

ahead. After making sure that there was a 150gr softnose in the chamber, I moved forward very slowly and cautiously. About 100m or so further on I spotted movement to my left – a band of impala was moving towards me at an angle and would cross my front if they continued on their path. I sat down and waited. The animals took their time, but eventually the first ones poked their noses into a clearing about 50m ahead of me. Three females crossed, followed by a young ram and then a mature ram stepped into view. I clicked my tongue and he stopped to look for the origin of the sound. The bullet took him dead centre in the neck, just below that white patch under his throat.

After gutting the ram I covered him with branches and moved the intestines about 15m away. Then I hurried to camp to get the vehicle. I was still in camp when the first vultures started circling over the kill. Fortunately the animal was only about 800m from camp so we got back there before the first vultures started dropping from the sky. After delivering the ram to the skinning shed I had a quick lunch and then returned to the spot. It was hardly two hours later but by then the vultures had completely devoured the intestines.

Late that afternoon Gerard shot a representative nyala trophy with horns measuring about 25 inches. Animals qualifying for Rowland Ward cost more but Mark's prices are very competitive and some packages he offers seem downright cheap. His place teems with nyala and there are big ones too. Several animals in the 30-inch class have been shot.



The 3m long python I encountered on the second day of my hunt.

On the second day I hunted in more open woodland away from the river. Here I spotted several nyala, stalked a small herd of blue wildebeest, got the fright of my life when a reedbuck exploded from the long grass from almost right under my feet and encountered a young rock python on a hillside. The snake was in no hurry and I had ample time to take a good look at the 3m long youngster. Eventually it moved off and as it put its head into a bush, I moved closer and stroked its muscular back – boy there's a lot of power there. Touching the python made it move faster and I watched until it disappeared in a cluster of low growing bushes. After walking less than 200m I

looked downhill and spotted two warthog grazing in a green burn on the other side of a small riverbed. To save time I headed straight downhill but ran into such an impenetrable tangle of bush that I had to back off and take a long detour. Imagine my delight when I found the warthog almost an hour later still in the very same spot. One was a young boar feeding on his knees about 50m away. Using the branch of a small tree as support, I put the crosshair on his neck and squeezed the trigger. Being well over 2km from camp, I covered both the intestines and the boar with branches to hide them from the vultures.

Back at camp I told Johan about my meeting with the python and he told me that the Zulus believe it is a sign of good luck for the hunter if he sees a python. When I mentioned how the warthogs obliged by not moving off he laughed and said, "I told you meeting a python is good luck." Gerard was also successful – he shot a giant of a warthog.

Johan was somewhat fascinated that I gut animals myself because he has never had a visiting hunter doing that. He told Mark that I hunt like the old white hunters and that I remove the intestines and cover them much like *ingwe* (the leopard) does. They decided that Ingwe is a fitting name for me and I accepted. What an honour to be named after such a magnificent animal.

On my last night in camp we were sitting around the fire when the deep rasping sounds of a leopard calling suddenly filled the chilly air. He was on the far side of the riverbed, probably walking along the dirt track that followed the river. That track is

I shot the warthog in this area.

