

# Leon's Natal Red Duiker Hunt

This hunt was conducted in the Niassa Game Reserve, Mozambique, Africa.

The hunt was scheduled at the last minute, due to my failure to harvest a Dall Sheep in the Yukon, Canada, in September, 2009. The Sheep was to be the final animal I needed to complete the North American Diamond level, which would finish my requirements for the World Hunting Award and Ring with Safari Club International. I also had the option to take a Niassa Wildebeest and a Natal Red Duiker, which would give me the Diamond inner circle of Africa with SCI. That would also complete my World Hunting Award requirements. Kambako Safaris was nice enough to let my wife and I schedule a hunt at the end of their hunting season, which was the end of October. They also made a special effort to get permits to allow me to bring my Handguns into Mozambique. I only hunt with single shot Handguns in Africa, having taken over 100 different species there with Handgun, and 145 species around the world with Handguns.....

The end of October, 2009 in Northern Mozambique was VERY hot; temperatures ranged from 40 - 45 degrees Celsius. Because the concession is so large, returning to camp during the heat of the day was not practical. We left the lodge before daybreak every day and returned after dark every night - 14 hour days.....

Since the Wildebeest and the Duiker were the primary animals, we hunted them hard every day. We were lucky and took the Wildebeest on the 4th day. We spent 8 days on the Duiker. The hunting method was to drive to the hunting area, then walk for 3-4 hours in a loop through the brush and back to the truck, take a hydration break and do another 3-4 hour hike, etc.

Fortunately (or unfortunately) we spotted this big Red Duiker on our 3rd day. There was no shot opportunity, especially for a Handgun. We spent 5 more days looking for a larger specimen, but this one was the best we could find. I could have taken several other Duikers, but I held out for this one. We hunted his hiding area every day, but only caught a few glimpses of him running into the brush ("he did not get big by being stupid!"). Finally, on the 8th day of hunting him, he actually stopped long enough for a shot! He was in heavy brush at 46 yards, so he evidently thought he was safe.....

The Handgun I was using has had the trigger set to a very low pull - about 2 pounds. As I set the gun on my shooting sticks, I accidentally hit the trigger and

the gun fired - with the bullet traveling over the Duiker. Unbelievably, he did not run off! I thought he had run off, so I was complaining to the PH about my stupidity. He said " The Duiker is still there, go ahead and shoot again". I quickly reloaded and carefully set the gun on the sticks and did a quick shot, which took him through the heart and he dropped right there.

I had completed the World Hunting Award! It was somewhat ironic that all the years of effort had culminated with a Duiker.....and a beautiful one at that! He is the number one (1) Natal Red Duiker for Handgun and the number two (2) overall in the SCI record book. He will receive a major award at the SCI awards banquet in Reno on January 27th, 2011.