



# Go wild!

## Ruger American Predator in .308 Winchester

Con Kapralos

The Ruger American Rifle in both rimfire and centrefire formats has certainly been a feather in the cap for Sturm, Ruger & Co as well as Australian importer and distributor Nioa. *Australian Shooter* has reviewed several models of the American Rifle in both rimfire and centrefire calibres and they offer an excellent firearm capable of very good accuracy as well as being affordable for new shooter and seasoned sportsman alike.

A recent addition to Nioa's Ruger American line-up is the Predator model, this variant aesthetically on a different playing field thanks to the technologically brilliant cerakoting finishes which are becoming more commonplace. The review rifle supplied was the Predator with cerakote burnt bronze barrelled action and concealment-enhancing 'Go Wild' camo stock finish. It certainly looked the part but the availability of a matching Leupold VX-3i 4.5-14x40 scope cerakoted in the same finish, sold separately by Nioa, makes the whole package a visually striking one.

### Features

The Ruger American Rifle Predator with 'Go Wild' camo stock is offered with the following:

- Burnt bronze cerakoted barrelled action which embraces the new metal protection technology and gives the rifle its identity.
- Cold hammer-forged 560mm heavy-tapered barrel with 1:9" twist in the tested .308 Win calibre (.300 Win Mag offered with 460mm heavy tapered barrel).
- Available in seven calibres - .243 Win, 7mm-08 Rem, 6.5 Creed, .308 Win (tested), 30-06 Sprg, .300 Win Mag, .450 Bushmaster.
- Detachable box magazine - AI-style, rotary or single stack (calibre dependent), three or four-round capacity (calibre dependent).
- Factory-fitted one-piece aluminium scope rail makes scope mounting easy.
- Threaded barrel fitted with muzzle brake, cerakoted to match barrelled action.

- Ruger's Marksman Adjustable trigger can be adjusted from 1.4-2.3kg to suit user.
- Ergonomic lightweight synthetic stock in 'Go Wild' camo pattern designed for quick, easy use with textured grip panels to ensure positive handling.
- Soft rubber recoil pad for maximum reduction.
- Patented Power Bedding integral bedding block system which positively locates the receiver and free-floats the barrel for excellent accuracy.
- One-piece, three-lug bolt with 70 degrees throw provides ample scope clearance and features a full-diameter bolt body and dual cocking cams for smooth bolt travel and cycling.
- Weight: 2.8-3kg.

### At the range

Testing the Predator 'Go Wild' in .308 Winchester was a joy, the Leupold VX-3i scope in 4.5-14x40 magnification with standard duplex reticle crisp and clear at all distances out to 300m (range distance).

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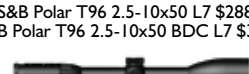


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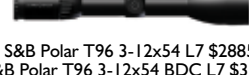
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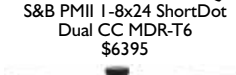


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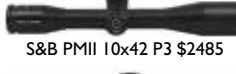
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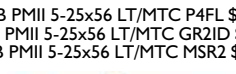
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## Ruger American Predator in .308 Winchester

Pairing both rifle and scope with the burnt bronze cerakote finish attracted much positive attention and Nioa look to be on a winner offering the cerakote finish on Leupold scopes through their Australian-based custom shop. Admittedly it doesn't make the rifle shoot any better but there's no denying it looks the part.

Nioa also supplied a quantity of .308 Winchester hunting ammunition in 130 and 150gr bullet weights. The rifle was cleaned before accuracy testing and once the scope was dialed in to point-of-aim at 100m, testing commenced shooting five 3-shot groups with a barrel clean between changes of ammunition (accompanying table outlines the results).

The provision of a muzzle brake, supplied as standard, certainly tamed muzzle jump and recoil but the usual trade-off in muzzle blast was evident. I wasn't sure if the brake could be removed as there was no thread cap supplied and for calibres like the .308/.30-06 and smaller a muzzle brake really isn't needed, but for the .300 Win Mag and .450 Bushmaster it will be appreciated.

Any of the supplied ammunition would suffice as a general hunting load but the 130gr American Eagle hollow-point was the pick of the four with an average of 22mm for the five groups shot at 100m.

### Field testing

The Predator 'Go Wild' in .308 Winchester was taken afield in spring, specifically targeting deer for a dwindling venison supply. Using the 150gr Federal Fusion loads, the rifle with Leupold VX-3i carried well in the field with the total weight of 3.54kg spot-on when stalking on foot over long distances.

The .308 calibre is well suited for harvesting fallow deer and several animals in prime condition were taken with a



The 'business side' of the American Predator Go Wild.



