

CLOSER

THE HUNTING MAGAZINE FROM
SWAROVSKI OPTIK

GIVING
**BACK
TO
NATURE**

ANNETTE OELOFSE
AND HER OKONJATI
GAME RESERVE

**MUSK
OX**

ARCTIC HUNTING DREAMS

**ONE BRAND
ONE COMMUNITY
BUILDING BRIDGES**

THE ESSENCE OF US ALL
LOVE OF NATURE

EUR 4.50


**SWAROVSKI
OPTIK**



LEGAL NOTICE

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“WE CAN LOVE OURSELVES BY LOVING THE EARTH”

— Wangari Maathai



Dear readers,

Have you ever had experiences like these? Those special moments when distant objects feel vibrantly close? When perception is heightened and the observer becomes one with nature? A sight that truly touches the heart is worth so much more than a thousand fleeting glimpses. It's these moments that enrich our lives, move us deeply, and give us strength. Let's share these precious instants of true connection with nature! The photo gallery at the beginning of this magazine shows the magic experienced by hunting enthusiasts from all over the world.

Hunting is among the most intense and beautiful activities that you can engage in outdoors. You live, feel, think, and act at nature's pace. Or as a saying appropriately puts it: "The hunter's luck is but a moment."

We strongly believe that nature represents an immense source of strength for everyone, not just for us hunters. It boosts all aspects of health. Body, soul, and mind find peace, gather strength, and replenish energy. We rediscover a sense of harmony on a physical, mental, and emotional level. This gift awaits us every time we set out on an expedition, whether we're strolling through a forest or hiking over fields and meadows...

Wherever we are, Mother Nature has so many benefits to offer us.

So surely it is in our best interest to preserve these treasures? An intact and pristine environment allows us to fully appreciate its beauty and to draw strength from it. The more people recognize that protection of nature, biodiversity, and the climate is a win-win situation for everyone, the more nature lovers will also commit to this cause.

Our aim as a company is to preserve the environment, to protect nature, and to maintain biodiversity. We would be delighted if we could inspire many more people to do the same. Not only for the love of nature, but also for the love of our fellow humans and – not least – ourselves.

Carina Schiestl-Swarovski

CARINA SCHIESTL-SWAROVSKI
Chairwoman of the Executive Board
SWAROVSKI OPTIK.
SEE THE UNSEEN.



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ANNETTE OELOFSE
Giving back to nature



EYES FOR THE NIGHT
The latest product development
from SWAROVSKI OPTIK

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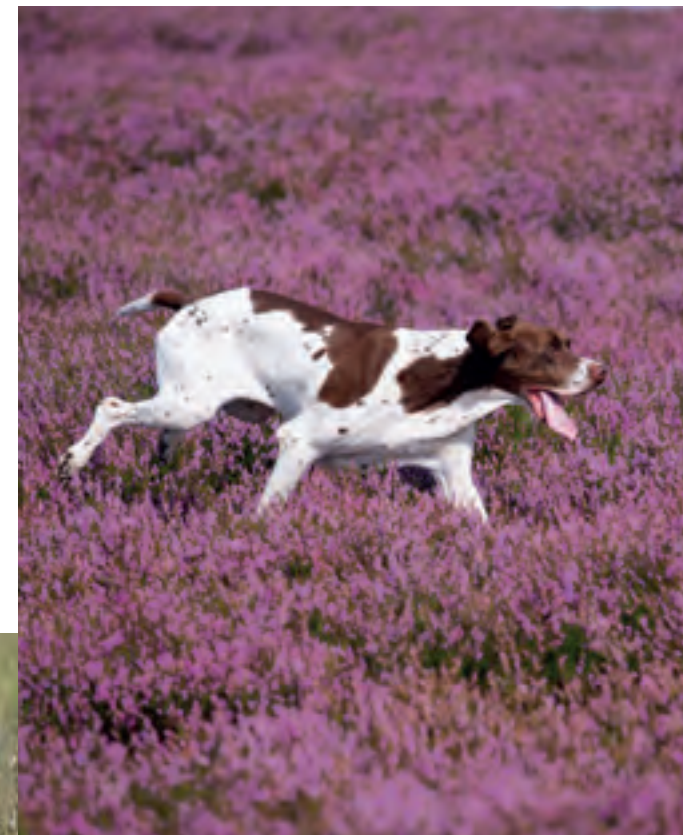
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Where heather meets
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Always there for you



A CLOSER LOOK



WE INVITED CLOSER READERS TO SHARE
THEIR FAVORITE PHOTOS WITH US. ON THE
FOLLOWING PAGES, YOU CAN FIND A SELECTION OF
THE MOST THRILLING OBSERVATIONS OF NATURE.



WILD BOAR
(*SUS SCROFA*)

Credit/photo: Patrick van Asselt
Location: Veluwe, the Netherlands
@wildlife.addiction



RED-BACKED SHRIKE
FEMALE (*LANIUS COLLURIO*)

Credit/photo: Davorin Jurković
Location: Lič, Gorski Kotar, Croatia





ROE DEER FAWN
(CAPREOLUS CAPREOLUS)

Credit/photo: Davorin Jurković
Location: Lič, Gorski Kotar, Croatia



GREEN WOODPECKER
(*PICUS VIRIDIS*)

Credit/photo: Thomas Rogl
Location: Puchenau, Austria





CINNAMON BEAR
(*URSUS AMERICANUS CINNAMOMUM*)

Credit photo: Charles Post
Region: Rocky Mountains (Montana)
@charles_post

IN FOCUS

IN FOCUS

MUSK OX

OVIBOS
MOSCHATUS



I HAD TO DO IT, BUT I WAS HUNGRY FOR MORE THAN “JUST” AN ORDINARY HUNTING TRIP.

MY DREAM ABOUT THE ARCTIC

For as long as I can remember, I have dreamed about the Arctic, and Greenland in particular. As a child I visited my uncle and aunt who had lived there for several years. Their home was marked by their time up there with traditional Inuit art, sperm whale teeth, and a large musk ox skin on the wall. I remember letting my hands disappear into the soft dark wool. I have no doubt that this stimulated my Arctic dream, the dream about great pristine wilderness, cold and inhospitable, yet still so alluring. My desire for the great desolate wilderness even grew when I started hunting and reading stories about hunting caribou and musk oxen. The tales seemed so real to me, as if it were in my blood to follow these herds of animals, to hunt them in the landscape they are created to master. I had to do it, but I was hungry for more than “just” an ordinary hunting trip. I wanted the full experience of the Arctic and the hunt for these Arctic giants. I wanted to chase them on my own, get to know them, and experience the course of the year. I decided to look for work in Greenland to settle there and get access to all the hidden opportunities on the world’s largest island. After a year and a half of sporadic searching, I found a job in Sisimiut, Greenland’s second largest town with 5,500 inhabitants. The town is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of the Arctic Circle, with the Strait of Davis to the west and the Greenland ice sheet to the east. Between Sisimiut and the ice sheet is a large backcountry that houses the biggest caribou population in Greenland, and closer to the ice sheet you find the core area for musk oxen in West Greenland, Kangerlussuaq.



A PARADISE FOR HUNTERS AND OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

If you are a hunter, fisherman, or just an outdoorsman, it is difficult to find a place that offers more unique opportunities than Greenland. Many of them are difficult to reach for tourists, even as a resident it can be difficult to get around in this big, rough, roadless country.

As a resident of Greenland and with a valid hunting license you get access to hunt both caribou and musk oxen. The number of licenses issued depends on where you live and varies from year to year. Musk licenses are often issued as ballot tags. In addition to big game hunting of caribou and musk oxen, an ordinary hunting license allows you to hunt grouse, hares, foxes, seals, and various seabirds. The hunt for walruses, narwhals, and polar bears is reserved for the professional Inuit hunters.

MUSK OX HUNTING

The musk ox in particular seemed iconic to me, and the opportunity to hunt this prehistoric species became my big dream. During the four years I lived in Greenland, I was lucky enough to get licenses for both winter and summer hunts. Apart from the hunting objective, the two forms of hunting are almost incomparable.



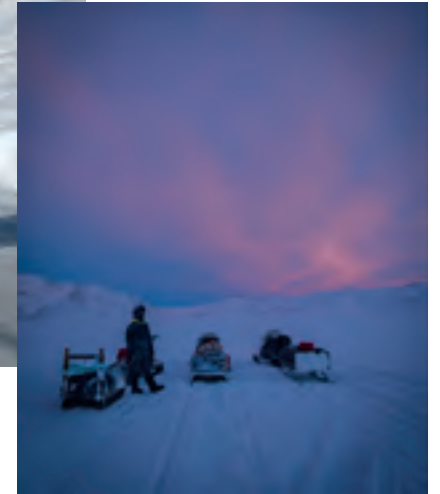
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Malte Nyholt is a Danish author and outdoor enthusiast. He has always had a great interest in nature and spent much of his childhood watching birds and wildlife. He started hunting at the age of 16, and has been hunting in most of northern Europe as well as South Africa and New Zealand. He spent four years living in Greenland to follow his dream of hunting in the north. Malte works as a teacher and has been sharing his passion for the outdoors for over six years through his project Nordica Outdoors. @nordicaoutdoors



The world belongs to those
who can see beauty.

WHEN TO HUNT

The hunting season for musk oxen is divided into two periods. The fall period runs from August 1st to October 15th, and while the winter hunting for the local hunters takes place in January and February, the period for international hunters runs from March to mid-April. The two seasons both offer unique experiences, and which season to choose must be up to the individual hunter. The fall hunts will often offer great physical effort in the form of hiking while searching for a shootable bull, and also after the bull is shot when trophy and meat must be returned to camp. All meat must be carried home, as it is not allowed to leave edible parts of the animal behind. The winter hunt does not require as much hiking and carrying, as you use a snowmobile or dog sled. Instead, the physical challenge is fighting the cold. When the temperature drops below -20°C (-4°F), a lot of energy is spent on just keeping the body warm, and you have to be mindful every time you remove your gloves to operate your firearm or binoculars. As a non-resident hunter however, the conditions are very different during the winter hunt because the season for international hunters is later in the year, and therefore the days are longer and you will not have to spend as much time on the snowmobile.



