

S&C Reviews

Barking at the moon

By Stuart Mack

This impressive tome is the result of a decade of the author's life photographing a syndicate shoot in the southeast of England, writes *Will Hetherington*. The fruit of Mack's labour is 208 pages of visual tribute to the rhythm of life in a small shoot run by a group of friends and it tells a very real story which will be familiar to so many BASC members.

There are no famous shooting estates with bouquets of soaring pheasants on display here. Nor are there helipads and Bentleys. This is a quieter story about the reality of the jobs which must be done to produce a small but harvestable number of birds in the late autumn and winter.

It's a story about tradition, beauty, respect, relationships, man and dog, family, and purpose. It's about hand-me-down shooting coats with barbed wire scars and missing buttons... a father's initials etched into worn cartridge bags.

This is a story about a group of people of all ages and backgrounds who gather throughout the year to ensure that, when the season comes, there is enough game to be harvested and then eaten in good company.

The author is a photographer by trade, and he sensibly lets the pictures do the talking, with short chapter introductions and picture captions used to provide context. The foreword from former *Shooting Times* editor Patrick Galbraith says it all: "This is not an apology for shooting or agitprop, this is the countryside as it is, in all its earthiness, bloodiness and beauty."

Stuarmackphotography.com – £47.50 plus p&p



Living with greys

By Tarquin Millington-Drake

When I was researching grey partridge in Ireland and the Czech Republic, writes *Conor O'Gorman*, I was immersed in the sights and sounds of their daily lives, surrounded by a diversity of flora and fauna that wild greys are a barometer for. If only I had had a decent camera all those years ago.

Which brings me to the natural wonders to be discovered in this book, which has captured some truly spectacular and unique images of wild grey partridge from every aspect and in every month of the year.

The location is Great Lemhill Farm in Gloucestershire and the photographer is the exceptionally talented Millington-Drake.

This large format book contains 200 photographs which I devoured in one sitting, bringing goosebumps and so many forgotten memories flooding back. The narrative text is profound and inspirational. This volume is a timely reminder of just how sterile much of our farmland has become relative to the oases to be found on kept 'partridge manors'.

As a guilty pleasure, this is perhaps not a book you will buy for yourself – rather to purchase as a present for someone you know with an interest in grey partridges and conservation. I can assure you that your gift will be very well received, for this book is simply stunning. Or, if you really want it – drop some hints to family and friends, and you never know.



Merlinunwin.co.uk – £50



Meindl Dovre Extreme GTX

Meindl boots need little introduction, writes *Lewis Thornley*. The company has been making boots for 300 years and prides itself on craftsmanship, always delivering the highest quality. The Dovre Extreme boots are highly regarded by shooters and stalkers due to their height, support, comfort and durability under constant use across varying terrain in all conditions.

I tested a new pair sent from BushWear, having owned a pair previously which lasted ten years. I was excited to see how the new ones would compare. Obviously, I couldn't compare over a whole decade, but I did have the chance to properly put them through their paces. Out of the box I found them comfortable, more so than I remember the previous pair. They are true to size although I usually go half a size bigger to allow for a thicker sock.

I wore these boots every day during testing, dog walking and deer stalking in a lowland environment and out on the hill in Scotland in some seriously challenging terrain and weather. As expected, the boots matched the terrain and did exactly what I needed them to do. They are flexible enough for easier walking but sturdy on the hill when that extra level of support is required. They are totally waterproof, as you would expect being GORE-TEX lined, and extremely comfortable for long periods, thanks to the memory foam system. These boots give you the confidence to take on any situation and, with a bit of care, will no doubt last for years.

Available in sizes from 5-15 including half sizes.

Bushwear.co.uk – £389.99