

# Outdoors



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE



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**Brian Neureuther**  
*with a chunky  
fall Steelie*



# Hunting for North Shore Fall Steelhead

*By Samantha Neureuther*

Every die-hard Steelhead angler won't be packing up their river gear just yet. While we can bet that most Northerners will now be gearing up or in the middle stage of hunting season, for you anglers don't forget that our fall Steelhead fishing has some of the best and most aggressive rainbows around. And not to mention the near or complete solitude of having a river or area to fish to yourself during hunting season, something we in Northern Ontario truly are lucky for.

These beauties take a lot more time and patience compared to your average spring Steelhead, but the payout of a chrome fall Steel is worth the challenge, time, and effort to find and tangle with one.

Mid September into October the Steelhead will make their way into select rivers on our North Shore Lake Superior tributaries and follow the Salmon into the rivers, munching on salmon eggs. Using a drift float setup rigged with a roe bag or a small bead mimicking an egg ; the same you would do in the spring, is a well known first choice while river fishing for Steelhead in the fall. Casting in a flashy spinner or spoon into the river will also entice a fall Steel. Once you feel the power of a chrome rocket of a Steelhead you will understand why fall steelhead can and will become addicting for any angler. The sheer power of these Autumn fish make all the difference between a spring and a fall Steelhead, although it's hard to beat either of these great opportunities to fish for these magnificent trout.

Watch the water conditions; Steelhead just like the Salmon they are following, need lots of rain like in the Spring to make their way into the river. Wait until a few good rainfalls to explore the smaller tributaries. If there has been little to no rain, stick to the bigger rivers like the Nipigon. Or try your hand at targeting them on Lake Superior by boat, or using a fishing kayak!

Fall Steelhead can also be found cruising near the river mouths of our Lake Superior tributaries this time of year. Before heading out on the big lake it is a MUST to check wind and weather conditions before you plan your trip, we all know how Lake Superior can turn nasty. Targeting them by Flatlining is a great way to do so. Start by rigging up a flashy spoon, plug, or deep diving Rapala. I like to use Cotton Cordell's Silver Ripplin' Redfin trolling the rocky shorelines or drop-offs in 15-25 feet of water at around 2-4mph. Try to keep at least 50 to 100 feet of line behind the boat, as this will drown out the boat noise and not spook the near by fish. Start anywhere from 15 to 25 feet of water near the shorelines or on a rocky drop off. This method has produced many nice steelhead and also the occasional Salmon. Casting from the shoreline with Mighty Mitch Jigflies and assorted Spoons will also work well for steelhead in the fall.

Soon there will be ice covering the lakes and rivers, and snow is starting to fly! Now is the time to get out there and experience fishing these acrobatic beauties one last time before winter sets in! Happy Steelhead Hunting!



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### The McConnell family enjoying a game cutting and wrapping party



## Making the Cut

*By Rich Brochu, NOSA Member*

Like many hunters, the hope for a successful harvest and meat in the freezer for the winter is an annual ritual I take pride in. Ensuring the sustenance is handled properly from the field to the table is an area I have mastered throughout many years of experience. While many hunters seek to find a butcher to cut their yearly harvest, I have been fortunate enough to have learned this important skill. Taking extra care to ensure my family and friends harvests are handled in the best way possible has always been top priority.

Field dressing the animal once it hits the forest floor is the first important step in ensuring your prize will deliver the great tasting protein we all hope to get from our harvest. Whether you quarter the animal or take it home in full, making sure that the least possible dirt and contaminants touch the meat will go a long way in safeguarding and delivering the best quality meat. Once at home hanging the meat will be important. Depending on the type of animal, the length of hanging time can vary. I usually let a bear or deer hang for a few days depending on the temperatures and moose hang a few days longer. Everyone has their own opinions on this process and my opinion would be doing what is best for you and your experience. Taking the fur off the animal is also another preference left to those who have harvested the animal. I prefer keeping the hide on until the night before I butcher the animal. I find if the hide is removed too early, the meat can dry and make it more difficult to cut.

