



# **RANGE OF THOUGHTS SPRING 2021**



**SHERWOOD PARK**  
FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION

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# SPFGA Board

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## Programs at SPFGA

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### ***Kelly Annesty, Programs Director***

Public health measures over the sixteen months since the pandemic began have certainly complicated our programs planning and delivery.

Out of necessity, we carried our events from 2020 forward with the plan of delivering them this year. The [Open For Summer Plan](#) announced by the provincial government on May 26 does offer us some promise that some may still happen, but realistically we'll be probably be looking at carrying the bulk of them forward into 2022.

We'll do what we can this year of course and hopefully the province is able to safely reopen as we move to Stage 3, but next year we plan on having Mother's and Father's Day events in addition to the many events that the other Directors have planned. We'll be incorporating our Annual Awards Night with the Family Fun Day next fall, which should result in some wonderful festivities on our property.

But that's next year. This year, in continuation of a program begun last year, I have worked with other Directors on a large-scale project to update the tree swallow nesting box inventory on our properties along with local youth groups, including the Tofield Junior Forest Wardens and the 203 Sherwood Park Scouts. Youth in these groups helped build the boxes, which have been placed all around the

property. Each box's GPS coordinates have been recorded and this year the youth will come to the property as a orienteering exercise to find their birdhouses. They'll record information about the birds in "their" boxes for us, which we'll use to write a scientific paper for submission to a wildlife biology journal. (See [page 15 in the Fall 2020 issue](#) and [page 15 of the Winter 2021 issue](#) of *Range of Thoughts* for more details on this project.) This year, we are looking at completing the remaining phase of this project and will be working with two separate Girl Guide Troops from Ardrossan and Sherwood Park.

I'm also working on community engagement this year, and within the possibilities allowed by public health measures, we hope to get local youth groups out exploring the beautiful facility we all enjoy. This includes many of the various types of scouting groups, both boy and girl scouts as well as the Junior Forest Wardens.

I look forward to seeing you all around our wonderful facility and remind you all to wear a mask, physically distance, sanitize your hands, and most importantly to stay safe.





## Bat conservation

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### ***Roland Coppens, Communications Director***

We were touched by a February 2021 Facebook post by Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation, based in Saskatoon, about the relocation of a hibernating bat colony discovered during a building renovation. This was also the subject of a recent CBC news story, after which Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation issued an update to their efforts.

The synopsis is that during a planned renovation of an arena in Unity, Saskatchewan, a colony of hibernating Big Brown bats was discovered within the structure. A wildlife relocation firm was brought in and, together with the assistance of the Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation, a total of 687 bats were relocated. Of these, 600 were assessed to be healthy and returned to hibernation in a temperature-controlled environment. The remaining 87 were either underweight, injured, or sick and were rehabilitated by Living Sky. This was a project of sizeable scope, with a large resource requirement. We supported Living Sky in these efforts with a donation of \$500 and promoted them widely on our social media feeds.

When I contacted Living Sky at the time to discuss their project, their reply was interesting. Among their comments was that Albertans posting on their story tended to be more positive, whereas posters from other parts of Canada tended to be less

so. Editorializing a bit, my suspicion is that this is a reflection of the efforts of our own Alberta Community Bat Program (ACBP) in providing a refined understanding among Albertans about bats and their importance to us and our environment. I reached out to Cory Olson, the ACBP's lead biologist to discuss this further. During our conversation, in addition to recognizing our support Living Sky, he also encouraged us to also consider supporting WildNorth Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation, a local organization that does similar work.

Because of the important influence the Alberta Community Bat Program has in our own provincial sphere, we donated \$500 to support their important work as well, and a further \$200 donation to WildNorth Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation to support theirs. We can all take a moment of pride in our club's commitment to conservation of wildlife resources and of the habitats on which they depend.

The donations above came from funds budgeted for support of environmental conservation in 2021.







# HANDGUN HOLSTERS THE SP

# HOLSTERS, HANDGUNS AND SPFGA

## **Mark Lowry, Firearms Director (Handgun)**

As we were heading into spring this year, the club's newest weeknight evening event—the Thursday Night Fun Shoots—got off to a strong start. And then, unfortunately, the Third Wave crested and public health measures temporarily shuttered our league activities. Thankfully though, this too subsided and moving to Stage 1 has allowed us to restart our leagues. Stage 2 will help widen things further.

I often get questions from members about holsters. Can we use them at SPFGA? Where can they be used? Under what circumstances? The answer to the first question is yes, holster use is permitted at SPFGA. However, it is important to understand that this comes with some important caveats.

The first, and perhaps most important caveat to know is that Ketchamoot Creek is a *cold range*. That is, at no point may any firearm be loaded until you are at the firing line with the safety curtain raised and ready to begin shooting. Outside of this time, a holstered handgun must be *cold-holstered*. That is, unloaded. **Unloaded** here, according to *Statutory Orders and Regulations 98-209* attached to the **Firearms Act**, means that “any propellant, projectile or cartridge that can be discharged from the firearm is not contained in the breech or firing chamber of the firearm nor in the cartridge magazine attached to or inserted into the firearm”.

Second, you should ensure that your holster is designed for your handgun and effectively secures it. Once you have such a holster, you should ensure that it is properly secured to your belt of choice.

Third, and very important, is expressed by the ‘*Knowledge and Skill*’ statement in the **Facility Rules**:

**Members must ensure they have the knowledge and skill necessary to conduct themselves in a safe manner in all activities they engage in while on SPFGA property.**

This intentionally broad statement encompasses all activities you undertake at the facility, including the use of a holster.

This caveat requires that you have the training and experience to safely use your handgun and holster. That training and experience can come from several sources, including military or police training, taking a Black Badge course, or from competition experience under the supervision of a Range Safety Officer. SPFGA Thursday Night Fun Shoots are a great place to build that training and experience in the setting of an informal, club-supported league. For formal training, our upcoming Black Badge Course on August 7 and 8 is an excellent opportunity in an instructor-led, practical setting.

