



2017 BLACK BEAR SEASON

Spring here in the Fraser Canyon came a bit late this year. This was not surprising after the heavy snowpack we received this winter; one of the deepest snowpacks the local ranchers in the area say they have seen in the past 20 years. With all the deep snow, the vegetation was a bit slower to green up than most years, but we were fortunate enough to find consistent green belts along the Fraser River and the flats just above. This kept us more than busy enough until things were able to warm up and we were able to follow the green up into the mountains, just as the bears did.

We started things off early with Per Saanum, all the way from Trondheim, Norway. Per previously hunted with me at Arctic Red and harvested a 40 1/4" Dall Sheep, and a 452" Mountain Caribou, so we figured we had a good thing going. We were not disappointed. On day two of our hunt, we came across a beautiful green area above the river, secluded from the ranches with a creek and waterfall right below. There were signs of heavy position for about an hour, a big color phase boar fed right out below us. Per made a perfect shot at 160 yards and sealed the deal on our first bear of the season, a 6'7" Color Phase Black Bear.

Our good friends Donnie Vincent and his camera man William Altman were the next to come to Arcadia to hunt with us once again. They brought along one of the most exuberant clients we have ever seen in our time in the hunting world: their friend Alex Lindus. This was Alex's first Outfitted hunt for a Big Game animal, and he was not disappointed. On day one of his hunt, we took Alex to an area we had previously witnessed some good bear activity. We sat waiting quietly in the timber, and like clockwork, out strolled a huge black bruin. At 36 yards, it was a chip shot. This turned out to be one of our biggest bears of the season, at an honest 7 foot squared. Donnie was next in line, archery equipment en-route, Donnie picked up my 7mm Tikka...the first time he has hunted with a rifle since



PER SAANUM



ALEX LINDUS



WILLIAM ALTMAN

we first met 9 years previously in the Yukon Mountains up north. Although it felt foreign in his hands, Donnie made a quick clean shot on one of the most beautiful color phase bears we have ever seen on day 3 of the hunt. With everyone tagged out, and that finally arrived in town, and grabbed one more tag and license for William. William rarely gets to shoot for himself, as camera men are always following the shooter to capture the essence of the hunt. To say William was ecstatic is an understatement, when on the last day of the hunt, he harvested an ancient 6'8" color phase as well. Three bears in five days of hunting; not a bad week!



TAGERT PARVINEN

After many years apart, we ran into our old friend Tony Popp of Popp Construction at the Western Hunt Expo this past winter during show season. Tony is one of the most generous men we have had the pleasure of sharing the mountains with, and he did not disappoint. Tony heard of our recent purchase of two star employees: Tagert Parvinen and Caleb Barrett. Two of the younger hunters we have hunted with, we all had a riot together. The bears were moving consistently, starting to feed heavily on the blossoming foliage quickly spreading throughout the entire area, and it seemed like everywhere we went, we were bumping good bears off the roads. It was a matter of time before we rolled around the corner and managed to catch one same bear two days before, we found him once more, only a half mile from where we last attempted to get him. We hopped out of the vehicle and lined up 150 yards away, waiting for the perfect broadside. When Tagert was presented with it, he squeezed and dropped the black giant in his tracks. Scarred up and battered, this old black warrior squared 6'10". With only one day left, we decided to focus our energy on on a monster black bear bear we were seeing on trail cam daily. We hit it hard, but as is the rule, they get that big for a reason. He fooled us once again, and Caleb went home with his tag. We invited Caleb to come back at the start of our 2019 Spring Season, to try his luck once more!



