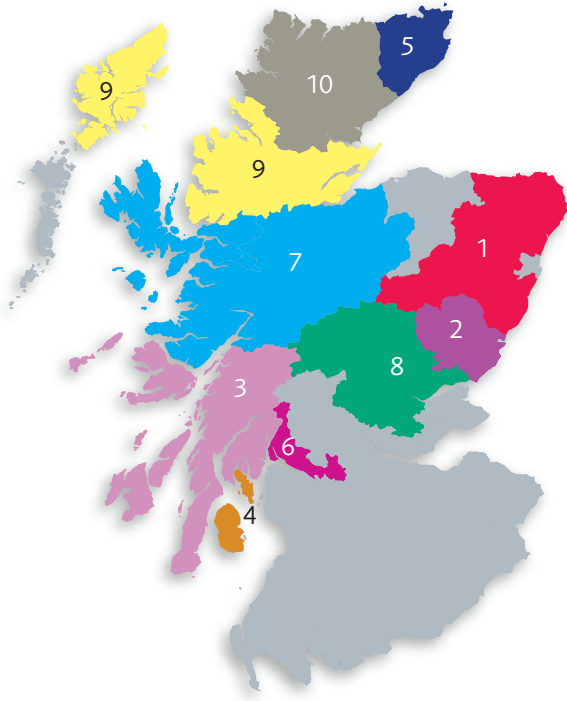


ADMG - Knight Frank 2010 STAG SEASON REVIEW



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The Association of Deer Management Groups is the representative body for deer forest owners and deer managers in Scotland. www.deer-management.co.uk

Front cover: Walking in, Acharacle, Shielbridge

Back cover: Stags on Boreland, Perthshire February 2011

All photography by Glyn Satterley, www.glynsatterley.com



This will be the sixth year that Knight Frank has supported the annual Stag Season Report prepared by the Association of Deer Management Groups in association with Shooting Times.

This year, with over 150 entries, the report has a record number of contributors, but this probably only represents half of the forests that could make a return. The more data that is received, the more comprehensive the report becomes, and the more useful it will be to all who see it.

So spread the word, and ensure that for the 2011 season there are even more entries.

The Scottish property market has been through a tough time at every level since 2008. It remains difficult to predict, but well priced, quality rural property still sells well. Activity in the market is up on this time last year and we are now doing deals on property that had failed to sell during the last 12 months. Global inflationary concerns and a volatile currency market are increasingly pushing investors towards quality assets. This combined with the usual shortage of supply bodes well for the deer forest and estate market in 2011.

Knight Frank continues to invest in Scotland, and we are expanding our rural service to embrace not just our portfolio of houses and estates, but also enhancing our focus on farms, sporting and renewables.

Michael Ireland has written a more detailed examination of the market and value of deer forests which I hope you will find interesting reading on page 9 of the Review. We are looking forward to a stronger spring market as we have now hopefully shaken off this harsh winter.



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Boreland stag, February 2011





2010 RED STAG REVIEW

Tony Jackson

A season notable for the late rut and deer in good condition despite a hard winter.

The red stag stalking season for 2010 will long be remembered, mostly for the wrong reasons. Almost without exception the rut was slow to get under way and in many cases stags did not break out until the last week of the season and were even heard still roaring in November. On the other hand, despite the previous appalling winter, the majority of stags appeared to be in good to excellent condition, though in some cases body weight was down on the average. As usual, there was no determined pattern to the weather and, while some forests suffered from cold, wet and cloudy conditions, others noted warm September days and southerly winds. There had been heavy mortality amongst red deer, notably calves, as a result of the prolonged and bitter winter of 2009-10 and on some forests hundreds of carcasses were found. There were also reports from Sutherland concerning deer desperately trying to seek shelter and food on Forestry Commission land during the hard winter. Many forests reported no problems with hill walkers, but others noted an increase in walkers who are not prepared to use recognised tracks or to respect or understand stalking activities.

Aberdeenshire

Most forests reported a late start to the rut. On Mar estate there was no activity until 18 October and then the rut fizzled out. At Glen Tanar estate there was a good, active rut in the woodland but little action on the hill due to a lack of mature stags. Most forests reported deer in good condition, though several noted deer as being light. The weather tended to east winds, rain, low cloud and snow at end of the season. Glenmuick lost 20 stags and about 80 hinds and calves in the winter of 2009/10 and nearly all forests reported heavy mortality, with calves suffering the most. Three forests, Baddoch, Glen Callater and Mar estate reported an increase in disturbance by hill walkers.

