



The New Zealand Deerstalkers Assoc. Inc.

June Issue 2011:

*Next Social: Air rifle shoot at club rooms – with
Hell's pizza.*



“The Tines”
Rotorua Branch Newsletter June 2011



Rotorua N.Z.D.A. Branch Calendar

Ring coordinators for more information.

Phone numbers listed on inner back page.

Calendar of the Club's regular monthly events:

Committee Meeting	Last Monday of each month
Range Shoots*	3rd Sunday of each month
Socials	4th Wednesday of each month
Party Hunts**	4th Weekend of each month

** Regular Club Hunting & Trophy Shoots. For extra range shoots and 300 metre shoots please refer to Yearly Range Calendar.*

***Some Party Hunts may be on different dates, see programme.*

Our programme for this month:

Party Hunts	Party hunt – Boating/fishing social. Still to be confirmed. If interested, please contact a committee member.
Socials	Fun air rifle shoot. At the Neil Hunt Park Club-rooms from 7.30pm. June 22nd, 7:30pm Neil Hunt Park Clubrooms, Tarawera Road, Rotorua.
Range Shoot	Range itinerary for 2011 in this issue: Contact Malcolm Perry.

Cover Photo: Scott with a 2011 Red stag. See stories pages 8 and 9.

If you have a photograph that would be suitable for the cover please contact the Newsletter editor, Elvis Bowring on 350 3230 or ebowring@gmail.com.

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Presidents Report

Hello

Well while some off you lot were still out chasing the Deer I along with Mitchell and a mate were chasing the ducks. It was unfortunate that the weather was not quite as well planned as some may have thought. Plenty of wind is good the amount of rain not so much. As with all the rain most of the plains were covered in ground water hence the ducks had plenty of save havens to hold up on but in all we didn't do too badly. I hear the National pres shot his limit on the first day!

Well as you were all aware we had a couple of speakers at the last social. Paul Jefferson, from the Mountain Safety and Todd McClay, Rotorua MP.

First up was Paul who gave a very informative session on courses that are available to people who would be interested in improving their skill and knowledge in bush craft, risk management. It was a very informative session which had a few of us there thinking that it may well be an idea to spend weekend on one of the courses available.

Next up was Todd, who gave us a bit of a run down on were the Game Council proposal is at and also ideas about organising a Wallaby shoot, as DOC have recognised they are becoming a problem in our area and are looking to step up a programme to control there numbers. Todd would first like to hold an event similar to the possum shoots that are run by some of the local country schools to raise money etc. This guy is trying to change DOCs approach to pest control. If there is an over population of animals, use the local DSA Branch to have a go at getting the numbers down, before using the standard approach of poisoning. This will require people to get out there and support these ideas, so we will keep you posted on the progress of these ideas.

In all it was an interesting night. It was good to see people other than the committee along, all be it just two guys, one I invited from the Eastern Bay Club and a new member who hailed from the USA. I was a little disappointed that we as the Committee try to organise socials etc and no one turns up! I have been approving a lot of new members of late it would good to see you guys come along to some socials.

Next Social is Head measuring night; this will sort fact from fiction no doubt!

We are also planning an air rifle shoot, open sights, old school style no flash Harry stuff sorry Ralph! and pizzas.

Well that's it folks

Hope to see some knew faces at next social
Cheers

Colin Petersen

NZDA SOCIAL(s)

June social: Fun air rifle shoot with pizza:

At Rotorua Deerstalkers Club Rooms

**Neil Hunt Park,
22nd June, 7.30pm.**

All welcome.

Classifieds

For sale

No items listed.

Wanted to buy

No items wanted.

Wanted

Good stories for newsletter.

Any interesting articles.

Any good photo's of your hunting trips.

Anything to buy or sell?

Send to editor – nzdarotorua@gmail.com

Or phone 021 066 7868

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ROTORUA

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Range report April 2011

Saturday 2nd. We had 16 scouts from the combined Central/Ngongotaha Scout Group on the range for a .22 shoot. After a sorting out a misunderstanding of who was doing what the day went very well.

Sunday 3rd. 300M club shoot. As I was unable to attend not sure how that went.