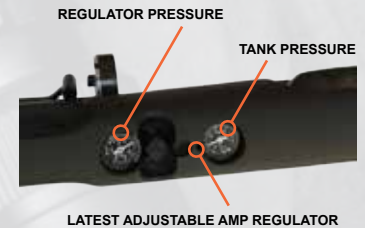
One of two fallow deer taken with the Predator Go Wild and Federal Fusion ammo.



The matching cerakoted muzzle brake tamed recoil.

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|-----------------|--|
| <b>Magazine</b> | Removable<br>21 shots cal. .177<br>18 shots cal. .22<br>16 shots cal. .25<br>14 shots cal. .25 |
|-----------------|--|

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>Energy</b> | .177 (4.5) 24J - 18 ft/lbs<br>.22 (5.5) 41J - 30 ft/lbs<br>.25 (6.35) 60J - 45 ft/lbs<br>.30 (7.62) 110J - 82 ft/lbs |
|---------------|--|

Power output can be tuned higher or lower if needed.

|                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Fill pressure</b> | 250 BAR - 3600 Psi |
|----------------------|--------------------|

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| <b>Weight</b> | 3 - 3.5 kg |
|---------------|------------|



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## Ruger American Predator in .308 Winchester

single shot at distances out to 200m. In all instances, be it range or field, the Predator 'Go Wild' in .308 Win performed without fault, cycling and extracting cases without issue.

For field use a five-shot detachable box magazine would be preferable but the three-shot AI-style magazine supplied with the rifle was still adequate for the task at hand and I'm fairly sure after-market AI-style detachable box magazines would work in the rifle if desired.

### Summary

The Ruger American Predator 'Go Wild' with burnt bronze cerakote finish and concealing camo-patterned stock, available in seven popular hunting calibres, is certain to appeal to new and seasoned shooters and hunters looking for a very capable rifle which not only shoots well but looks the part too. The cerakoted Leupold VX-3i scope supplied with the rifle but available separately matched perfectly. The 4.5-14x40 magnification range I reckon would have to be the new 'standard' for hunting riflescopes and the optics in this case were top-notch. It's been some time



Left-hand side of the action.

since I used a Leupold optic and I was very impressed by the VX-3i.

The Ruger American Predator 'Go Wild' is available through all Nioa network dealers Australia-wide and retails around the \$1100 mark. The custom cerakoted Leupold VX-3i riflescope can also be sourced from the Leupold Custom Shop through any Nioa network dealer. More at [www.nioa.com.au](http://www.nioa.com.au) or ask your retailer. ●

### SPECIFICATIONS

#### Manufacturer:

Sturm, Ruger & Co, USA

#### Model:

American Rifle Predator - Go Wild

**Action:** Bolt-action, push-feed, 70° bolt throw. Chrome moly steel receiver; bolt receiver and bolt handle finished in burnt bronze cerakote.

**Trigger:** Ruger's Marksman Adjustable (between 1.4-2.3 kg).

**Safety:** Two-position tang-mounted.

**Barrel:** Cold hammer-forged, 560mm heavy-tapered, 1:9" twist in the tested .308 Win. calibre. (.300 Win Mag offered with 460mm heavy tapered barrel). Factory fitted with muzzle brake. Barrel and muzzle brake finished in burnt bronze cerakote.

**Sights:** Clean barrel, receiver drilled and tapped and fitted with one-piece Picatinny rail for scope mounting.

**Calibres:** .243 Win, 7mm-08 Rem, 6.5 Creed, .308 Win (tested), 30-06 Sprg, .300 Win Mag, .450 Bushmaster.

**Magazine:** Detachable three-shot AI-style made of polymer.

**Stock:** Synthetic with Ruger's patented Power Bedding integral bedding block system, stock dipped in 'Go Wild' camo pattern. Rubber recoil pad and sling swivel studs fitted as standard.

**Weight:** 2.8-3kg (bare rifle)

**Distributor:** Nioa

**RRP:** \$1100 approx (source: Horsley Park Gun Shop, NSW)



The pleasing profile of the buttstock will suit most users straight from the box.

### Ammunition testing, Ruger American Predator 'Go Wild' in .308 Winchester - 3-shot groups in mm

| Factory ammunition                          | Best | Worst | Average |
|---|------|-------|---------|
| American Eagle 130gr                        | 16   | 26    | 22      |
| Federal Premium Nosler Ballistic Tip 150gr  | 27   | 36    | 32      |
| Federal Fusion 150gr                        | 29   | 41    | 35      |
| Federal Premium Power Shok 150gr Soft Point | 32   | 37    | 35      |

Average group size calculated from five 3-shot groups at 100m