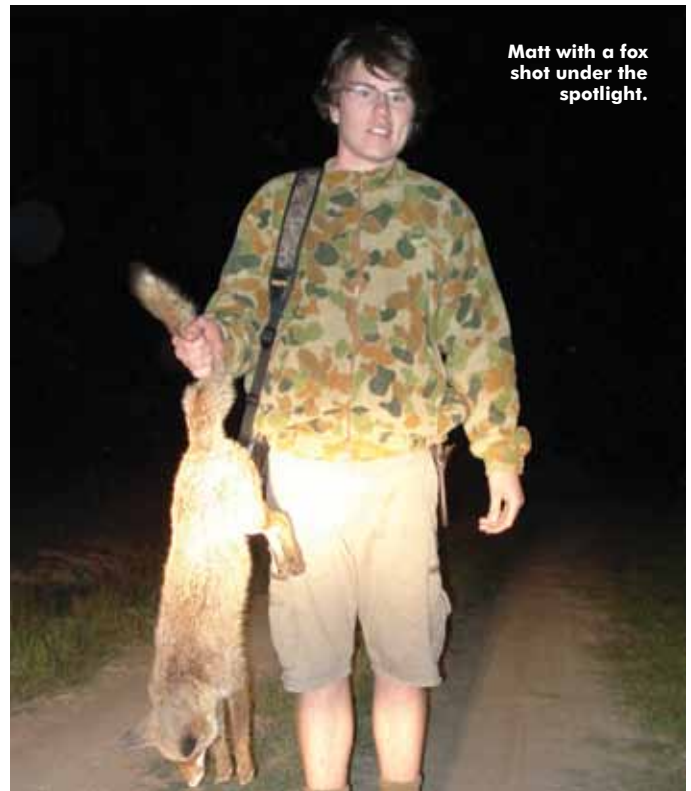
The next morning, we headed back out to the spot we had been shooting the night before. We walked up the creek bed, but from closer to home, enabling for a longer hunt. During that time, Dad and I shot around 15 bunnies each. Our trusty dog Bud was with us and he was loving it, retrieving and chewing on some of the dead bunnies and swimming in the creek beds. He had been quiet all morning until we bumped into each other, I accidentally stood on his paw and he let out a loud yelp. Then everything went eerily quiet.

Sure enough, just seconds after Bud had yelped, a fox bolted from a clearing not 70m away and ran over the hill. How unlucky was that! Well, we couldn't dwell on the past, so we headed back to the truck, shooting a couple more bunnies on the way. We decided to pack it in and head for home, ready to go out again that afternoon.

## Making memories

And what an afternoon it turned out to be. Just minutes into the hunt, I spotted a fox in the grass 50m away, sitting and staring up at the sky. I steadied the cross-hairs on his head and fired. 'Bang!' The 17-grain projectile went straight between his eyes and he was instantly downed. After a short cheer, we moved on to more warrens. This day was turning out to be the same as the day before. Dad and I lined up many rabbits sitting on warrens over various distances, the furthest being 120m and the closest being 30m. We were concealed behind a large fallen log, which also acted very nicely as a rest. We moved our way around the large dam and continued to shoot bunnies right through until 7.30pm when it got dark.

Our favourite moment of the afternoon was a well-articulated shot. We steadied ourselves on a large rock and looked at two bunnies 70 yards away, standing back to



Matt with a fox shot under the spotlight.

back, looking as though they were watching the sunset. As we agreed, we counted backwards from three and shot on one: Three, two, one, 'bang'! Dad hit the bunny on the left and I hit the one on the right and they both fell where they were standing. We collected them and skinned them up for Bud. That took our bunny count to more than 100 for the week, along with six foxes and one feral cat.

On our way back to the car, we were reliving the memories of the week - all those good times where we were shooting aces and having the greatest fun of our lives. We were father and son doing something that we both enjoy together.

