

A ZEBRA FOR Eliza

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #243 —

The zebra is a special trophy from Africa, as anyone who has ever hunted there knows. They are big, tough and wary. Non-hunters, and folks who've never hunted Africa, sometimes think of them as horses and wonder why anyone would shoot them; but no one has ever figured out how to domesticate zebras to the same level as horses and donkeys, so they exist only as wild animals on the plains and in the hills and mountains of south and east Africa – and, of course, in zoos all over the world.

The Eastern Cape Province, of South Africa, holds a special place in my mind, because the first recorded hunting safari started there, from Port Elizabeth – in 1836. *The Wild Sports of Southern Africa* by

William Cornwallis Harris

records this first safari, in great detail. There are many excellent places to hunt in South Africa, but it was Harris's book that created my interest in going to the Eastern Cape Province.

This was mostly a "grandkids hunt" for Eliza and Jay (Sara's children), and they did the bulk of the shooting. I was mostly just along for the ride, switching from one safari car to the other.

However, I did shoot a few greywing partridges with an old Spanish-made side by side 12 gauge, borrowed from the safari operator. Interestingly, there is serious interest in bird hunting in South Africa and they have some good pointing dogs.

Zebra hunting normally comprises a lot of driving around, looking for a zebra herd in the distance, then making a quiet, careful stalk to get into range to shoot the stallion. However, sometimes you bump into them, while hunting something



Thirteen-year-old Eliza with her first zebra; one-shot through the heart at 150 yards, from her Ultra Lite Arms 260 Remington. Her mom Sara (my daughter) and I were quite pleased to be along.

else, and make a plan to follow them up as they disappear into the brush. I've never tracked zebra for the first shot; it's never been necessary, but certainly it could be done. Often there are many starts and re-starts to a zebra hunt.

Eliza's hunt was a combination of many factors that, in the end, presented her with an "oh my gosh, there he is" broadside shot at 150 yards. She took her time and made a perfect shot through the heart. The zebra stallion reared on his hind legs (reminding me of the rampant colt logo made popular by Colt Firearms) and fell over dead. Eliza shot several other animals on this safari, but for me, her zebra was the most memorable.

" This was mostly a 'grandkids hunt'..."

Midway USA

Larry Potterfield
Bowers Hope Ranch, Tarkastad
Eastern Cape Province
South Africa
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Her mom decided it was tradition to paint her cheek from the blood of her first zebra.



There was lots of other shooting on this trip. Here stands Eliza with a white Blesbok.