WINTER HUNTING

In my second year as a resident, I drew a ballot license to hunt musk oxen on my own for the first time. It was a winter license, and it gave me the right to shoot three animals of my own choosing. However, the season only lasts a few weeks at the coldest and darkest time of the year, with temperatures close to $-40^{\circ}\text{C}/^{\circ}\text{F}$. Luckily a weather window came where it was possible to go hunting. After a long snowmobile ride through the arctic wilderness for more than 175 kilometers (108 miles), my colleague and I arrived at a hostel, our basecamp for the hunt. As we entered the hostel, we were greeted by a wall of outerwear, gloves, and big winter boots. The air was dense, with a strong smell of sweat, exhaust from snowmobiles and, last but not least, musk ox. It was clear that some of the other hunters had already been successful. On the next morning we started the day with high expectations. The temperature was below -20°C (-4°F), so even the door handle was frozen on the inside when we went out and drove into the darkness. Already from our snowmobiles, we spotted several groups of musk oxen in the terrain above us. There were a lot of them around, but most of them were too far for a day trip like ours. However, after some time we spotted a herd of bulls walking in an area not far from where we were. We left the snowmobiles behind and set off on foot. As we approached the herd, the animals gathered on a small hill. They had clearly seen us but trusted their

instinct to stay together and face their enemy. We got into position at a distance of 100 meters (109 yards). However, it was no easy matter to get a clear shot on a bull. Every time a bull was broadside another was behind it. Finally, one stood free and I took my chance. The bull fell to his knees and my colleague also had the chance to take a safe shot before the herd split up. Two large, dark animals lay behind in the cold, white wilderness. There was not much time to let the experience sink in, as the daylight was disappearing. We had to start field dressing the big animals immediately, which was hard work for us. After preparing the snowmobiles, we placed the meat at the bottom and skins above to protect it, then we had a long ride home. Snow and bad weather conditions on the coast made the ride with the heavy sleds a difficult task. We had to lighten the load several times to get up the steep hills. By the time we arrived back home, every muscle in our bodies was sore. I must admit, hunting musk oxen was a different experience than I had imagined. A constant battle against cold and short days, with very little time to stop and enjoy the beautiful landscapes, or let the hunt sink in. Despite that, the trip still stands as an unforgettable first encounter with these prehistoric arctic beasts that I had dreamed of for so long.



OPTICS

BINOCULARS

A lot of time is spent scouting for musk oxen on the endless tundra, so a good pair of binoculars is indispensable, preferably with a built-in rangefinder as it is difficult to judge distances in the open landscape without trees or other reference points.

RIFLE SCOPE

For the conditions you will meet in Greenland I suggest a light scope such as the Z6i 2.5-15x44 P BT.

NICE TO HAVE

I had the great pleasure of bringing my light ATS 65 spotting scope on my hunts, but it is not a must and often you will find a spotting scope in the camp.



SUMMER HUNTING

In order to reach as far into the hunting area as possible, I left camp with my two buddies in the first morning light. Our goal was first and foremost to bring home some caribou meat, it was early in the season and our freezers were nearly empty. But with a license to shoot a summer musk ox in my pocket, there was always a tiny hope of meeting a group of musk oxen, even though this is rare in the coastal area. The day before our hunt, we had sailed a few hours into the fjords to reach a large valley surrounded by glaciers. I had hunted in this valley once before and have been fortunate enough to shoot a few caribous. After hiking for about an hour, we reached a small ridge giving us a good view over the valley and the chance to observe the area with our binoculars. On the last stretch before we reached the ridge, we found tufts of the finest soft wool, or *qiviut* as it is called in Greenlandic, in a willow bush – proof that there had been musk oxen in the valley this summer. Fresh droppings revealed that it was not long ago. The binoculars were diligently used from the ridge and revealed a small herd of caribou a few miles into the valley. While we discussed how to approach the herd without scaring them, a large, dark silhouette suddenly appeared just a few hundred yards in front of us. There was no doubt it was a musk ox. A huge solitary bull that was slowly working his way toward us, feeding on the small willow bushes, unaware that he was being watched. The wind was in our favor, the sun had risen, and our scent was taken by the wind up the mountainsides. It quickly became clear that it was certainly a bull worth spending my tag on. Slowly we got into position, preparing to shoot the bull when it stood broadside. A few minutes went by, and the large animal slowly approached. When he was about 100 meters (109 yards) away, he turned and stood perfectly

broadside. The bright red dot within the riflescope found its place just behind the front leg. When the shot went off, the bull jumped forward, clearly hit but without knowing by what. He took only a few steps before he stopped again, and my second bullet hit him. The bull turned around a few times before overturning in the low vegetation. And the valley went quiet again, except for the river a few hundred feet below. Seeing one of these prehistoric animals is a great experience, and the opportunity to hunt one is truly overwhelming.

When hunting musk oxen, as well as in so many other forms of hunting, there is a huge amount of work after the shot itself. After admiring the big animal for half an hour, we started skinning and quartering it. Once it was divided and all the meat packed into gamebags, I set off for the boat with the first heavy load while my friends continued further into the valley to look for the caribou herd. I had to make the trip four times to get all the meat back to the camp by boat. My friends didn't succeed in getting within shooting range of the caribou herd further into the valley, but the atmosphere was good while we enjoyed a well-deserved dinner and went through the events from the morning over and over again. While I sat there, I let my mind wander back to my winter hunt two years earlier. Back then I didn't have the same opportunity to let all the impressions sink in, but one feeling was exactly the same – I could feel every single muscle in my body when I laid down in the sleeping bag that night.

These days I am back home in Denmark, but my Arctic dream is still alive in me. If you also have a dream about the Arctic, you shouldn't hesitate to follow it. If not as a resident, then as an unforgettable holiday. The Arctic will not disappoint you. It is not a question of if I will return, but when and for how long. 🌍



FACTS ABOUT MUSK OXEN

Ovibos moschatus

Length: 250 cm (8 ft, 2 in)

Height: 150 cm (4 ft, 11 in)

Weight male: 350 kg (772 lbs)

Weight female: 200 kg (441 lbs)

Mating time: August – October, 1-2 calves are born in early spring.

The musk ox is called *Umimmak* in Greenlandic, which means “the long-bearded.” The primary habitat for musk oxen is Greenland and Arctic Canada. However, musk oxen have been reintroduced to other areas, so today there are wild populations in Norway, Siberia, the Yukon, and Alaska.

In Greenland, the musk ox is originally native to North and East Greenland, but in the early 1960s, 27 musk oxen were released in West Greenland in the area near Kangerlussuaq. Here the climate is less harsh than in the Northeast and the musk ox population thrived. Today, it is this population that makes up the majority of the hunt in Greenland. Kangerlussuaq is the top destination for musk oxen and a number of outfitters offer hunts in the area. All with a success rate close to 100 percent for both musk oxen and Greenlandic caribou.



FIT LIKE A GLOVE

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GP GLOVES PRO**
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WHAT TO BRING WHEN

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EQUIPPED FOR THE WILDERNESS

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HUNTING IN GREENLAND

WHAT TO BRING ON A TRIP TO GREENLAND FOR MUSK OX OBVIOUSLY DEPENDS A LOT ON WHETHER IT IS A SUMMER HUNT OR A WINTER HUNT. OFTEN YOUR OUTFITTER WILL HAVE SOME GEAR THAT CAN BE RENTED, ESPECIALLY FOR THE WINTER HUNT WHICH REQUIRES SPECIAL GEAR TO HANDLE THE EXTREME COLD TEMPERATURES. HOWEVER, SOME GEAR IS UNIVERSAL FOR BOTH SUMMER AND WINTER HUNTS.

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LOVE OF NATURE

THE
ESSENCE
OF
US ALL



ONE BRAND
ONE COMMUNITY
BUILDING BRIDGES



“WE MUST
TAKE CARE OF
THIS WORLD
TOGETHER.”

DALAI LAMA



NATURE IS OUR INSPIRATION

WHEN LIFE BECOMES WRENCHINGLY UNCERTAIN, HISTORY TELLS US HUMAN INSTINCT IS TO RETREAT TO THE NATURAL WORLD.

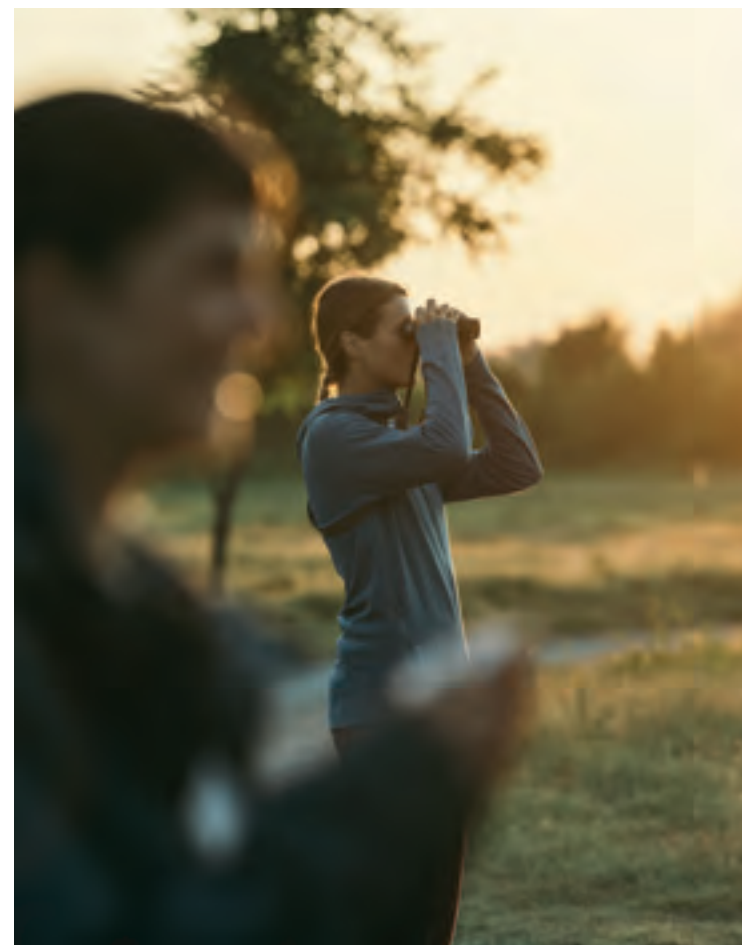
Challenging times, like the last two years, inspire people to look toward simpler ways of life. Part of this is that people spend more time outdoors and discover the appreciation of nature as a new source to gain strength from and discover new perspectives. Experiencing and discovering nature has established itself as a strong trend.

