

GameTrails

\$5.95

VOL. XI, NO. 3

FALL 2004



JOURNAL OF DALLAS SAFARI CLUB

BY TIM PARRIS

Big, Big, Vancouver Island

If you were to look up on the internet the definition of a black bear in North America, you would find a description of the bear weighing between 150 and 250 pounds. They obviously missed including Vancouver Island in their analysis or they would have extended that possible weight up to 650 pounds.



Black Bears

In reading the "Hunting Report" (the May 2003 edition), the first paragraph caught my attention; it started like this: "Since the 1980s British Columbia's Vancouver Island has been recognized as a premier black bear hunting destination. A large chunk of the Island has gone virtually unhunted for about the last ten years, leaving a population of big, mature bears, basically untapped." It went on to say that Darren DeLuca had just purchased this 2,000-square-mile concession and was about to begin bear hunts there. This area was described as "riddled with streams and creeks where salmon spawn and the bears come to feed on fish and the vegetation." Darren indicated in this interview that clients should see between five and ten bears a day. He also suggested that clients should be able to take bears with at least an 18-inch SCI skull, the minimum score for the record book, and he expects numerous 19-inchers.

Having read this, I was full of excitement and wanted to be part of a hunt in what I would consider virgin territory for the largest black bear in North America. I convinced three other friends, Dr. Stephen Vobach, Dr. Craig Callewart, and Galen Johnson to join me on this adventure. As many of you can appreciate, putting together a group of four is not an insignificant task. We met with Darren at the January Dallas Safari Club convention and asked all the pertinent questions. Darren actually suggested a 300-versus a 375-caliber rifle and to be sure to include rain gear.

We booked our trip directly from Dallas and arrived in Vancouver on April 30th. Here was the only negative comment about the trip: "The immigration line in the Vancouver airport took three hours, an unacceptable event even in a third-world country." Having tolerated that process, we immediately went to Harbour Air, located on the other end of the airport and quickly set out in our seaplane for our lodge located on the Barkley Sound. The air charter took approximately one hour; the scenery was beautiful and cut the travel time from about six hours to one. It was well worth the cost. We arrived on a sunny afternoon with exceptionally warm weather, and enjoyed the beautiful bay that our house



The author, Tim Parris, with his 20" skull bear.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

BIG, BIG, BLACK BEARS



Stephen Vobach with a 19 1/2" skull bear.

overlooked. The afternoon provided a great opportunity to get acquainted with our guides and to make plans for the next morning's hunt.

Darren DeLuca runs Vancouver Island Guide Outfitters which has over 2,000 square miles of prime black bear country on Vancouver Island. Darren has hunted bear in this area for over 18 years. This area is along the west coast of Vancouver Island and is comprised of five large ocean sounds, three of which are easily accessed by Darren's guide service. Feeding the sounds and coastal fjords, the rivers and lakes are teeming with Pacific salmon and are covered in coastal forest land. The mountains are criss-crossed with logging roads and the hillsides are a combination of old growth timber, clear cuts, and second-growth forests, a prime habitat for black bears. It is estimated that Vancouver Island's black bear population is 9,000 to 12,000 bears; the majority of them are located in this northwestern part of the Island.

The black bear hunting season occurs twice during the year: Spring and fall. The spring season runs from April to June. Darren indicated that he takes 24 hunters during this time

period and moves around the territory based on the time of the year, how the hunting has been progressing and weather conditions. Early spring hunts are done by boats in estuaries and on beaches or in low-lying land areas. As the spring warms, he moves more into the four-wheel-drive hunts and hunts the higher



Tim Parris with guide Kim, along with his second bear with a 19 1/2" skull.

Kudu Killing Leopards on Rampage in Namibia!

Hunters are needed right NOW to even the score!...

My name is Larry Bussey and I've spent the last seven years figuring out how to get the Kudu on my game reserve in Namibia to grow **monster trophy horns with big, deep spirals** - and now because of the increased game population, we have a very "healthy" Leopard population - *and I'm losing about one Kudu a week to Leopards!*

Simply stated, **I NEED LEOPARD HUNTERS!** So, to encourage prospective hunters **I am willing to offer you a Leopard hunt at a price**

that none of your friends will believe - and I get rid of some of my pesky Kudu-killing Leopards! Sounds fair, right?

