

# Z.P.G.A.

Official Newsletter of the Zimbabwe Professional Guides Association



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**ETHICS ARE EVERYTHING!**

# A HUGE TURNOUT FOR THE MAY 2021 HWANGE CLEAN UP CAMPAIGN

BY NATASHA AYLWARD

Approaching Hwange National park airport, slightly anxious on Saturday morning, I was delighted to see a large convoy of vehicles accompanied by many smiling faces, eagerly waving banners and clasping bin liners. It was an incredible turnout, and one could only be in awe of the sheer pride and stewardship this community has for Zimbabwe's largest National Park and for many who participated on the day, their home...

In a collective effort by stakeholders, local authorities and Hwange residents, it was the first of many scheduled community clean up days, following Zimbabwe's National Clean Up Campaign.

The day kicked off with the registration of over 90 volunteers! Among these names were local community organizations and clubs namely the Hwange Art and Recycling Project, Soft Foot Alliance, the Kulisumpula Recycled Glass Beads Ladies, Sobajimba Permaculture Group, HSL Social Soccer Club and most excitingly, representing the youth of the community, the Detema Secondary School Conservation Club.

For the clean up activity, volunteers were split into five groups, each covering approximately 3.5km of road frontage, for a total of 17 km from Cross Mabale to the Hwange National Park Main Camp entrance. Due to the sheer number of volunteers on the day, we were able to have a separate group covering the extra 14 km section of road from Main Camp entrance to Dete town centre.

Each team was supported by at least one vehicle and guide, which proved its worth when a huge herd of elephant crossed the road between two groups. Although privileged to be able to experience such a sighting, it was a grim reminder of why trash and wildlife should never have to occupy the same space and highlighted the importance of protecting our heritage and environment. Soon after the elephants quietly moved off, we found a plastic bottle that remained among the large footprints.

Glass and plastic beer bottles, soda cans, take away containers, chip packets and old tires made up some of the frightening amount of rubbish collected that day. Elisabeth from the Gwango team shared a picture of plastic that had already, luckily, passed through an animal. It was hard not to feel discouraged, seeing the sheer quantity of litter being collected, this was of course a mammoth and ongoing task, but looking around all I could see were the proud faces of a united community and I realized, that together, we are strong enough to achieve our goal of a litter free environment.

As this initiative grows, not only will we be conducting monthly clean up days, we will collectively continue to work on sustainable tourism practices, including waste management solutions and recycling. We will remain dedicated to ensuring the objectives of this campaign are met, by raising awareness and educating residents and visitors of the park, as well as constantly striving to find new and sustainable solutions to this global problem.



A special thank you to Conservation Wildlife Fund for the donation of bin bags. To National Parks, Zimbabwe Republic Police, Forestry Commission, Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe and the Hwange Crime Consultative Crime Committee (CCC) for your continued dedication to supporting our wild spaces.

Thank you also to Elisabeth Pasalk and the Association for Tourism Hwange (ATH) for coordination and support, to Forgie Wilson and Brent Staplekamp for providing transport from both Dete and Mabale and to all the lodges, camps and individuals for not only volunteering your time, but providing vehicle and guide support. Special thanks also to Roy Aylward of WILD.Life Picture Productions for filming the event.

Next month, 5th June we tackle the main road from Mabale to Cross Dete and hope to see you all there.

A lesson the elephants demonstrated to us that day, take only memories, leave only footprints.



**SUPPORT THE  
NATIONAL CLEAN UP  
DAY, THE FIRST  
FRIDAY OF EACH  
MONTH, NEXT DATE  
04TH JUNE**



**ETHICS ARE EVERYTHING!**

**Have you taken on an  
Apprentice L.P. Hunter or  
Guide? Do you really know  
what is required of you as a  
Tutor?**

**Please get in touch with the  
Z.P.G.A. Education  
Committee on  
[education@zpga.org](mailto:education@zpga.org) and ask  
for a copy of the "Train the  
Trainer" program.**





## Firebreaks - it is that time of year again!

BY JOHN LAING

As we enter the dry season it is vital that we get our firebreaks right. Here are some thoughts for all of us to consider;

Firebreak roads should be wide enough, at least 8 m wide to prevent accidental fires crossing them. In some instances, land owners may wish to do controlled burning, but this should never be attempted without adequate firebreaks in place. A change in wind direction can be disastrous and the application of a back fire to contain a runaway fire almost impossible to attain.

