One Globe. Two Years. 24 Hunting Adventures.
Spring 2026 Update

The hunting calendar began promptly in early 2026 with a brisk jaunt across the pond to the U.K. in pursuit of English red deer and muntjac. My wife, Kisha, joined me for this quick excursion, and we were welcomed by Olde Man Winter: bitter cold, dustings of snow, and air that bit sharply at the lungs.

After a thoroughly enjoyable day of wing shooting on The Isle of Sheppey featuring the finest in English fare, where, truth be told, the wily partridge largely had the better of us, we made our way to the quiet town of Thetford to stalk the storied English forests. Our efforts were well rewarded, producing two fine stags and a muntjac. Kisha's muntjac, in particular, was exceptional and stands a real chance of earning a place in the SCI Top 10. A special nod goes to a fine bloke, Kevin Downer, who has guided us on previous adventures in the U.S. and was game enough to leave the comfort of the hearth to track with us across the frozen forest for several memorable days.

Our return to the U.S. carried us through the familiar rhythm of the season, Reno for the Wild Sheep Show, Nashville for SCI, and Lancaster for ECWSF. Then the path shifted unexpectedly. A last-minute opening led me north to Resolute Bay with Shane Black of Canada North (an ECWSF exhibitor), in pursuit of polar bear, one of the few remaining animals for the North American 29 which has eluded my rifle.

This was a different cold altogether. The U.K. had been sharp; this was absolute. At -30, with the wind cutting it down to make it feel like -60, the air itself felt heavy, something to be endured rather than breathed. Winter had come late and hard across Canada, and it took five days of delays and cancellations just to reach Resolute, and at this point I already lost two hunting days. Even so, the frozen sea offered its own timing and the weather cleared offering cerulean skies. On the very first day, not long after camp was set on the ice, a lone boar was spotted moving along the pressure cracks about a mile out. There were still a few hours of daylight left. The dogs were quickly retethered, and we set off across the frozen expanse. The hunt was decisive, an exceptional bear finally taken on thin ice before night settled on the arctic. Beside a fantastic bear was the fact that we were spared more than a single night on the ice. The journey home proved no easier than my efforts on arrival. Six more days passed before I reached the U.S. again, the cold and distance lingering in the gaps between flights marked by deadtime in Resolute Bay, Iqaluit and Ottawa. Somewhere along the way, my bag was lost, now gone these past 30 days, a small but fitting reminder of a trip shaped by weather, distance, and patience.

The missing bag forced some expeditious purchases of replacement gear as I was headed off to the next hunting adventure. This time, the route led to Bosnia Herzegovina for Eurasian brown bear, followed by Serbia for the opening of roe deer season. The two country 10-day itinerary was organized by Sasha Belancic (a previous ECWSF exhibitor).

Bosnia is not a common destination for American hunters, as bear trophies are not importable, an irony not unlike polar bear. Still, the draw of new destinations and unfamiliar countries continues

to shape my itinerary. Arrival in Sarajevo offered more than a starting point; it's a city layered with history, long at the crossroads of empires, and forever tied in my mind to the 1984 Winter Olympics and the Bosnian War of my youth. There is far more to this hunt than space allows for this summary, but enough, perhaps, for a future story or even a book. What can be said is that the experience delivered its share of intensity. On the second night, a pack of wolves brought real tension to the darkness, and by the third night, I was able to take a solid boar.

Serbia proved generous in a different way. Roe deer were plentiful, though the wide fields and unusually high grass, fueled by steady spring rains, made for challenging stalking. By the end of it, Kisha accounted for three roebucks, a wild boar and a turkey. I added two roebucks over our days in the field.

May is already on the horizon, with plans to head to Vancouver Island for coastal bears and then on to Wyoming for turkey. June will offer a brief pause. Time to rest, welcome a new grandson, and reset before a demanding stretch ahead that will carry me through seven more hunts scattered around the world.

If you have any interest in following along with this ongoing pursuit, you can find me @craiglkauffman or visit CraiglKauffman.com. Until then, keep the wind in your face, good hunting, and stay safe.