For only \$9,200 you'll get 14 days of hunting, the trophy fees for **one Leopard** and for **one trophy Kudu of 55"** or better, **PLUS all the doves, francolin, and guinea fowl you want to shoot!**

What's the catch? **I only have FIVE Leopard permits; so if you wait there's a good chance you'll miss out!**

What about a guarantee? Ok, if you don't get a shot at your Leopard, **I'll give you a \$2,500 refund - who else does that?**

Please call me personally at (706) 593-1011, email me at: lbussey@mindspring.com or please visit our website at www.tambutiwilderness.com

See us in booth #535 at the Dallas Safari Club Convention and Sporting Expo.

mountain slopes. By the end of May, he defines the hunting as entering into the breeding season and ends up looking for boars paired up with sows. The early spring season can be affected by weather or a late spring although the hides are usually in perfect condition in early spring. Late season hunts during the spring; you need to be careful about the rubs on the bears' hides. He said that the fall hunt starts in September and runs until the end of October. He only books a half-dozen hunters during that time period and they mainly hunt the slopes of the mountains, the berry patches, and some of the larger rivers, home of the migrating salmon. Hunting black tail deer or some salmon fishing can also occur on a fall hunt.

We awoke the next morning to a wonderful breakfast and were paired up with our private guides; we gathered our goods and headed out about 7 a.m. Three of our parties went up into the mountains and one went in a boat to a beach with tall, green grass. Upon returning at the end of the first day, there was one bear in the camp and it had been taken within the first 45 minutes of the morning light by Galen Johnson. On the boat trip, he and his guide spotted a very large bear eating grass in one of the estuaries. The skull measured 19 1/2 inches. We all raved

Saltwater Taxidermy

Fish Artist
Bob Harris

*Elephant Tusk
Reproductions*

*Rhino
Reproductions*

*All Type Fish
Reproductions*

*Hippo
Reproductions*



4730 Pinemont Dr.
Houston, TX 77092

www.saltwatertaxidermy.com
Order Direct 1-800-448-1078

Local: 713-683-0087
Fax: 713-686-1487

that within the first hour and a half of our hunt he had probably shot the biggest bear of the hunt. Well, that was to be seen. By the third day of the hunt, all four of our hunters, together, had taken seven black bears; the eighth bear could have been taken, but the hunter decided he'd rather have the money in his pocket. And, listen to this – every bear was over 18 inches; three were over 19 inches SCI and one went slightly

over 20, Monster bears in anybody's calculation.

The largest bear measured 20 inches plus and stretched out to nearly seven feet. I was the fortunate one to have taken this big, big black. Of course with a bear that size, there's always an interesting story. We spotted the bear eating green grass along a creek bed and snuck up within about a 60-yard shot. Having been told to send the bullet behind the front shoulder into the heart/lung and exit through the other shoulder, I was prepared to make a perfect shot. However, I failed to realize that when a bear walks, the entire body moves in a wobbling fashion. And while my shot entered behind the front shoulder, it exited behind instead of through the other shoulder. Therefore, I had a wounded bear, one that was not very happy. There was a significant blood trail that led through what seemed like an endless forest going over fallen timber, through bushes thicker than a rabbit could negotiate, and even crossed a small stream; we were fortunate enough to pick the blood trail up on the other side. As Kim, my guide, rounded a thick corner (I was near exhaustion), he let out what



Left to right: Galen Johnson, Stephen Vobach and Craig Callewart.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 . . .



INDIANHEAD RANCH



The only exotic game ranch in Texas offering 25+ species, free-roaming on 10,000 acres with no interior fences.

The first recipient of the HSC North American Professional Hunter 2004 Award



Diane & Laurent DeLagrange

HCR 1, Box 102 • Del Rio, Texas 78840-9801 • USA

830-775-6481

Fax: 830-774-1528

Email: indianhead@starband.net

Web site: www.indianheadranch.com

BIG, BIG, BLACK BEARS

I would consider a significant scream. The bear had found a hollowed out tree trunk and was inside that tree with his head poking out not ten yards from us. Cautiously respecting the size and danger of this animal, we quickly put an end to his struggle. This bear would easily go 625 – 650 pounds and it took a tremendous effort to remove him from the huge, hollowed-out tree. This trek had gone well over two miles and through some of the most dense forest and brush that I've ever been through. Then, of course, the next problem was that the truck was another mile in the opposite direction. The bear had to be skinned and then hauled out. It made for a great story, a story that a bear of that size should have.

As in any hunt, there was a story with each bear, but one of the more interesting was that Dr. Vobach shot a bear that was crossing a road. When he shot the bear, it went off the side of the mountain. He and his

guide, Nick, had to rappel down the side of the mountain almost 75 yards to a ledge where they adequately skinned and recovered the bear meat and hide.