There are basically two types of firebreaks, namely clean cultivated firebreaks and burnt firebreaks.

- 1) Clean cultivated firebreaks are the most effective and comprise the removal of all ground vegetation. This can be accomplished either manually or mechanically.
- 2) Burnt firebreaks are where a strip of vegetation is burnt around the larger area intended to be burnt.

The most common method is to burn a strip of grass with the aid of fire-fighting equipment.

A safer method is to cut two strips with a mower early in the winter. This leaves an uncut strip in the centre, which is then burnt as soon as the grass is dry enough. This method is, however, limited to areas with gentle topography.

### Travel to Zimbabwe

"The regulations with regard to travellers arriving into Zimbabwe by air remain unchanged and are as follows:

- People travelling from or transiting from India will be subject to mandatory quarantine at a designated quarantine centre at their own cost
  - These travellers will be subject to a COVID-19 test on arrival despite the status of their traveling certificate
- Travellers coming into the country from other countries should present with a COVID-19 PCR test done not over 48 hours from the time of departure
- Travellers arriving will be required to fill out a Surveillance form which will be handed in at the Port Health desk
- Travellers will be temperature checked on arrival and any arrivals presenting symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to take a PCR test at their own cost.
  - Only if a Traveller tests positive will they be taken to a quarantine centre and required to quarantine at their own cost
  - Travellers testing negative on arrival may proceed without quarantine
- Irrespective of how long a traveller stays with us in Zimbabwe everyone needs a negative COVID-19 PCR test before they exit from our airports



## HWANGE NATIONAL PARK- A professional guide's perspective.

BY NIC POLENAKIS

Zimbabwe's largest and one of its oldest protected areas, Hwange, is immense in every sense of the word and its reputation as one of the great game reserves in Africa is fully justified.

Once home to the San bushmen and stone building Nambya, a traditional hunting ground for the Matabele kings and stomping ground for the early hunters/explorers the area is now a superb national park.

Proclaimed a game reserve in 1928, and named after the local Nambya chief, Hwange National park has gone from strength to strength and now boasts one of the largest mammal diversities of any park in Africa, with over 108 species recorded. Herds of elephant, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, impala and wildebeest are common and sable, roan, waterbuck and eland are often seen. All the large predator populations, including the endangered painted dog, are healthy with lion now numbering around 500 individuals.

In 2006 Hwange National Park was included into the largest terrestrial Transfrontier Conservation Area in the world, the Kavango, Zambezi TFCA. At a bewildering 520 000km<sup>2</sup> KAZA incorporates wilderness areas from five countries where Hwange serves as a vital cog in this massive ecosystem and is of strategic importance and significance as a corridor for migrating wildlife.

At 14651 km<sup>2</sup>, Hwange's habitat is astonishing and varied with over a 1000 tree species and shrubs dispersed over the dramatic Kalahari sands, rugged basaltic outcrops, sedimentary rocks and granites, fossil river valleys and sand dunes, ephemeral rivers, and springs.

Hwange's impressive safari camps and lodges are just as diverse, where most are involved with eco-tourism ventures and conservation projects and work hand in hand with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority to assist with infrastructural development, maintenance, and anti-poaching.



Only a couple of hours drive from Victoria Falls the park is easily accessible and caters to self-driving safaris and tours with its impressive road network and numerous camping grounds. Being so vast the park cannot be explored by visitors in a few days and needs time for her many secrets to be revealed. The park also has multiple private concessions which allows for an intimate experience for a privileged few who pay highly for this honour. These concessions are vital in keeping tourist volumes low in certain areas whilst still generating high incomes for the authorities.

With the amazing assistance from NGO’S such as Friends of Hwange and Bhejane trust, as well as many of the safari operators, boreholes have been drilled and maintained and solar installations have been erected, slowly replacing the lister engines of old. These artificially pumped pans are the heartbeat of the park providing thirst quenching water to the myriad of animals therein.