Angus

The rut only got under way on 8 October at Glenisla, but deer were in good condition. A great deal of mist in early October followed by north winds from the 10 to 20 October caused deer to leave the ground. A heavy official cull had also made letting stalking in September a non-starter and October was problematical. However, winter mortality was less than expected. The rut at Invermark was slightly later than usual in the second week of October, but deer were in good condition. About six days were lost to mist, and winter mortality was slightly higher than usual. At Tulchan of Glenisla headstalker W H Mearns reported a very short eight-day rut. Deer were in good condition and variable weather, with a great deal of snow in last week of the season.

Argyll

Niall Rowantree, headstalker at Ardnamurchan and Glenborrodale, reported first roaring on 22 August, a slowing down of the rut at end of September then in full flow around 7 October, and some stags well run by 15 October at Glenborrodale. Stags were in excellent condition with good heads, though hinds were thinner than usual. Heavy rain and mist occurred in early September, followed by almost summery weather at the peak of the rut.

There was less mortality than in previous long wet winters. However, several other forests reported a late rut while at Glencoe and Dalness, stags were still roaring at the end of November. Many forests reported good weather conditions, but at Black Corries, driving sleet and hail on some days made for a testing season and a contrast to Dunlossit where the weather was dry, warm and sunny. Winter mortality for 2009/10 was relatively mild due to lack of rain and cold, though a few calves suffered. On the Argyll estates, headstalker Tom Kirsh reported a hummel seen holding 20 hinds and a stag heard roaring on 28 November.



Stag holding hinds, Acharacle, Shielbridge



Ayrshire/Bute

Alastair Chalmers, the headstalker at the Dougarie estate reported a short, sharp and late rut, but with deer in very good condition.

Caithness

Both Langwell and Braemore estates and Dunbeath and Glutt reported a late rut, which only got under way in the last ten days of the season. Weather conditions were dry and warm with south winds and the deer were in good condition. The estates reported heavy losses during the previous winter and the Northern Deer Management Group of a dozen estates found more than 1,000 dead deer.



Walking up, Suisgill, Sutherland



Spying, Suisgill, Sutherland

Forest	Owner	Tenant	Stalker	Stags Shot	Average Weight	Heaviest
ABERDEENSHIRE						
Ballogie	M Nicol	N/a	Peter Littlejohn	33	15-03	21-02
Glenmuick Estate	Sir Andrew Walker Okeover Bt	N/a	A B Taylor	60	12-09	18-05
Glen Tanar	Michael Bruce	N/a	Colin McClean	71	14-07	20-09
Invercauld	Baddoch	Invercauld Trust	Colin Farrel	24	13-06	16-10
	Glen Callater	Invercauld Trust	Michael Falconer	46	13-08	16-06
Mar Estate	M M Nicolson and others	N/a	Ian Campbell	51	13-07	20-01
Mar Lodge	National Trust for Scotland	Various	Stewart Cumming	84	13-02	17-04
ANGUS						
Glenisla	Major J P O Gibb	N/a	Nicholas Gibb	15	13-00	17-02
Invermark	Earl of Dalhousie	N/a	Fred Taylor	70	14-00	19-03
Tulchan of Glenisla	Dr Florian Kühnle	N/a	W H Mearns	85	13-03	17-12
ARGYLL						
Ardchattan	Mrs S H Troughton	N/a	Bruce Campbell	14	09-02*	12-05*
Ardkinglas	David Sumsion	N/a	Jason Ferguson	39	09-06*	Not given
Ardnamurchan and Glen Borrodale	Ardnamurchan Estates	Various	Niall A Rowantree	76	16-08	29-04
Ardtalla	Ardtalla Estates Ltd	N/a	Callum Sharp	47	15-12	21-01
Ardtornish	Ardtornish Estate Co	N/a	Simon Boulton	30	15-04	23-06
Argyll Estates	His Grace the Duke of Argyll	N/a	Tom Kirsop	91	13-08	20-01
Auch	A Besterman	N/a	J Campbell	15	14-05	17-10
Black Corries	Vicomte Adolphe de Spoelberch	N/a	Davy Thomas	20	13-09	16-02
Blackmount	Philip Fleming	N/a	Alastair MacDonald	87	13-10	17-00
Dalness	R J Fleming	N/a	Alastair Hunter	10	13-10	16-08
Dunlossit	Dunlossit Trustees Ltd	N/a	Donald James Macphee	35	14-10	24-10
Glencoe - Dalness	National Trust for Scotland	N/a	John MacDonald	32	13-05	19-08
Glenforsa	Trustees of Glenforsa Estate	N/a	Graham Waugh	22	14-08	22-05
Laggan Estate	Laggan Properties Ltd	N/a	Niel Park	33	14-06	22-07
Laudale	J K R Falconer	N/a	Steven Brazendale	27	12-00	20-04
Shielbridge Estate	Trustees of CB Holman Settlement Trust	N/a	Doug Macdonald	18	12-02	18-03
Strone	T R Turnbull	N/a	T R Turnbull	32	12-01	20-06
ARRAN AND BUTE						
Dougarie	S C Gibbs	Various	Alastair Chalmers	29	14-05	17-08