Looking back and considering this hunt, the facilities were excellent; Teddy the cook had wonderful food for us each and every day. Occasionally, we would come in at noon and would pull the shrimp pots and we'd have fresh shrimp and other delicacies. The food was superior, the guides were as good as any guides I've ever hunted with, the accommodations were superior. I would highly recommend this hunt.

Darren also runs a camp out of Port Alberni where the Stamp and Somass rivers come together, which I'm told is a very nice camp that is used as a fishing camp during fishing season. We, however, wanted to find that area that had not been hunted in a ten-year period. Every expectation on this hunt was met and exceeded; again, three of our hunters took two bears each, and one, by decision, only took one bear, and that was Galen

who shot his within the first hour of the first day of the hunt. I believe he caught up on his naps and relaxation, and spent the rest of his time watching and observing, thinking his bear was going to be the largest, only to find out that there were two other bears that surpassed the 19.5 inch measurement of his early taken bear.

How do you improve on a hunt like this? Well, I'm not sure. I went back and reread the hunting report and looked again at the expectations that the hunters should be able to kill bears with an 18-inch SCI skull, and that he expected a few 19-inchers. Well, most of our bears were 19-inchers with one surpassing 20 inches. To contact Darren DeLuca, e-mail him at dfdluca@shaw.ca or visit his website at vancouverislandguideoutfitters.com.

In talking with Darren, I believe he will have a booth at the Dallas Safari Club convention here in Dallas this next January, and I am sure you will see pictures of these great bears taken in this remote area. It was a great trip and one that I would recommend. *GT*



INDIANHEAD RANCH



The only exotic game ranch in Texas offering 25+ species, free-roaming on 10,000 acres with no interior fences.

The first recipient of the HSC North American Professional Hunter 2004 Award



Diane & Laurent DeLagrange

HCR 1, Box 102 • Del Rio, Texas 78840-9801 • USA

830-775-6481

Fax: 830-774-1528

Email: indianhead@starband.net

Web site: www.indianheadranch.com

BIG, BIG, BLACK BEARS

I would consider a significant scream. The bear had found a hollowed out tree trunk and was inside that tree with his head poking out not ten yards from us. Cautiously respecting the size and danger of this animal, we quickly put an end to his struggle. This bear would easily go 625 – 650 pounds and it took a tremendous effort to remove him from the huge, hollowed-out tree. This trek had gone well over two miles and through some of the most dense forest and brush that I've ever been through. Then, of course, the next problem was that the truck was another mile in the opposite direction. The bear had to be skinned and then hauled out. It made for a great story, a story that a bear of that size should have.

As in any hunt, there was a story with each bear, but one of the more interesting was that Dr. Vobach shot a bear that was crossing a road. When he shot the bear, it went off the side of the mountain. He and his

guide, Nick, had to rappel down the side of the mountain almost 75 yards to a ledge where they adequately skinned and recovered the bear meat and hide.

Looking back and considering this hunt, the facilities were excellent; Teddy the cook had wonderful food for us each and every day. Occasionally, we would come in at noon and would pull the shrimp pots and we'd have fresh shrimp and other delicacies. The food was superior, the guides were as good as any guides I've ever hunted with, the accommodations were superior. I would highly recommend this hunt.

Darren also runs a camp out of Port Alberni where the Stamp and Somass rivers come together, which I'm told is a very nice camp that is used as a fishing camp during fishing season. We, however, wanted to find that area that had not been hunted in a ten-year period. Every expectation on this hunt was met and exceeded; again, three of our hunters took two bears each, and one, by decision, only took one bear, and that was Galen

who shot his within the first hour of the first day of the hunt. I believe he caught up on his naps and relaxation, and spent the rest of his time watching and observing, thinking his bear was going to be the largest, only to find out that there were two other bears that surpassed the 19.5 inch measurement of his early taken bear.

How do you improve on a hunt like this? Well, I'm not sure. I went back and reread the hunting report and looked again at the expectations that the hunters should be able to kill bears with an 18-inch SCI skull, and that he expected a few 19-inchers. Well, most of our bears were 19-inchers with one surpassing 20 inches. To contact Darren DeLuca, e-mail him at dfdeluca@shaw.ca or visit his website at vancouverislandguideoutfitters.com.

In talking with Darren, I believe he will have a booth at the Dallas Safari Club convention here in Dallas this next January, and I am sure you will see pictures of these great bears taken in this remote area. It was a great trip and one that I would recommend. *GT*