Sunday 17th. Deer silhouette shoot. Probably the best attendance we have ever had, including a father and young adult son from Papamoa who are keen to join up. They came with the intention of locating the range and seeing what we offered, I gave the son a turn with my rifle and that seemed to increase their enthusiasm to join. The rest of the group were regular members most of whom had been on previous occasions making a total of 6 or 7 including a junior lady.

Coming events:

May:

Sunday 15th. Rimfire metallic silhouette. A good chance for juniors to get a practice also

June:

Sunday 5th. 300M club shoot.

Sunday 19th. Deer Silhouette shoot 300, 200, 100, and 50M. Eight rounds per run through required.

July:

Sunday 3rd. 300M club shoot.

Sunday 17th. Rimfire Silhouette and Junior practice.

August:

Sunday 7th. 300m club shoot.

Sunday 21st. Deer Silhouette shoot.

Time to reload,

Malcolm.

NZDA ROTORUA WEBSITE IS ONLINE:

CHECK OUT WWW.NZDAROTORUA.ORG.NZ

Hunting Story - 1st deer!! by Geoff Moree

It all started with a text from Scotty showing off a stag he had got in the weekend. After a couple of texts of where when, the invite came “we are going back on Friday to find two others we heard roaring, would you like too come?” Umm, yes. So jacked it up with the boss at home (my daughters birthday that night, 5 10 yr olds sleeping over) and organising the day off work I was set.

Met up with Scotty and Cam at some ungodly hour Friday morning, biffed the gear on board and we were off. We were at the boat ramp before daybreak and proceeded to launch his boat, this would have too be the first time 4WD has been needed to get the boat IN the water due too sand buildup on the ramp....but mission accomplished. A couple of his mates met us there and we were off across the lake. They dropped us off at spot x and went fishing. We could hear two stags going nuts at each other the next bay over (first time I had heard wild stags roaring) Awesome! We headed up the gut using headlights to get closer to the stags he had heard the week before and then waited for daylight. We carried on up the gut once headlights were no longer needed listening for any roars. We got to a point were we could hear two stags, one on our left and one on our right. The decision was made to head right and climb out off the gut we were in. At this point Scotty looks back “Don’t break any sticks!”. Further clarification was offered by Cam, “Don’t break any sticks, or dad will get angry”.

Out of the gut and into a small valley Scotty lets out a roar that was immediately answered. Holy sh*t! Here he comes! Another roar from the stag, much closer now, I moved up behind a log with a view up the valley. Another roar from Scotty, another reply, and then I see him, the first deer I have ever seen, coming through the trees getting closer. He lays his head back and roars again, heart pounding arms trembling I try to find him in the scope, where the F*** is he? Look back at Scotty he’s frantically mouthing “SHOOT HIM” head up, look at stag, look through scope, look at stag, look through scope and suddenly there he is, crosshairs on shoulder BOOM! He does a 180 and bolts up a small rise and disappears in the bush, Scotty runs past me as I am lying there, frozen, thinking “sh*t, I missed”. Cam and I catch up to Scotty at the head of the valley and we see a spot of blood, we all move slightly downhill and hear from Scotty “there he his.” The stag is lying under a fern dead. YAHOO!

We dragged him out, took some photos and started cutting him up. Scotty was keen to take him out whole so we gutted him and hung him in a tree to cool. Right time to head back to the boat, pick up your deer we are off. I lay back and tried to put the deer on my back, Scotty helped me roll over, I got to my knees but there was no way I could stand up! After trying for a few minutes I gave up (Scotty has a video). He had a turn to prove it could be done, but after walking 30 meters looking like someone that had had a dozen beers he threw it on the ground and the decision was made too bone it out.

All in all, a great hunt. Thanks Scotty.

GETTING READY FOR THE ROAR by Scott Russell

The roar is coming I said to my wife, and this time I am going to get a stag. I have been out in two roars but not actually seen a stag even though I have been within metres of one in the Whirinaki with Daryn. I have been going to a spot off my favourite lake for nearly a year now; I am getting to know the area well and regularly seeing deer, so this is where I hope to get a stag.

