Stirling SAFARIS

NEWSLETTER

January 2025

Why Africa?
Because no other place compares!

Welcome Back To The Stirling Newsletter

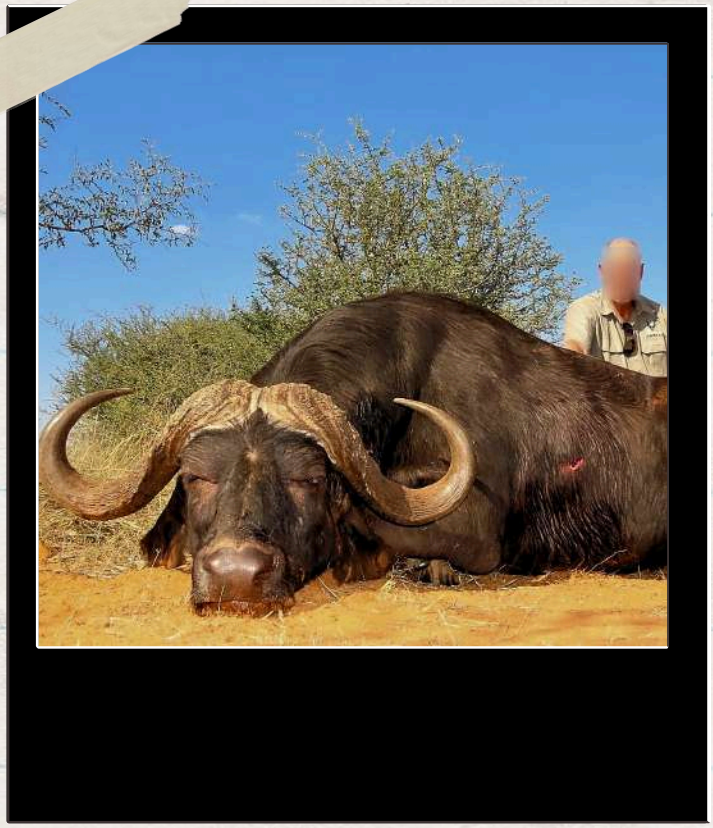
Greetings from all of us at Stirling!
We hope that this newsletter finds you in good health and spirits, well-rested and ready for the new year.
This issue is filled with exciting updates, nice-to-knows, valuable insights and useful information.

We hope you enjoy this edition as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you!
Please feel free to share this newsletter with fellow hunters.

Open Safari Dates For 2025

The following dates in Stirling's 2025 booking calendar are still uncommitted.
Since we do not double book safari dates please see if the open dates work for your next safari.
Don't delay as bookings are on a first come basis.

- **The entire month of March**
- **17-27 August**
- **12 -24 September**
- **The entire month of November**



"They look at you like you owe them money. You must place the first shot perfectly. A Buffalo, when they decide to charge, will not stop until you are gone or one of you is dead. You cannot discourage a charging buffalo with a non lethal shot as you can an elephant."

"The problem with buffalo is adrenaline. You can shoot him practically to pieces, if he gives you the chance, but he'll keep coming despite wounds that would disable a tyrannosaurus. Blow his heart to tatters, literally, and he'll have enough oxygen stored in his brain to go a hundred yards and still have the moxie to take you apart with his tent peg horns and mix you up with enough topsoil to start a modest tomato farm."

— Peter Hathaway Capstick from the book "Death in the Long Grass"

"The unusual aspect of the buff (Cape Buffalo) is that, of the three really big dangerous species, he has no weak spots in his natural defenses. He has the eyesight of a cheetah, the hearing of a hypersensitive elephant, and the smelling ability of a bird dog on a damp morning. In the bush, he can do anything that you can, including running four times your speed through cover so dense that it would make a mole claustrophobic.'"

— Peter Hathaway Capstick from the book "Death in the Long Grass"

URGENT:
Opportunity For Problem Hippo Hunt Available

A large hippo bull makes for an impressive trophy and can be exported to the U.S. Hippos are responsible for more human fatalities in Africa than any other animal and also inflict significant damage to landowners' properties, crops and plantations. Unlike elephants, hippos don't "mock charge" – when they choose to attack, only a 375 caliber rifle with a well-placed shot can stop them.