I’m often asked where members can wear a holstered handgun. Taking it as understood that you have a quality holster designed for your handgun and you have the necessary knowledge and skill for safe use, the next thing to understand is that the range area of the Ketchamoot Creek facility extends from the Big Bore Range to the Black Powder Trail. So, it is permissible to have your handgun cold-holstered within this area. Outside of the range area, restricted firearms must be stored and transported in accordance with the Firearms Act.

It is often said that the safest place for your handgun, outside of your safe, is in a holster on your belt and this holds true. While in the holster, there is no chance it will become lost or slip out of your control.

Equally true is that the use of a holster, without proper training or experience, could be dangerous to you or others. Safety should be always your number one consideration when at the range.



# Where else can I find places to

**Roland Coppens, Communications Director**

In continuation of the [Hunting on SPFGA properties?](#) article in the [Winter 2021 issue](#), in this article we consider a number of other land trusts in Alberta and how to use their property finders to locate places to hunt. There are a great deal of conservation land throughout the province, which offers many hunting opportunities across a variety of terrain.

## Alberta Conservation Association (ACA)

The ACA holds special status as a delegated administration organization operating at arm's length from government, administering funds received [primarily from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses](#) to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for Albertans to enjoy and use. A portion of their activities is as one of Alberta's land trusts.

Using the ACA's [Discover Guide](#), you can search the 783 conservation properties that are part of their land trusts, some held in shared title with other land trusts, where hunting is permitted.

**Alberta Discover Guide**  
Conservation Site Database

Find Conservation Sites | Guide App | Get Your Guide | Partners | Contacts | FAQ

Search Conservation Sites for:

Click the check boxes to only include sites that:

- ☒ Allow Hunting
- ☐ Allow Fishing
- ☐ Allow Other Activities
- ☐ Stocked by ACA
- ☐ New in 2021

Showing 1 to 25 of 670 entries (filtered from 783 total entries)

Site Name	Activities
7D Coulee	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Aadc Wainwright 1	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Aibright	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Aibright II	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Aif Graham 24	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Aiford Creek	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: Yes, Other: No
Allen	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Alliance LUEP	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Ambler	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Ambrose	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Anderson	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Andrews	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Andruchow	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No
Archie	Hunting: Yes, Fishing: No, Other: No

All ACA conservation sites are available year-round for public use at no cost, and are foot access only with no overnight camping or fires. Some properties have lease agreements during the summer months, typically for grazing—any contact details will be listed in the property description.





# hunt?



# Where else can I find places to hunt? (continued)

## Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)

The NCC is Canada's leading national land conservation organization. A private, non-profit organization, the NCC secures properties through donation, purchase, conservation agreement and the relinquishment of other legal interests in land and manages them for the long term. In fact, the majority of the SPFGA's properties are included under a conservation easement with the NCC.

Many NCC properties on their [property finder](#) require the request of prior permission, but some do not. Terms and conditions for access to this property can be found [here](#).

The screenshot shows the NCC website's property finder interface. At the top, there's a green navigation bar with links for Français, Media, Blog, and a search bar. Below this is the NCC logo and a secondary navigation bar with links: Who We Are, What We Do, Where We Work, What You Can Do, and a prominent orange Donate button. The main content area features a map of Alberta with numerous colored dots representing property locations. To the left of the map is a sidebar with a calendar for June 2021, a 'Select a Property' dropdown, and filters for Property, Activity, and Group Size (set to 2). A 'Submit Booking' button and a 'Booking assistance' link are also present. To the right of the map, there's a 'Create Account' and 'Account Login' section, followed by a list of featured properties with their descriptions: Barrus, Bergeson, Birdseye Ranch, Blind Canyon, and Block/Cervo 1.

## Wildlife Trust Fund

Wildlife Trust Fund, Alberta's first land trust, holds sole and shared title on over 100 properties across the province encompassing over 45,000 acres of important fish and wildlife habitat. Their [property index](#) gives access to their five zones – [North](#), [Central](#), [South](#), and [East Slope](#).

Wildlife Trust Fund properties are available year-round for public use at no cost, and are foot access only with no overnight camping or fires.