Once the hide is off the animal it's important to clean the meat as best you can to remove unwanted hair and any other contaminants that may be on the animal. Some hunters prefer to quarter it, while others will cut it in half. At this stage most hunters will bring their meat to the butchers to be processed or have a butcher come to their residence and have it done there. Being part of the butchering process is time consuming and at times a lot of work, but very satisfying. Taking pride in the process helps hunters enjoy the full circle of their harvest. Knowing how it is handled is also another important aspect some hunters prefer.

Understanding the cuts when butchering an animal becomes common place as you learn how it's done. Some of the cuts within the hind quarters are sirloin, sirloin tip, inside and outside round, eye of round and part of the T-bone. All hunters appear to know where the tenderloins are to be found. My suggestion would be to remove those after the harvest as they can dry up if left in the animal for a prolonged period. The fact they come from within the cavity of the animal and more prone to be exposed to contaminants is another good reason to remove them. In the front part of the animal, you will find your blade roast, prime rib and also part of the T-bone. The hind quarters hold the bulk of the prize cuts while the front of the animal holds your stewing meat, sausage meat and burger.

Through the years I have invested in a good meat grinder and a minute steak machine. Some hunters will add fat to their burger meat while others prefer to leave it as is. Moose burger is very lean and my preference is to leave it as is. Worst case scenario is adding butter while cooking your burger and honestly, who doesn't like butter! If you are fortunate enough to find a butcher with a minute steak machine you won't regret it. It can turn some of the toughest cuts into delicious steaks that can be marinated and offer great table fair.

Most hunters prefer their animal to be de-boned. This means all bones are removed and just the meat is wrapped and packed for freezing. Some say by doing this it removes the wild taste in the animal. In my opinion the most important thing once you've harvested your animal is to take all necessary steps to ensure the process from forest to table is done as best you can. Keeping the animal clean and free from contaminants can go a long way in making sure you'll enjoy your harvest over the long winter months ahead. Good luck on your next hunt and no matter how you have your animal processed, you will be assured you are eating the finest organic meat available.

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# A Partridge in a Poplar Tree



**Jenni Pearson enjoying success of a ruffed grouse hunt.**

*By Jennifer Pearson*

On the first day of grouse hunting season, the weather is still warm, the leaves are putting on their autumn display. The woods are full of stir-crazy hunters hoping to test their luck, as well-camouflaged birds sit tucked away snickering to themselves each time a fully loaded side by side buzzes by in a blur of plaid or blaze orange. At least that is what I imagine they are thinking to themselves, since I never seem to spot the elusive ruffed grouse once their internal calendar sends them a notification that the hunt is legally open!

Too many hunters and too many leaves on the branch! At least it seems that way. That is why I avoid the September 15th opener. Instead, I wait until a bit later in the season, once the leaves and the temperature drops. In my experience, the best chance at harvesting your limit is that sweet spot between the leaves falling, greatly increas-

ing visibility, and the first real snow. That initial snow and the days following does slow them down for a little while but like any prey, they will have to emerge eventually for food and will be back scampering through the woods once again.

After spending enough time hunting grouse, you will notice certain behaviours that are characteristic of the species to help you predict their next move. For example, if you come upon a grouse all puffed out strutting along the trail acting like he owns the place, more often than not, if you listen in the bushes for scraping or “kissing sounds” and sweep along the treeline, there will most likely be another bird, sometimes several, just within reach. If you are quick, you can get both and be on your merry way. Keep in mind that the daily limit is 5 birds, with a possession limit of 15 in NWO.

I always find it interesting to sex the birds I harvest. Males will have a black ring on their tail feathers that is solid throughout the whole semi circle whereas the females, the stripe is not as solid along with being smaller in size. You should also know your species. Ruffed grouse are found throughout most of Ontario as opposed to their smaller and apparently fearless cousin the spruce grouse that is commonly found in Northern Ontario coniferous forests. Although both birds can be located in NWO, they are very different in behaviour along with the colour and taste of the meat.