* shows larder weight

Forest	Owner	Tenant	Stalker	Stags Shot	Average Weight	Heaviest
CAITHNESS						
Braemore	The Welbeck Estates Co Ltd	N/a	J H Miller	36	14-05	19-02
Dunbeath & Glutt	S W M Threipland	N/a	W Milne	75	13-08	19-08
Langwell	The Welbeck Estates Co Ltd	N/a	J J Bain	50	14-09	19-12
Sandside	Geoffrey Minter	N/a	Alan Sandison	2	12-11	14-00
DUNBARTONSHIRE						
Garabel	Ove Wolff Marsden	N/a	Colin Stark	3	15-02	16-07
INVERNESS-SHIRE						
Achdaluie	West Highland Woodlands	Various	Alan Currie	33	14-06	19-07
Achnacarry North	D A Cameron of Lochiel	Various	Alex Macdonald	47	14-04	18-03
Achnacarry South	D A Cameron of Lochiel	Various	Donald Kennedy, Ewan Kennedy	33	Not given	17-09
Alvie & Dalraddy Estates	Alvie Trust / Jamie Williamson	N/a	Graeme Macdonald	22	13-01	16-11
Ardverikie	Ardverikie Estate Ltd	N/a	D Langlands	125	13-03	16-09
Barisdale	R & J Gordon	N/a	Craig Harbison	21	14-00	17-02
Ben Alder	Ben Alder Estate Ltd	N/a	Ian G Crichton	56	14-00	16-04
Braulen	Andras Ltd	N/a	R Smith	111	14-08	19-06
Camusrory	The Hon Rupert Soames and Mr R Crosthwaite-Eyre	N/a	V Stockwell	4	15-06	17-03
Coignafearn	Coignafearn Estate	Various	Sandy Dey	103	14-06	18-10
Conaglen	J Guthrie	N/a	Ross Maclean	47	13-10	17-11
Corrour Estate	Corrour Lands Ltd	N/a	Donald Rowantree	250	13-04	16-06
Culachy	Culachy Estate Management Ltd	N/a	Scott Bremner	46	13-08	19-00
Dalwhinnie	Ben Alder Estate Ltd	N/a	Iain MacDonald	9	13-03	15-00
Dell	J P G Finnis	N/a	Colin Barclay	16	Not given	Not given
Dunachton	John Forbes-Leith	N/a	Andrew Drummond	24	09-11*	13-10*
Glenaladale	Glenaladale Estate	Various	David McCauley	18	13-10	17-04
Glenavon	Glenavon Estate	N/a	R Greenlaw	45	14-01	17-08
Glanbancher	Glanbancher Estate	N/a	Jim Grant	36	13-11	Not given
Glen Dessary	Sir Patrick Grant	N/a	-	35	14-07	18-02
Glendoe	Messrs G and R Vernon	N/a	George Watson	37	13-10	16-04
Glenfeshie	Glenfeshie Estate Ltd	N/a	David Taylor	70	10-12	17-07
Glen Mama	Dr D F Berardelli	N/a	Paolo Berardelli	17	13-12	15-02
Glenmazeran	Englefield Estate Trust Corporation	Various	M J Irvine	12	13-10	16-04
Glenquoich	Duncan Gordon	N/a	Lea McNally	31	15-05	18-12

* shows larger weight

Dunbartonshire

Colin Stark, the headstalker at Garabal reported that the weather had been very wet, but that the deer were in good condition.