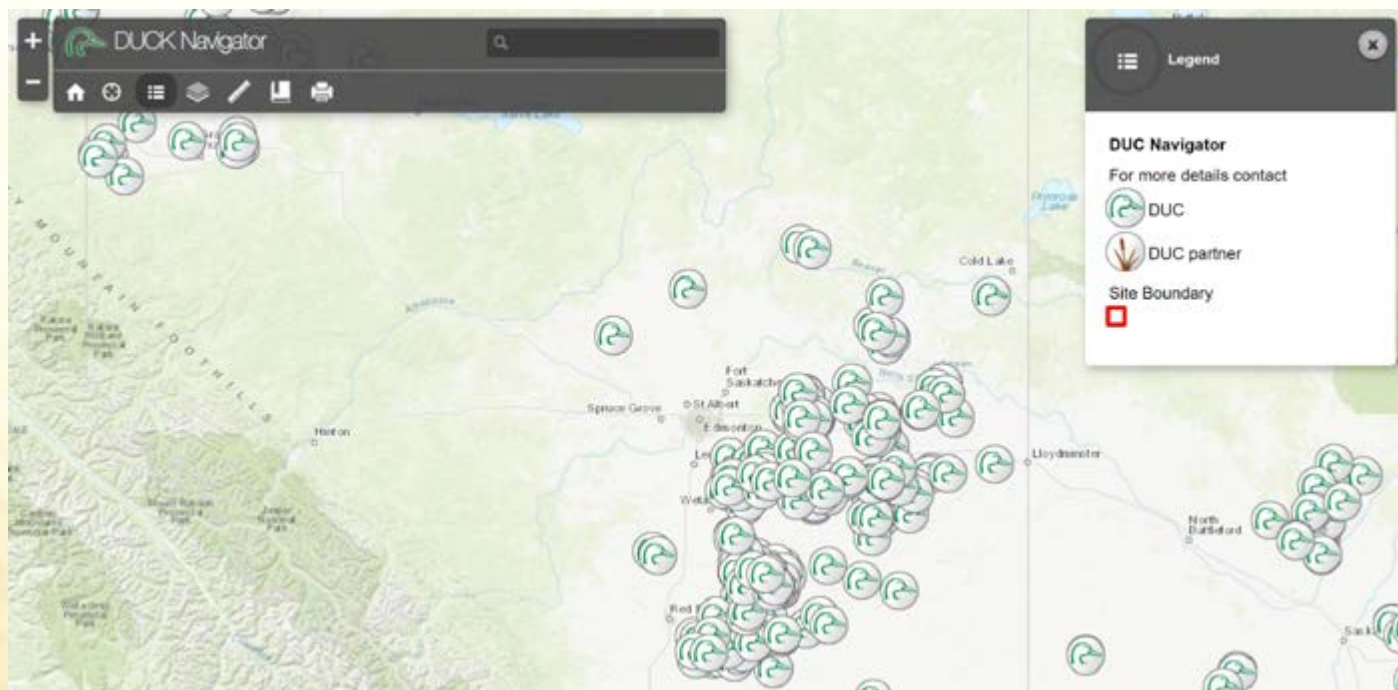
The screenshot shows the 'Wildlife Trust Fund Properties – Central' website. The header features the title 'Wildlife Trust Fund Properties – Central' and a subtitle 'HOME - WILDLIFE TRUST FUND PROPERTIES - CENTRAL'. Below the header is a large image of a river landscape. The main content area is a list of properties in the Central zone, organized into two columns. The properties listed are: Ambrose Property, Beltz Lake, Birch Coulee, Braithwaite Property, Buffalo Lake Conservation, Buffalo Link Property, Caine 3 Property, Camrose Habitat Property, Centre Chaine Lake, Chip Lake Property, Cindy Property, Lawrence Property, Lefauveau Property, Lockerby Property, Millet Fish & Game Property, George & Joan Mitchell, Nevis Property, North Fawcett Property, North Pine Creek Property, Parkland Conservation, Partridge Property, and Pigeon Lake Property.

## Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)

DUC is a Canadian nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and associated upland habitats for waterfowl, other wildlife, and people. Their property finder, [DUCK Navigator](#), gives access to their many, many properties in Alberta.

Ducks Unlimited properties are available year-round for public use at no cost, and are foot access only with no overnight camping or fires. Some properties have lease agreements during the summer months, typically for grazing – any contact details will be listed in the property description.

We hope that using these resources will increase your access to huntable properties and help to get you out, responsibly enjoying the outdoors and participating in conservation activities.



# Tick awareness

## **Reproduced with permission from the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)**

This blog post is part of the Backpack Essentials series, a series that explores the items that Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) staff carry with them when heading outside. It is inspired by the quarterly Nature Conservancy of Canada Magazine and our Nature Destinations program. To learn more about NCC's properties across Canada that you can visit, check out [naturedestinations.ca](https://naturedestinations.ca).

It's finally summer. The sun is shining and nature is calling for you. With COVID-19 restrictions slowly lifting and hiking trails re-opening to public across the country, you may be thinking about spending more time in nature.

**Disclaimer: Please check your local municipal websites for the latest information on trail access. See the latest updates on access to NCC lands [here](#).**

What you may not know is that there may be small but dangerous creatures lurking in the leaves. Called ticks, these arachnids are considered a nuisance to every nature lover due to the possibility of being bitten and contracting infections, including the infection that causes Lyme disease.

But don't let your fear of ticks stop you from enjoying your time outdoors. Mhairi McFarlane, director of science and stewardship at the Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC's) Ontario Region, has shared some advice on how to protect yourself against these tiny, spider-like, egg-shaped creatures.

## **Protect yourself**

Tick populations begin to grow, generally, from early spring to summer. To reproduce and nurture their eggs, females of all tick species need to consume blood from a bird or mammal, including humans. Although ticks can't jump or fly, they can attach themselves to their desired host by waiting on a leaf and climbing onto an individual passing by.

*"This is why you should always wear long pants and tuck them into your socks," suggests Mhairi. "Shirts should also be tucked in. Make sure every opening is covered."*

Whenever you are going outdoors, you should always apply a good-quality bug spray that contains DEET. However, to specifically prevent ticks, Mhairi recommends wearing clothing that has been pre-treated with a bug-repellent called **permethrin**.

Another easy way to reduce your risk of picking up an unwelcome hitchhiker is to stay on designated trails in natural areas. If you're hiking with family, friends or your dog, make sure that they too are staying on designated trails. If Fido gallops through the off-trail vegetation, he could pick up ticks that may then crawl onto you later.

*"Our field staff do their best to keep trails clean and accessible, thereby reducing contact between you and any vegetation that may be carrying ticks," said Mhairi.*





### Tips for tick safety

Tick season typically starts mid spring and can run until October in parts of Canada.

**4 tick tactics to keep in mind when heading out into nature**

**1**  
**KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT**  
Be aware of areas where ticks live and thrive. Stay on trails.

**2**  
**CHECK YOURSELF**  
After spending time in nature, do a thorough body check.

**3**  
**RAISE YOUR PROTECTIVE BARRIER**  
Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants to keep your skin protected from ticks.

**4**  
**REPEL**  
Use insect repellent on clothing that may come in contact with grass and brush.

To learn more tick safety tips, visit [natureconservancy.ca/ticksafety](https://natureconservancy.ca/ticksafety).



## Once bitten...

If you do notice a tick on you, with its head buried in your skin, you should pull out its entire body using either tweezers or a [tick key](#). When pulling on the tick, aim for its mouthpart and never its abdomen, as that can push the mouthpart further into your skin. But don't destroy the critter! Keep it in a jar or container for your doctor.

After removing the tick and putting it in a container, the bite site should be rinsed with water and disinfected immediately with an antiseptic. Within three days of being bitten, bring the tick with you to a medical doctor's office and have it tested for Lyme disease.