If you are using a shotgun, aim for the head of the bird by putting the bead directly on their skull to avoid a body shot. If the bird is sitting down oblivious to your presence, make a small noise to get it to stretch out its neck, giving you a better shot. I won't shoot unless I know it will be a clean kill shot because I don't want an animal to suffer. Also, nobody likes to clean a blasted-up lead-filled bird! My diet has enough iron in it already and I don't care to chip a tooth!

Always keep a positive attitude. Just because you spook a bird and it takes off in flurry, does not mean to give up on it. Be observant and see how far they flew and in what direction. Oftentimes, it is only 15 meters away up the trail or in a spruce tree within walking distance. Don't be afraid to get your boots wet if your mobility permits it and punch through the trees to get a better look. It's always a little extra fun to earn your classic crispy fried grouse and beans.

Lastly, hunting grouse with a partner has many benefits. And utilizing an ATV has become a popular method for covering ground in the grouse woods. My husband and I will often take turns as the ATV driver and the hunter, each taking a side to scan for birds looking and listening for the shape or any movement on the side of the trail. The driver will maintain a slow and steady speed of between 12-15km. The hunter will shoulder the unloaded firearm and be ready to hop off the bike to shoot. On the way back, we switch. A lesson I have learned is if you spot a bird right beside your wheel as you drive by, keep driving at least 10m up the road and keep the bike running to not scare off the bird by jumping out on top of it or startling it. (Bonus of hunting with a partner: you can warm your hands, trade snacks and have an extra set of eyes to spot a partridge in a poplar tree!)

NOTE: Know the rules when using a vehicle to travel while hunting, don't carry a loaded firearm in or on the vehicle and do not shoot from a vehicle. Be sure to only shoot at game by stepping off the travelled portion of the trail or road and do not shoot along or from the travelled portion of a maintained roadway. When in doubt, consult your local OMNR Enforcement Branch for information about where it is legal and permissible to hunt along secondary/tertiary bush roads and trails.

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# 2020 NOSA Sportswomen and Sportsman Of The Year Award



## THIS MONTH'S NEWS



Executive Director John Kaplanis recently announced the recipients of the 2020 NOSA Sportswoman and Sportsman of the Year Awards. The awards are normally announced at the Annual Dinner Event however this year due to COVID, the event was cancelled.

The 2020 NOSA Sportswoman of the Year Award was given to Samantha Neureuther. Samantha is an avid angler and huntress and she owns and operates Larry's Baits in Kakabeka Falls with her husband Brian. She is a regular contributor to the NOSA Northwestern Ontario Outdoors news publication as well. Samantha is an outstanding ambassador for the outdoor lifestyle that many northern families like hers get to enjoy. Thank you Samantha for your continued efforts!

The 2020 NOSA Sportsman of the Year Award goes to Rich Brochu. Rich is also an avid sport angler and hunter, and trapper. Rich is a fantastic outdoorsman and family man who recently retired. He is also an aspiring outdoors writer and photographer, regularly contributing to the NOSA NWO Outdoors news publication and also to the monthly Chronicle Journal Outdoors Guide magazine. NOSA is lucky to have him on board as a contributing member and volunteer. Rich is an exemplary ambassador for our northern outdoors lifestyle. Thank you Rich for your continued help with the organization!




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*Samantha*

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## Make the Call

By John Kaplanis, Executive Director/NOSA

I recently got together for a coffee with a buddy of mine, Davis Viehbeck, who is also an OMNRF Conservation Officer. I like to catch up with the latest news from the field, trends observed by COs, anecdotal information about hunter behaviour etc. Our chats are always interesting, and Davis has no shortage of stories from his experiences in the field. But one disturbing trend he finds each year remains a constant bother to the MNR's enforcement ranks, and it should likewise also bother the conservation minded moose hunters out there among us.