DONNIE VINCENT

Our fourth hunt of the season was a busy one. We had a full camp, with guide Nolan Osborne from the Journal of Mtn Hunting, and professional houndsman and hunter all the way from Norway, Martin Brenne, along with his Norwegian Elk Hounds Dolly and Groom. We had hunters Mike Taylor, Rick Bohannon, Beau Beus, and Travis Poul-

son. It was a whirlwind hunt, with lots going on. The area had heated up considerably the previous hunt, and pushed the bears into more nocturnal activity. We still had good action and some high energy chases on the bears with Martin's dogs nevertheless, and it kept things interesting. Unfortunately, Travis had a family emergency and had to head home early, leaving the other three to continue on. Rick was the first to harvest, taking a big color phase boar from our lightly hunted north end of the area. This was Rick's first big game animal ever, and what a way to start with a big 6'8" boar! That will be a hard one to beat! Gentle giant Beau followed shortly after, taking a beautiful 6'1" blonde color phase with his bow with guide Nolan Osborne. These guys put on some miles walking the road systems on foot to stay nice and quiet and get Mike, who has certainly seen his fair share of bear hunting in the past. He is no novice to the hunt. When we rolled around the corner of a remote logging road on the 5th morning, and a bear multi-coated black bear. Mike's 6'6" boar had a top coat of jet black hair, and an undercoat of chocolate brown. One of the most interesting combinations we have witnessed.

most interesting combinations we have witnessed. one hunter in camp, Craig Heisserer. This allowed us to explore some new areas we weren't able to get in previously with the bigger groups. We rode the ATV's up into a steep access area, and were quickly blown away by the number of bears we found there. The rut was in full swing by this point, and there was lots of movement. On day two we set up and had a monster dark chocolate boar walk within 31 yards of us. Unfortunately, he stopped directly behind some small tree branches, and it covered his vitals from a clean shot with Craig's bow. We were not given a second chance. Again, they get big for a reason! We continued hunting the area in an attempt to find the big guy once again, but every time we spotted him, he was chasing another bear out of his territory, displaying signs of dominance during the rut. When a great 6' black fed out of the timber into a good bow hunting position, we quickly got down there and crept into range. At roughly 45 yards, Craig made a great shot and the Black did not run far. When done properly, a bow kill can be much more quick and clean than even a rifle kill.





The last week of hunting consisted of unseasonably cold and wet weather, which pushed the bears into hiding in the woods. We hunted hard and found a few bears here and there, but nothing of the caliber which we were looking for. At Arcadia, our goal is to harvest only mature animals that are either at the end of their life cycle, or out of the breeding population. In this way we ensure the quality and quantity of future hunts in our area. Although we did not find what we were looking for this last go around, the guys will be back next year to finish the job and hunt those big old animals we all strive to harvest.



That wrapped up our spring bear season, but we weren't done there. Hunters in our concession have the opportunity to have a black bear tag on their fall hunts as well. Our good friend Seth Murphy decided to do just that on his California Bighorn hunt. Lucky he did! As we sat waiting patiently for his ram to feed out into a safe position, we sat and watched a gigantic color phase black bear down below, sleeping on a boulder. When we finally shot his ram and looked over to see the bear within range as well, it was a no brainer. We lined up and Seth made another perfect shot, putting the big guy down in a heartbeat. This was Arcadia's biggest bear of the season, and my personal biggest bear ever guided to date, squaring 7'7", and a dark chocolate coat. A true giant in the black bear world, especially one with color! Congrats Seth on your "Arcadia Double"!!

All told we harvested 10 Bears this hunting season, and all great mature animals with perfect hides and hair. Six bears harvested were color phase, and four were blacks. No rubbing was seen on any of the bears. Our overall average size on all ten bears came in at just under 6'8"! In general, a hunter aims to harvest a mature 6 foot animal, and that size is a great bear in any area, including Vancouver Island. To harvest ten animals and maintain an average close to 7 feet in an interior hunting concession, is representative of an area harboring excellent genetics and proper wildlife management. As we continue to move forward and Arcadia grows, we hope to maintain this average or even improve upon it. Lofty goals bring great results!

Spring bear 2019 is quickly filling up. We still have some remaining spots for both large groups and individuals spread throughout the spring however, but better to act fast and scoop them up before they are gone. Our 2019 rates are \$5,500 USD for a 1x1 hunt, and \$4,500 USD for a 2x1. We feel hunting with friends is really the best for everyone involved. Second bear tags are also available in our area, so the chance at both a black bear and a color phase is very high. The trophy fee for a 2nd harvest is \$2,700 USD. If you are interested in a fun hunt for yourself or for some friends, be sure to contact us and inquire for remaining options and hunt details. Until then, happy hunting!