We have obtained a (problem animal control) tag in the North West Province for a bull that has become a dangerous nuisance for a farmer and needs to be dealt with urgently.

As the hippo moves in and out of the area, the hunter should book a flight to South Africa as soon as possible (preferably within the next two weeks), while the bull is active, before he leaves the area for an extended period again.

DON'T DELAY IN CONTACTING ROLAND TO SECURE THE TAG FOR YOURSELF!

What to expect?

- Hunting will take place on dry land or in the water, depending on the circumstances. . When shot in the water, the bull will sink. After some time, the buildup of decomposition gases will cause the hippo to rise to the surface, a process that can take up to two hours. Once the hippo floats, it can then be retrieved from the water.
- Hunting might take place at night which adds an adventurous element to an already thrilling experience. Night hunting allows the hunter to intercept the bull traveling between the water and its feeding grounds.
- The average shooting distance is 30–50 yards.
- The minimum legal caliber is .375 caliber.
- Good quality solid bullets are recommended.
- Shot Placement: The hippo's thick hide and fat layer make it challenging to inflict a clean shot. When hunting a hippo in the water, targeting the head is the only option. This requires the most accurate rifle you can handle to place a shot precisely between the eye and ear.

March 2025 Safari Special

The landowner of one of Stirling's concessions wants to quickly reduce the number of gemsbok and springbok on his property, as they are competing with livestock for forage. Since we have availability in March, we see this as a great opportunity to take advantage of the offer. Should a hunter book a hunt for March 2025, Stirling will throw in a gemsbok and a springbok at **no charge**.

DON'T DELAY IN BOOKING AS THIS IS A VERY TIME LIMITED OFFER!

What To Expect For 2025

The Kalahari region has experienced an exceptional five-year stretch of good rainfall, leading to thriving wildlife and excellent game conditions, presenting fantastic opportunities for our clients. Hunters can expect all game to be in prime health, with particularly impressive kudu and Cape eland bulls available for harvest.

With species like giant reedbuck and crocodile in the mix, found in our mountain and Eastern concessions, there's chance for truly unique and record-breaking trophies. It's wise to remain open-minded and flexible about taking animals of opportunity that might not have been on the list originally, as rare and once-in-a-lifetime creatures may unexpectedly cross your path.

It's shaping up to be an exciting season with many possibilities for clients seeking exceptional hunting experiences!

New Year, New Western Cape Concession

Stirling Safaris has acquired the hunting rights on a 54,000 acre concession in the Western Cape Province. This desert mountain property is home to some uncommon game species such as Cape Mountain Zebra. Giant Klipspringer, Vaal Reedbuck, Cape Bushbuck and Eastern Cape Kudu can also be hunted here.

Make a plan to join Roland in pursuit of the regional game that this area has to offer.

The Western Cape Experience is truly unique. It could be the people, the land, or the camaraderie around a crackling campfire. It might be the professional hunter who starts as a stranger but leaves as a friend. Or perhaps it's the abundant game and the incredible variety available. Ultimately, it's the unforgettable feeling that calls you back to return again.

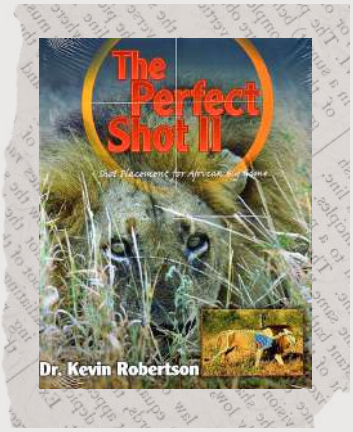
Book Club

To enhance your anticipation of an upcoming safari with Stirling, we are urging each client to "get into the mood" by establishing a personal library of African Literature.