Davis explained to me that each year moose are shot and intentionally abandoned by a few careless hunters who mistakenly shoot the wrong moose or who shoot more moose than for which they're licenced for. On average, the Thunder Bay District sees 4 to 6 moose shot and left each hunting season that are reported. Many other moose go unreported or are reported too late to salvage valuable evidence needed for an investigation. This is an incredible waste of a valuable resource in an era where moose conservation is challenged on many fronts.

On behalf of Conservation Officers, Viehbeck encourages hunters to slow down and properly identify their target and what lies beyond their target. Use binoculars if necessary. Many hunters rush their shots, shoot too far, or shoot in low light or poor visibility conditions resulting in mistakenly shot animals. Spike bulls shot as cows, yearling cows shot as calves seem to be most common.


Hunters can help stop this disturbing trend. It is hunters who are most often the eyes and ears in the field that provide valuable information to OMNRF Enforcement officers. As moose hunters and conservationists, we need to join the efforts of OMNRF to inform the hunting public two key points: First, if you find a dead moose or suspect that a moose has been shot and left, don't assume someone else has already called in the moose you've located. Call the MNR TIPS line at 1-877-TIPS-MNR and give the location of the moose, the sex of the moose and any other observations. Secondly, if you're a hunter that has made a mistake, do the right thing and contact the MNR TIPS line immediately. A dispatcher will provide you with directions and put an officer in touch with you. Worst case scenario if the hunter self-reports an incident of this type, is a \$365 ticket. No firearm seizures, vehicle seizures or mandatory court appearance will occur. Those are all penalties that go along with someone who shoots a moose and abandons the animal to spoil.

If you report a moose kill to the TIPS line, an officer will contact you by phone and most likely direct you to field dress the animal if it is still fresh, to prevent spoiling and will meet you at the kill site to further investigate the situation. The animal will be seized, processed and donated to the Regional Food Distribution Association or other charitable organization for distribution to those in need.

NOSA has become active in the Thunder Bay District by informing and educating moose hunters on the importance of taking the time to correctly identify the moose for which hunters are licensed to harvest. Our "Hunters: Know the Difference" bill-board campaign is a reminder to hunters to make sure of their target. Your help will go a long way to reducing the number of moose that are mistakenly shot and abandoned in the field. Go ahead, make the call! Thank you for your assistance!



### Hunters: Know the Difference



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# CCFR Integrity March in Ottawa

By Tracey Wilson, Vice President of  
Public Relations/Canadian Coalition of Firearms Rights



## THIS MONTH'S NEWS



A warm, bright sun shone on the architectural magnificence that is Parliament Hill on Saturday, September 12, 2020. For weeks we had been planning the Integrity March, not sure what to expect, but unwavering in our commitment to make a bold statement to legislators.

"We have no idea what to expect," said CCFR CEO Rod Giltaca the morning of the Integrity March. "We could arrive to 100 people or 1000. My hopes are that people recognize the importance of what we are trying to do here, we are fighting this Liberal gun ban on every single front."

As the morning waned, we headed for the sprawling lawn of the commons to speak with Parliamentary Protective Services, accompanied by a small group of friends and supporters. As we ascended the stone steps and the vast expanse of the crowd came into view, an overwhelming pride grew.

Before us stood a crowd of thousands, congregated well before the posted event time, standing ready to march on Ottawa. They fell quiet as we neared them but erupted in a chorus of cheers as we shouted into the megaphone, "what's up, Canada!". It was like thunder, and we knew right then, we are not alone, we are united, and we have the support we needed.

Together in one massive, winding trail, we walked through the streets of this hallowed city, peacefully, led by the poignant sounds of bagpipes and the beating of a drum.

We encircled so many city blocks that as the front of the march reared the last corner, the end of the group was yet to step off the hill and start. Our line was nearly a kilometer in length.

