

The Small 7x7 ELK

– LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #233 –

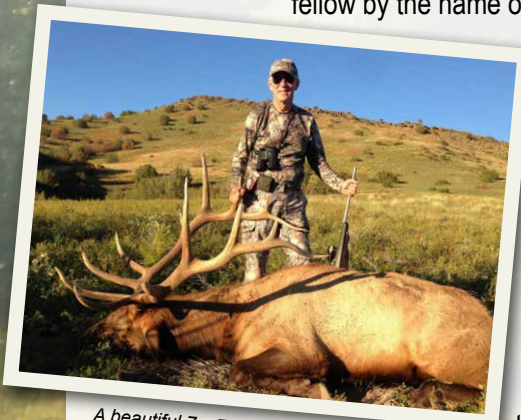


Dark timber, with a few open areas, has always described my previous elk hunts; but there was no dark timber here, just rolling grasslands, with a few trees.

Small is a relative term, it seems - especially as it applies to elk; normally a seven-by-seven, scoring over 330 points wouldn't be considered small. But, at the end of the week, compared at least to Brenda's heavy 6x6, mine was just a small 7x7 elk.

Brenda and I have hunted elk many times at what was known as Forbes Trinchera, near Fort Garland, Colorado. We had four slots there, and would take a couple of Friends/Employees from the office each year. But the ranch changed hands and the new ownership cut the total harvest by half (to increase the trophy quality) and reduced our slots to two. So, we would hunt together or one of us would go with a guest and the other would stay home.

In 2009, it was my turn to be on the Forbes hunt, when a fellow by the name of Neil Lawson hailed



A beautiful 7 x 7 elk, taken late on the first day of the hunt, at about 350 yards. My rifle is a customized Remington 700 in 300 Win. Mag.

Brenda would go on this hunt.

New Mexico became Brenda's place to hunt (the elk were bigger there); and Colorado was mine. Then, the ranch in Colorado changed rules again – to archery only, and the tags again reduced – I was out; since Brenda had already invited a guest for her hunt that fall, I stayed home. In 2013 Brenda and I hunted together for the first time in several years – at the “new” ranch in New Mexico.

Having shot several elk, when the guide asked what I was looking for, my response was: “something big, something unusual, or a 7x7.” Interestingly, this ranch had the quality of elk to deliver on any or all of what I was looking

**“something big,
something unusual,
or a 7x7...”**

for. The hunting area was very open, rolling, grassy hills, with a few pines – mostly in the draws. We hunted from a 4-wheeler, and could stop at any time and glass elk in the distance; after which we stalked around the hills to get a closer look and more into shooting range. Late afternoon we spotted this 7x7 and went after him, closing the distance to 350 yards, after a two-hour stalk – and I made a decent shot.

Brenda and I at the Dallas Safari Club show and said that he would be honored if we would come hunt on a ranch that he managed in New Mexico; he had two slots. We booked the hunt. Since I was already scheduled to hunt in Colorado,

Midway
USA

Larry Potterfield
The Ladder Ranch
Caballo, New Mexico
October 2013



Mine was the biggest elk of the trip, until Brenda returned with her heavy 6x6 -- on day three.