Not every tick bite results in Lyme disease, so there is no need to panic. There are many tick species in the wild, and only a few carry the bacteria that leads to infections like Lyme disease. The notorious deer tick and lone star tick are the only species that transmit infectious bacteria to humans. Deer ticks, a carrier of the Lyme disease-causing bacteria, usually feed on deer but sometimes feed on mice, too. When taking the blood of infected white-footed mice and deer mice, these ticks also ingest bacteria at the same time. If they then bite a human afterward, they may transfer the bacteria into the human's bloodstream, which can cause Lyme disease.



The reasons for the increasing number of ticks at our favourite outdoor spots are "complex and interlinked and likely include climate change, changes in mammal populations, and even changes in vegetation structure and composition," added Mhairi. With changing ecological relationships and more invasive plants affecting our local ecosystems, tick populations have found it easier to reproduce and survive.

*"A landscape dominated by native plants, which support mammal predators as well as their prey, may have a more 'balanced' relationship between deer and mice and their respective predators, reducing the chances of ticks having a blood meal and laying eggs,"* said Mhairi. This makes ecosystem restoration and the fight against invasive species all the more important.

The next time you enjoy a walk or hike outdoors in the height of summer, keep these tips in mind. Have fun in nature, but don't let the ticks bite!

The Conservation Internship Program is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Summer Work Experience program.

Link to original article:

[Backpack Essentials: Don't let the ticks bite!](#)

And, because this can be so serious, here's some additional reading: [Chronic Lyme disease: How one tick bite can ruin your health for ever](#)



## SPFGA-branded apparel now available

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SPFGA-branded merchandise received a good deal of interest when we asked you about it. So, we set out to find a partner with which to do this in a way that didn't require us to hold merchandise, set up a store front, or handle returns.

Our search led us to Entripy, a Canadian retailer of custom-made apparel, whose storefront works exactly this way. Our SPFGA store front with them is <https://spfga.entripyshops.com/> and have a broad range of offerings—click on the link and go have a look around!

We look forward to seeing you out and about in them!

Please note: If you're following up on an order, making an exchange or doing a return, please contact Entripy directly using the **Contact Us** page on their website, linked above.



## Best to have your own email address

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### ***Roland Coppens, Communications Director***

We have observed that some members use their work email address for club communications. Staying informed about club matters, particularly facility-related information that we send out via **Safe and Sound** emails, is challenging if you're only receiving them during the workday when you aren't on vacation.

Similarly, a family sharing a single email address can be challenging. Virtual meetings and remote voting will likely be a continuing reality even after in-person meetings are able to resume.

We encourage you to obtain and use personal email for club updates instead. There are [many options for setting up a free email available](#), and we encourage you to explore these.

If you would like to update your email address, you can do this directly yourself on the [website](#) by logging into your profile.

# SPFGA Black Powder Trail

## **Tom Oppenorth, Firearms Director (Primitive Weapons)**

The Black Powder Trail is one the Ketchamoot Creek facility's ranges, built with the assistance of volunteer effort between 1989 and 1990. The trail is a unique facility among Alberta ranges, allowing black powder enthusiasts to walk a nature trail while engaging targets with muzzle loading black powder pistols and rifles. Typically, these firearms are the "trade guns" used in early Canadian history by the fur-traders and settlers as they moved west.

With entrances located along the northwest edge of the Shotgun Range parking area, the trail consists of 34 firing stations and several tomahawk and knife throwing stations. The walking portion of the Black Powder Trail is approximately 900 m in length over wooded, gently undulating terrain typical of the Beaverhills Biosphere. The trail is regularly maintained by the SPFGA and is accessible year-round. Each firing station has a red and/or a yellow piece of rebar (approximately 1.3m tall) in the ground, a red rod indicating that the station is intended for rifles, while a yellow rod indicating that the station is for pistols. Some stations may be used for both rifle and pistol, and some present more than one target. Shooting stations range from 11 yards to approximately 100 yards, with varying degrees of skill required. The targets are downward-deflecting steel targets, each hanging from a metal frame. Consistent with the colour of the bar at the shooting position, targets are either red (intended for rifle) or yellow (intended for pistol).

The trail's design makes good use of knob-and-kettle terrain to provide backstops for shooting stations. That said, the layout and design of the trail is such that it is unsafe to discharge anything but lead ball ammunition from a black powder firearm. Because of this, the discharge of modern centrefire, rimfire, sabots, or black

powder bullets is prohibited. Members using the Black Powder Trail are must only load and discharge their firearms at designated firing stations, and only at the targets for that firing station. Rifles are typically carried from station to station and it is very common to see holsters used for the carriage of pistols. Both entrances to the Black Powder Trail have signs that clearly state what is and what is not allowed on this range. These signs are consistent with the [Facility Rules](#).

During the routine recertification inspection in the fall of 2020 by Firearms Officers from the office of the Chief Firearms Officer (CFO) of Alberta, various deficiencies involving backstops on several shooting stations were identified. As a result, the recertification of this range has been deferred pending completion of this work and a successful reinspection.

Following an assessment of the work required on a particularly frigid day in February, a work party came out on April 3 and completed a portion of the planned work, bringing us one step closer to re-approval as a range by the CFO. A further review of the remaining work took place on June 7, with a work party planned for June 12 to complete the outstanding tasks.

Once the remaining items have been completed, we will be contacting the CFO's office to complete our recertification request. Until such time as the Black Powder Trail has once again been recertified however, this range remains closed to shooting.

Once recertified and reopened, with a hopefully recently reopened Alberta, we plan on rescheduling the Black Powder Shoot, an annual club event with a large attendance looked forward to by many.







# Ahh... The lure of that big cloud of smoke!

***Randy Simmoneau, SPFGA member and proprietor of Sights And Arms, Ltd.***

This article is about black powder and muzzle loading. More specifically, the lore of ol' school black powder firearms, whether they be antiques, replicas of antiques, or of modern design.