It was something to behold by any account. The pipe band played continuously as patio-goers and tourists stopped and watched. At the rear of the massive procession was our field officer team armed with garbage bags, ensuring we left the city cleaner than we found it. Families, friends and complete strangers walked together and, in that moment, – we were one.

We met people from every corner of this country, from every walk of life, gun owners and non-gun owners, every demographic was represented by the massive crowd. We heard tales of travel from great distances, stories of sacrifice due to COVID measures that would await folks upon their return to their province, and so many positive, encouraging words that it was almost too much to bear. It spelled out what we already knew – that the hundreds of thousands of good Canadians who are affected by these punitive, Liberal decisions are fed up. They want a safer Canada too, and gun bans aren't how we get there.

Safety is always top of mind for the CCFR and our supporters. We went to great lengths to ensure we had a robust Covid-19 policy in place, provided PPE to our group and tried our best to follow protocols on distancing. The entire event was outdoors, and the added benefit of a march is it keeps participants moving, and there is less close contact. The remainder of our PPE, masks and sanitizer has been donated to the Perley Rideau Veterans Home in Ottawa.

We had a couple, loyal opposition members join us as we walked, and of course, the independent media was out in full force, telling the true stories of real Canadians that the mainstream media refuses to. By all accounts, between 4,500 and 5,000 gun owners showed up while the MSM ran with an estimate of 800.

All this in the middle of a pandemic and a recession. Gun owners are truly remarkable people.

So, in the end, if the goal was to find "integrity in Ottawa," we found it around every corner. From the hard-

working supporters who made the effort and the trip to stand shoulder to shoulder with us, to the journalists, free of Liberal corruption, who helped tell the story, Integrity was in good supply.

### No sign of Bill Blair or Justin Trudeau ...

The CCFR is clearly leading the fight against this undemocratic gun ban in every way. CCFR has launched the largest, most comprehensive federal court challenge on behalf of gun owners against the Government in Canadian history. CCFR has filed a massive injunction to stay the OIC gun ban. CCFR continues to produce multiple TV documentaries to educate Canadians, shown on WildTV and Sportsman Channel Canada. CCFR has engaged a massive mainstream media advertising campaign consisting of 68 full-page newspaper articles across the country. CCFR and firearms owners have marched on Ottawa for the first time in 22 years. We will not go quietly. We will not stare at our empty gun safes, wondering what the outcome could have been had we put in more effort. Doing nothing is not an option.

### Status of the ongoing CCFR federal court action:

- Main action has been filed in federal court (CCFR et al vs Canada)
- Motion for an injunction has been filed and will be heard in January – if successful we go back to pre-May 1 conditions until the main case is heard and a judgement received.
- Cross-examination of witnesses has begun
- Government is delaying providing their evidence, asking for 8 years for ATIPs
- Coalition for Gun Control is intervening in our action to defend the government and the gun ban
- Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms is intervening on our action on our behalf
- The "banned list" continues to grow as 48 shotguns have been added as "variants of an AR-15"
- Hunters across the country scramble as many bolt action and semi auto hunting rifles caught in ban
- The RCMP firearms lab continue to add more rifles & shotguns to list – 344 to date



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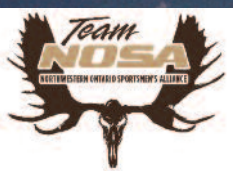


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# Rifle Scope Options

*By Justin Reid*

With any purchase of outdoor gear or equipment, there is usually a trade-off between price and quality. Rifle scopes are no exception. It can be difficult to determine an appropriate amount to spend on a scope, especially when you're unsure of which features really matter. Above all, it is most important that you find an optic that suits the style of hunting you do and pair it to the rifle and caliber that you shoot.

