



# Enter the *Copper pot*

UK-based African hunting agent Adrian Sailor looks to complete his springbok slam with the elusive copper springbok, but pursuing this wary animal takes him far off the beaten track

**T**he springbok is the iconic animal of South Africa. The two species are the common and the slightly larger Kalahari. There are three others, white, black and copper, which are not subspecies but colour variations that occur due to varying amounts of melanin in the skin.

The time had come to hunt the expensive copper variation to make a full complement on my trophy wall. Arriving at the farm, on the border of the Northern Cape and Free State, the first thing noticeable was the lack of high game fencing. This was a stock farm of sheep and cattle where the game animals were truly wild. The land extended to 5,000 acres but the owner advised me the springbok favour one corner with a large kopje towering over a man-made dam.

The land here is very open and flat, with vast areas of tall grasses between small mountain ranges, which is very different from the

lush, green bush of the Eastern Cape. It was mid-morning and the sun was beating down on this fabulous April day, causing a heat haze in the distance. Stopping the Hilux, I climbed onto the back with my tracker to glass the grassland and the sides of the kopje for movement. There were small pockets of common springbok milling around the acacia bushes at the base of the kopje, and four black springbok about 30 metres above on the side, but no coppers in view. It was getting close to midday and the sun beating down on my back was getting uncomfortable. My ears felt like they were