Have you ever wondered what "that" SPFGA member is shooting on the other end of the firing line? The stunning report followed by a big cloud of smoke definitely catches your attention. When you look over, you will definitely notice some different things. Perhaps a very long, octagonal rifle barrel the size of an axle, or a revolver the size of a box car. Then you notice that it takes the owner several minutes to reload, and that they happen to have a big toolbox full of accoutrements (called a "Possibles Bag" in the traditional muzzle loading world).

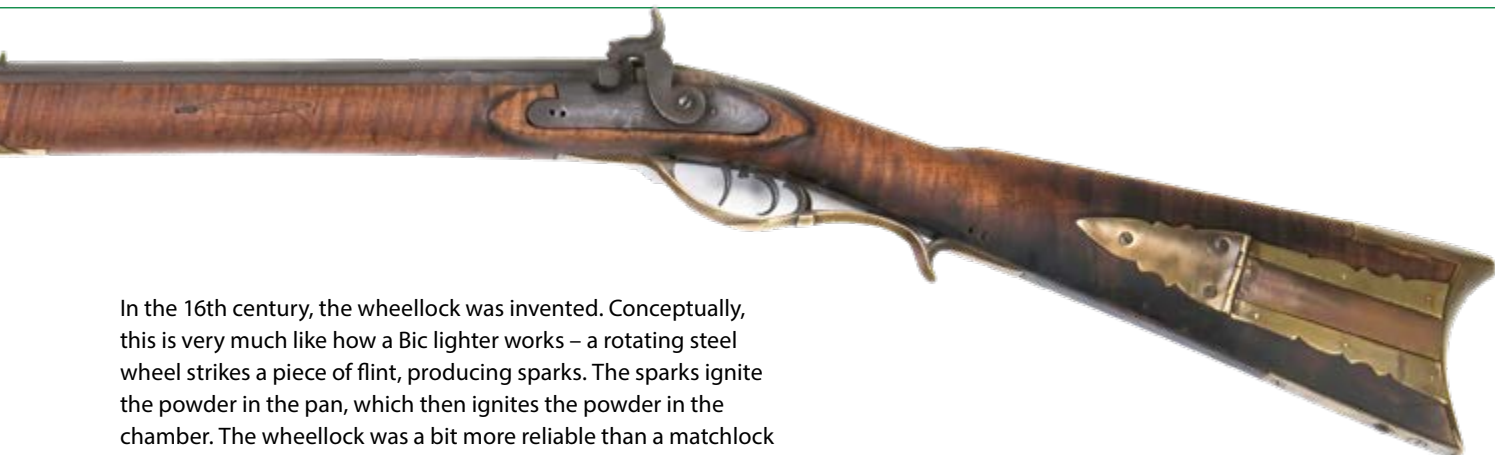
What could possibly draw a modern-day firearms enthusiast and/or sport shooter to the mystique of these old world types of firearms? Well, perhaps you live close to a hunting zone that requires the use of an appropriate primitive weapon such as a muzzle loading longarm. Or perhaps you have an interest in the historical aspects of the "cap and ball" Old West revolvers. Colt and Remington models come to mind here, just for starters.

First, a little bit of history so you understand the different types of black powder firearms.

Recall from the [Canadian Firearms Safety Course \(CFSC\)](#) manual's chapter on the history of firearms that black powder was discovered in the 9th Century and used in cannons. Sometime around the 14th century, these cannons were "miniaturized" and evolved into much more elaborate "hand cannons" for soldiers. These hand cannons had three major components: a barrel directing the projectile, a stock that the soldier could hold, and finally the lock (a mechanical contrivance to ignite the gun powder in the barrel).

The first reliable "hand cannon" was the matchlock. It used a slow burning fuse and when the trigger was pressed, the fuse would be lowered into a touch hole on the lock. This would ignite a small bit of gun powder in a small pan. The flames from the pan would then ignite the main powder charge in the chamber.





In the 16th century, the wheellock was invented. Conceptually, this is very much like how a Bic lighter works – a rotating steel wheel strikes a piece of flint, producing sparks. The sparks ignite the powder in the pan, which then ignites the powder in the chamber. The wheellock was a bit more reliable than a matchlock because the shooter didn't have to worry about the slow burning fuse going out. The drawback is that it took a very skilled craftsman to build a wheellock, making them expensive.

Innovations in the design of the locks continued, and in the 17th century the flintlock was invented. With a flintlock, the flint is on the hammer, and when the trigger is pulled, the hammer falls and strikes a piece of metal called a frizzen. The sparks will then ignite the powder in the pan, which then ignites the gun powder in the chamber. Flintlocks dominated for around 200 years.

At the beginning of the 19th century the percussion lock was invented to address the shortcomings of the flintlock.

Instead of using flint and steel to generate the sparks, a very small cup (known as a cap) is filled with a chemical that will produce sparks when struck by the hammer. These sparks will ignite the powder charge in the barrel.

Up until this time, black powder firearms were primarily muzzle loaders – the gunpowder and projectile had to be dropped down the muzzle and rammed down into the barrel. This changed in the middle of the 19th century when breechloading firearms became popular. Finally, in 1884 smokeless powder was invented.



Continuing with our discussion of firing mechanisms, we need to introduce two new terms:

**Lock time** is defined as the time it takes to hit the primer, percussion cap or flash pan once the trigger has been pulled. All firearms, be they black powder or modern smokeless firearms, have a lock time.

**Dwell time** is the time from the ignition of the powder to the time the projectile leaves the barrel.

Generally speaking, the lock time and dwell time are longer in a black powder firearm. This means that your bad habits, like a flinch or failure to follow through, are amplified. The fundamentals of marksmanship are even more important when it comes to black powder!

It's ALL part of the passion of black powder firearms.

Getting into muzzle loading firearms is not as expensive as one might think. As with any activity, you can go hard and spend a small fortune, or go easy on the pocketbook and enjoy. Modern in-line muzzle loading rifles are quite affordable and most use modern shotgun type 209 primers for a much faster lock time ignition. If you like to shoot pistols and revolvers at the range, Pietta and Uberti (Italian gun manufacturers) have many beautiful replica options to choose from at very affordable prices.