At SWAROVSKI OPTIK, the love of nature has always been at the heart of our business. Our purpose is to inspire people to love and care for nature. What we want is for people to discover the world's beauty with our premium long-range optics and be able to enjoy those precious moments.

Having started with a strong customer base in hunting, SWAROVSKI OPTIK has evolved over the last decades. Today, we are active in three target groups: hunting, birding, and outdoor. All of them are of equal value to us and they have one crucial thing in common: a deep passion for nature.

Although the individual approach and motivation for their passion may vary, we appreciate and celebrate these different branches of the same tree. Based on the current trend, we would like to focus on the common ground uniting hunters, birders, and outdoor enthusiasts: the wish to cherish and protect nature.

In everything we do, we aim to foster this close relationship between human beings and nature. Here are some examples of how we try to bring people closer to nature and help them SEE THE UNSEEN.



BRINGING TOGETHER A COMMUNITY OF NATURE LOVERS – SWAROVSKI OPTIK CAMPEX LE CASELLACCE

SWAROVSKI OPTIK's mission is to inspire people to love and care for nature by bringing them closer to the preciousness of the moment. At our new Italian office, this motto was put into practice in the year 2020.

Nestled cozily on top of a hill in Italy's Emilia Romagna region, the location boasts an amazing view of the surrounding landscape. The traditional *agriturismo* farmhouse not only offers an amazing panoramic terrace and restaurant, but is now also home to the SWAROVSKI OPTIK showroom with lounge area, the SWAROVSKI OPTIK store, a shooting range, and office facilities.



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SHARING THE FASCINATION FOR THE BEAUTIFUL AND HIDDEN

THANKS TO THE MANY ACTIVITIES THE PLACE OFFERS, ALL VISITORS WILL FIND SOMETHING FUN TO DO:

- take a walk or hike on the nature trail to learn more about the fauna and flora on site,
- observe the local wildlife from the panoramic terrace,
- join one of the guided tours with our expert naturalists,
- take your camera and photograph the vivid wildlife you will encounter,
- try out different rifle scopes at the shooting range,
- or go horseback riding at one of the nearby stables to explore the area,
- in winter, seize your chance to ski at Sestola (only 25 minutes away), the favorite resort of the famous Italian skier, Alberto Tomba.



SWAROVSKI OPTIK's new Italian office occupies a scenic location in the heart of the beautiful landscapes of Emilia Romagna (see also pages 38–43).



FOR MORE INSPIRATION
ON OUR LOVE OF NATURE,
VISIT THE STORIES SECTION
ON OUR WEBSITE.
#fortheloveofnature



THE MOBILE EXPERIENCE – HIGH-PRECISION LONG-RANGE OPTICS ON THE ROAD:

How do you understand the value of binoculars? That's right, by looking through them and experiencing precious moments. You need to see for yourself how it feels to get so close to nature without disturbing the animals. It is an amazing sensation that uplifts the soul and allows you to immerse yourself in the present moment. In our words, you SEE THE UNSEEN.

But how do we share this experience with as many people as possible? We knew that it was time for us to engage directly with people and venture with our binoculars and spotting scopes into their natural habitat: the great outdoors.

Thus, the Mobile Experience (MEX) was created. A vehicle that brings optical gear to the places where wildlife observation is happening. So that you can see for yourself what all the fuss is about. With the Mobile Experience, SWAROVSKI OPTIK developed a unique mobile brand experience. The MEX's aim is to get closer to customers and enable as many people as possible to immerse themselves in the world of SWAROVSKI OPTIK and try out high-quality products. The Mobile Experience is therefore a fantastic opportunity to thoroughly test our binoculars and spotting scopes right away with expert guidance.

In 2018, we started in Central Europe and brought the first MEX to North America in 2019. Since then, we have managed to organize or attend over 500 events. Even in 2021, we were able to continue this path adding another 20 Mobile Experience set-ups, ranging from small bike versions through to trailers and event cars.



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NATURE IS ALL AROUND

AN INSIGHT INTO THE SWAROVSKI OPTIK SITE



SWAROVSKI OPTIK moved from Wattens to Absam (both in Tyrol, Austria) almost three-quarters of a century ago. The local community grew alongside the company, and production now mostly takes place in the heart of a residential area. Space is precious, so we ensure our construction projects are very compact and always strive to consider our neighbors. This also applied to our most recent infrastructure project, representing an investment of 27 million euros, which was successfully completed in the fall of 2020.

NEW PRODUCTION BUILDING

To continue to meet strong demand for high-quality binoculars, spotting scopes, and rifle scopes in the future, the company has invested in a new production building, housing a cutting-edge anodization plant for aluminum surface finishing, facilities for optical component production and device assembly, as well as a technical center.

NEW PRODUCTION BUILDING IN FIGURES

- CONSTRUCTION TIME: 2 YEARS, 3 MONTHS
- INVESTMENT: 27 MILLION EUROS
- SURFACE AREA: APPROX. 1,400 M² (15,000 FT²)
- CUBIC CONTENT: 31,000 M³ (10,900 FT³)
- NET AREA: APPROX. 5,650 M² (60,800 FT²)

MORE SPACE FOR ADMINISTRATION

A second new building accommodates 60 workspaces in a bright, healthy, and very pleasant atmosphere. The interior design strongly reflects the company's guiding principle "for the love of nature."

A SUSTAINABLE AND NATURAL INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

One objective was therefore to incorporate "as much nature as possible" directly in the workplace. The architects achieved this with large wooden window facades, allowing an open view of the green surroundings and majestic Tyrolean Alps. Nature is also apparent in the materials used in the offices, selected with painstaking care. Local woods, clay, or hemp were used to create a healthy indoor climate and to structure the open workspaces both physically and acoustically.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE DETAILS ABOUT OUR COMPANY? THEN VISIT THE "ABOUT US" SECTION ON OUR WEBSITE. THERE YOU WILL FIND A LOT MORE EXCITING INFORMATION.



#WILD2TABLE

THE WILDERNESS, A SOURCE OF PLEASURE



Le Casellacce sits almost exactly in the center of an imaginary line between Parma and Florence, in a very scenic setting with beautiful views of the surrounding landscapes of Emilia Romagna. Italy stirs the soul – and whets the appetite too. Together with her husband, Benedetta Samori runs an Agriturismo business here which perpetuates old recipes and traditions, adding a few modern twists along the way. The talented cook spoke to CLOSER about her homeland, her inspirations, and her philosophy of pleasure.

LE CASELLACCE

Anyone seeking impressive natural experiences, rest, recuperation, and authentic Italian cuisine will be richly rewarded in Le Casellacce. Visitors can explore the local flora and fauna and relax on the panoramic terrace, which more than lives up to its name.



www.swarovskioptik.com/it/en/outdoor/campex-valley



Just a stone's throw from Benedetta Samori's restaurant is SWAROVSKI OPTIK's Italian showroom, where the company's philosophy of "inspiring people with the beauty of nature" is practiced on a daily basis.

THE PLACE

Le Casellacce is my homeland. It is a beautiful place, but it also involves a great deal of work, passion, and commitment. For us, it is the long-term vision of each individual employee, the many different components of a company, looking toward the future. Le Casellacce is our garden, as familiar as the taste of an authentic recipe. It is sport, bird watching, and the outdoors. Le Casellacce is each and every one of us.

THE ORIGINS

My passion for game cooking dates back to my childhood as I grew up in a family of hunters. Even my mother, Monica, was a passionate hunter, starting out with one of the first Fratelli Piotti rifles.



THE INSPIRATION

This environment has been the air I have breathed since childhood, and this now stands me in very good stead as chef in a restaurant where the menu revolves predominantly around game dishes. So it wasn't difficult for me to put my mother's cooking tips into practice in Le Casellacce. But we all want to continue to learn and develop, so I look to great chefs such as Massimo Bottura in the Osteria Francescana in Modena for inspiration, with his signature dish "La lepre nel bosco" (The hare in the woods). But ultimately, the real highlights in our countryside restaurant are dishes that remind you of sociable evenings at the end of a long day hunting in the forest.



Massimo Bottura

"IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US TO ENSURE THAT ALL HUMAN INTERVENTIONS IN NATURE NOW CONSIDER THE ASPECT OF SUSTAINABILITY. THIS ALSO APPLIES IN RELATION TO ANIMALS AND HUNTING."



THE SUSTAINABILITY ASPECT

The only way to truly get to know nature is to profoundly experience all its seasonal changes. We have learned many things from people who have spent their entire lives in close contact with nature. But the rest comes from our own careful observations or our discoveries in relation to cultivation techniques or management of green spaces. It is very important to us to ensure that all human interventions in nature now consider the aspect of sustainability. This also applies in relation to animals and hunting. I grew up in a family that believed in "hunting for need" rather than indiscriminately. It's almost a philosophy of hunting to meet our own right for sustenance.

THE WILDERNESS

While our move from the small neighboring village of Montese to Le Casellacce meant a change in the family organization, there was no great adjustment process for us. Both my husband and I have always been accustomed to living in harmony with nature. The choice of Le Casellacce was a professional decision that also satisfied our need for authenticity.



THE CULINARY PRINCIPLES

I enjoy cooking lighter versions of my mother's recipes to appeal to a younger audience. For example, my pheasant breast cooks in its own broth, with the addition of a slight exotic twist to meet the taste of generations of world travelers. Of course, all ingredients of the dishes in Le Casellacce follow the "zero-kilometer principle." In other words, they are all sourced in the local region.

THE SEASONS

The menu reflects the changing seasons: in fall, we have mushrooms and truffles; in summer, edible berries, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries picked along the streams of the Cascade del Doccione waterfall. These are my favorite ingredients for game dishes and venison tartare. The carne salada with taggiasca olives, anchovies, capers, and cherry tomatoes from the garden is a classic dish that I prepare all year round, along with hare in oil, cooked and stored in a glass container with rosemary, sage, garlic, and juniper berries.