Inverness-shire

Nearly all the forests that submitted returns reported a late rut, in some cases only commencing in the last week of the season and then ending quickly. At Glendoe, the rut never really got under way, with few stags on the ground and, even in October, there were groups of hinds seen without a stag. However, at Glen Mama, activity improved dramatically in the second week of October with the arrival of some mature stags. This was not the case at Kingie where a lack of mature stags resulted in an inactive rut.

Most forests reported deer in good condition, while weather conditions were mixed. Some forests reported dry conditions, apart from the last two weeks in September, when heavy rain, wind, snow and mist made stalking difficult. Though the majority of forests reported average mortality among deer in the previous winter, there were some exceptions. There were 60 dead hinds at Dunachton estate, while at Glenavon there were 130 deaths, mostly calves.

Ewen Kennedy, headstalker at Kingairloch estate reported that all 52 stags were shot by clients, with guests coming from nine different countries. At Glenquoich one guest, aged 75, having survived four bouts of heart surgery, shot his 99th and final stag, a feat that had taken him 26 years to achieve. Whilst hill walkers caused problems at Killiechonan Forest and at Kingie, Alvie and Dalraddy estates noted less disturbance from walkers and mountain bikers than in previous years.



Perthshire

Again, without exception, every forest reported a late rut, often not getting under way until the first or second week of October and, in some cases, stags still holding hinds and roaring in November. A shortage of big, mature stags was reported in some forests and many hinds were noted without mature stags well into October. Keith Hall, headstalker at Acharn Hill, noted many young stags with poor heads or only pedicles, and at Craiganour stags stayed in their groups to the end of the season and did not break out. Many forests reported deer in reasonable to good condition, though stags at Auchlyne and Suie lacked fat and were about a stone underweight, while deer at Invergeldie were described as lean. Some forests noted that while deer were carrying fat, weight was down compared to the previous season

Weather conditions were mixed, with some forests experiencing heavy rain, mist and low cloud in September, whilst others reported dry days with south-east winds. Most forests reported mortality from last winter as being surprisingly low, though Glenartney lost around 300 deer and a lot of roe were found dead. On the whole, disturbance by hillwalkers was light, though several stalks were spoilt at Gleylyon by ignorant or unhelpful walkers. At Lude estate stalker Alistair Stephen witnessed a golden eagle attacking and killing a roe fawn. The hen eagle kept the doe at bay, while the cock drove the fawn into a drain and killed it. At Auchleeks estate a freak head was shot on 9 October, a stag with four antlers protruding from the right pedicle.



Quarry in sight, Acharacle, Shielbridge



Forest	Owner	Tenant	Stalker	Stags Shot	Average Weight	Heaviest	
Glenshero / Sherramore	Rio Tinto Alcan Estates	Various	Bruce Hendry	126	13-08	18-13	
Glen Spean	Messrs Smith & Bruce	N/a	Phil Hoare	15	Not given	Not given	
Inverguserain	Iain Wilson	N/a	Iain Wilson	5	13-06	15-08	
Kilchoan Estate	Eric Delwart	N/a	Iain Biggart	24	15-01	20-05	
Killiechonate Forest	Rio Tinto Alcan Estates	Various	A Walker	49	13-13	18-10	
Kingairloch	Kurt Larson	N/a	Ewen Kennedy	52	14-07	21-01	
Kingie	I & H Brown Ltd	N/a	John Cameron	22	15-01	17-13	
Kinloch Hourn	Henry Birkbeck	N/a	Donald Cameron	12	12-12	14-08	
Knoydart Estate	The Knoydart Foundation	N/a	Jim Brown	47	14-00	16-12	
Mamore	Alcan Highland Estates	I & H Brown	John Cameron	18	13-00	15-13	
Mamore - Caolasnagon	Alcan Highland Estates	Stuart Symmers	Stuart Symmers	9	12-06	16-05	
North Morar	Ian R S Bond	N/a	Alec Mackay	40	15-00	18-08	
Nevis	Nevis Estate, c/o Strutt & Parker	N/a	Robert Grant	6	Not given	Not given	
Pitmain Estate	C/o Smiths Gore	N/a	Graham Mabon	24	Not given	Not given	
Roshven Hill	Captain J A P Forbes	Colin Surman	Colin Surman	8	13-05	15-08	
Struy	Angus Spencer-Nairn	N/a	Roddy Legge	22	13-06	17-03	
PERTHSHIRE							
Acharn Hill	A N B Baillie-Hamilton	Mr K Hall	Keith Hall	8	06-06*	09-04*	
Atholl	Clunes	Bruar Trust	Various	Ronnie Hepburn	68	12-11	17-00
	Dalnamein	Bruar Trust	Various	Kevin Grant	58	13-00	18-13
	Forest Lodge	Atholl Estates	Various	Richard Fraser	109	13-01	17-00
	Glen Bruar	Bruar Trust	Various	Dominic Morrogh Bernard	30	13-13	17-00
	West Hand	Atholl Estates	Various	Graeme Cumming	44	13-00	17-06
Auchleeks	Nial Mackinlay	N/a	Bob Pirie	40	12-04	15-00	
Auchlyne	Mrs E Patterson	Various	George Coyne	18	13-02	15-03	
Boreland	Judge R A R Stroyan	N/a	Tim Frost	65	13-05	16-11	
Camusericht	Ben Alder Estate Ltd	N/a	Duncan Richardson	60	13-02	19-00	
Cashlie	W H Porter	N/a	Steven Martin	49	13-02	18-02	
Cluniemore	Pitlochry Estate Trust	N/a	Brian Troup	17	15-03	18-01	
Corrievarkie	Ben Alder Estate Ltd	N/a	Richard MacGregor	25	12-03	16-10	
Craiganour	Astel Ltd	N/a	David Olds	81	12-04	16-01	
Edradynate	Michael Campbell	Alex Cargill	Alex Cargill	8	10-07	11-06	
Glenartney	Baroness Willoughby	N/a	Alistair Work	90	14-03	21-04	
Glencally	Mr & Mrs Bennett	Jason Williamson	Jason Williamson	48	14-07	18-08	
Glenlochay	Struan Robertson	N/a	James Barrie	52	11-13	17-08	
Glenlyon Estate	Iain Wotherspoon	N/a	Jimmy Lambie	55	13-06	18-00	
Glenturret Estate	Mr and Mrs Seldon	N/a	Ian Macphee	5	07-10*	09-06*	