If you can't wait until then, the staff of Sights And Arms Ltd. are also members of SPFGA and are more than willing to introduce new comers to the old/new sport of muzzle loading firearms. In the past few months, you may have seen us target shooting with our 'old smoke' hand cannons. If you do see us at the range, please stop by and give it a try!

**Thinking about getting into muzzle loading?**—join us in Part II of this article in the Summer 2021 issue, where we'll cover what it takes to get started in black powder and muzzle loading shooting sports, including resources to further educate yourself in this very rewarding historical and fun sport!



# From *The Ketchamoot Discourse*

*The Ketchamoot Discourse* is our club's private Facebook discussion group. It was created as a members-only social media space where we can gather and speak with one another or where members can talk with the Board. (Not part of *The Ketchamoot Discourse* yet? [Join here!](#))

The following article was shared in a post on *The Ketchamoot Discourse* by Tom Opgenorth, SPFGA member and Board member with the comment "This is promising - the University of Minnesota have developed a test for CWD that can be used in the field, giving results in ~ 24 hours or so." We certainly agree—these early results are very encouraging! Hopefully we'll continue to see positive things from this line of research.

## University of Minnesota researchers develop novel, field-deployable test for CWD

University of Minnesota researchers at the [Minnesota Center for Prion Research \(MNPRO\)](#) have developed a novel approach to field testing chronic wasting disease (CWD). The team confirmed their findings in southeast Minnesota the week of March 8, 2021, making them the first-ever scientists to successfully deploy a CWD field test.

There are limited testing options available for CWD, leading scientists to investigate several new approaches with the hopes of obstructing the disease's spread. Last spring, the MNPRO team worked with the Minnesota DNR to analyze tissue samples from CWD-positive white-tailed deer using a technique known as RT-QuIC. The team managed to obtain confirmation of protein-misfolding in just nine hours with that approach. Only a handful of labs currently have access to this top-of-the-line technology for CWD testing.

Now, the MNPRO researchers have developed a new assay that generates a color change of red for a positive CWD result and blue for negative. They have named the test "MN-QuIC" to honor the state of Minnesota, where the test was developed.

*"MN-QuIC uses nanoparticles to identify CWD prions in tissue samples. It is the product of an intense multi-disciplinary research effort that united scientists across the University of Minnesota," says [Peter Larsen, PhD](#), assistant professor in the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and co-director of MNPRO. He says the new test is also a lot cheaper than those using traditional equipment and uses field-deployable equipment to garner preliminary results in just 24 hours. "We have performed over one hundred confirmatory tests in our MNPRO lab and this was our first field-deployment. We will continue to validate MN-QuIC over the coming months and plan additional field deployments this fall."*

The team is striving for a test that could be set-up at individual stations statewide, cutting down on testing bottlenecks. *"This would help prevent CWD prions from entering our food supply,"* Larsen says, *"and would be an important step forward in the fight against CWD."*

CWD originated roughly 50 years ago and affects white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer, sika deer, caribou, reindeer, elk, and moose—all animals known as "cervids." The transmissible neurological disease



produces small lesions in an animal's brain and ultimately results in abnormal behavior, weight loss, loss of bodily functions, and death. While it is yet unknown whether the disease can spread to humans, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends against eating meat from CWD-infected animals. In 2020, both the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture declared CWD-positive venison unfit for human or animal consumption, listing the meat as an adulterated product.

CWD is spread by misfolded prion proteins, which also cause scrapie in sheep, bovine spongiform encephalopathy in cattle (sometimes called "mad cow disease"), and sporadic Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. CWD-causing prions are not alive and can only be destroyed with specialized equipment or strong chemicals, which is what makes CWD so difficult to mitigate. They can also persist in the environment for years. Advances made on CWD could inform other prion-related diseases in humans and animals alike.

The field team was composed of Larsen; Peter Christenson, a graduate student in the UMN College of Science and Engineering who envisioned this new testing method; Manc Li, a PhD student in the CVM; Marc Schwabenlander, MPH, chronic wasting disease research program and outreach manager at MNPRO; and [Tiffany Wolf, DVM, PhD](#), assistant professor in the Department of Veterinary Population Medicine at the CVM and co-director of MNPRO. The scientists also spent the trip collecting environmental samples from areas impacted by CWD and connecting with partners in nearby Amish communities to identify culturally-appropriate CWD management strategies.

*"This project is a shining example of bringing bipartisan support in the legislature, scientists, state agencies, and private landowners together to find solutions that support everyone's needs,"* Larsen says. *"This is exactly how a land grant institution should function."*



This research was supported by the MN Agricultural Experiment Station Rapid Ag Response Fund and Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. Additionally, various entities at the University of Minnesota have provided support, including the CVM's Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, the Office for the Vice President of Research, and the College more broadly, which also houses MNPRO. The research team works

closely with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on multiple aspects of CWD research.



**Used with attribution from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities' News and Events page:**

<https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/university-minnesota-researchers-develop-novel-field-deployable-test-cwd?fbclid=IwAR1SkU5mpTmQ8Zjxi3KLIXwdaUOAltFbUxM8uxB5J0iD9Vx9RPK2jIXKI6w>

## Calling all mule deer hunters

As an item of interest to all SPFGA mule deer hunters, the Alberta Environment and Parks Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance program is looking for volunteers to participate in a pilot program for the 2021-2022 hunting season. The purpose of this pilot project is to instruct deer hunters on collecting tissue samples for CWD testing.

If you would like to participate in this program, please contact --**Dr. Mark Ball** at [mark.ball@gov.ab.ca](mailto:mark.ball@gov.ab.ca).



Dear Alberta Fish & Game Member,

The Alberta Environment and Parks Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance program, is looking for volunteers to participate in a pilot program for the 2021-2022 season. This pilot project aims to instruct deer hunters on how to collect tissue samples for CWD testing.