LA DOLCE VITA

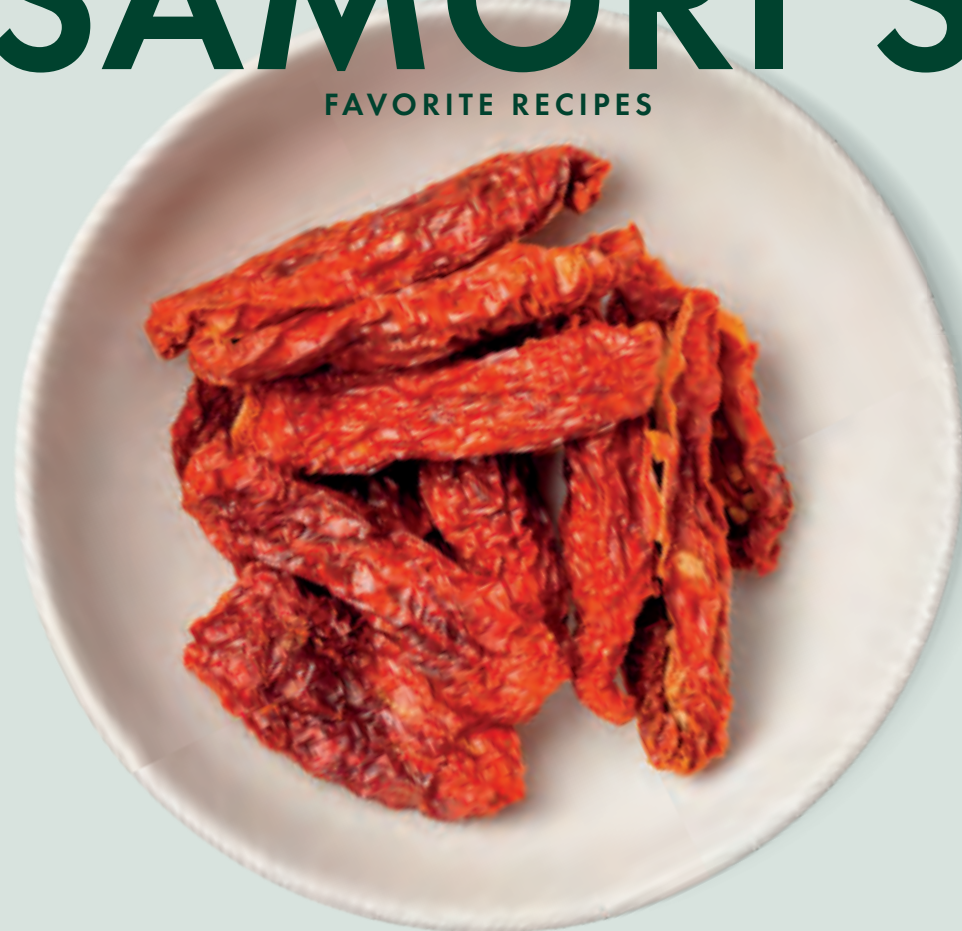
A low-alcohol liqueur is an essential accompaniment to any game-based lunch, reminiscent of the Renaissance cuisine tradition: nocino, blueberries and sloe berries, like at the court of Catherine de' Medici.





BENEDETTA SAMORI'S

FAVORITE RECIPES



"I ENJOY CREATING 'LIGHTER' VERSIONS OF MY MOTHER'S RECIPES AND ADD A LITTLE TWIST TO APPEAL TO A YOUNGER AUDIENCE."



PASTA WITH WILD BOAR/VENISON RAGOUT

INGREDIENTS:

- 500 g (17.6 oz) minced wild boar/venison meat
- 90 g (1.8 oz) chopped celeriac
- 1 celery stalk
- 70 g (2.5 oz) chopped carrot
- 100 g (3.5 oz) chopped onion
- 150 ml (5 fl oz) of red wine, preferably Lambrusco
- 350 g (12.3 oz) tomato purée
- vegetable broth to taste
- salt to taste
- olive oil
- your favorite kind of pasta (e.g. tagliatelle)

PREPARATION:

- Sauté the celeriac, celery, carrots, and onion in oil
- Add minced meat
- Deglaze with wine
- Add tomato purée
- Add vegetable broth as needed
- Cook for 3-4 hours on low heat adding more broth periodically
- Serve with your favorite pasta

PHEASANT BROTH

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 whole pheasant
- 4 dried tomatoes
- 10 sprigs of parsley
- 5 peppercorns
- 2 carrots
- 1 onion
- 2 celery stalks
- salt to taste

PREPARATION:

- Fill a large pot with 8 liters (270 fl oz) of water
- Boil the pheasant with all the other ingredients for 4-5 hours
- Strip the pheasant meat from the bone
- Brown the breast in a pan with butter or extra virgin olive oil
- Salt to taste
- Serve on a soup plate and add the broth

HARE IN OIL

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 whole hare
- 4 dried tomatoes
- 10 sprigs of parsley
- 5 peppercorns
- 2 carrots
- 1 onion
- 2 celery stalks
- rosemary
- sage
- salt to taste
- olive oil

PREPARATION:

- Fill a large pot with 8 liters (270 fl oz) of water
- Boil the hare with all the other ingredients for 4-5 hours
- Strip the hare meat from the bone
- Place the meat in a resealable glass container forming a layer of meat, rosemary and sage, and then more meat, rosemary and sage until all the ingredients are used up. Cover everything with olive oil
- Salt to taste
- Serve on a soup plate and add the broth





ANNETTE OELOFSE

GIVING BACK TO NATURE

AND HER OKONJATI
GAME RESERVE IN NAMIBIA

A CLOSER Interview about the importance of the big picture, the power of nature, and the contribution that sustainable hunting can make to the protection of nature and biodiversity.

"WE ARE MERELY OBSERVERS.
WE ARE HERE TO PROTECT,
TO RESPECT, AND TO CHERISH
THE BEAUTIFUL MOMENTS OUR
WILDLIFE PROVIDES US WITH."

In the middle of Namibia, on an area of 35,000 hectares (86,000 acres) of land, lies the Okonjati Game Reserve. Countless species of wild animals and birds find a protected habitat there. Annette Oelofse has been running this reserve for around 35 years. For many decades she did so together with her husband, conservationist Jan Oelofse, who founded the sanctuary in the mid-1970s. Today, she is running the reserve together with her son Alexander and his family. Every day, Annette Oelofse experiences the cycle of life, the inseparable connection between human beings and nature. Everything at the Okonjati Game Reserve contributes to a greater whole, from preserving the wild game species to rearing of orphaned rhinos, from sustainably managing the hunting and ecotourism income to providing school education for the children of her staff. And all this has one ultimate goal: to give back to nature and preserve Namibia's incredible wildlife for generations to come.

CLOSER:

Together with your son Alex, you are running the 35,000-hectare (86,000-acre) Okonjati Game Sanctuary in Namibia. Please tell us about it. How was the sanctuary established?

Annette Oelofse:

"Give back more than what you take out" – this was the philosophy and goal of my late husband Jan Oelofse, a world-renowned conservationist, who founded the Okonjati Game Reserve in 1975. He leased approximately 5,000 hectares (12,000 acres) of land, a farm with the name of "Etjo" ("Etjo," quite fittingly, means "place of refuge"), previously used for cattle ranching. He pitched his tents under a huge Acacia tree, fixed the telephone to the tree trunk, and with only 700 Namibia Dollar in his pocket, courage, determination, and a love of nature, he worked toward his goal. I met him during the early eighties. We re-introduced many new species of game to the leased land, which we later purchased together with neighboring land. We named it "Okonjati" ("Place of the buffalo," named after the fossilized buffalo

footprints found on the property) and thus founded the Okonjati Game Reserve.

I had the privilege to live and work side by side with Jan for 30 years to build up the Okonjati Game Reserve to its size of 35,000 hectares (86,000 acres) today and create an environment for hundreds of different species of wildlife and birds.

Our son Alexander was born in 1985, the same year we introduced the elephants into the area. Alex was part of our beautiful journey. My late husband's spirit lingers on in the animals that roam the fields, in the earth, and in the wind.

CLOSER:

Which species of wildlife live in your sanctuary?

Annette Oelofse:

Our area is home to over 8,000 animals. More than 35 different wildlife species are part of the ecosystem in our wildlife sanctuary. You can observe cheetahs, elephants, white and black rhinos, hippos, lions, numerous antelopes such as the smallest Damaraland Dik-Dik, Kudu, Nyala, and Gemsbuck, two different species of zebras, warthog, and the smaller antelope such as Springbuck, Impala, Blesbuck, and many more...

CLOSER:

Your staff make a significant contribution to the success of your sanctuary. What are the benefits you provide to your employees?

Annette Oelofse:

Our whole team of 80 permanent employees live in the area of the Okonjati Wildlife Reserve. We have 65 staff houses for our employees and their families. They enjoy the privilege of free water and electricity and can grow their own vegetables. All our staff is provided with meat from the hunt and starch rations and earn a good income generated by tourism and hunting. The grandparents of



Jan Oelofse and his son Alexander, 1985



The Okonjati Game Reserve, 1982

Annette Oelofse with son Alexander, 1985



Nyala
(*Tragelaphus angasii*)





MOUNT ETJO SAFARI LODGE & JAN OELOFSE HUNTING SAFARIS

In order to generate funds for his vision – the development of the Okonjati Game Reserve and nature conservation – Jan Oelofse established lodging facilities very early on. There are now three different lodges in the reserve, two being the Mount Etjo Safari Lodge and the Elephant Lodge for hunting tourists. The hunts are organized by the team of Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris. Guests can expect luxurious accommodation, homemade African cuisine, and incredible impressions of Namibia's wildlife.

www.mount-etjo.com
www.janoelofsesafaris.com

#FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

SWAROVSKI OPTIK
inspires people to love
and care for nature.

"NATURE IS EVERYTHING
TO ME, MY HEALER,
MY TEACHER,
MY REFUGE,
MY ENERGIZER,
MY SANCTUM –
A SCHOOL OF ALL
BASICS IN LIFE."



Lechwe
(Kobus leche)

some of our workers have already worked for Jan and myself and the next generations are still employed by us. We provide schooling for their children and assist them via sponsors to attend high school as well as the "Amy Bell" Scholarship program to enroll at universities. Education in the bush with all its wildlife leaves long-lasting impressions on our children, the foundations are laid for their lives. This is the biggest enrichment we can offer to our future generations.