On Friday the 18th of February not far from the boat I heard a deer feeding, it takes me about 20 minutes to locate it and stalk to about 20 metres from it. Resting on a log I get glimpses of its head through my scope 'a hind' I keep waiting for a decent kill shot but it moves off to my left. Damm! I think.

I try to move another five metres in the same direction to a better vantage point then I hear the unmistakable sound of a deer crashing off through the bush, a bark then sounds of it disappearing into the distance. Oh well, that's hunting.

A couple of hours later I am walking back towards the boat, the wind is coming from behind me but over my shoulder, so I am moving relatively fast to stay ahead of my scent. I walk towards the top a spur and as I look into the next gut I see a spiker stopped in his tracks looking at me from 20 metres away. Up comes the rifle, bolt closing as I bring it up.

Cliff has been coaching me on reloading, and with a good book and good advice I have developed a load that looks good on paper at the range but I had never fired one at an animal until now.

The .308 Remington Kore-lokt projectile hit it just behind the shoulder, smashing a rib, it then nicks the right lung and then puts a 2cm diameter hole through the left lung, and takes out two ribs on the other side as it exits.

The deer turns and runs off. I wait and listen to it run and then go to where it was standing. Five metres in the direction it went I find a crimson colour splash of blood and the for the next twenty-five metres it looks like someone has emptied a 2 litre bottle of blood all over the place. I find him, take some pictures and the turn him into a pikau then head for the lake for a spot of fishing, returning home with a deer and a fish.

The Ten Pointer by Scott Russell

The next weekend after shooting the spiker it rains, so I don't go out. The following weekend Geoff and Cam come with me, we hear a deer bark at us in the distance and Geoff shoots a wallaby but other than that it is just a nice bush-walk.

Another week rolls by and I have decided to take a Friday off again. My mate Nat wants to go fishing. He's from England and you don't get fishing or hunting like this where he's from. So while he is manning the boat I am in the bush. Nat drops me off just on daylight (7am) and we arrange to meet at the beach at 2pm. Ten minutes up the valley I hear movement in the bush, is it birds in the trees or a deer browsing? Where is it? I move five metres and listen. Not sure where it is I move a few more steps and listen again, and again.

Finally I manage to locate it; it is on the bottom of a new slip that came down in some recent heavy rain. It is feeding on a tree that came down in the slip and it is a stag. He is mostly out of sight but I get glimpses of his head through a gap in the trees Rifle up and loaded I watch him through my scope from about forty metres away. Damm! It's a tricky shot. I decide to wait for

him to step into the open. If he moves away to the right I'll give a roar (probably too early for roaring), if he steps to the left I'll have a shot. Then I notice the breeze is not on my face any more. Come on! I urge him, move! He steps into the open, cross hair on his shoulder and Boom.

He takes off, cutting back and sideling above me. I know he's hit as he is not moving fast and is too noisy in the bush. I find my-self running along below him trying to see him again. I get a glimpse again and have another shot at a moving target – and miss. I catch up with him, he is down and leaning against a tree, this time my shot hits him in the neck and it's all over for him. The time is 7.28 am, a very short hunt for me.

I drag him down to a flat area to take some photos and gut him, he has a small head but has ten points and is not a big deer, a good size to take out whole. Then I notice his back leg. Bugger. My first shot hit him in the back leg. I am not that bad a shot. May-be I was shaking too much waiting for him to step out, or may-be he got my scent in that shifty breeze and bolted a split second before I fired. Yeah, that's it; it was the wind, not my shooting. Lucky it was the .308 and not the .223.

After I gut him I take my rifle, the head and bum bag to the beach, stash it and come back for the deer. Luckily I manage to get a txt to Nat and he comes to get me at about 9.30am, he is so excited about my deer he forgets to bring the motor up. "PUT THE MOTOR UP!" I yell, he puts the motor up. "TURN IT OFF!" I yell, he turns it off.

After some more photos we head out onto the lake for a swim and some more fishing (Nat already has a nice fat 6&1/2 lb trout) and then head home with a deer and some fish.

Volunteers/NZDA Rotorua Projects Updates

Whirinaki Deer pen removal

Waiting for word on the next lot of activities. If you want any further information, or are able to help, please contact Darryn or another committee member.