In recent years, the Alberta CWD surveillance program has seen an overwhelming number of submissions which has placed significant pressure on infrastructure and testing turn-around times. By instructing hunters to collect and submit their own tissue samples, we hope some of these concerns will be addressed and alleviated.

We are canvassing Local Fish & Game Associations to determine if any active members are interested in participating, to provide their contact information to Dr. Mark Ball ([mark.ball@gov.ab.ca](mailto:mark.ball@gov.ab.ca)). All contact information will be secure and used for the sole purpose of communication for the duration of the pilot project. Volunteers will be permitted to submit samples from any WMU in which they have a tag assigned to.

The required information would include:


- Name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Is the volunteer able and willing to participate in online training?
- Is the volunteer willing to provide feedback to Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) regarding the efficiency of the pilot project via a survey upon completion of the project requirements?

Once volunteers have been obtained, further instructions will be provided throughout the summer months, leading up to the opening day of rifle season. Communication and training will consist of sampling techniques, submission of samples, and how/where to obtain sample kits provided by the CWD program.

Thank you for your interest in the CWD program. Your participation and input is very important to the CWD program and will aid in determining what may need to be done to provincially implement these new strategies in the future.

Sincerely,  
The CWD Team

Classification: Protected A



# Did you know?



*These **Did You Know?** articles, suggested by you as a source of quick reminders, highlight specific facility rules & briefly explaining their reasoning.*

This **Did You Know?** deals with the Facility Rules and accessing them while out on the property.

## Did you know that there are multiple methods of accessing the Facility Rules when out at the property?

We heard clearly from you that you wanted complete, timely, and context-appropriate access to the Facility Rules when out enjoying yourself at Ketchamoot Creek. To facilitate that, our sign update project throughout the facility in the spring of 2020 provided clear indication of the rules appropriate to each amenity right at the point of use.

In addition, we added signs with QR codes (two-dimensional matrix barcodes that you can scan with an app on a mobile device) that take you to the [Facility Rules page on the website](#).

As well, we added the functionality for you to print your own copy of the rules should you want to. The button for this can be found on the Facility Rules page of the website (but, being a conservation organization in the digital age, we do recommend that you sparing print these, and print only what you need).



## SPFGA FACILITY RULES

**These rules are a policy of the SPFGA. Non-compliance contravenes Section 2.4.2 of the Bylaws and may result in disciplinary actions including suspension or loss of membership.**

In the case of an on-site dispute of interpretation of these rules between an (Acting) Enforcement Officer and a member which cannot be resolved, the member will be asked to leave and the incident reported for investigation. The member's gate pass may be suspended during this time until the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of the Board.

[PRINT RULES](#)



And then, lastly, we included a full print version of the rules at the facility on weather-proof paper. These can be found in binder in the First Aid Kiosk between the Big Bore and Rimfire Ranges.

*Please note that in the case of disagreement between a printed version of the rules or signs on the facility and the details on the website that the version on the website, being the most up-to-date, is to be taken as correct.*



# Not just another birdhouse!



## Roland Coppens, Communications Director

We were contacted by Delinda Ryerson, Executive Director of the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA) with the invitation to contribute a piece for publication in the May/June 2021 issue of *Outdoor Canada* to give a summary of the tree swallow nesting box update project we'd featured in articles in the [Fall 2020](#) and [Winter 2021](#) issues of *Range of Thoughts*.

This was a very welcome exposure to our youth involvement and our club's commitment to conservation of wildlife resources and the habitat on which they depend!





# Wild game recipes – Chili colorado

## **Duncan Chow, SPFGA member**

If you love Mexican food or if you're looking for a different spin on chili, here's something new to try.

When you're done, you'll have a perfectly seasoned dish ready to be garnished with Spanish rice, beans, and some of my favourite Mexican garnishes: lime, radish, pickled onions, and cilantro.

## **Dried Chilies**

The key to this dish is the dried chilies you'll use for the main component of the braising liquid.

It's a little hard find whole dried chilies here in Edmonton, but I picked mine up at [Paraiso Tropical](#), a Latin market based in Edmonton.



## **Meat**

For this recipe, any lean red game meat such as venison, elk, or moose will do. For the cut of meat any roast from the back ham, or piece from the shoulder are ideal cuts. If you find yourself running low on game meat, this recipe will also work equally well with pork or beef.

Here, I'm using a part of the shoulder of a whitetail.

For preparation, I removed some of the silver skin but left most of it on. Contrary to popular belief, it doesn't all have to come off. Silver skin helps retain the liquid in the muscle fibers, imparting flavour, and when converted to gelatin during the cooking process it adds a silky succulence, counterbalancing the lack of fat in game meat.



## Recipe

### Chili Sauce

#### Ingredients

- Ancho Chili – 5
- Colorado Chili - 2
- Garlic – 4 cloves
- Cumin – 2 tbsp
- Guajilo Chili – 2
- Chicken Stock – 3 cups
- Oregano – 2 tbsp

#### Steps

1. Remove the stem, and seeds from the dried chilies



2. Bring the 3 cups of chicken stock to a boil, remove from heat and pour over the chilies.



3. Allow the chilies to rehydrate in the stock until the become soft and flexible, approximately 30 minutes.

4. Once rehydrated, add the Chilies and the stock to a blender. Then add the garlic, oregano, and cumin and continue to blend until smooth. Set this aside.





# Wild game recipes – Chili colorado (continued)

## Chili

### Ingredients

- Lean game meat - 2 lbs
- Grapeseed (or canola) – 5 tbsp (enough to cover the bottom of the pot)
- Garlic – 3 cloves, chopped
- Chicken stock – 3 cups
- Bay leaves - 2
- Salt – 2 tbsp
- Pepper – to taste

### Steps

1. Cut meat into ~1" cubes and add salt and pepper.



2. On medium-high, heat the oil in a pot or dutch oven.

3. Once the oil is hot, add meat and cook until brown. (Note: in order to brown the meat and avoid excess liquid being released from the meat, I cooked the meat in two batches. In breaking it up into separate batches, I had to add a bit more oil for the second batch to assist in browning. If you did this with a fattier meat (pork/beef) the amount of oil used could be reduced.)