CLOSER:

How does hunting contribute to game management, but also to the reserve's finances?

Annette Oelofse:

Hunting plays a very important role in our game reserve. Since our area is fenced for the safety of wildlife and the environment, constant wildlife management is a priority. It is hard work, a great responsibility, and very costly. The proceeds are generated by hunting as well as ecotourism, live wildlife sales to stock new areas, breeding of rare species, and meat production. All facets are intertwined. We are constantly making ethical decisions. We have to decide which species, how many of them, how and when to either capture, sell, and move to new areas or professionally hunt. All proceeds are continuously re-invested to protect our wilderness and wildlife and to enlarge the area. Hunting in a very professional and ethical manner only harvests a minute amount of mature animals, but generates almost half of the reserve's income.

CLOSER:

The protection of rhinos is particularly close to your heart. You have raised countless orphaned calves and released them back into the wild. Can you tell us a little more about that?

Annette Oelofse:

Nossi was the first orphaned rhino we received in 1995. She was only seven days old and was brought to us by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Nossi was born prematurely, weighing only 25 kilograms (55 pounds), which is approximately 10 kilograms (22 pounds) under the usual birth weight. She was very weak when she was put into our care. My outlook has always been: where there is life, there is hope. With intense care and dedication – especially during the first three months – as well as with some luck, we saved her. She became part of our daily routine, only weaned off the milk at 18 months. Staying at our side for seven years, she became a companion for more orphans put into our care. She slowly began visiting the wilderness in her own time and finally in year 11 was in calf for the first time. She roams the entire 35,000 hectares (86,000 acres) now as part of her species. Even though we do not meet on a regular basis, she accepts me as



"MY UTMOST PRIORITY IS TO RAISE THE RHINO ORPHANS TO BECOME PART OF THEIR SPECIES IN THE WILD AGAIN."



PROTECTING THE RHINOS OF NAMIBIA

In Namibia, both white and black rhinos still live in the wild. This is mainly thanks to consistent animal welfare and government initiatives. But both rhino species are still threatened by extinction, mainly through poaching. Annette Oelofse has been committed to protecting these animals for more than 25 years. She raises orphaned rhino calves on her reserve and releases them back into the wild to live among their species. Annette has made a name for herself through her sustainable and extremely successful approach to rearing. Rhinos are given into her care by both private owners and the Ministry of Environment. In the Okonjati Game Reserve, a strong anti-poaching team takes care of the protection of the animals day and night. This includes patrols at the borders as well as surveillance from the air. Special trackers are regularly on the move to identify the individual animals. Each rhino is identified based on photos of their unmistakable lip wrinkles.

You can support Annette Oelofse's rhino project through the Mount Etjo Rhino Trust. www.mount-etjo.com/rhino-trust

ABOUT ANNETTE OELOFSE

Annette Oelofse was born in Otjiwarongo, a small town in northern Namibia. Her mother had immigrated from Germany in the 1950s. She grew up on a cattle ranch run by her parents in the middle of the bush. Since early childhood, Annette and her three brothers helped with the farm work: driving cattle, vaccinating animals, and milking the cows. They accompanied their father on hunts and later hunted themselves. "Most nights we came home sweaty and dusty. We loved it." Life in the bush in harmony with nature and her parents' tireless dedication and diligence made Annette Oelofse the person she is today.

In the 1980s, she married Jan Oelofse, a well-known wildlife conservationist. Their son Alexander was born in 1985. For 30 years, Annette and Jan worked together to build the Okonjati Game Reserve. Today Annette runs the reserve and lodges together with her son, his wife Carola, and their two children. She loves nature in all its facets, and also enjoys camping and photography.

her rhino mother to this day. She greets me as rhinos do and introduces every new calf to me. In 2021 she turned 26 and gave birth to her tenth calf. A personal ever-lasting connection exists between us, a special bond, which I treasure deeply.

CLOSER:

You have already been called "the rhino whisperer." Can you describe your special connection to these animals? How do you communicate with them?

Annette Oelofse:

I feel honored to be called a "rhino whisperer." My connection with the rhinos comes from deep within. Over the years I have gained an integral understanding of their body language, their emotional and psychological needs. The orphans read a calmness in my voice, they often greet by searching for my breath, they read my state of mind as much as I do theirs. Every time I meet Nossi in the bush, even if we have not seen each other for several months, we follow the same ritual. Each time we see each other, I am overcome with a very spiritual emotion, leaving me in awe with appreciation for the trust she gives me.

CLOSER:

You are incredibly active. How do you personally recharge your batteries? What gives you strength?

Annette Oelofse:

Stillness! Absorbing nature at a secluded place or just gliding through the calm morning air with my plane, enjoying the beauty and freedom of flight clears my mind. It puts everything in perspective and reminds me of the privilege it is to live so close to nature. Nature is my energy source. I can feel it already in the first rays of the sunrise, while I am feeding my orphaned rhino calves with the first warm milk of the day. Just listening to the sound of the orphans contentedly suckling away at the milk is so enriching. I enjoy these precious moments and deeply appreciate the privilege of living this life. This is where I tap my energy for the day. And: my energy also comes from the happiness and health of my son Alex, his wife Carola, and my two grandchildren – that is life, that is my energy.



Cheetah
(Acinonyx jubatus)

CLOSER:

What would you like to pass on to future generations?

Annette Oelofse:

"Less is more, choose it well and make it last." Always remember that nature is life. Stay part of this beautiful ecosystem for your children to be able to walk barefoot, to feel the sand between their toes, to count the butterflies, to surf clean waves, to pick berries from the woods, to dive in a sparkling ocean, to smell clean air, and to taste the refreshing water from the planet's springs. This said, I wish for the next generations to grasp how important the whole ecosystem is for our own survival. That we are an integral part of the chain. That only the beauty of all past generations be enshrined in the foundation of each new generation, that they learn from our mistakes, and only take the good to build on and preserve our planet and the abundance of species.

CLOSER:

Thank you for the interview. 🐾

Many thanks to Annette Oelofse for providing the pictures.





Searching
for orientation



IS IT THE RIGHT DIRECTION? OR TENSION?



"To get lost is to learn
to find the way."

- From Swahili



"Go right" or "head south".

"Chronological orientation," on the other hand, refers to time contexts, such as the date or part of the day. For example, "before it gets dark." From a spiritual perspective, faith can provide direction for life. Consider, for example, our lost person hoping for divine intervention. Scientific, biological, political, artistic, moral, ethical, or philosophical components can also play a role.

It is possible to have, give, seek, or find direction. CLOSER considers an aspect that people tend to contemplate mainly when they lose their way.

Imagine that someone is trying to find their way in an expanse of flat terrain, with no landmarks to guide them. They are feeling slightly lost and disorientated. Think how much more quickly they would reach their destination if someone described the route to them

Or gave them some valuable advice:

"Don't wait until it gets dark, that's when it's dangerous!"

Even this little imaginary scenario illustrates the many different levels of "orientation." We usually tend to think of "spatial orientation," i.e. the ability to get our bearings in a space and progress accordingly, for example "head south."

The person sends a quick prayer up to heaven, which always helps them in this kind of tricky situation, checks their watch and the position of the sun in the sky, and then sets out toward the south.

To answer these questions, people spend their entire life – consciously or unconsciously – striving to understand, research, and describe themselves and everything around them. But to quote Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832): "People make mistakes as long as they strive." We need direction to survive.

→ An example:

People are born. But how do they then find their way in the world? What gives them security, the assurance that they won't stray from the path, both literally and figuratively? → → → → → → →



ANIMAL ORIENTATION

A lot of animals, such as bears, elephants, eels, and domestic pets like dogs and cats, have a clear advantage when it comes to olfactory orientation. As demonstrated by the thousands of miles that many animals walk, swim, or fly without getting lost. Migratory birds, in particular, demonstrate their amazing navigational prowess each year. While their tools are surprisingly similar, their skills are far superior to those of humans. Different species of birds also navigate in different ways: Starlings and many other related

species use the sun for direction, while the night-flying Indigo Bunting uses the moon. The earth's magnetic field, perceived by animals using a magnetic sense, is especially important. Animals use this for accurate navigation, registering both its direction and strength and storing this information in a kind of "internal magnetic field map," which they can refer to like a compass on their flight routes. However, the precise location of this magnetic sense in birds is not yet clear.

Seeking direction

As well as scientific "hard facts," factors that cannot be objectively quantified or measured play a very important role too. While from a purely practical perspective, direction involves a simple "left or right," at the other end of the scale, still "left or right," inevitably leads to one of the big questions of our existence: what is our direction in life? Religion, philosophy, and ethics contemplate this question. Self-help books and advice programs also attempt to guide our path and the direction we should follow.

Finding direction

"Direction to help us find our way in the world and in nature" is an essential consideration in the development of new SWAROVSKI OPTIK products too. When observing birds and other wildlife, our senses provide orientation, supported by high-precision long-range optics. For instance, the dG, the first long-range optical device with a digital identification functionality, can assist in identifying different animal species. The NL Pure binoculars with SWAROVISION technology or the 11.5-mm objective module for spotting scopes show even tiny details in the distance and thus provide important clues as to the type of animal. The Tracking Assistant integrated in the EL Range provides orientation in difficult terrain or challenging situations and makes it far easier to find the target area. This allows you to quickly and confidently navigate straight to your last measuring point and find the place where your shot hit the target.

Orientation is always a dynamic process. It can sometimes be very easy to suddenly lose your bearings. With the big questions in life in particular, direction is never entirely certain. Orientation is an issue that stays with us throughout our entire life.

A COMPREHENSIVE PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATION OF THIS SUBJECT IS OFFERED IN WERNER STEGMAIER'S PHILOSOPHY OF ORIENTATION (PHILOSOPHY OF ORIENTATION), DE GRUYTER 2008.

GUN DOGS

AT WORK



Photo: Moorland Association

IN GREAT BRITAIN

WHERE HEATHER MEETS
GROUSE AND SPANIELS

Gundogs and humans are a team. In the United Kingdom shooting takes many different forms, but all of them require the assistance of gundogs. Let us take you on a stroll through the enchanting heather moorlands where spaniels flush red grouse.

Photos by Scott Wicking



We want to motivate people to care for the environment, protect nature, and preserve biodiversity.

#FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

A

s a gamekeeper Andy Parker spends his working life high on the heather moorland, and he needs his dogs to deliver all year round, which makes his passionate advocacy for the noble Clumber spaniel even more convincing:

"I actually have 11 Clumbers at the moment, as well as a few springers. In April and May time we start with the

spring grouse counts to establish the number of adult pairs. I use the Clumbers and springers two at a time, looking for the adult pairs of grouse. When they flush a pair, we mark on a plan where they have flushed them. And we do the count in the same area each year, so we have a good comparison year-on-year. We might do 16 different counts in total during this period, with two a day; one in the early morning and one in the evening to protect the dogs from the heat of the day, even in spring. It's hard work in the heather and we have to be very careful not to overwork the dogs on this terrain."

And the gamekeeper on the North York Moors continues: "The grouse population is dependent on the heather quality. We are quite close to the coast so we sometimes get bitter northerly winds, which effectively cause frostbite in the heather; it can be that severe. Dry weather at the wrong time of year can also have a bad impact. We expect our grouse chicks to hatch in the middle of May. So, having done the pairs count in spring, we then go again in the summer to do the brood count to get an idea of how many young on average each pair has produced. More than six young per pair is considered good, and double figures would indicate a very successful breeding season indeed."

"This is all done with the dogs and when they flush the adult pair we watch with the binoculars (SWAROVSKI OPTIK of course) to count the number of young. We use these numbers to multiply up and get an average for the whole moor. We are on the moor all the time, so apart from the spring and summer counts we will be keeping a very close eye on the broods as they grow."



Photo: Moorland Association

LOST IN TRANSLATION

In the UK the terminology around shooting and hunting is different from the rest of the world, so to clarify:

Hunting

In the UK this generally refers to the traditional country pursuit of fox hunting, normally undertaken by smartly dressed people on horseback and a pack of hounds in pursuit of a fox. The hunting of wild mammals with dogs in this manner was banned by the Hunting Act 2004, but hunting can still take place chasing a scent rather than a live animal.

Shooting

In the UK this refers to game bird shooting. Typical quarry species are pheasant, partridge and grouse. Shooting also covers wildfowling (duck and geese) and wild woodpigeon shooting.

Stalking

This is the word used to describe the pursuit of deer with a rifle in the UK. Something the rest of the world would call hunting.



"THEY USE THEIR NOSES TO CONSERVE ENERGY IN A SMART WAY AND FOR ME THEY ARE THE PERFECT DOGS FOR THE UPLANDS."



TRUSTING THEIR NOSE

Some gamekeepers prefer labradors and increasingly HPR (hunt, point and retrieve) breeds are popular too, but for Andy nothing beats a Clumber: "If we are in the beating line the dogs have to push through knee-deep heather walking for up to three miles (five kilometres) a drive and there could be five or six drives in a day. Make no mistake, this is hard work for the dogs. But to be honest I think this is where the Clumbers come into their own. They use their noses to conserve energy in a smart way and for me they are the perfect dogs for the uplands. Instead of just covering every inch of the area in a blanket coverage approach, they will use and trust their nose to take them to where the grouse are. Springer spaniels famously have tremendous energy, and they are brilliant dogs. But often you will see halfway through a drive they can start to lose their enthusiasm because they get tired, having wasted so much energy covering every inch of the ground."



TEAMWORK IS ESSENTIAL AS THE GAMEKEEPERS AND DOGS WORK ON AND MONITOR THE MOOR ALL YEAR ROUND.

GUNDOGS ASSISTING SHOOTERS IN THE UK

With 38 different gundog breeds officially recognised by the Kennel Club there is something for everyone. Whether you spend winter mornings huddled on the freezing foreshore waiting for the distinctive call of greylag geese, or you prefer glorious sunshine on heather-clad moorland in pursuit of grouse, there is a breed for all occasions.

In the lowlands driven pheasant and partridge shooting is most common. On these days typically there will be eight people shooting (Guns) and on average 20 other people (beaters) involved in flushing the birds and collecting the shot game with dogs (picker-ups). Gundogs are involved across the board, accompanying the stationary Guns, walking with the beaters, or at work in the picking-up line.

The most common breeds seen on shoots these days are labrador retrievers and spaniels (cockers and springers) as well as the much-loved golden retriever, but it's possible to see up to ten different breeds in action on any one day. Meanwhile wildfowlers and woodpigeon shooters use dogs for company on their solitary outings and for retrieving any wild birds they are skilful enough to harvest.

GLORIOUS GROUSE

However, the heather moorland that adorns the uplands of England and Scotland is home to one of the most sought-after game birds in the world - the wild red grouse (*lagopus lagopus scotica*). With its reddish-brown plumage, black tail, white feet and distinctive red combs over the eye, this fast flying and delicious game bird is only found in the British Isles.

Enthusiasts travel from all parts of the world to soak up the unique atmosphere of grouse shooting, and the season famously starts on the 'Glorious Twelfth' of August. At this time of year when the purple heather is in full bloom there can be few better places to be than on top of a grouse moor, with people and dogs all working together in pursuit of this magnificent quarry.

Ensuring the moors deliver their prize package when the Glorious Twelfth comes around is a year-round job and dogs are essential to the work. Teamwork is essential as the gamekeepers and dogs work on and monitor the moor all year round. So, for thousands of gamekeepers across the country their dogs are essential for the job, but they are more than just machines.

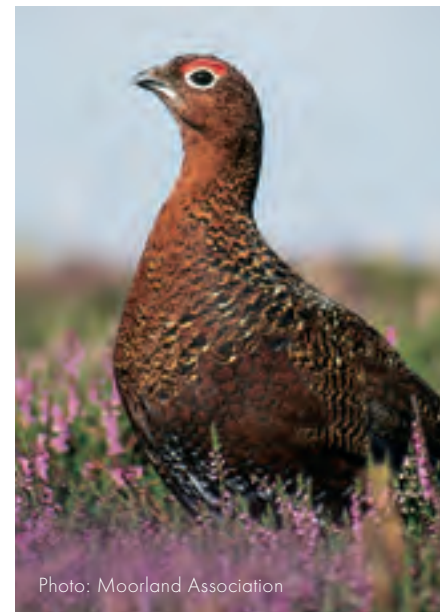


Photo: Moorland Association



MOORLAND HEATHER

The word 'moorland' generally refers to open upland landscapes dominated by heather with no trees, which are managed as part of agricultural holdings or shooting estates. Around 75 per cent of Europe's heather moorland is found in the UK. And to give an idea of scale, the Moorland Association helps its members manage 348,000 hectares (860,000 acres) of heather moorland in England and Wales alone. Meanwhile in Scotland there are an astonishing three million hectares of moorland.

A lot of the moorland in the uplands of the UK is higher than 500 metres (1,640 feet) and the weather is often wet, cold, and windy – even in summer. Therefore, it takes a special type of vegetation to thrive here, and this is where the heather comes into its own. This evergreen shrub with twiggy stems naturally covers the open moorland. Heather plants tend to grow together, forming a thick, bushy carpet, sometimes up to half a metre tall, and this helps it to survive strong winds. And it's the heather which forms 90 per cent of the diet for the wild red grouse which eats the shoots, seeds, and flowers of the plant. This extraordinary game bird can fly at up to 80 miles per hour (130 kilometres per hour) and it is uniquely adapted to use the heather for protection from the elements and predators, as a breeding ground and for nutrition. It is the existence of the heather which allows for the existence of the red grouse.

Other birds which thrive in this environment include waders such as curlew, lapwing and redshank and birds of prey like the merlin and hen harrier. The nectar from heather flowers also makes delicious honey, and beekeepers often take their hives on to the moor in late summer when the heather comes into glorious purple bloom.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

WILL HETHERINGTON

has been immersed in British country sports journalism for 22 years. He was editor of *Shooting Gazette* for 13 years, between 2004 and 2017, and is now a freelance editor and writer. One of his main roles is editor of *Gundog Journal*, a world leading bi-monthly gundog title published by Fieldsports Press. With two faithful labradors constantly by his side, he understands the companionship the gundog breeds offer, whether in the field in pursuit of winged game or relaxing at home with the fire lit and a glass of red wine to hand.

STYLISH ANIMALS IN BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES

While labradors and spaniels are common on the grouse moors for formal driven shooting days, other breeds are inextricably linked to this most traditional of country pursuits. Pointers and setters have always been used for grouse shooting and these elegant and graceful dogs have all the attributes to succeed in this difficult terrain. With long legs and slender frames, they are almost purpose-built to cope with hard days on the heather-clad hill. They use their ultra-sensitive noses to scent their quarry from a long way out and go on 'point' when they do.

Shooting grouse over pointers and setters is generally considered to be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable ways of

hunting. It involves a whole day of walking across the notoriously springy heather. To many it's the ultimate example of human and dog working together to harvest a wild, sustainable, and delicious game bird in truly dramatic scenery.

Jon Kean, a well-known Scottish advocate of pointers and setters, said of the pointer and setter breeds: "Apart from their magnificent appearance, they have the wonderful asset of fulfilling a role they have been bred for over many generations. And what could be more satisfying in a sporting sense than to work with these stylish animals in some of the most breathtaking landscapes of the British Isles in search of the King of the game birds?" 🐾



Photo: Moorland Association

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Are you planning your trip to the amazing heather moorlands? On our website, we share some insider tips about the Yorkshire Dales, famous pubs, sporting estates, as well as dining locations and accommodations. Check them out:





EYES FOR THE

NIGHT



EVA-MARIA SONNWEBER, A DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER WITH SWAROVSKI OPTIK, AND THOMAS ZERLAUTH, REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, SPOKE TO CLOSER ABOUT SWAROVSKI OPTIK'S LATEST DEVELOPMENT, THE NEW tM 35 THERMAL IMAGING HAND-HELD AND CLIP-ON DEVICE.

In the past, hunting in darkness was the absolute exception. However, changing conditions such as increasing cases of damage caused by game or diseases (e.g. African swine fever) are making hunting until late into the night increasingly necessary. SWAROVSKI OPTIK believes that alert and active

senses are essential for hunting: respectful observation, concentrated listening, and the ability to confidently respond to different situations. Thanks to modern thermal imaging technology, the tM 35 allows responsible hunting in adverse weather conditions and at night.



