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Bowhunting the spotted hyena

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Quail – a bowhunting pursuit on a small bird

Frank Berbuir tells about bagging some smaller-than-usual quarry during a hunting trip in Namibia.

The warm Namibian sun that had risen just an hour before warmed us up in our blind where we had been sitting since 5:30 am on the second-last day of our trip. Once again I had made it back to Africa, back to Namibia, for bowhunting.

This time we were a small, strictly bowhunting group of three, organised and accompanied by Juergen from Wildlife-Marketing (<http://www.wildlife-marketing.de>). The other two bowhunters, Rolf and Gerd, had booked a “non-trophy” meat hunt and were accompanied by their ladies. Juergen worked as our organiser and outfitter and my priority was to photograph and film for a new bowhunting DVD for Wildlife Marketing. Our eight-days trip started on Saturday morning 25 April at 6:00 am, when we arrived in Windhoek. Christian, the owner, farmer and PH of Farm Kachauchab, where we would be located, picked us up. After a short visit to the city and a quick stop at the gun shop and bow shop, we were hitting the road for the last 280 km to Farm Kachauchab in the south of Namibia near Maltahöhe.

After arrival we had a hearty welcome with all the guys on the farm and all of us were quickly in our hunting clothes to get out for the first afternoon hunt in the warm Namibian sun. Fortunately I had some time for bowhunting in addition to the

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At 5:00 am on our second-last day, Juergen, Christian and I drove in complete darkness to a ground blind where we wanted to hunt that morning. We walked the last 500 metres.

Every morning at this blind usually six to ten quails would fly in and take their sandbath near the salt lick in between the countless stones. These small terrestrial birds are highly adapted to the surroundings and have such excellent camouflage that you might not see them at all unless they move.

They gathered at around 7:00 am in small groups near the salt lick and from time to time were chasing each other, picking at the salt lick or looking for seeds. It was interesting to observe their behaviour.

Christian told me that they also tasted good and that we could have them for dinner if we harvested several of them. So I took one of my arrows that was equipped with a field point



The author took the quail at 20 yards, but lost the arrow through it hitting a stone behind the bird.

and Adder head and nocked it in. This time I wanted to go the whole hog because some days earlier I had missed the quails and shredded the arrow. PH Christian and Juergen were ribbing me over that shot.

I faded out the teasing of the guys, grabbed the Gripwerks Birdseye Maple custom grip on my Bowtech Tribute, and put the 20-metre pin of my sight onto the tiny quail. “Damn, that is a small target and kill zone”, I thought to myself. I controlled my heartbeat and triggered my Scott release... and a quail was lying in the sand dead as a doornail! Well done, Horrido and Waidmannsheil – Chris and Juergen congratulated me. Great, I thought, but the only sour note was that the arrow was busted again because it had hit one of the stones behind the quail. That is life! Nevertheless, we all had a great and successful bowhunting time again in Namibia, and the quails – all of us shot some – tasted really good.

Take care and always good hunting – alles van die beste.

Equipment:

70-pound Bowtech Tribute bow with Gripwerks Birdseye Maple custom grip / PSE Top Gun F35 sight / Trophy Ridge drop-away rest / SVL Camo stabiliser / Scott Wildcat release / Carbon Express Maxima Hunter 350 arrow / 125-grain field point with Adder head / Sniper Africa camo clothing / Zeiss Victory 10 x 40 binoculars / Leupold RX-III rangefinder