4. After the meat is browned, add the chopped garlic and cook for 1 minute.



5. Add the chicken stock, bay leaves and the chili sauce that you previously prepared. Bring to a boil for approximately one minute.

6. After boiling, reduce heat to a simmer and cook partially covered/uncovered to allow the chili to reduce. If the liquid level is reducing too quickly, cover the pot/dutch oven further.



7. Allow the mixture cook and reduce until the meat is tender and can be broken apart with a fork, typically 3 to 4 hours. The liquid should reduce by half of the original volume and become a chocolate brown.





8. Ready to be plated! Garnish with lime, radish, pickled onions, and cilantro and serve with a side of rice. Enjoy!



## Member Disciplinary Committee (MDC) report

### **Jennifer Hodge, 1st Vice President (Membership)**

*When situations where the need for correction of member behaviour is identified, per item 2.5 of the [bylaws](#) the matter is referred to the Member Discipline Committee (MDC) for review. The primary objective of the MDC is member education rather than punitive action. All efforts are to be made to find productive ways to engage with members when issues arise and to achieve mutually beneficial solutions.*

*The purpose of this section is transparency and accountability, reporting back to the membership in a meaningful summary that respects member confidentiality.*

I am reporting here on the second half of 2020.

For this period, the MDC investigated 5 separate incidents. Each case was evaluated thoroughly and included follow-up on the initiating complaint and any other issues identified during the investigation process. In descending order of precedence, these matters dealt with:

- Unsafe muzzle direction
- Handling of firearm with the safety curtain down.
- Not observing proper protocols per our [COVID Mitigation Plan](#)
- Shooting after the posted range hours
- Vehicle contact with range property

The investigations into these incidents have resulted in:

- 2 one-month suspensions of membership; successful completion of Level 1 Orientation required for reinstatement
- 5 temporary suspensions of membership; successful completion of Level 1 Orientation required for reinstatement.

# “What are your hours?” Well, the answer to that varies...

Members often ask about our hours, looking for clarification.

**The membership office is open 9 am - 4 pm  
Monday to Friday each week.**

The Ketchamoot Creek facility – the property where the ranges and our other club amenities are located – is open and accessible 24x7x365 unless there’s a reason we need to close it.

The firearms ranges themselves have their own hours – shooting can begin at 9 am daily throughout the year, and the end time varies with the time of year. Range hours are listed in the Range Hours section here in the newsletter as well on the website on the [Facility Rules](#) page.

## Range hours

Shooting hours begin at **9:00 a.m.** daily and end according to the following:

<b>2nd Sunday in March – April 14</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>April 15 – September 21</b>	<b>8:00 p.m.</b>
<b>September 22 – 1st Saturday in November</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>1st Sunday in November – 2nd Saturday in March</b>	<b>4:30 p.m.</b>

All firing must cease at the posted hours. These times are posted at the gate, on the website and in the newsletter. In the case of disagreement in times posted, the information on the website is to be taken as correct.

## You’re always invited!

You’re of course invited to General meetings—they’re the times when we gather as members.

But it’s not just General meetings—you’re always free to attend & observe Board meetings as well. Board meetings are held remotely on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm.

If you have a topic you’d like to speak about at a Board meeting, send an email *at least 24 hours in advance* to the **President** at [president@spfga.ca](mailto:president@spfga.ca) and the **Secretary** at [secretary@spfga.ca](mailto:secretary@spfga.ca) to have it included in the agenda.

We’d love to see you, so please come on out!

## Check the Events Calendar

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We have many amenities at our facility that our members use. It's fairly common for us to have received bookings for them, so to avoid frustration or surprises, **make sure you've checked the Events Calendar on the website before leaving to come out:** <https://www.spfga.ca/events>.



## Wildlife issues—who to call?

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Fairly regularly, we receive questions in the office regarding who to contact regarding issues with wildlife. To the right is a contact list based on animal type:

**For issues with migratory birds** (e.g. ducks, geese), contact **Canadian Wildlife Services** at **1-800-668-6767**

- **For issues with large wildlife** (e.g. bears, cougars, moose, etc.) contact **Report a Poacher** at **1-800-642-3800**
- For issues with smaller animals such as squirrels or skunks—these are dealt with on your own, or a third party animal removal company can help with the issue.





## The Enkindled Spring

*By D.H. Lawrence*

This spring as it comes bursts up in bonfires green,  
Wild puffing of emerald trees, and flame-filled bushes,  
Thorn-blossom lifting in wreaths of smoke between  
Where the wood fumes up and the watery,  
flickering rushes.

I am amazed at this spring, this conflagration  
Of green fires lit on the soil of the earth, this blaze  
Of growing, and sparks that puff in wild gyration,  
Faces of people streaming across my gaze.

And I, what fountain of fire am I among  
This leaping combustion of spring? My spirit is tossed  
About like a shadow buffeted in the throng  
Of flames, a shadow that's gone astray, and is lost.







## Join us on social media!

SPFGA is active on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram —we'd love to see you come and join in with us! Click the links below to connect to us.

**Please like & follow us** to receive news, updates & information about upcoming events. Invite family, friends and other association members to do the same!

If you have social media-related stories or photos, or material we can use on the club website, send the details in an email to the **Communications Director: [communications@spfga.ca](mailto:communications@spfga.ca)**.



[@spfga](https://www.facebook.com/spfga)



[@shpkfga](https://www.instagram.com/shpkfga)



[@spfga](https://twitter.com/spfga)

## Feel proud: You make this possible!

As SPFGA members, we have collectively contributed to making the following conservation projects possible:

<https://www.facebook.com/letsgooutdoorsca/videos/723164378084733/>

**Editor:** Roland Coppens

**Design:** Vance Yung



**SHERWOOD PARK**  
FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION