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For Birdshooters and Waterfowlers

Vol. 10, No. 4

April 1998

## Dateline: Africa

(represented by **Trek International Safaris**, 800-654-9915 or 904-273-7800) and **Trevor Comins** (represented by



**Frontiers** 800-245-1950 or 412-935-1577). **Mark Kyriacou** (represented by both **Frontiers** and **Trophy Hunter Safaris** 888-893-4868; 305-893-1162) op-

erates in Botswana while **Steve Seward** (represented by **Frontiers**) operates in Zimbabwe. Then there are the train shoots in South Africa which are represented by **Bushsports African Expeditions** (011-44-181-780-5906).

However, as the market grows, additional outfitters emerge. Many of them have been successfully catering to European clients for years and are just now beginning to tap into the growing American market. Others have been primarily big game outfitters and are expanding their operations to include bird shooting.

Without a doubt, there are more bird shooting operators in South Africa than the rest of Africa combined. **Mike Ross of Mike Ross Safaris (28 Edgeware Road, Diep River 7800, South Africa; telephone and fax 011-27-21-7131335)**

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*Editor's Note: In the past decade, bird shooting in Africa has come of age and more and more hunters are traveling to the Dark Continent to sample its wingshooting. That has triggered the emergence of several new operations worth noting. Senior correspondent Gary Kramer has provided all the important information on the latest developments in the world of bird shooting in Africa.*

Over the years, a cadre of African outfitters and guides has provided consistently good bird shooting and, in the process, these outfitters have developed the infrastructure necessary to support clients year after year. We have covered some of these operators in the June 1997 and July 1997 Bird Hunting Reports and will list them here for quick reference. In South Africa, there is **Mark Haldane**

## Dateline: Mexico

Near the Mexican mountain retreat of Yecora, Sonora, partners **Miguel Puig** and **Ruben Del Castillo (011-52-64-149-934)** operate perhaps Mexico's finest turkey hunting operation. This is the home of the fabled Gould's turkey, typically the last of the North American toms taken by gringos looking to complete their gobbler collections. Hunters stay in a comfortable house located at roughly 5,000 feet of elevation. Up to six hunters can be accommodated at any given time and guides who can call the birds are provided if visiting gringos aren't comfortable with the task.

Last year, 37 visiting hunters took

36 toms — the one who didn't had a shot at a gobbler, but missed in only two days of hunting. Such an astounding success rate is due to the strong bird populations  
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*Editor's Note: A growing number of turkey hunters are looking to collect all the species found in North America. To complete the task, many head to the mountains of Sonora, Mexico, to find the Gould's turkey, but the trip also provides an opportunity to hunt the unique ocellated turkey which is actually not a true turkey at all, but rather a bird related to the peafowl family. In last month's issue, correspondent Tom McIntyre gave us the scoop on a few operations specializing in these birds. This month, correspondent Chris Dorsey provided a report on how to set up a trip for both Gould's and ocellated turkey in Mexico.*

## Africa ... (from page 1)

has been offering bird shooting safaris for the past eight years. Until recently, most of his clients have been from the United Kingdom. Ross offers the full array of African game birds — waterfowl, francolin, guineafowl, doves and pigeons. He hunts greywing francolin, which are considered to be the sportiest of all African game birds and guineas in the East Cape region and francolin, waterfowl, dove and pigeon in the Natal Midlands.

His package price is reasonable at \$300 per day for shooters and \$130 for observers. Depending on the area, accommodations are in a country manor, tent camp or hunting lodge. The price is all-inclusive once you reach the hunt area. Ross is a young energetic outfitter and he intends to make his bird shoots among the best in South Africa.

Another South African outfitter new to the North American market is McDonald Pro-Hunting (41 Plein Street, Pietersburg, 0700, South Africa; telephone 011-27-15-2880218 or fax 011-27-15-2880095). Sandy McDonald and Terry Southam run this second-generation hunting company that just recently branched out into one of their long-nurtured passions — bird hunting. They operate in the Transvaal Province and offer both upland bird shooting (francolin, guineafowl and sand grouse) over pointers along with waterfowl hunting. Of particular interest is the shooting for doublebanded sand grouse, a bird not available in many regions of South Africa.

Hunters are housed in tent camps as well as permanent lodges and the packages include full board, lodging, hunting services and transportation. An introductory rate of \$250 per hunter, per day and \$100 for observer is being offered for 1998. The group size is limited to four guns.

Another South African outfitter that has been catering to European shooters

for the past 20 years is Chappy Scott of Scott of Africa (SEI Adventure Travel, 967 West Wall Street, Suite 130-B, Grapevine, TX 76051; 800-228-3006 or 817-488-3006). Scott specializes in greywing francolin shooting over a kennel of well-trained pointers. The hunts take place in the Winterberg Mountains about two hours north of East London in the East Cape Region. The elevation here ranges from 4,000 to 6,000 feet, so hunters must be in relatively good shape to enjoy the hunt. In addition to the francolin, some guineas are available and trout fishing can be arranged. Scott also offers special itineraries for duck, dove, pigeon, guineafowl and francolin shooting in other regions of South Africa. A seven-day shooting package from East London costs \$3,600 for



shooters and \$850 for observers. The package includes accommodations in country manors, meals and hunting services.

Fritz Nolte of Nolte Adventure Safaris (P.O. Box 113, Omaruru 9000, Namibia; telephone and Fax 011-264-64-4054540) is one of the very first outfitters in Namibia to offer bird shooting. Nolte has been running his own company and offering big game safaris for the past three years. Previously, he worked for several other professional hunters in Namibia. To date, Nolte has not conducted any bird hunting safaris but is an avid bird hunter himself. This season he will offer bird shooting in August and September. Most of the shooting will take place within a 30-mile radius of Omaruru, a three-hour drive northwest of Windhoek. The shooting here is for francolin, guineafowl, doves and pigeons. In addition, he has located an exceptional concentration of sand grouse near Mariental, southeast of Windhoek. His price is \$300 per day, per shooter, \$150 for non-shooters and includes safari lodge accommodations, meals and all hunting services.

— Gary Kramer



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