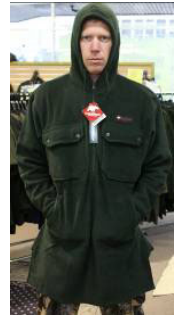
Whirinaki Hut restoration

If you would like to be involved in the Whirinaki Hut restoration, please contact Darryn or any other committee member. We will be doing one or two huts every year. Although we are working, there is ample time to get in some hunting as well.



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General

A good reason to crap yourself....



The Afterlife (*warning – adult content*)

A couple made a deal that whoever died first would come back and inform the other if there was s~x after death. Their biggest fear was that there was no after-life at all. After a long life together, the husband was the first to die. True to his word, he made the first contact:

"Sue.....Sue"

"Is that you, George?"

"Yes, I've come back like we agreed."

"That's wonderful!? What's it like?"

"Well, I get up in the morning, I have s~x. I have breakfast and then it's off to the golf course. I have s~x again, bathe in the warm sun and then have s~x a couple of more times. Then I have lunch (you'd be proud - lots of greens). Another romp around the golf course, then pretty much have s~x the rest of the afternoon. After supper, it's back to the golf course again. Then it's more s~x until late at night. I catch some much-needed sleep and then the next day it starts all over again."

"Oh, George, are you in Heaven?"

"No, I'm a rabbit in Central Otago!"

In the news

MISSING HUNTER SAFE AFTER TWO NIGHTS IN SNOW – NZHERALD.CO.NZ (19 APRIL 2011)

A hunter missing in the bush in the Urewera Forest has been found safe and well after two freezing nights out in the open.

Police said the 45-year-old got lost in the bush after becoming separated from a group he went hunting with on Saturday.

He was found by a police search and rescue party last night.

"Conditions in the area...were extremely cold with snow flurries and sleet," Constable Colin Fraser from Rotorua police search and rescue said today.

"His survival is due to being well prepared for the conditions, carrying the right equipment and his extensive hunting experience.

"He was well-equipped with suitable clothing for the environment, along with a survival blanket, torch, firearm and a small belt bag containing other essential items including a map and compass."

- NZPA

ROTTEN LOG AND HUHU GRUBS KEEP HUNTER ALIVE BY MIKE WATSON – STUFF.CO.NZ (20 APRIL 2011)

A hunter lost in Te Urewera National Park for three days slept in a rotten log and ate huhu grubs to stay alive in sub-zero temperatures.

Brett Potter, of Waikino, near Waihi, lost his directions on Saturday, five kilometres from Maungapohatu, when he chased a deer he had seen.

The 45-year-old painter and decorator spent three days and two nights walking through the dense bush before finding his way back to Makomako Hut, where his hunting companions were, Rotorua Search and Rescue constable Colin Fraser said.

The group planned to spend a week in the park during the annual "roar". They split up to hunt on Saturday afternoon.

Mr Potter lost the track after seeing the deer and did not return to the hut as planned on Saturday night.

After an unsuccessful search, two of the party walked out to Ruatahuna to raise the alarm on Sunday.

Mr Potter eventually made his way back to hut on Monday after walking about 20 kilometres and spending two nights sleeping in a hollow log.

He arrived at the hut 15 minutes after a three-man volunteer search party had left to look for him, Mr Fraser said.

They returned to the hut about 9.30pm on Monday to find him.

"He was physically very tired. He told us all he had to eat were two muesli bars and huhu grubs he had found in the log he slept in.

"He said he had found the track but went the wrong direction before he realised. ... He walked all day and then slept at night.

"It was freezing cold with sleet and snow flurries."

Mr Fraser said the hunter, who was very experienced but unfamiliar with the area, had done all the right things.

The search party was expecting the worst after not being able to find him on Sunday. "He was well equipped, he lit a fire to keep warm and he didn't lose his head. If he had panicked, it would have been totally different.

"Obviously we are pleased with the positive, early outcome, as conditions in the area overnight were extremely cold with snow flurries and sleet.

"His survival is due to being well prepared for the conditions, carrying the right equipment and his extensive hunting experience.

"He had a survival blanket, torch, firearm and a small belt-bag containing other essential items including a map and compass."

The hunter rejoined his companions to continue hunting for the remainder of the week.

They are due out on Friday.

Mr Potter's wife, Leanne, said he never went hunting without a survival kit.

She would not stop him going hunting again, she said.

"I can understand why they do it – the buzz, the beauty, the environment – it's just a huge adrenaline rush when you are in the bush."

- The Dominion Post

CHARGES FOR HUNTING TRIO OVER TEACHER'S DEATH BY HAYDEN DONNELL – NZ HERALD (20 APRIL 2011)

Charges have been laid against a trio who were hunting with a man when he shot a Wellington teacher at a Turangi campsite.

Andrew Mears, 26, was sentenced to two years and six months jail for the manslaughter of Rosemary Ives, 25, and ordered to pay her partner \$10,000 reparation in February.

Police said they were unable to lay charges against the other men in the hunting party - who were "spotlighting" in the Kaimanawa Forest Park when Mears mistook Miss Ives for a deer and shot her while she was brushing her teeth.

But DOC today confirmed it would charge three men with breaching permits forbidding them from hunting after dark. Two of the men are 26 and the third is 18.

The maximum penalty for the offence is 12 months in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

Anyone hunting on conservation land had to be issued a permit that "expressly forbade" them from hunting at night, a DOC spokesman said.

Miss Ives' mother and the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association (NZDA) had both criticised Mears' companions and argued for charges to be laid against them.

Detective Senior Sergeant Todd Pearce said police were also in the process of revoking firearms licences held by two of the three men.

HUNTERS CULL EASTER BUNNIES – NZ HERALD (25 APRIL 2011)

Row upon row of dead rabbits brought smiles to the faces of Central Otago farmers yesterday, with the news that the pest population had dropped by 22,904.

The victims of the 20th Great Easter Bunny Hunt were displayed at Pioneer Park in Alexandra - and thousands of people gathered over the weekend to see the haul collected by 47 teams of hunters in 24 hours.

The Beige Brigade Wolfpack team, from Southland, won the contest, bagging 1664 bunnies on a Luggate farm.

Captain Jason Gerken, of Winton, said the team carried out the hunt like a military operation.

"We kept going for the full 24 hours with hunters always ready to shoot."

Rabbits were the focus, but pigs, hares, stoats, ferrets, turkeys, pigeons and even a goat featured in the spoils displayed by teams.

Not all were pleased with the tally. A spokesman from Animal Welfare group Safe, Hans Kriek, criticised the event yesterday and was reported as saying the hunt did more to incite cruelty than control the pest.

Event convener Dave Ramsay said the spokesman was entitled to his views, "but he's clearly never seen the devastation wrought by rabbits in this area".

"We think we're doing something to tackle the rabbit problem and I think the majority of views, especially those of farmers, are in our favour."

The rabbit corpses were picked up by the Alexandra Scout group, which carries out the task as a fundraiser, for composting.

- OTAGO DAILY TIMES

LOST HUNTER SURVIVED BY BEING PATIENT BY MIKE WATSON – STUFF.CO.NZ (06 MAY 2011)

An Australian hunter who spent a night in Te Urewera National Park clinging to a tree in torrential rain 20 metres above a stream bed said he only survived by being patient and well equipped.

"I knew I would die if I didn't keep my head clear," Brent Italia said from his Melbourne home yesterday. "I just made sure I didn't do anything which would make it worse. I'm sore, bruised and tired, but I'm alive."

The 26-year-old executive chef had been on a five-day hunting trip with his uncle and a friend when he slipped 50m, only arresting his fall by grabbing a tree.

The men had split up to hunt on Monday. Mr Italia was walking along the track above a steep rock face when he lost his footing.

As he grabbed the tree, he lost his rifle, which fell into the rocky stream.

He sat for 20 minutes deciding what to do. "I started digging holes in the ground above me with my knife to get a handgrip on tree roots."

Bruised and sore, he spent an hour slowly creeping 15m up the bank before finding another tree on a small ledge strong enough to hold his weight. "It was getting dark so I got out my survival blanket and waited."