The park is of course world famous for holding the second largest elephant population in Africa and at 40 000 elephant the park has no comparison. These “Super herds” are extraordinary, especially with the onset of the dry season, when the 100 odd pumped pans attract impressive concentrations and at certain pans over 1000 elephants can be counted over a 24 hour period.

Sitting by one of these pans is simply breath taking and it is not uncommon to be totally surrounded by elephants as they run towards the water pumped from deep underground. The atmosphere is palpable, as the swirling clouds of dust engulf and accompany the thirsty animals as they quickly make their way towards the pan. On reaching the watering hole the privileged few make their way directly towards the crystal clean water pulsating from the black poly pipe, whilst the others pour into the mud strewn pan to skim the surface, in unison, for the life giving water. The vocalizations are dramatic and varied, terrifying and fabulous as even more ghostly herds appear and then descend into the abyss! It is this unique “elephant experience” which has helped elevate Hwange national park to one of the best on the continent.

Hwange is a birding hotspot and a birder's paradise with an impressive 420 birds recorded. The park holds an exceptional raptor population with over 50 species and during the rainy season (November/December) migrating birds flock to this region in massive numbers.

As with all our national parks in Zimbabwe, Hwange offers some of the best walking in Africa and an opportunity to track all the big game on foot including Black rhino. Walking down one of Hwange’s dusty elephant, dung strewn paths, through the famous camelthorn, teak or mopane woodlands on the heels of big game is an experience to behold and will leave one breathless.

Besides the exciting game drives, exhilarating walks and sitting in hides, Hwange also offers horse riding, mountain biking and both historical and cultural tours.

As with many national parks Hwange has its challenges. However with an effective and tireless Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, working hand in hand with dedicated conservation bodies, NGO’S and world class camps, guides and operators, Hwange’s future looks bright indeed.

HWANGE ARTICLE PICTURES  
BY DUNCAN WATSON





## THE WINE WAREHOUSE

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Mobile: 0782 737 714  
Email: [norbert@threechoirs.co.zw](mailto:norbert@threechoirs.co.zw)







## Z.P.G.A. Diary

[www.zpga.org/zpga-events](http://www.zpga.org/zpga-events)

### JUNE 2021

- Tues 1st - Wed 2nd - Re-write of the LPH exams
- Fri 4th - National Clean up day
- Fri 24th - Z.P.G.A. Talks

### JULY 2021

- Fri 2nd - BLZ Winter Waterfowl Count (Duration of July)
- National Clean up day

### AUGUST 2021

- Fri 6th - National Clean up day
- Fri 20th - Z.P.G.A. Talks

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- Fri 3rd - National Clean up day
- Fri 10th - Last date for Learners Registration
- Sun 19th - Shooting Proficiency (#3 Harare)
- Mon 20th - Bulawayo Oral Interviews
- Tues 21st - Bulawayo Learners Exams
- Wed 22nd - Bulawayo Learners Exams
- Thurs 23rd - Marking of Papers

### OCTOBER 2021

- Fri 20th - Z.P.G.A. Talks

### NOVEMBER 2021

- Mon 1st - Sun 7th - Proficiency exams
- Thurs 11th - Fun for Rhino (Multiple sports event)
- Mon 15th - Fri 19th - Pan African Ornithological Congress Victoria Falls
- Sat 27th - BLZ Big Birding Day

### DECEMBER 2021

- Fri 03rd - Z.P.G.A. Talks
- Sat 11th - AGM & Safari Dinner (Bulawayo) Provisional

Members will receive discounted rates on production of a valid Z.P.G.A. member's card

Participating companies include:

- Autoworld 4x4
- A.P. & L. Workwear
- Barons Motor Spares
- Courteney Boot Company
- Four Wheels Auto
- Pro 4x4
- Safari Canvas
- SAF Bar
- Shongwe Lookout
- The Orange Elephant
- Tiger Wheel & Tyre
- Toyota Zimbabwe Pvt Ltd
- Trophy Consultants International (TCI)
- Widency Upholstery

If you would like to see your company name listed here please contact [secretary@zpga.org](mailto:secretary@zpga.org)

