

# EASTERN CAPE SAFARI

By Bob Coleman

After several trips to Africa I always came up short in my quest for a bush pig. They are extremely nocturnal and the best way to harvest one is by happening on one or shining at night. After doing some research on the internet I found two interesting possibilities and they were both in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. One was hunt over bait around a full moon and the second was to hunt them with dogs. After my son Brett had successfully taken a leopard using dogs a few years ago I became a firm believer in hunting with dogs. I contacted Toby Cilliers of Born to Hunt Safaris and learned he also hunts leopard and caracal with dogs and they use different dogs for cats than they use for bush pig. He has both cat and bush pig trained dogs and that would make another species available that I had a great desire to harvest. I asked about hunting some of the small critters at the same time and he said no problem.

I booked the safari for this past October and I learned after I arrived this was all free range hunting and typically South Africa is known for high fences. I told Toby my priority animals were the bush pig and caracal. Late in the first day of my safari I was able to harvest and real nice common duiker. The next day we were after bush pig and came close to taking one but one of the dog handlers shot the one we running with the dogs just before we got close enough to shoot. Needless to say Toby was very unhappy with the situation proceeded to tell them not to shoot unless they were in danger of being attack by one.

The next day the dogs got a caracal treed and after some incredibly tough and thick terrain we got to the caracal and the tree it was in was right next to a road. After shooting it I accused Toby testing my physical condition by going through the tough terrain instead of simply taking the road. He said he just wanted to test my physical skills.

The second time out for bush pig we spent 12 grueling hours and late in the day with the dogs on the heels of a bush pig Toby told me to shoot. I was using his 12 gauge semi automatic shot gun with oo buckshot and when he told me to shoot the bush pig it was in some of the thickest cover you could imagine. I hesitated and he yelled shoot and not a single buckshot hit it. That was the end of a long and very exhausting day.



The next day I harvested a very nice cape bushbuck and the following day we drove about three hours to another one of his hunting areas and there I took a 5" plus steenbok.

One night we went out looking for wild cat and we came upon a very large porcupine. After a pursuit I was able to harvest it. There is no comparison between an African porcupine and the ones we have here in the states. They have very long black and white quills.



On the last day we were again in pursuit for bush pig. Shortly after the dogs picked up the scent they began chasing them and we positioned ourselves to intercept the bush pig as it was headed our way. Again using Toby's shotgun with oo buckshot he reminded me to shoot until the gun until I emptied

the gun. We were positioned on a very narrow two track with very heavy cover on both sides. I got a glimpse of the bush pig just before it attempted to cross the two track and with Toby yelling SHOOT SHOOT SHOOT. I emptied the gun and the bush pig dropped before it got across the two track. After congratulations by Toby he got a call on the radio that another bush pig was headed towards an open field. We got in his truck and after spotting it we were in hot pursuit. As Toby called it I shot it Chicago style out of the truck. This was the last day and in less than an hour I shot two bush pigs.

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He has a great area for Blue Duiker and I actually blew a shot at one. I plan to return and hunt with him again and get some more of the small critters. The down side to the hunt was that after three safaris with my hunting partner Brett I went on this one alone. I have to say hunting with Toby was one of the most fun safaris I have gone on. He is a great PH with a very entertaining personality and I highly recommend him.