* shows larder weight

Forest	Owner	Tenant	Stalker	Stags Shot	Average Weight	Heaviest
Innerhadden	Richard Barclay	N/a	Craig MacIntosh	34	12-03	16-08
Innerwick	Mrs F Whewell	N/a	David Pirie	Not given	13-02	17-08
Invercauld - Rhiedorrach and Glenshee	Invercauld Estate	N/a	Liam S Donald	170	14-12	18-01
Invergeldie	Priestley Family	N/a	Craig Ross	23	13-03	15-10
Invermearn	A Besterman	N/a	J Campbell	48	13-07	21-06
Lochs	Lochs Estate Trust	N/a	Steven Macdonald	57	Not given	17-06
Lude	Duncan Gordon	N/a	Alistair Stephen	66	14-07	20-00
Meggernie	Mrs B Malim	N/a	Ally Macaskill	99	Not given	18-03
Monzie	Mrs C M M Crichton	Glenturret Estate	Ian Macphee	3	09-13*	11-05*
Murthly & Strathbraan	Thomas S Steuart Fotheringham	N/a	Fergus McGregor	17	11-09	20-06
North Chesthill	Alastair Riddell	N/a	H Shearer	30	12-02	17-02
Remony	A & J Duncan Millar	N/a	Bruce Blackley	38	13-04	23-01
Roro Estate	Emily Anderson	Balnahanaid Farm	Roddy Billimore	22	13-02	17-04
South Chesthill and Invernain	Major General C A Ramsay	N/a	Hamish Rae	52	13-02	17-09
Suie	Mrs E Patterson	Various	George Coyne	8	13-06	16-02
Tarvie	J Colman	N/a	Jim Tod	24	13-06	15-04
ROSS-SHIRE AND ISLE OF LEWIS						
Achnashellach	Captain NJNH Wills	N/a	Christopher Mackenzie	15	13-10	14-09
Applecross	Applecross Trust	N/a	David Abraham	62	14-07	18-07
Arnisdale	J H Richmond-Watson	N/a	Ewen Ballantyne	40	14-05	19-13
Corriellair	Ian Brown & Sons	N/a	Johnny Matheson	18	14-00	16-12
Coulin	The Hon P R Smith	N/a	Neil Morrison	34	14-00	19-11
Cluanie, East Quoich and Bunloyne	Mr Siva-Jothy	N/a	Rhuairidh Campbell	39	14-09	17-05
Diabaig	The Trustees of E C Bacon	Sir Paul Nicholson, Sir Nicholas Bacon Bt	Donnie Beaton	11	14-00	16-07
Druidaig	H I Macrae	N/a	Iain Culbertson	10	14-00	15-00
Dundonnell	Sir T Rice	Mr F Dineley	Alasdair Macdonald	30	Not given	Not given
East Benula South	R Turcan, G Weaver, P Urquhart and M Ward	N/a	Angus Hughes	14	13-12	16-10
Eilanreach	Lord Dulverton	N/a	Alan Mackenzie	36	14-03	18-04
Eishken	N Oppenheim	N/a	Chris Macrae	87	12-00	15-00
Fannich	Medieval Industries	N/a	R Matheson	33	13-04	16-06
Glasnock Estate	Mark Adams	N/a	Duncan Macleod	11	14-05	18-00

* shows larger weight

Ross-shire

With a few exceptions, once again the rut was delayed. On some forests it did not get under way until mid or late October and even then was brief. However, this was not the case everywhere. At Applecross, the rut got under way on 23 September and continued normally. At Druidag it commenced on 25 September and, while at Eishken the first roar was heard on 22 September, there was little rutting until late October. Many forests reported deer as being in very good to excellent condition, though in some cases weights were below average as a result of the previous hard winter.



Synchronised spying, Boreland, Perthshire



On the west coast, weather conditions were described as "variable", but many forests experienced warm, dry weather through most of the season. Strong south-westerly winds at Diabaig made sheltering deer hard to find, while Eishken experienced a hot season with little rain or cloud.

At Kinlochluichart, there were more hill walkers than usual, with few sticking to recognised tracks and, as a result, above average deer disturbance. It was the same at Achnashellach, where a steady increase in walkers has meant that deer now show little fear of humans. The same occurred at Arnisdale estate, Glencarron and Glenuaig Forest. At the latter, ptarmigan are now nesting below 2,000 ft. Mortality from the previous winter was variable, with some forests reporting deer having survived with little loss, but others noting some mortality. There were a number of deaths at Glencarron and Glenuaig along the railway line, probably as a result of deep snow muffling the sound of an approaching train.

Sutherland

In some forests the rut was on time but lingered into November; but on others it was late. At Borrobol, it began on 22 September, whilst at Dalnessie it was late October before it got under way, with the first stag in the larder on 19 October. The condition of the deer was fair to good, many with fat round the kidneys. Weather conditions varied hugely, some forests noting mild days with southerly winds, others such as Balnacoll suffering from a predominantly east wind.

Three forests reported a large number of local stags killed by the Forestry Commission after they gained access to trees and shelter over snow-filled cattle grids.

Deer mortality from the previous winter was high in some forests. Achentoul lost 184 deer, while at Borrobol 60 stags, 140 calves and 20 yearlings died, and 30 carcasses were found at North Loch Naver estate.



Forest	Owner	Tenant	Stalker	Stags Shot	Average Weight	Heaviest
Glencarron and Gelnuag Forest	Alasdair Douglas	N/a	Brian Watson	32	14-07	17-07
Inverinate	Smech Management Co Ltd	N/a	Andrew Slaughter	200	13-08	18-07
Keanchulish	David Bulmer	N/a	Marcus Munro	12	13-06	20-04
Kildermorie	Ian A Duncan	N/a	Dougie Russell	46	11-05	15-07
Kinlochluichart	I H Leslie-Melville	Various	Glyn Robson	77	13-01	17-07
Lochrosque, Cabuie, West Fannich, Kinlochewe and Glendocharty	Pat Wilson	N/a	Ronnie Ross	82	Not given	Not given
Strathconon Estate	Kirkbi Estate	Various	Angus Cameron	76	13-02	16-06
Strathvaich	Strathvaich Farms Partners	N/a	Donald MaCrae	80	14-00	18-06
Torridon Estate	National Trust for Scotland	N/a	Seamus McNally	9	13-12	15-09
Tullich	The Hon Richard Curzon	Tom Chetwynd	Tom Chetwynd	6	13-02	16-02
SUTHERLAND						
Achentoul	Sir John Nutting	N/a	Duncan Bentley	40	14-11	20-06
Alladale and Deanich	Paul Lister	N/a	Innes MacNeill	100	12-07	18-04
Badanloch	Badanloch Estate Company Ltd	Various	Brian Lyall	45	14-07	21-01
Balnacoil	Mr and Mrs P Nissen	N/a	John McMorran	33	15-01	18-03
Bighouse	M T Ward	N/a	Malcolm Richardson	17	14-02	17-01
Borrobol	Michael Wigan	N/a	John Macdonald	56	13-12	17-11
Clebrig, Altnaharra	A W Nicholson	Mrs P F Nicholson	A Robertson	15	16-01	19-08
Corriemulzie	Corriemulzie Trust	Various	Alasdair Mackenzie	65	14-06	17-08
Croick	J Hall	N/a	A Sutherland	20	16-11	19-05
Dalnessie	Ericht Farming Company	Various	Andrew Mackay	34	14-02	18-07
Glencalvie	Glencalvie Estate	Various	Andrew Sutherland	78	13-12	19-03
Glencanisp and Drumrunie	Assynt Foundation	Assynt.Biz Ltd	Ronnie Buchan	59	13-03	16-10
Glen Cassley Estate	Glen Cassley Estate Ltd	N/a	M White	48	14-00	19-07
Kinloch	A W G Sykes	N/a	Hugh Montgomery	32	14-00	18-07
Ledmore	David Bulmer	N/a	Marcus Munro	25	13-08	20-07
Loubcroy	Executors of Mr P F J Colvin	Various	Alasdair Mackenzie	22	14-02	17-07
Merkland	R Woods	N/a	Roddy Watt	40	13-12	17-08
North Loch Naver	North Loch Naver Estate	N/a	Craig Rigby	8	13-08	19-00
Reay Forest	The Duke of Westminster	N/a	David Allison	166	13-06	19-12
Shinness Estate	CGA Fletcher and Family	N/a	Derick Sutherland	13	Not given	Not given
Skelpick and Rhifail	The Hon G E Lopes	N/a	Euan Anderson	4	15-03	16-12
Strathmore	Mrs Heather Gow	N/a	John Spence	26	14-02	19-05
Syre	Syre Estate	N/a	David Horsburgh	7	14-07	17-00

* shows larder weight

2010 DEER FOREST MARKET SHINES THROUGH - ALBEIT ON A SMALL SCALE



Michael Ireland

MA MLE MRICS.

Head of Scottish Rural
Valuations, Knight Frank

With a long and bitter winter from 2009 into 2010 giving rise to reports of out of condition beasts and a late or somewhat subdued rut, coupled with the ongoing economic malaise, you could be forgiven for thinking that the deer forest estate market would have followed suit in 2010. The 2010 marketing season, however, was dominated by one principle factor – scarcity.

In summary, no more than five traditional deer forest estates were brought to the open market in 2010, with a not much greater number of more mixed upland estates where stalking was interspersed with other sporting opportunities. In reality, there were therefore, only a limited number of buyer opportunities, with demand from both home and overseas buyers still at a level where competition, over those prime estates, was generated in most cases.

There is no doubt that economic conditions have reduced buyer numbers from those seen a few years ago. However, the Highland sporting estate remains, for some, a trophy purchase in a global market place.

Those estates which offer the classic components of an appealing lodge house, necessary staff accommodation, quality stalking with good averages and good weights, and add-ons such as fishings and low ground shooting opportunities, were highly prized, resulting in sales of some concluding well in excess of guide prices. Those estates that were unable to offer the full range of classic components, or were influenced by detrimental factors, attracted less interest and less market appetite.

In summary, the 2010 market saw a widening of value ranges with the 'cream', represented by only a small number of classic estates brought to the market, very much rising to the top.

As a question of capital value and valuation of deer forest estates, the capital value range, traditionally assessed on a per stag basis, widened in 2010, with the best continuing to grow in value and the poorest, at best, stagnating, giving a range now, from a low point of £20,000 to a high of £40,000 and above per stag, quality rather than quantity being the influencing factor.

Market demands are changing also with many purchasers valuing other aspects that an estate can give, through alternative sporting and income generation opportunities. The 2010 market demonstrated that the best definitely shines through, but that valuation of such estates in future, purely on the basis of the 'record book' is becoming over simplistic.

In a residential and commercial property market of stagnation, small transaction numbers and press reports of 'doom and gloom' in 2010, the deer forest estate market shone through, albeit in a smaller number than most of us would like. Here's to 2011!



Stags and hinds on the skyline, Acharacle, Shielbridge





TIM FROST HANGS UP HIS BOOTS

Dick Playfair meets **Tim Frost**, Boreland stalker for 35 years, and who finally called it a day in February

Tim Frost is not the retiring type – but then, this once, he is. Mind you, he says that he retired at 23 when he started working for Jock Cairney at Loch Choire, so delighted was he to have landed a job in the countryside with no relevant qualifications on the strength of his wife, Linda, being appointed as teacher at a small school in Sutherland.

Tim may look like a man of the hills – he says he still has the nest on his head, but the eggs are all gone – but in fact he hails from Burton-on-Trent in the Midlands where, after working at the fine needles factory, he joined Marston Thompson and Evershed as an assistant mechanic.

It was on a holiday at Loch Shiel, Ardnamurchan and, having taken a real shine to Scotland and the outdoors, that the couple saw a job advertised for a schoolteacher at Loch Choire that Linda applied for and landed.

It was a brave move for a young couple to up sticks from 'civilisation' and head to the back of beyond, with the Sutherland Education Authority and the Countess of Sutherland to thank.

They were by all accounts happy times, Tim acting as ghillie and helping on the estate for around four years, learning stalking skills and fieldcraft from Jock Cairney, a master of the craft. Whereas Tim flourished, Cheeky, the eight pointer, sadly did not – but that's another story!

A boundary change placed Linda's job in jeopardy, if the Caithness Authority pulled the rug and this prompted an unlikely turn in Tim's career path as he entered the employ of the Blair Drummond Safari Park and bigger game in the form of lions, tigers, leopards and elephants.



No such job would be without its shaggy tales! Tim recounts the time he took a tiger, presumably a cub, from the Park to Leith to visit HMS Tiger. Through Edinburgh the tiger sat upright in the back of their old Cortina, causing varying degrees of shock and surprise from other motorists and their alarmed passengers whenever they stopped at the lights on Queen Street.

Then there was the over-exuberant lion on a visit to the Peebles Hydro Hotel, and the time at the Blair Drummond park when Tim was summoned to attend the lion enclosure as an emergency. The radio crackled to life, with a hint of panic thrown in: "Tim, Tim come quick; they're getting off the bus!" Tim recounts how the keepers had to position themselves between the lions and a party of pensioners on their day out who were gently persuaded back onto their coach.

Tim went back into the world of deer management in May, 35 years ago, as understalker at Boreland for the Stroyan family to Niel Graham, head stalker. Things were very different then. The Red Deer Commission was to decide that there were too many deer being shot in their particular DMG, and the stalking team was reduced to one, unlike today when the DMG's targets to control numbers are now firmly locked into a Section 7.

Boreland then offered not just stalking but also pheasants and grouse. Now the grouse and the pheasants are few, but the stalking continues in great health. Thirty years ago there were few stags on estate ground to the south of the Lochay. Now there are plenty; their health even more assured with a regular winter feed.

I had the pleasure of a day out on Boreland, over the Eagles and Duncroisk Burns, Beinn nan Oighreag, and the chimneys of Meall Ton Eich, with Mark Stroyan and his wife Bunch.

Tim, with Bunch and Mark Stroyan, Boreland



It was a dreich October day when you could hardly see your hand in front of your face at times – but great company; Bunch taking two stags and both Tim and son Morv who has taken over from him at Boreland guiding us.

I went back in February on a bright but cold day to see Morv feeding the stags, with some glorious beasts among them all in good fettle.

Tim doesn't see himself as a conventional stalker. He came with no background in it - unlike sons Falcon and Morven who have it in their blood. He admits to possibly doing things differently, but is prepared to put his neck on the line, and even to write about it in his two-monthly column in the Killin News which he describes as fun and edgy and has covered such themes as 'The women I have slept with on the hill!'

But Tim, the stalker who, in his underpants, was seen beating out a hill blaze with his burn-drenched breeks,

does have a serious side. Plainly he loves his job, and will miss it. He knows his craft and takes great pride in it. He has seen change over 35 years – not all of it for the best. While he thinks the access laws have been good in getting urban folk out to enjoy the countryside, he agonises over why they cannot be more genial. He says that less folk speak to you now that they have the 'right to roam', and they forget that they have a side of the bargain to keep. He has only ever had one serious set-to with a walker. He has only ever come across one dead body on the hill – and no, it wasn't the same person.

He acknowledges the risks you take. He says:

"When you think of the conditions you go out in, and the crazy things you do, there, by the grace of God and all that ..."

Tim, now you can put your feet up, read a book, write your newspaper column, relax. Somehow I doubt it.



Father and son team, Tim and son Morven



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