He spent a sleepless night leaning against the tree as the rain bucketed down. He ate a muesli bar and barley sugars for energy, and at dawn started to climb again, reaching the top of the ridge after three hours. "I didn't want to die so I just went slowly."

He then went down to the stream bed and collected his damaged rifle, firing three warning shots to alert his companions. When he got no response he headed back to the hut.

In the meantime his companions had alerted search and rescue. The three men were flown out on Tuesday afternoon. Mr Italia has severe bruising and grazes and a suspected broken rib, but intends to hunt in Te Urewera again. "I love it ... every sport is dangerous, I just enjoy hunting." Rotorua search and rescue co-ordinator John Wilson said Mr Italia would have died if he had fallen into the stream bed.

"This is another case of in spite of taking all due precautions, doing all the right things, and being well prepared, sometimes things can and do go wrong for those going into the outdoors."

The Dominion Post

RESCUED SAR MAN RED FACED BY JESSICA SUTTON – STUFF.CO.NZ (09 MAY 2011)

Palmerston North search and rescue leader Sergeant Andy Brooke says he felt embarrassed having to be rescued by his own, after his tracking device failed to send messages that he was safe.

The 50-year-old officer-in-charge of Palmerston North search and rescue and his seven-year-old jack russell terrier, Yetti, went into the Tararua Range near Otaki Forks on Thursday to lay a trail for a SAR exercise next weekend, but was reported overdue on Friday at 9pm.

Mr Brooke told the Manawatu Standard he had been well equipped with clothing, enough food to last him another two days, a GPS device, compass, maps, a personal locator beacon and a Spot-Me device.

The beacon lets trampers raise the alarm if they come to any harm, and the Spot-Me device is a way for trampers to communicate where they are and their status.

Mr Brooke activated his Spot-Me on Thursday afternoon, but when he failed to return home by dark on Friday the alarm was raised.

"The only problem was the spotting device didn't transmit under the canopy like I thought it would," Mr Brooke said.

"On the instructions it says it would work as long as you had a clear view of the sky. I thought I did, but there obviously wasn't enough. So, I was just on my little walk thinking everyone knew I was OK."

He sent about seven messages from his spotter on Friday and Saturday, but realised they had not been received only when he heard a number of helicopters overhead.

"Helicopters fly through the Tararuas all the time for training so I didn't really know anyone was looking for me, until I came out of the dense bush. I was quite pleased they were looking for me though, as I was getting very tired and was happy for a ride home. Yetti was exhausted too."

Mr Brooke had anticipated the 30-kilometre off-track trek would take him just over a day to walk, but had not realised how rough the terrain he would face would be. He managed to complete only 20km of the trail.

At 2.40pm on Saturday he sent another message from his spotter device, and decided to activate his personal locator beacon as he realised people were looking for him. He was found at a creek junction in the Waitewaewae River catchment, and was winched out.

An air force Iroquois, rescue helicopters from Palmerston North and Horowhenua, and 10 search and rescue teams, including police and volunteers from Horowhenua, Palmerston North and Wellington, were involved in the search.

Setting the trail for next weekend's SAR exercise in the bush, Mr Brooke said the search for him had been a good test.

"It was extremely ironic that I was the one being rescued, but these things happen. It was very embarrassing and I know I'll get a bit of grief at work, but I'd had enough of walking so I was quite pleased to be rescued.

- Manawatu Standard

RESCUED TRAMPERS HAD ONLY ONE JACKET BY SHANE COWLISHAW AND PAUL EASTON – STUFF.CO.NZ (16 MAY 2011)

Two teenagers went tramping with only a photo of a map on their cellphone and one jacket between them, search and rescue say.

Sam Lamb and his friend, Chris Handley, both 19 of Palmerston North, rang police at 4.40pm on Saturday afternoon after they got lost in the Ngamoko Range in Ruahine Forest Park, north of Palmerston North.

"The cloud came down and we could only see about 50 metres," Mr Lamb said.

A search and rescue mission began, involving eight Land Search and Rescue staff from Palmerston North, the Palmerston North rescue helicopter, police search and rescue and an air force Iroquois from Ohakea.

