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HUNTING THE GREAT CONTINENT OF AFRICA





Bowhunting a
WILD BOAR
in South Africa

By Frank Berbuir

Highly strung

It was the second week of August and, luckily, I made it back to Africa. This time my hunting endeavors led me to South Africa for my first hunt with PH Izak Vos from Vos Safaris. The major challenge was to hunt a Cape buffalo. But beforehand, my PH wanted to see how I performed with a bow. So after my arrival we drove to a farm in the Gauteng area where the owner had some imported European animals – the European Wild Boar. I would never have thought that there were wild boars in South Africa.

However, after some practice shots with my 90lb Elite GT 500 bow and the 800-grain arrow with the Muzzy Phantom broadhead on our practice shooting butt, we headed out to stalk them. The farmer said that they were active during the day as well as at night and told us where we should go and try our luck.

When we arrived at the place, we started walking and stalking slowly and quietly, and after a while we spotted some boars between the bushes about 80 to 100 meters from us. We could see a gang of some sows, young males, and a real bruiser. So far, they have not seen us, and we figured out how we could sneak in closer. Gradually we moved from one bush cover to the next. The wind was in our favor, and we had shortened the distance down to 40 meters when a sow saw our movement, looked at us, and grunted.

Izak and I immediately froze. It was lucky for us that the other pigs did not react to the grunt and only this sow was looking in our direction. It felt like eternity until finally she turned away from us. Time to take a deep breath. Avoiding too much noise, we gradually crept forward. We saw the big male pig stroll in from the right about 30 meters from us.

“Get ready,” Izak whispered. I put an arrow on the rest and in the moment that I pulled the bow, the boar went behind a bush! Smoothly I let my full draw back. Now we had to be calm and wait for what would happen next. Unfortunately, the wild pig walked away from us and went behind a bush.

“Hmm, what a hassle,” I thought. Now we had to start from the beginning and follow him as best as possible. Luckily, the only reason that the boar moved was because he was the last one at the end, following his gang. Anyhow, it took us quite some time to circle quietly from bush to bush, not spooking any of the pigs. Eventually they stopped walking, and we could approach the big male again. We were standing behind a bush, and I ranged it once more at 30 meters again. Only his backside visible while he was sniffing and rooting for something edible. I already had an arrow on the rest and set the sliding sight. I was also feeling my rising blood pressure when Izak mumbled: “He is turning broadside, Frank.” I moved slowly to the right for a clear shooting window, pulled my bow to full draw and aimed at the vital zone. I smoothly pushed the trigger



Rough bushveld.

of my release and in a split second, the heavy Full Metal Jacket arrow with the Muzzy Phantom 2-blade broadhead sliced completely through the body of the wild boar. It took just two more steps before it fell and expired. What excitement! Izak congratulated me, patting my shoulder.

“Good shot, probably you hit the heart.” We went to examine the animal and saw that, “Wow, this was a bruiser of a wild boar.” We needed to radio the farm owner to pick us up with the bakkie.

After some nice trophy pictures, we celebrated it with an ice-cold beer and weighed the boar at 108 kilograms. Very good for me because Izak had a bet that for anything over 100 kilograms I did not have to pay! Memories for a lifetime. Furthermore, I could also take my Cape buffalo with bow and arrow on this safari, but that is another story. Once more I can only thank Izak for the great organization, his experience and company and all the nice people I had the opportunity to meet during this fantastic time.

Unfortunately, this was the last bowhunting story with Izak Vos and Vos Safaris, from the time we first met in 2011 in Mozambique, and all our yearly adventures we had up to 2019. After the corona pandemic, which blocked all travel, we had already made plans for our next hunting adventure in 2022 when all of a sudden I got the saddest and shattering message from his wife that Izak, at age 39, had passed away tragically in a quad bike accident. An unbelievable loss of a great person, loving husband and father, exceptional professional hunter, and truly honest friend. Rest in peace my friend.

Always good hunting, shoot straight,

Waidmannsheil and “Alles van die Beste”. Frank Berbuir



Wild boar.



108 kilograms on the scale.

German hunter Frank Berbuir is passionate about the outdoors and hunting – especially bowhunting, which he has practised for more than 24 years. Although he has bow hunted in several countries, he has become addicted to hunting in Africa since his first safari in 2004. Frank is a mechanical engineer and quality manager in the automotive industry.

Equipment:

Bow: Elite GT 500 @ 90#

Arrow: Easton Full Metal Jacket 250 Dangerous Game with heavier inserts

Broadhead: Muzzy Phantom SS 2-Blade @ 200 grain

Optics: Zeiss Victory Binocular & Nikon Rangefinder

Release: Scott

The **wild boar** (*Sus scrofa*), also known as the wild swine, common wild pig, Eurasian wild pig or simply wild pig, is a suid native to much of Eurasia and North Africa, and has been introduced to the Americas and Oceania. The species is now one of the widest-ranging mammals in the world, as well as the most widespread suiform.

The wild boar is a bulky, massively built suid with short and relatively thin legs. The trunk is short and robust, while the hindquarters are comparatively underdeveloped. The region behind the shoulder blades rises into a hump and the neck is short and thick to the point of being nearly immobile. The animal's head is very large, taking up to one-third of the body's entire length. The structure of the head is well suited for digging. The head acts as a plough, while the powerful neck muscles allow the animal to upturn considerable amounts of soil. It is capable of digging up to four inches into frozen ground and can upturn rocks weighing up to 100 pounds. The eyes are small and deep-set and the ears long and broad.

The species has well developed canine teeth, which protrude from the mouths of adult males. The medial hooves are larger and more elongated than the lateral ones and are capable of quick movements. The animal can run at a maximum speed of 25 mph and jump at a height up to five feet.

It has become an invasive species in part of its introduced range. Wild boars probably originated in Southeast Asia during the Early Pleistocene and outcompeted other suid species as they spread throughout the Old World. As of 2005, up to 16 subspecies are recognized, which are divided into four regional groupings based on skull height and lacrimal bone length. The species lives in matriarchal societies consisting of interrelated females and their young (both male and female).

Fully-grown males are usually solitary outside the breeding season. The wild boar has a long history of association with humans, having been the ancestor of most domestic pig breeds and a big-game animal for millennia. Boars have also re-hybridized in recent decades with feral pigs. These boar-pig hybrids have become a serious pest wild animal in the Americas and Australia.