This issue's suggested reading is

THE PERFECT SHOT II" BY KEVIN ROBERTSON

This book, written by Professional Hunter and veterinarian, Kevin Robertson, is the most comprehensive work ever undertaken to show the anatomical features for all African game. In our opinion, "Perfect Shot II" is the best knowledge preparation that the hunter can obtain before embarking on a safari.



Stirling's New Night Vision Rig

With the installation of a new thermal imaging scope, Stirling has moved the 30.06 camp rifle to night shift. When the sun sets a whole different cast of characters emerge to roam the African landscape. Take a couple of night hunts on your next safari and see for yourself what creeps through the shadows.

Sun Shield For The Rifle Scope

Over the past few seasons, some clients while setting up a shot have experienced the sun glaring in their rifle scopes which prevented the taking of some spectacular trophies. Stirling Safaris recommends that upcoming hunters add sun shield extensions to their rifle scopes in an effort to reduce the chance of a missed opportunity due to severe sun glare. Be sure to shoot the rifle multiple times after adding the sun shield in order to become thoroughly familiar with the change in weight/balance/feel.

Cheap Soft Case For Your Rifle

Safari hunting can be hard on the hunter's rifle as the firearm is repeatedly bumped on every hard surface in its path as it is moved in and out of the truck. Frequently the rifle is also handed up to ride along with the hunter in the truck's elevated open seat resulting in another series of potential contacts with rigid metal. Plans must be made to protect the rifle's finish and the scope's integrity.

It is imperative that the hunter bring a soft rifle case to shield the rifle during vehicle travel while hunting. The hunter should include in their baggage a cheap to moderately priced soft case for field use. This case will suffer the abuse of mud, dust, and blood; therefore, the hunter should refrain from utilizing a nice custom case.

Exciting Night Hunt For Hippo

In November of 2024 Jeff Cramblit of Alabama conducted his second safari with Stirling. Jeff's primary objective was to experience a challenging hippo hunt.

Since the sands of the Kalahari make a terrible habitat for hippo, Roland packed everyone up for an eastern drive to a concession with a bit more water. On this hunting area some hippos had made a nuisance of themselves by nightly raids on agricultural crops.

The preferred hunting method for these types of hippos is to creep through the fields with no artificial light and then to determine the location of the quarry by listening for grazing sounds and scanning the area with night vision optics. Once a hippo is located the hunting party eases up to within 40 yards of the target. The hunter then takes a shooting stance and awaits the illumination of the hippo by a portable light. When the light switches on all hell breaks loose and the hunter had better be quick.

We were lucky enough to get a "problem animal control" hippo tag in Hayzyview, near the Phabeni Gate of Kruger National Park – which led to Jeff joining in on this spur-of-the-moment hunt! The Kruger Park is surrounded by several villages, and hippos have been causing significant damage to local crops.

On the second night of the hunt, we waited for the rain to stop and, around 23:00, made our way into the fields. Using thermal binoculars, we spotted a massive bull about 40 yards away, hidden in some brush. Roland positioned Jeff on the sticks, and as the bull emerged, Roland switched on the light. The hippo immediately started running, but Jeff was able to take a shot from 60 yards, slowing it down enough for a kill shot. The team field-dressed the animal, and the meat was distributed to the villagers.

Reload, Dammit, Reload

Quite a few hunters take the initial shot at game and then they freeze up to admire the effects of that first shot. Instead of this "inaction", the hunter's primary reaction should be to place another cartridge in the chamber for a follow up shot. The second, third, and fourth shots are often critical in the successful recovery of a struck animal. The sooner that the subsequent shots get down range, the better.

The skills to quickly reload and fire follow up shots are best learned on the shooting range. All practice sessions should be based on firing an accurate initial shot from shooting sticks and then following up, shooting offhand, with two additional shots as quickly as possible. On most occasions, the PH will help remind the hunter by verbally stating "Reload!" after each shot.