IN COMBINATION WITH MANY SWAROVSKI OPTIK RIFLE SCOPES, THE tM 35 CREATES A RELIABLE COMPLETE SYSTEM THAT REQUIRES NO ALIGNMENT OR SIGHTING IN. IT IS READY TO USE IMMEDIATELY AFTER MOUNTING ON THE RIFLE SCOPE. ONE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT WAS TO AVOID ANY DISPLACEMENT OF THE IMPACT POINT. THE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT TEAM FACED MANY SETBACKS ALONG THE WAY BEFORE THIS COULD BE GUARANTEED.

"The biggest problem with thermal imaging clip-on devices is repeatable precision and any unforeseeable displacement of the impact point. You need to have 100 percent confidence in your equipment before you fire a shot at an animal. Anything else would not be good hunting practice and could lead to unnecessary suffering."

22:43

"The optics concept for the tM 35 requires particularly high levels of precision in development. We are talking about tolerances in the μm range. To meet the specifications, the mechanics had to be continuously optimized, accompanied by numerous measurements and trials."

Sonnweber adds: "You learn from the sum of your failures. You need to stick with it and stay calm. Even if it's not looking good at times. In product development, the solution always seems logical in hindsight, but it takes a lot of trial and error to find it."

22:54

CHARACTERISTICS



EVA-MARIA SONNWEBER
DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER



THOMAS ZERLAUTH
REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR CEE

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THIS CAREER?

Optics was my specialty subject in the school exit exams. After my studies, I went on to work in development as things are never boring here. You're constantly working on new topics and tasks and never do the same thing twice.

As a child, I was allowed to accompany my father when he went hunting so SWAROVSKI OPTIK products have always been part of my life. I wanted a career with an international element and above all the opportunity to make things happen.



WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR CAREER?

The technology is constantly evolving so you need to continuously update your knowledge.

There are also cultural and linguistic barriers. The size of the region I am responsible for as well as the fact that I need to always keep sight of the bigger picture.

FAVORITE SWAROVSKI OPTIK PRODUCT

CL Companion or EL Range because they are ideal for getting closer to animals in nature.

The Z8i 2-16x50, because it is the most universal rifle scope. And if I simply want to discover and enjoy the world, I pick up my NL Pure 32.

INTERESTS

Construction (we're renovating an old house at the moment), climbing, travel, listening to music

Hunting, skiing, hiking, cycling, travel, work

LISTEN & UNDERSTAND

BECAUSE MANY EMPLOYEES OF THE TYROLEAN FAMILY BUSINESS ARE HUNTERS, THE COMPANY KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT HUNTERS NEED AND WANT. THIS KNOWLEDGE GUIDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS.

Thomas Zerlauth, who started his career with SWAROVSKI OPTIK 20 years ago on a vacation work placement, therefore places particular emphasis on "understanding at an early stage what the market wants and what the hunter needs."

23:12

For development engineer Eva-Maria Sonnweber, a project also begins with the analysis phase: "Information and ideas are collected. This includes technology research, market studies, or cost estimates. Only then can the actual project development begin."

23:21

ABSOLUTE CONCENTRATION ON THE ESSENTIALS

THE FEWER MOVEMENTS YOU NEED TO MAKE, THE GREATER YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESSFUL HUNTING IN DARKNESS. EVERY SOUND CAN ULTIMATELY MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUCCESS AND FAILURE. THE FOCUS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE tM 35 WAS THEREFORE EASY, INTUITIVE HANDLING: AVOIDING UNNECESSARY DISTRACTIONS AND ALLOWING THE HUNTER TO CONCENTRATE ENTIRELY ON THE CRUCIAL MOMENT.

"As hunters, we don't necessarily use our equipment every day. Of course, you need to know your tools. But operating a device in complete darkness – without making any noise – is by no means easy. The excitement of the hunt or nerves can intensify this challenge and lead to mistakes," explains the Regional Sales Director.

23:35

As the product developer isn't a hunter, she listens very closely to the wishes of the hunting community: "The tM 35 impresses with extremely intuitive handling. Simply press the button to activate the device for the entire hunting session. It is so easy to operate, there is no need to study the instructions for hours."

23:42

ALWAYS AT THE READY

WHEN HUNTING – IN PARTICULAR IN TWILIGHT AND DARKNESS – MANY FACTORS ARE UNFORESEEABLE. THIS IS PRECISELY WHERE THE ATTRACTION LIES FOR MANY HUNTERS, SO IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THAT AS WELL AS YOUR OWN SKILLS, YOU CAN ALSO RELY ON YOUR HUNTING EQUIPMENT. TO EXTEND THE BATTERY LIFE, THE tM 35 FEATURES THE SWAROLIGHT FUNCTION, TRIED AND TESTED IN SWAROVSKI OPTIK RIFLE SCOPES.

"Battery life is an essential factor at night and in cold temperatures, but also when hunting far from civilization. The automatic switch on/off feature helps to save energy while still allowing rapid responses."

23:48

"A tilt sensor detects when the device is not being used or the firearm is tilted to the side. The display, camera, and other energy-consuming functions are then switched to power-saving sleep mode."

23:52



As a hunter, Thomas Zerlauth knows that with a very bright display the eye needs to readjust to the darkness. During this time, accurate assessment of the situation is almost impossible. "An overly bright display also acts like a spotlight on your face and would alert the game to your presence."

23:54

THE INTEGRATED INTELLIGENT BRIGHTNESS ADJUSTMENT ALSO PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ENSURING SUCCESS.

"The tM 35 uses a brightness sensor to distinguish between day, twilight, and night. It adjusts the brightness of the display on activation." Eva-Maria Sonnweber points out another clever feature: "The device remembers the user's habits. The setting is automatically assigned to the ambient brightness and used when the device is switched on again."

23:58

TOGETHER WITH
SWAROVSKI OPTIK
RIFLE SCOPES, THE tM 35
OFFERS A POWERFUL
COMBINATION WITH 100%
RELIABLE POINT OF IMPACT.
MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION,
TAKE THE PERFECT SHOT.

SUSTAINABLE HUNTING

AX

IS

ON LANAI



No man is an island, poet John Donne informed us, but plenty of humans live on islands, usually to the detriment of wildlife living there. Consider the extinct Tasmanian tiger, dodo bird, New Zealand's moa. Extinct from a combination of unregulated shooting, habitat destruction, and competition from introduced domestic animals. But not the axis deer on Lanai. They are not being hounded to extinction; they are being shot to health.

My wife and I recently went on a trip to hunt Lanai axis deer, glassing their spotted and antlered forms flickering, dipping, disappearing, and reappearing as they browsed and grazed across the vast, dissected green plains of Hawaii's smallest inhabited island. "The far ridge," I said, never moving my binocular off the spot. "Just coming up through that brush."

"Got 'em," Alec confirmed. "Two more than I was watching over here." The deer were silhouettes

ghosting through early morning fog, metamorphosing from gray to orange as the sun burned through the vapors arising from the night's rain.

"I see two bucks sparring," Elizabeth reported. "We should go after those." Hunching, duck walking, and crawling, we stalked and slipped inside sure hitting distance, but not before bumping a half dozen other deer that had been foraging out of sight in a small thicket. Fortunately, they dashed wide of our quarry, leaving them undisturbed.

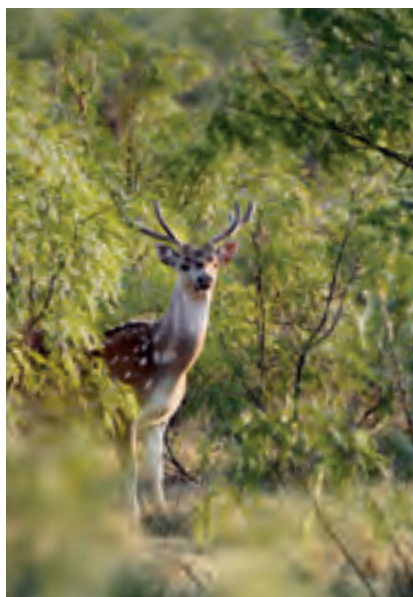
"We make it to that bush we should have a shot," Alec estimated. He led, Elizabeth followed, and I brought up the rear with my camera. The chosen buck's antler tips were bobbing behind the greenery when my wife set up, rifle steady atop a slim, portable bipod. We waited. A doe, three more does, and four fawns fed into the clear, ripping grasses and stepping ever closer. If the buck didn't clear soon, the herd would drift into our scent cone and erupt. "Here he comes!" Alec hissed. "There's his head. Wait for his shoulder to clear." It did, Elizabeth fired. We'd concluded the first step toward introducing to our dinner table what many consider the world's most delectable venison.



"W

e don't know the precise number of deer on the island," confessed biologist John Burrell, "but islanders are eating them by the hundreds and our studies and modeling indicate the deer population has doubled over the last ten years." Doubled? While being hunted and eaten? This phenomenon needs explanation.

As CEO of High Adventure Company, Burrell, in coordination with Pineapple Brothers Lanai, manages deer and deer hunting on the 97 percent of Lanai owned by Larry Ellison, who founded the Oracle software corporation in 1977. Ellison's objective is to make the island a self-sufficient, "green" community. Solar power. Wind power. Vegetables. Burrell is convinced the axis deer can be a key component of that.



"It's pretty simple, really," he explained. "You can raise cattle elsewhere and ship them or their meat here for consumption, then battle the ongoing erosion following on the heels of too many deer browsing and grazing too much vegetation. Or you can hunt, shoot, and eat enough Lanai deer to not only supply islanders' protein demands, but maintain a deer population within the island's carrying capacity. You keep the deer, feed the people, restore native plants, reduce erosion, and minimize the large carbon footprint that comes from raising domestic livestock elsewhere and shipping it in. In the process you create jobs and bring tourism dollars into the local economy, too."