**Ethics Are Everything!**



## G.A.P. working in conjunction with Z.P.G.A. - Illegal Netting

BY PETE FICK

Early morning of the 17th of March, 2021 I went in my boat from Sijarira to the Senkwi River and located 5 illegal nets on the river - strung bank to bank. These nets were removed and burnt and there was no sign of the perpetrators. The next day, myself and four rangers headed to Chareri Bay, following reports of Zambian poachers. Two poachers were seen in a canoe, but escaped, leaving behind their 450m illegal net, dugout canoe and their catch of many small tiger fish, bream, Hunyani salmon and Silver barbel. From there we covered Kudu island and the entire Ruzi bay area and up-river. I was very surprised that not one net was located, as 2 years prior the entire area was inundated with kilometres of nets.

After checking with a senior ranger, he indicated they had been doing many foot patrols along the shoreline, which has obviously had a very positive impact on the illegal netting, but he explained they are in desperate need of a motorised boat. We then checked the entire Chete shoreline, to Senkwi and back to Sijarira and located illegal nets all joined together between the Sounde inlet and Mbeta Island. After four hours of hauling, we removed 12 km of Zambian nets, twice the depth of Zimbabwean nets. A few days later, early in the morning we went back to Senkwi and located seven nets, 1.2 km long, strung across the entire river. We caught two culprits in a canoe and destroyed the nets.

Altogether, 13 kilometres of illegal nets were located in a matter of days. It appears the entire Musumu/Elephant Bay protected area has been taken over by local illegal netters. This is having a devastating negative impact on the local economy of the Binga area, as tourists and recreational fishermen, both local, regional and international, no longer wish to visit the area. It was obvious that foot patrols are useful, but there is an urgent need for signs against illegal netting along the banks and motorised boats, so Parks rangers can patrol on the water. The more of us that work together, the quicker we will get the protected areas back, which will definitely result in improving the overall economy of this area.

Hopefully I have made some positive difference for the area and looking forward to others following suit and working together with Zimbabwe Parks and National Parks and Wildlife Authority to get our valuable natural resource back.





## Security of firearms

by John Laing

Firearms must, at all times, when not in use, be kept in a suitable place that provides the necessary security in line with legislation laid down by the Firearms Act.

Firearms General - The handling of firearms within a camp should always be strictly controlled. Controls should apply to three areas:

- 1) Issue from safe
- 2) Use
- 3) Return to safe

### 1) Firearms issued from Gun Safe:

The following recommendations relate to the issuance of a firearm from a gun safe:

- When the firearm is issued from the gun safe it must always be pointed at the roof and checked to see if clear.
- Loading procedures should only be carried out outside the buildings. NO-ONE should ever load a firearm while in a building.

### 2) Use of firearms:

The following recommendations relate to the use of a firearm

- Firearms should be carried for the purpose of protecting the lives of staff and guests from wild animals. Should it be necessary to use firearms when members of the public are present and could be in danger, every safety precaution should be taken
- There is no such thing as an accidental discharge. These are ALWAYS caused by negligence – to many companies this is a dismissible offence.
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, within the presence of a guest, should a firearm be discharged in a public place in an attempt to recover money/valuables stolen. That is to say, firearms should only be carried and used for the PROTECTION OF LIFE AND NO OTHER REASON WHATSOEVER.
- The laws relating to the carrying of firearms will be complied with AT ALL TIMES and the following rules should be strictly observed:

"Thank you to Corneli Claassen for the hours spent proof reading our articles and her continued help in ensuring a quality newsletter"

– John Laing on behalf of the Z.P.G.A. –



- Always ensure the safety catch is ON, unless you intend to fire the firearm
- Be sure of your target before squeezing the trigger
- Never point the firearm at anyone
- Never carry a firearm if you have consumed any alcohol
- Always carry the licence with the firearm
- Always keep the firearm on your person or in your hands and NEVER leave it unattended
- NEVER have a round in the chamber
- ALWAYS carry firearms pointed upwards
- A firearm shall only be removed from its bag or holster when it is to be loaded or unloaded. There will be no playing, or showing off with firearms
- All persons handing over firearms will 'prove' the firearm is clear and all persons receiving firearms must do likewise

Firearms should be unloaded before entering any vehicle. NEVER take anyone with a firearm in a vehicle without first checking to see that their firearm is clear - for example National Parks or Rural District Council Rangers or fellow guides & hunters. Firearms should be unloaded in a safe place away from camp when returning from a game drive or walk, that is to say, ensure there is no round in the chamber.