For the average hunter, a 3x-9x variable power scope with a 40mm objective lens is by far the most popular configuration for rifle scopes. They are effective and reliable, with a range of anywhere from 10-150 yards. Though there are exceptions, the terrain and cuts around the Thunder Bay area mean most animal sightings and shooting opportunities occur within 200 yards. On the other hand, while using a rangefinder in cutovers that are 2-3 years old, visibility can reach up to 1000 yards. This might not be an ideal range to squeeze the trigger, but with enough practice and the proper rifle and optics, a shot out to 500 yards is entirely possible. I personally have found myself in situations similar to this. I would sit on a hillside and hunt areas where Whitetail Deer could be anywhere from 50-500 yards out. I came to the realization that, without capable optics or sufficient practice to shoot out to that distance, I'm missing out on many opportunities to make something happen.

After a few experiences like this I decided to switch to a Burris scope in a 4.5x-14x power scope with a 42mm objective lens. I find 4.5x power is a good minimum as it still allows me to narrow in on a target within 50 yards, and the 14x power is clear enough to reach out to 300 yards comfortably. With a proper scope and enough practice, you gain the capability and confidence to shoot farther than 300 yards, and hopefully end up with a successful harvest.

These days, getting into a solid rifle scope doesn't need to involve breaking the bank. Brands such as Vortex, Burris, Bushnell, and Leupold offer great optics and impressive clarity, costing anywhere from \$300 and up. Vortex specifically sells a Crossfire rifle scope that starts in the low \$200 range and offers an unconditional VIP lifetime warranty. For the value you receive, this optic is super hard to beat.

Another topic that is often overlooked is rings and bases. I personally tend to stay away from aluminum rings on a high power rifle. With the varying temperatures in our area, aluminum has a higher tendency to expand and contract. I have had guns sighted in during the fall, and by the time the following spring comes by, screws have become loose. Since switching to a steel base and ring set, I find sighting in from year to year requires little to no adjustment and the higher quality screws seem to stay true throughout the season. Little decisions like this while building your next hunting rifle just might make all the difference when it comes to accuracy. With this in mind, I have confidence knowing that if a mistake is made after pulling the trigger, it would more than likely be due to user error and not the rifle itself.

A quality rifle scope to match your rifle is just as important as the rifle itself. Taking time before hunting season to dial in your rifle to pair to your hunting style is crucial and could make all the difference on the next hunt. Next time you're in the market for a new rifle scope, stop in to D&R Sporting Goods in Thunder Bay and we can talk optics. With various options like Vortex, Leupold, Hawke, Burris, Bushnell and more, your next rifle scope could very well be sitting on our shelves!



# Members In The Field



Kira Fry with her fall 2020 whitetail buck



Shayleen Ahtila enjoys autumn grouse hunting success



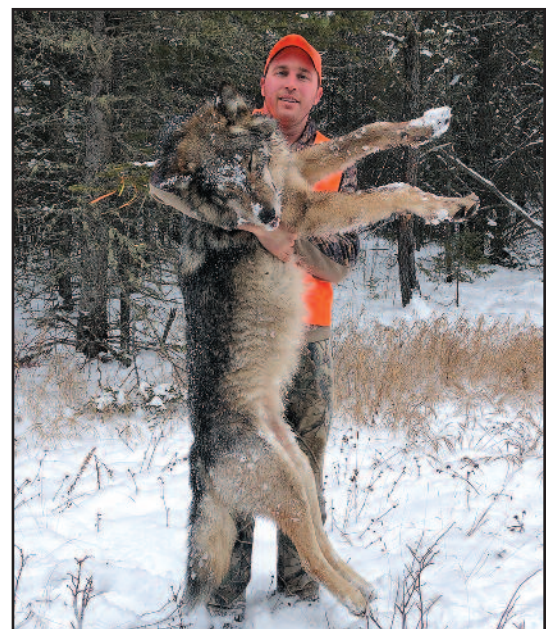
Jeremy Gardiner enjoys Sharptailed Grouse hunting success



Shannon Fry with her fall 2020 archery cow moose



Domenica Thurier and daughter Mila with a haul of ruffed grouse



Lundy Thurier doing his part to control the wolf population on his trapline



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