Seems Lanai deer hunting could become a poster child for sustainable use. To fully appreciate this developing dynamic, consider the backstory... Perched in the Pacific west of Maui, Lanai has a sordid environmental

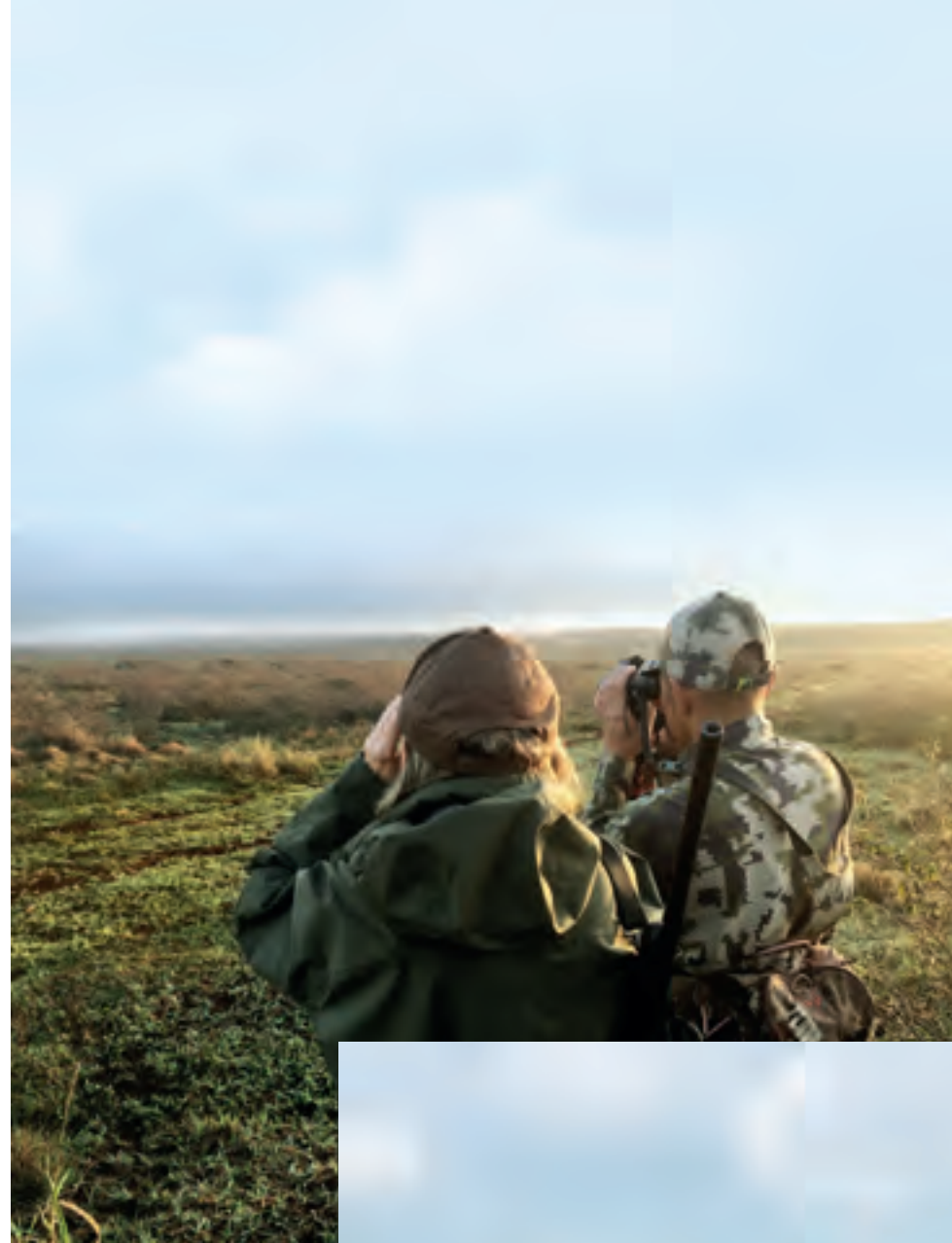
history that began with Hawaiian islanders settling in small fishing villages along its coast. This was about the time Black Plague was ravaging Europe. In the 1780s King Kamehameha I launched an attack on Lanai that nearly wiped out all settlements. By 1892 a Chinese immigrant was growing sugar cane on the island. He was followed by a colony of Mormon sheep ranchers. Let the overgrazing begin. In 1902 the Lanai Cattle Company bought the island, exacerbating the vegetative decline. Erosion gulches and ravines deepened as the island's red soils sluiced away. Native plants and birds died out. A ring of red mud surrounded the island. Still does.

Then came the pineapple express. In 1922 one James Dole bought the entire island and created the world's largest pineapple plantation and processing facility. It supplied 75 percent of world demand for that exotic fruit, while accelerating destruction of native plants and animals. To add a bit of wildlife to that factory farm, someone brought over axis deer from neighboring islands and turned them loose.

This was no attempt to restore Lanai's native fauna. Axis deer, also known as chital, are a beautiful, heavily spotted, subtropical deer native to India. Initial Hawaiian

stocks were presented to then King Kamehameha IV in 1860. By 1922 most Hawaiians probably looked upon them as natives, too.

Because the deer found pineapple plants tasty, their numbers were kept in check by aggressive hunting and shooting. But by the mid-1960s world pineapple markets changed and Dole's Pineapple Island began a rapid decline to "former Pineapple Island." The last fruit was harvested in 1992. But not the last deer. Largely freed to breed, the axis thrived. By the time Ellison purchased the island in 2012, deer were an environmental threat.



The deer were silhouettes ghosting through early morning fog.



#FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

Enjoying the magic of this precious moment and rediscovering a love for nature.

YOU KEEP THE DEER, FEED THE PEOPLE, RESTORE NATIVE PLANTS, AND REDUCE EROSION.





Axis deer, also known as chital, are a beautiful, heavily spotted, subtropical deer native to India.



SUSTAINABLE USE REMAINS NATURE'S PROVEN METHOD FOR MAINTAINING HER FECUND DIVERSITY OF LIVING THINGS.

Enter John Burrell and friends who assessed the burgeoning herds and quickly hatched a plan. Sell deer hunts. Aggressively. Hire local guides. Fill hotels, cabins, lodges. Offer meat processing and taxidermy services. Donate venison to the roughly 3,300 citizens of the island.

"It's working well," Burrell noted. "The people of Lanai are consuming, literally, tons of game meat every year. During Covid it became more important than ever. Our hunters are starting to make a dent in the overpopulation of deer."

This doesn't mean the non-native deer are all curse and no blessing. Given the already grossly disrupted biotic community on the island -including numerous invasive plants as well as feral goats, domestic cats, and birds from various continents - this volcanic blip in the central Pacific will never return to its pristine state. Meanwhile, the Indian deer now living on it prevent many invasive shrubs and grasses from getting completely out of control, at the same time reducing wildfire fuels.

"The trick is limiting the deer to the proper levels for them to in turn limit the weeds without increasing the erosion that's been carving away the island for more than 150 years. It's a balancing act, but we're seeing light at the end of a tunnel that appears to stretch five to ten years. By that time, we should have herd size at a sustainable level that provides most of their benefits without major detriments."

Success like this may be unique to Lanai, according to Burrell. "Non-native deer on the other islands are a constant problem, too, but land ownership and fragmented habitats there make management ever so much more difficult. Here we can devise a plan and apply it across 97 percent of the island."

Other environmental pluses from hunting and eating Lanai deer include the surprising health of the animals. Isolated as they have been for decades, they are free of all major parasites and infectious diseases. There are no genetically modified crops on the island on which they might feed, and of course they receive no hormone injections, vaccinations, or other pollutants. It's the locavore's all-organic dream dinner. And what meat it is. Fine-grained, tender, mild. An epicure's delight.

After sampling our first buck, my wife and I stalked and shot an additional buck and two does. Our guide drove the carcasses to a custom butcher in Lanai City who skinned, aged, and cut them into steaks, chops, and roasts. We ferried the cuts to Maui to share with friends, then flew the remaining meat home in a standard airline fish box.

The Lanai deer program reminds us that, just as none of us are islands unto ourselves, neither are deer nor pineapples nor volcanic islands disconnected from the wider world. Each and every part is connected and interwoven, cogs in Nature's ancient wheel. Life supporting life. Sustainable use remains Nature's proven method for maintaining her fecund diversity of living things. 🌿

The hunting trip was organized by High Adventure Company: highadventurecompany.com





HAWAII



LANAI PRIMER

Dramatic seascapes
and the rocky tide pools
of the Pacific can
be discovered along
the coastline.



While Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii (the Big Island) have been vacation hotspots since at least 1778 (when British explorer Captain James Cook landed), Lanai is just joining the fun. The newly remodeled Four Seasons Resort and Lodge near historic Hulopoe Bay plus the renovated historic Hotel Lanai near downtown Lanai City provide bases from which to explore this uncrowded little island where low-stress vacation dreams come true.

In addition to stalking the island's 30,000 spotted deer, hunters can glass and stalk feral mouflon sheep. Or tune up their shooting skills at sporting clays, archery, handgun, and rifle ranges with targets as far as 1,250 yards (1,143 meters).

But Lanai offers more than just shooting sports. Vacationers can negotiate 400 miles (644 kilometers) of unimproved trails. Hike, bike, ride horseback, or rent a 4x4 and explore natural wonders and historic sites like the 600-year-old Kaunolu Village ruins and petroglyphs on the sea cliffs

above Kaunolu Bay. Or follow in the wake of those ancient islanders and fish the same deep waters old King Kamehameha I used to troll.

For a more encompassing view, hike the 13-mile (21-kilometer) Munro Trail along the island's ridge to the top of 3,370-foot (1,027-meter) Lanaihale, the extinct volcano that emerged from the Pacific to build this island millions of years ago.

Closer to sea level you can stroll the coastline to dramatic seascapes like Pu'u Pehe, Sweetheart Rock, where you can investigate rocky Pacific tide pools. Dig your toes into gentle sand beaches where sea turtles rest while dolphins patrol just offshore. Swim and snorkel the blue waters of Hulopoe Bay. For a change of pace, explore historic Lanai City's quaint restaurants and coffee shops. Learn more history at the Lanai Culture & Heritage Center.

Don't forget your binoculars. Whether in Lanai City or prowling the hinterlands, you'll spot exotic, introduced birds from Africa, Brazil, and Japan plus native species like the endangered Hawaiian petrel. Pacific golden plovers are common and tolerant of people poking big lenses at them.



SEE YOU THERE!

EXPERIENCE THE WORLD OF SWAROVSKI OPTIK AT FIRST HAND.

We go wherever beautiful things are waiting to be discovered. We use innovative concepts to bring you closer to nature and our high-quality long-range optics: look out for our new environmentally friendly bikes or the famous SWAROVSKI OPTIK trailers!



DATES

Find out when and where you can meet us:

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