# Juniors-only competition

Only junior SSAA members are eligible to enter. One entry per member. To enter, simply write your name, address and membership number on the back of an envelope and send it to:

May Junior competition  
SSAA Media & Publications  
PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061

or online at [www.australianshooter.com.au](http://www.australianshooter.com.au)

Winner randomly drawn June 10, 2013

## WIN 1 of 2 Wolf-Eyes pen & Year of the Hunter cap packs



Valued at \$65 each

Kindly donated by Wolf-Eyes and the SSAA  
[www.wolfeyes.com.au](http://www.wolfeyes.com.au)



# 2013 SSAA National Junior Challenge

If you're a SSAA junior shooter interested in taking part in a national shooting competition, get your nomination in for this year's SSAA National Junior Challenge. Hosted by SSAA ACT at Hector McIntosh Grove in Majura from July 5 to 7, the National Junior Challenge will include Rifle Metallic Silhouette, Scoped Air Rifle, 3-Positional and Field Rifle shooting events. There are national medals and prizes to be won, with aggregate medals for Under 15 and Under 18 junior classes.

There will be a pizza dinner for competitors on the Friday night and a spit roast dinner, along with games and social activities, on Saturday night. The canteen will offer light meals, snacks and drinks at the range each day.

The National Junior Challenge costs \$20 per event or the special price of \$60 for all four events. Just remember to get your nominations in by June 30! For nomination forms and more information, check out [www.ssaa.org.au/juniorsports](http://www.ssaa.org.au/juniorsports)



## Remembering my first fox

Hi, my name is Angus. I am nine years old. The first fox I saw, my dad said was a magpie. Well, it turned out he was wrong! When he realised, he whistled it in from about 100 or 200m away. We were hiding behind a stump when Dad shot it.

Later, we saw another fox's eyes in the flashlight and I whistled it in. It was a good-sized adult and it was heavier than I expected. We then cut off their scalps for the bounty and got \$10 each.

My hint for finding and hunting foxes is to use a flashlight and look for their bright eyes in front of you and around you.

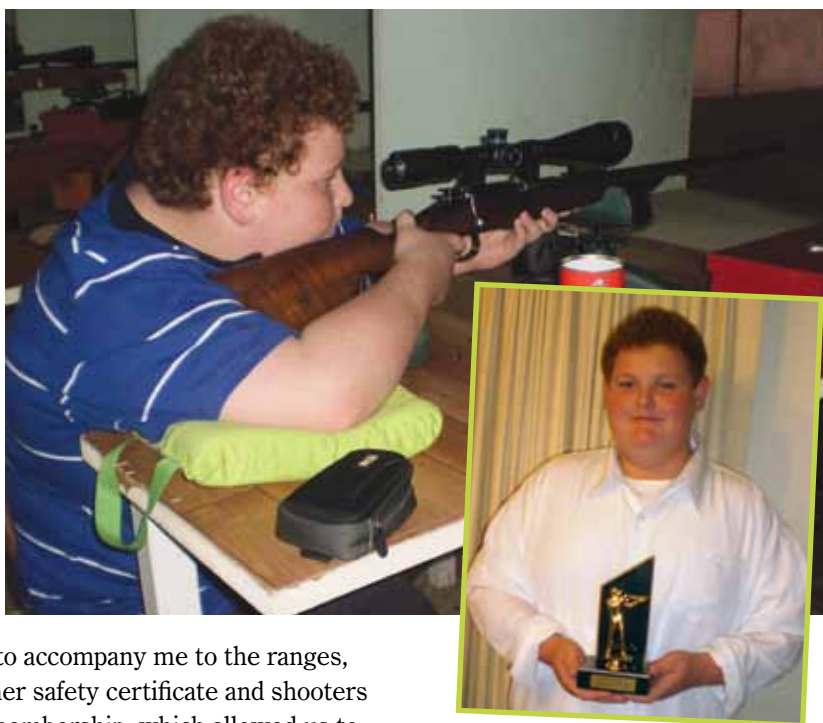
Angus Clegg, email

# Three generations of sports shooters

by Ryan Mitchell

At the age of 12, because of my interest in shooting, my nan took me to the rifle range in Wagga Wagga to obtain the information as to what was involved in becoming a junior shooter. I was fortunate enough to meet a local shooter named Carlo Zuliani, who guided me in the direction I needed to obtain my junior shooters licence. He also offered me his invaluable support and guidance. I then joined the SSAA Wagga Wagga Branch, where I soon obtained my safety certificate from Arthur Robinson.

