

06 CODE OF GOOD SHOOTING PRACTICE

THIS CODE OF PRACTICE OUTLINES OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS GAME BIRD HUNTERS TO SUPPORT THE PRACTICE OF ETHICAL HUNTING AND APPLIES TO ALL GAME SHOOTING IN NEW ZEALAND. IT EMBODIES FUNDAMENTAL RESPECT FOR THE GAME BIRD SPECIES, CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY AND SHOOTING BEHAVIOUR AND ETIQUETTE.

The Code sets out a framework that enables guns, shoot owners and managers, gamekeepers and their employees to responsibly deliver sustainable shooting, paying attention to management of habitat while avoiding nuisance to others.

You can help to protect the future of shooting by complying with the provisions set out within this Code and by encouraging others involved in shooting to do the same.

THE CODE CENTRES AROUND FOUR CORE FOUNDATIONS

- 1.0 Shooting Behaviour and Etiquette
- 2.0 Safe Shooting
- 3.0 Bird Welfare
- 4.0 Respect for the environment



1.0 SHOOTING BEHAVIOUR AND ETIQUETTE

NZGCA PROMOTES AND INSISTS ON SAFE AND SENSIBLE BEHAVIOUR BY SHOOTERS ACROSS ALL DISCIPLINES. GUNS SHOULD ACT ON THESE POINTS TO DEMONSTRATE BEST PRACTICE BEHAVIOUR AND ETIQUETTE IN THE FIELD.

- Ensure all safety instruction from shoot owners, managers and gamekeepers is adhered to
- Always respect and avoid disturbance of the owner's property, crops, livestock, and fences
- If you take a gun dog with you, ensure it's always under control and fully vaccinated
- Always treat a shotgun as though it were loaded and keep the barrel's pointing in a safe direction
- Do not fire at the quarry unless you are sure it's within range and that clear sky is visible behind it. If you are unsure for any reason, do not shoot
- For safety reasons you will be asked not to shoot any ground game nor any wounded bird on the ground
- Know your own limitations and those of your gun. If you are not reasonably sure of a humane kill, do not shoot. If your bird is not killed with your first shot, a follow up shot is required to ensure a humane kill
- Respect your neighbour's bird and encourage and praise good shots
- Be respectful to your fellow guns, beaters, and pickers
- Guns must endeavour to mark the fall of a shot bird and if required, inform pickers-up
- Any dogs accompanying guns are required to stay on the peg until the end of the drive. Once the drive is over, your dog is then able to retrieve any shot birds within their vicinity
- Pick up all spent cartridges and litter whilst in the field. On some shoots you will be asked to count your cartridges and give tally to the Shoot Captain
- All shooters should have read and be conversant with the Firearms Safety Code 2022, or the Arms Code 2013

2.0 SAFE SHOOTING

SAFETY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION OF ANY SHOOTING PRACTICE. SAFE SHOOTING IS PARAMOUNT TO ENSURE NOT ONLY THE SAFETY OF OTHER PARTICIPANTS ON A SHOOT, BUT THE PUBLIC AS WELL

Shoot managers must ensure all shooting is carried out in a safe manner, including briefing participants on safety matters. However, the safe use of guns is a personal responsibility therefore all those intending to shoot or handle a gun should adhere to the following;

GUN SAFETY

- A shotgun should always be considered loaded until proven empty and even then, still handled as if it were loaded
- Check barrels are clear at the start of each drive
- Hold your gun broken or with barrels pointed to the sky
- When closing your gun bring the stock up to the barrels to ensure barrel never points above your waist
- Never shoot unless you are sure it is safe to do so
- Never swing through the line
- Do not shoot birds flying back towards the beating line
- Always ensure your gun is unloaded before placing in slip
- It's considered good practice to have the safety catch on 'safe' until the moment before you fire
- Never keep a dog attached to you while shooting as it may pull you off balance
- Never put down a loaded shotgun or leave it unattended
- Ensure that the cartridge type and shot size are suitable for both your purpose and your gun



RANGE AND DISTANCE

Guns must be competent at estimating the range between barrel and bird and shooting within the limitations of their skill and equipment in order to kill cleanly and humanely. To do this requires a solid understanding of ballistics including gauge, shot size, load, pattern and choke.

WHEN SHARING A PEG, WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING:

- The extra person on the peg, either shooter or observer, must stand at least 2 meters behind the active gun
- A maximum of 2 people on a peg
- The second gun has empty barrels until they are active on the peg
- The first gun empties their barrels before stepping away from the peg
- The second gun does not load their barrels until they are in the correct position at the peg
- The second person on the peg does not load the first guns barrels

These rules are primarily for safety however it is also to ensure that your fellow shooters are not disadvantaged

SHOOTING WELL

After gun safety, shooting courteously and well is one of the most important attributes a gun can bring to the shoot line.

As mentioned previously, you should respect your neighbours bird. If you imagine a line midpoint between you and your neighbouring gun, then birds on your side of the line are 'yours.' You may agree with your neighbour before the drive as to what is fair game and what is not.

Try not to shoot any birds that are too low. This practice is called 'pillow casing' and apart from being unsportsmanlike, it generally renders the bird inedible.

THREE KEYS TO GOOD SHOOTING ARE:

- Footwork
- Mount your gun and pull the trigger in one smooth movement
- Keep your gun moving as you pull the trigger



3.0 BIRD WELFARE

SHOOT PRACTICES WILL BE JUDGED BY THE WAY PARTICIPANTS AND PROVIDERS BEHAVE, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO BIRD WELFARE. BELOW OUTLINES THE CODES OF PRACTICE THAT SHOULD BE ADHERED TO REGARDING BIRD WELFARE.

RETRIEVAL AND HANDLING OF GAME

- Shooting should not be conducted where it will not be possible to retrieve shot game
- Shoot managers must ensure that adequate provision is made to retrieve all shot game. Dogs are an essential part of this process
- On driven days, any wounded game should be retrieved during drives whenever it is safe and practicable to do so
- Guns must mark the fall and assist in the retrieval of their own shot game and where practical, should help inform pickers. Guns should also assist in the retrieval of fellow guns shot game
- Guns and pickers must ensure that they despatch any wounded quarry in a swift and humane manner
- A day's game shooting should finish early enough to allow time for pickers to complete their task before birds start to go to roost
- Shooting should be cancelled or stopped if adverse weather conditions mean that birds cannot be presented in a safe and appropriate sporting manner or be shot and retrieved safely
- Those involved in predator and pest control should carry out their lawful activities with due consideration to local residents and other countryside users

PREDATOR CONTROL

Game preserves are a benchmark for best practise predator control as one of the gamekeeper's main roles is on controlling predator populations. It is a constant undertaking requiring thorough knowledge of predators, their habitat and their movements.

Preserves are home to large numbers of gamebirds, therefore they become a magnet for predators. This can often be an advantage for the wider area as it draws predators into a concentration where they can be more efficiently dispatched.

GAME BIRD DISPOSAL

The NZGCA encourages their members and all guns to respect the birds by utilising as much of them as possible. The meat should be utilised for food. Most shoots provide pheasant breasts for you to take home and you will also be encouraged to take home as many whole birds as you like.

The feathers of the bird, where possible, should be made available to local iwi and other interested parties for making of traditional korowai, fly tying and for display purposes.

NOTE:

It is illegal in New Zealand to sell shot game birds.



4.0 RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

LAND MANAGED FOR GAME SHOOTING PROVIDES HUGE BENEFITS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

It is a major resource in promoting biodiversity and helps New Zealand achieve the targets set in national and local biodiversity action plans. Through professional gamekeeping, game shooting also aids the Government's predator free NZ 2050 target.

One of the key attributes to a successful upland game preserve is the natural terrain and habitat it provides, including woodland, forest edge and scrubby faces. This habitat creates ideal roosting and feeding grounds for pheasant and partridge while providing a suitable environment for a large number of other bird and wild life to thrive.

Crops such as sorghum, kale and maize sown to provide cover for game birds become a natural food supply for not only the pheasants and partridge, but also for many other species.

Therefore, it is in our best interest to care for preserve land by doing the following;

- Where required, use non-toxic shot and biodegradable products. The NZGCA requires their members to use fibre wads only.
- Remove all cartridges and any litter from your peg