### 3) Firearms returned to a Gun Safe:

The following recommendations relate to the return of a firearm to a gun safe, firearms should always be unloaded in a safe place when returning from a game drive or walk.

When the intention is to lock the firearm away the following rules should be observed:

- RIFLES – First remove the magazine, then cock the firearm three times, look to see if the chamber is clear. Then pull the trigger & apply the safety catch
- SHOTGUNS – Shotguns shall be cocked at least four times, without touching the trigger to ensure the magazines are empty. Look to make certain that the chamber and magazine are CLEAR. The trigger may be pulled and the safety catch applied
- REVOLVERS – Open the chamber and eject bullets. Look to see chambers are clear then close. DO NOT touch the trigger  
NOTE: In some cases the firing pin may be broken by “dry firing” – KNOW YOUR FIREARM!!
- Thereafter the firearm should be brought back to the gun safe



# MEMBERSHIP

## Membership Status

It's a collaborative effort

Z.P.G.A. Members Breakdown by Qualification		
Number of Members	Qualification	
32	ASSOCIATE	
25	CUBS	
48	FULL PG	
137	FULL PH	
5	LIFE MEMBER	
67	LPH LICENSE	
6	RESTRICTION	
3	SERVICE PROVIDER	
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The Z.P.G.A. webpage was launched on 20th April 2021 and forms part of our Membership Marketing Strategy. We aim to list all of our members and also their specialties.

[www.zpga.org](http://www.zpga.org)

Our members will also have an additional option of being showcased for a nominal administration fee per membership year.

In order to achieve both, we have come up with some fun, easy to follow logos that we will use for each guiding activity.

"CAN YOU REALLY AFFORD NOT TO BE A MEMBER?"





## Matobo Wire Removal Program

BY JOHN LAING

The Matobo Wire removal program was concluded on the 21st May and the results have been outstanding. In fact a hidden score for everyone that was involved was a surprise visit by the Z.T.A. whom came to see what was being done, so congratulations to EVERYONE involved!

TEAM	GRP A	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	Chapo	TEAM 3
Mon			9		21.2
Tue	22	24	25.8		12.7
Wed	37.4	30.4	11.6	26.8	12.45
Thu	27.2	9.8	14	11.6	12.3
Fri	19.8	14.3	12	15.2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106.4</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>53.6</b>	<b>58.65</b>

**Total Wire Removed:  
369.55km**







## The Warthog

BY JOHN LAING

The warthog is a tough, sturdy animal. Females weigh in at between 45 to 75 kilograms and males weigh 9 to 23 kilograms more than females, but both are distinguished by disproportionately large heads and “warts” — thick protective pads that appear on both sides of the head. Their large tusks are unusual: the two upper tusks emerge from the sides of the snout to form a semicircle; the lower tusks, at the base of the uppers, are worn to a sharp-cutting edge. Sparse bristles cover their body, and longer bristles form a mane from the top of the head down the spine to the middle of the back. Their long tail ends with a tuft of bristles. Warthogs characteristically carry their tails upright when they run, the tuft waving like a tiny flag.

Once seen on just about every drive between towns and cities within Zimbabwe, feeding on the road verges, today sadly human-wildlife conflict poses a threat to warthogs. Some are killed on the roads, others killed for raiding fields of wheat, beans, maize or even groundnuts. In some agricultural areas, people are also eliminating this species, as they can potentially carry African swine fever.

So, what needs to be done about this and other human wildlife issues? Well, we all have to work more with rural communities living in close proximity to wildlife. Many of the communities have schools, so tackling this issue from a grass roots level is the place to start. In exchange for practicing conservation and refraining from such practices as retaliatory killing, communities need to benefit; perhaps an inexpensive way of doing this is to build a school or community garden and of course produce conservation curriculums.

It is realised that this all takes time, effort and funding, but it is worth it in the long run, not just for the warthog but for all our wildlife in general. There are two camps that come to my mind when I think about human wildlife conflict, Chilo Gorge in the South Eastern Lowveld and Camelthorn in Southern Hwange, both do a huge amount of work with communities through the schools they support. Take some time to research what they do, who knows you could save a warthog in doing so.