Beartooth Shell Holder

One proven rifle accessory that we have seen here at Stirling is the Beartooth buttstock shell holder. Buttstock shell holders always ensure that extra cartridges are immediately accessible for quick reloads. This accessory also eliminates the rattling noise associated with loose rounds being carried in pockets. The Beartooth Neoprene shell loops tightly fit a variety of cartridge sizes. Other brands utilizing elastic shell holder loops have been observed "sprinkling" cartridges all over Africa. Beartooth shell holders can be found at Midway USA and Amazon.

Awaiting The Perfect Shot

While the broadside "perfect shot" is the dream of all hunters, many times the animal being pursued just refuses to cooperate. In addition an animal that already has one bullet hole in it rarely presents a broadside shot opportunity for the follow up shots.

If the hunter becomes fixated on awaiting the broadside shot a great deal of shot chances will erode with some never presenting again. The hunter must be prepared mentally from the outset of the hunt that the "non-perfect shot" may be the one required.

Game anatomy must be fully understood to execute a non broadside shot. The hunter needs to envision the position of the heart, lungs, brain, and spine from all angles. Choosing a bullet path that has to travel through non vital areas to impact the vitals is not an uncommon occurrence. Frontal, quartering to, quartering away, and rear shots are just as likely to be encountered as the broadside shot. With mental preparation, followed by good bullet placement, these "non-perfect shots" will bring home the bacon.

Here is the link to our "*Shot Placement Guide*"

Off The Wall

One of our clients recently received some of his past trophies from Stirling and they are looking amazing.

A well-mounted trophy can be a true work of art, offering the hunter years of cherished memories and visual enjoyment each time it's admired.

Contact our trusted taxidermist, **Moredou,**
and create a lasting tribute to your hunting experience.

https://www.moredoutaxidermy.com

Curio Curiosities

THE SAFARI JOURNAL

Keeping a journal is an excellent way to preserve your memories of time spent on safari. Diary style entries of hunt details, animal encounters, meals, people met, weather and general experiences will be greatly appreciated as the years separate you from the safari adventure.

In the Stirling Curio Shop we carry a variety of 144 page, 5x7 handmade journals that are great for recording each day's happenings. These leather-bound journals have closure flaps of different game skin. A Stirling journal would make a wonderful addition to your trophy room.

Cooking Stirling Style

ROOSTERKOEK

The word "roosterkoek" translates to "barbecued-grid cake".

Roosterkoek is a traditional South African bread that originated with the Khoi people of the Cape region that baked bread using open coals centuries ago. It has since become a staple of South African braais.

Roosterkoek can be eaten plain or stuffed with fillings like cheese, jam, or meat.

Ingredients

- 4 cups cake wheat flour
- 1 packet instant yeast
- ½ tot salt
- 1¾ cups lukewarm water

Note:

- You have to braai roosterkoek over hot coals and turn them often. If the coals are not hot enough, the dough will sink into the grid and get stuck before it has the chance to firm up.
- When making this recipe for the first time, aim for 12 roosterkoek. Afterwards, you can decide if you prefer the roosterkoek bigger or smaller, and adjust the number of roosterkoek to your liking.

Method

#1 In a bowl, mix together the flour, yeast and salt. Then, add the water, and use your hands to mix until everything is combined and the dough comes together.

#2 Cover the dough in the bowl with cling wrap so that the cling wrap sticks directly onto the top of the dough. Leave the dough to rise for 1 hour.

#3 After 1 hour, sprinkle some extra flour onto the surface of a table or work area. Remove the cling wrap from the dough. Scrape the dough out of the mixing bowl onto the floured surface. Add more flour onto and over the dough. This extra flour makes the dough easy to handle. The dusting of flour will also make your roosterkoek look pretty.

#4 Use your hands to spread out the dough. Then, cut the dough into 12 roosterkoek portions.

#5 Place all of the pieces of dough onto a big enough tray and use this tray to transport them to the fire. If any of the pieces of dough are sticky and difficult to handle, dust them with more flour.

#6 At the fire, pack the roosterkoek onto your braai grid. Braai for about 15 minutes over hot coals, turning a few times until the roosterkoek is done with brown spots forming here and there. Break one open to see if it is ready.

#7 Serve and enjoy with butter or any other toppings of your choice.

Did You Know?

Have you seen the mini African kangaroo?

THE SPRINGHARE...

The Springhare is not a hare but a rodent. This unusual rodent species, which appears to be a cross between a kangaroo and a rabbit, has caused scientists much confusion.

They are best hunted in the semi-arid grasslands of the Northern Cape and North West provinces of South Africa. Springhares are mainly hunted for display purposes and used as a prey species by taxidermists when mounting a small predator. Springhares sleep in burrows during the day emerging at night to forage and are hunted with the aid of a spotlight. Their massive eyes reflect brightly at night and can be seen from a distance by the bobbing motion as they hop around on their hind legs. Springhares are considered as a species of least concern by the IUCN. However, if trophies are imported to the United States, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has special rodent import regulations governing the importation of these trophies.

Here are some interesting facts about Springhares:

- Jumping: Springhares are known as "mini-kangaroos" because they can jump over 3 meters in a single leap.
- Speed: Springhares can run fast to escape predators like cheetahs and birds of prey.
- Habitat: Springhares are found in dry savannas of Kenya and Tanzania as well as in Southwestern Africa. Their distribution is scattered and limited to open areas free of rocks and large bushes (which would interfere with their leaping) and with sandy soil.
- Nocturnal: Springhares are nocturnal but can also be active during the day.
- Social: Springhares are solitary animals in the wild, but they can coexist well in captivity.
- Hunting: Springhares are vulnerable to intense hunting.
- Ears: Springhares have a small flap of skin below their ear that protects their inner ear from sand and soil.
- Nostrils: Springhares can close their nostrils to keep out sand and dust.
- Tail: Springhares have long tails that help them balance.
- Claws: Springhares have sharp claws on their short forelegs for digging and burrowing.

...once you have hunted Africa you will never come all the way home

Why Africa?

VARIETY OF GAME
Whether you want to experience the Big 5 or hunt the elusive Tiny Ten, Africa has everything from the biggest to the smallest, and everything in between!
Nearly 30 different species of animals can be legally and regulated hunted in South Africa.

UNIQUE TERRAIN
Africa has a variety of terrain, including savannahs, forests, and wilderness areas. Africa has abundant wildlife, and you will get to experience sights and sceneries like you have never seen before.

HUNTING HISTORY
Africa has a rich hunting history with century-old traditions.

CONSERVATION
Hunting is a wonderful way to support conservation, diversity, social and economic reform in rural areas, and eco-tourism. It also supports sustainable hunting, and in South Africa, this is strictly regulated by the government, with endangered species requiring the presence of a TOPS permit.

ACCESSIBILITY
Hunting in some African countries is accessible and affordable, especially for beginners . You are able to book a very enjoyable plains game hunting safari in South Africa for considerably less than the average elk hunt in the western states of America.

Frequently Asked Questions

Have questions?

Our goal is to provide you with all the information you need to turn your dream African hunting safari into a reality. There are often common questions that arise. We've compiled some of these questions and their answers below. If something is unclear, hasn't been addressed here, or if you'd like to ask us something directly, please don't hesitate to reach out.

CAN I BRING MY PERSONAL FIREARMS?

Yes. Personal firearms from the USA are easily imported to South-Africa with no government fee required.

CAN I RENT A RIFLE FOR MY SAFARI?

Yes. Please enquire about the variety of calibres available.

HOW DO I GET MY TROPHIES BACK HOME?

While we do not handle the taxidermy process of your trophies ourselves, we work with trusted partners in the industry.
Our team handles the field preparation of your trophies (skinning, drying, and salting) free of charge.
Thereafter your trophies will be sent to our taxidermist for dipping, packaging, and export.
You will be invoiced by the taxidermy company directly for these costs.
You will receive your trophies within 7-12 months with some shipments taking up to 18 months.

WHAT TYPE OF FOOD CAN WE EXPECT?

We have an amazing chef, catering for a traditional African experience from bush braais to fine dining. We serve 3 meals per day including snacks, soft drinks and liquor.
We also do field to table catering, preparing lovely meals from the venison of the days hunt.
You will receive a form to complete prior to your safari regarding any dietary restrictions and preferences.