Following this, I successfully obtained my junior shooters licence and my membership to the Small Bore Rifle Club and SSAA Wagga Wagga. As I required a licensed adult shooter to accompany me to the ranges, my mum then obtained her safety certificate and shooters licence, plus her SSAA membership, which allowed us to obtain our own rifles and gives me the opportunity to enter more competitions!



As my mum is a nurse and not always able to accompany me to the ranges, my nan then obtained her licence, so I am now able to spend more time at the ranges. Arthur Robinson from SSAA Wagga Wagga proudly says he has safety tested three generations of the one family for their licences. Also,

my nan is the oldest female (not that she is old!) to have obtained her safety certificate from him.

In December last year, I was the proud recipient of a trophy and a medal for my shooting. Without the encouragement and support from all the amazing shooters at the Wagga Wagga ranges, I would not have had the privilege to participate in a safe, well-regulated, family-oriented enjoyable sport. My family and I look forward to many years

of pleasure from my chosen sport, along with the many friendships that we have formed.

**Got a story, recipe or letter you'd like to share with your fellow junior shooters?**

**Then we'd love to hear about it!**

We're always looking for stories from our junior members about their hunting adventures in the field, achievements on the range, tasty recipes for the home or camp kitchen, or their helpful tips or advice for other newcomers to the shooting sports.

If you've got something to share, let us know!

Email Associate Editor Kaye Jenkins on [edit@ssaa.org.au](mailto:edit@ssaa.org.au), phone 08 8272 7100 or write to PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061.

## Got a story?



# SPONSOR A JUNIOR

**AND**

# SAVE your sport

It's your choice - sign up a junior or our sport will vanish

SSAA National's 'Sign up a Junior' campaign was launched to help introduce youngsters to recreational shooting. Juniors are essential to the ongoing strength and vitality of the SSAA and we are seeking your support to protect and ensure the future of the shooting sports in Australia.

Simply fill in the form below with the junior's details and your details as the 'sponsoring member'. You can add more than one junior by photocopying the form and adding an extra \$21 per junior.

As an incentive to promote the campaign, all junior members who join or renew their membership between January 1 and December 31, 2013, will go into the draw to win \$500 worth of SSAA merchandise. Additionally, all adults who sponsor a junior member will go into the draw to win \$1000 worth of SSAA merchandise!



\$21 - includes 11 issues of the *Australian Shooter*

\$46 - includes 11 issues of the *Australian Shooter* and 4 issues of *Australian Hunter* magazine

Membership No.

Has the junior been a member before? Yes/No

Details of junior being signed up - (must be under 18)

Branch (if known) ..... Sex (please circle) M / F  
 First name ..... Middle name ..... Last name .....  
 Home address ..... P/C.....  
 Date of birth ..... OFFICE USE ONLY

Details of sponsoring member:

First name ..... Middle name ..... Last name .....  
 Membership No. ....

## Payment options

I also wish to donate  
 \$..... to the SSAA

Enclosed is payment for the amount of \$.....

Cheque  Money order  MasterCard  Visa

Card number

Expiry date  Signature.....

Cheques payable to the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia

- Fees are per year unless specified and include GST.

MAIL TO: MEMBERSHIP OFFICE,  
 PO BOX 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761

SSAA Inc is subject to the provisions of the National Privacy Act. Should you want a copy of the SSAA Inc Privacy Statement or seek further information, please write to PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061.