## Potato & Leek Soup

BY JACO KOK

Clean 10 large Leeks by cutting off the bottoms, 1cm above roots and about 5cm from where green starts. Cut the leeks in half lengthwise and be sure to rinse all soil out.

Proceed to finely chop the leeks in half moon slices,  
2 large onions, finely chopped  
1 bunch celery, only stalks, finely sliced

Combine these ingredients in a cast iron pot with some cooking oil and fry till translucent. You do not want any discoloration, so watch the heat.

Add 8 large, peeled and diced potatoes and add to pot.  
Add 3 litres of warm water and boil until the potatoes start to break up.

Watch water level constantly and ensure that the contents of pot remains at about 3 litres.

Add 500ml fresh cream, salt and white pepper to taste, just before serving.





# Members Photo Gallery

A PICTURE CAN TELL A THOUSAND STORIES

A focus on anti-poaching and snare removal - pictures by Stanley Ndlovu during a recent outing, where anti-poaching assistance was provided to Wild Horizons. 10 LPH's volunteered their time to assist in this worthy effort.







## Contact Us

### SHOULD YOU REQUIRE ANY INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE

The Z.P.G.A. committee is here to assist you. To enable us to answer your questions in a timely manner, please would you firstly contact Jenny VAN DEN BERGH on [secretary@zpga.org](mailto:secretary@zpga.org) and request to be put in touch with one of the following sub-committees and the relevant committee member will gladly assist you.

Below you will find the various sub-committees, a short description of what their role and function is and a contact email address should you want to get in touch.

- Z.P.G.A. – Chairman Rob LURIE - [chairman@zpga.org](mailto:chairman@zpga.org)
- Z.P.G.A. – Vice Chairman John LAING
- Z.P.G.A. – Legal & Ethics - Pete FICK - [legal@zpga.org](mailto:legal@zpga.org)
  - Guiding Code of Conduct
- Z.P.G.A. – Finance - Rob LURIE - [finance@zpga.org](mailto:finance@zpga.org)
  - All payment issues
- Z.P.G.A. – Marketing & Advertising - John LAING - [marketing@zpga.org](mailto:marketing@zpga.org)
  - All branding Membership Cards
  - Membership Discounted Rates Initiative
  - Fundraising
- Z.P.G.A. – Education Training - David CARSON - [education@zpga.com](mailto:education@zpga.com)
  - Study Packs
  - RIFA & SAVE Valley Conservancy initiatives
  - Devil's Gorge Conservancy training program
- Z.P.G.A. – Research - Wayne Van Den BERGH - [research@zpga.org](mailto:research@zpga.org)
  - Ensure compliance with trophy off take in terms of ethics as well as sustainability
  - Cat ageing & Research
  - Attendance to & at quota setting workshops
  - Assistance with any NDF requirements that may come up from time to time
- Z.P.G.A. – Awards - Duncan WATSON - [awards@zpga.org](mailto:awards@zpga.org)
  - To discuss and agree what awards shall be current or pertinent to the industry
  - To look at and agree end of year award nominees
- Z.P.G.A. – A.G.M. & Dinner - Tan BLAKE (2021)

" We would also like to advise our members that we understand mistakes do happen from time to time. If you find yourself in an impossible situation please do call your Executive Committee and ask for advice.

Several stories have recently emerged regarding members where "had they raised the issue" a completely different result may have been the order of the day."



Visit our Web Page - [www.zpga.org](http://www.zpga.org)

Visit our Facebook Page - [www.web.facebook.com/ZimProGA](http://www.web.facebook.com/ZimProGA)

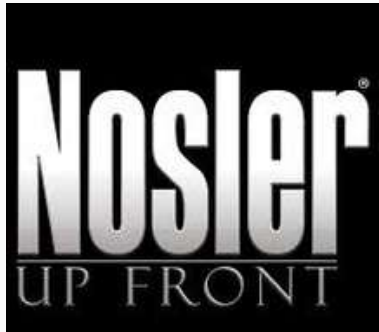
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