WHAT IS THE TERRAIN LIKE?

African hunting terrain varies widely depending on the region, but typically includes:

- open savannas
- dense bushveld
- sandy terrains
- rolling hills
- arid plains, and
- mountain areas, with diverse vegetation ranging from thick thorny bushes to sparse grasslands

offering a mix of challenges for hunters depending on the specific location and game species you are pursuing.

Frequently Asked Questions Continued

WHAT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION WILL I NEED?

- Copy of passport (South-Africa does not require a visa)
- Copy of flight itinerary that includes return flight
- Letter of invitation from Stirling Safaris (Stirling Safaris will send you the Letter of Invitation when visiting dates are agreed upon and finalized.)
- Rifle documentation if you are traveling with personal firearms

WHAT IS THE DISTANCE OF THE SHOTS I'LL BE TAKING?

It depends on the terrain and situation.
In the Kalahari concessions, the average range is between 100 and 200 yards.
In the mountain concessions, the average range is between 100 and 300 yards.

WHAT GEAR DO I NEED TO PACK?

We know packing for an African safari can be a bit overwhelming and can be a daunting task for first time travelers, therefor we put together a recommended packing list as a guideline.

You can download our Recommended Packing List here

WHO WILL MEET ME AT THE AIRPORT?

We will either personally meet you at the airport and assist with collecting your bow/rifle(s) if you are traveling with any or we make use of trusted shuttle services if we are unable to meet you at the airport ourselves.

Stirling Safaris has partnered with a Johannesburg-based company that provides VIP meet-and-greet services, offering hunters a convenient and welcoming option upon arrival.
The VIP meet-and-greet service consists of having someone meet you when you step off of the plane and that representative will walk you through every step of the entry process. This representative is very well versed in the entry process and use of this service will take all guesswork and apprehension out of dealing with entry officials.
This is at an additional fee that will be added to your Stirling Safaris invoice -you do not pay these fees directly.

You can download our Airport/Flight Step-By-Step Guide here

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE DURATION OF AN AFRICAN SAFARI?

The duration of the safari depends on the list of animals being hunted but generally we recommend a minimum of 7 days hunting and 2 days traveling.

IS HUNTING IN SOUTH AFRICA SAFE?

Yes. South Africa is regarded as a safe destination for hunting. Hunters are met at the airport or guest house and driven directly to the hunting area. The hunter is always accompanied by a local representative that knows what areas to avoid. As long as large cities, impoverished areas and travel at night is avoided, South Africa is a safe country to hunt in.

CAN I CHANGE MY MIND ON ANIMALS TO HUNT?

Yes. You only pay for the animals you harvest (or wound). If you wish to substitute an animal, you're free to do so at any time. You can also add more animals to your package for an additional cost, with no restrictions on species.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME FOR HUNTING IN SOUTH AFRICA?

South Africa allows for hunting year-round, but we recommend the cooler months from March through to September. The winter months of April, May and June are the ideal time of year for an African safari due to the rut.

Satisfy The "Out of Africa" Itch You've Been Dreaming Of

We take each individual's specific requirements into consideration and offer personalized, tailor-made packages to suit your needs. Stirling operates across multiple regions, and regardless of your skill level or background, your trip is planned for maximum enjoyment and success.

We take great pride in our high percentage of return clients. For many, it was their first trip to Africa, while for others, it marked a return for a thrilling dangerous game safari or even an annual visit to camp. Each experience is unique, but our commitment to exceptional service keeps our clients coming back year after year.

READY TO BOOK YOUR ADVENTURE? LET'S GO!

Take the first step towards a lifetime of unforgettable African hunting memories. Don't wait—your adventure of a lifetime is just one booking away!

Looking forward to seeing all the new and familiar faces in camp soon!

HAPPY HUNTING!

Roland & The Stirling Team

www.stirlingsafaris.com | stirlingsafaris@gmail.com | +27 79 508 4806