The helicopter team, using night vision goggles, spotted the men's torch just before 10pm but could not rescue them because of cloud and high winds.

Police kept in contact by cellphone, and two land teams headed up Tunupo Track, reaching the pair at 2.15am yesterday. They then walked out, arriving back home about 7am.

It was a long cold night, Mr Lamb said. "We huddled together to stay warm."

Search and rescue co-ordinator Sergeant Bill Nicholson said the men had one jacket between them.

The weather forecast was poor and they had no map, except for a picture of the park's layout taken on a cellphone, he said. Ringing police early was the correct thing to do but they were lucky the weather was not worse.

Mr Lamb said the pair accepted they were under-prepared.

The men wanted to thank their rescuers, who were "brilliant".

"The whole night we were dreaming of soup. Then they turned up and they were like, 'Hey, do you want some soup?' It was great."

- The Dominion Post

ROSEMARY IVES: HUNTING PARTY FINED - NZ HERALD (17 MAY 2011)

Three Hamilton men who were part of the hunting party that shot and killed Wellington teacher Rosemary Ives have pleaded guilty to charges related to the incident and been fined.

Brad Ward Bennett, 27, Kyle Raymond Dean, 18, and Ashley Paul Wolland, 27, all pleaded guilty to charges of breaching their hunting permits by hunting after dark and unlawfully discharging their weapons.

They were fined \$2500 by Judge Phillip Cooper in the Taupo District Court today.

In February, Andrew Mears, 26, was sentenced to two years and six months jail for the manslaughter of Rosemary Ives, 25, and ordered to pay her partner \$10,000 reparation.

The hunting party was "spotlighting" in the Kaimanawa Forest Park when Mears mistook Miss Ives for a deer and shot her while she was brushing her teeth.

Police said they were unable to lay charges against the other men in the hunting party, but DOC charged the three men with breaching permits forbidding them from hunting after dark.

Ms Ives family, including mother Margaret McFarlane, father Malcom Ives and uncle Hamish mcFarlane were all in the Taupo court today to hear the judge's decision.

They each held sprigs of rosemary and pictures of Ms Ives, who would have turned 27 on June 1.

DOC's national hunting advisor, Brent Beavan, said DOC was very concerned about the safety of people using conservation land and the fines sent a very clear message.

"If you want to hunt on public conservation land you must have a permit and the rules are very clear about where and when you can hunt. Hunting after dark is strictly prohibited," he said.

"Hunters must respect the safety of others. The vast majority of hunters using conservation land do act responsibly but DOC will take action against anyone who breaches their permits."

Any person hunting on public conservation land must obtain a hunting permit from DOC.

In February, a Wanaka man was sentenced to 60 hours community service and had his firearm seized after he was found guilty of hunting in the Abel Tasman National Park after dark and without a permit

- NZ Herald, NZPA

VANDALS TRY TO BLOW UP MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS DOC HUT - NZ HERALD (18 MAY 2011)

A 41-year-old Conservation Department hut in Marlborough Sounds will have to be removed after vandals tried to blow it up.

Damage to the Matai Bay Hut in Tennyson Inlet was discovered last week, but Sounds DOC visitor assets manager Mark Nelson said he thought the incident may have happened during Easter Weekend.

Vandals smashed all the windows in the remote hut and appear to have used an axe to put holes in the roof and walls before trying to blow the hut up.

DOC rangers found a galvanised bucket and pressurised gas canister sitting on the bench.

"Luckily it didn't explode otherwise we would be dealing with no hut at all," Mr Nelson told the Marlborough Express.

The hut is in a remote part of the inlet and can only be accessed by boat or kayak. The nearest launch is about 10 minutes away in Duncan's Bay.

A decision about what to do with the hut would be made over the coming days, but it was likely the hut would not stay in the same spot, Mr Nelson said.

The hut had been damaged a couple of times in the past, but never to this extent, Mr Nelson said.

- NZPA

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Range Keys

Any person who wishes to have a range gate key for the private use of our range must be a CURRENT FINANCIAL MEMBER of the Branch and must obtain a key from Hamills, Outdoorsman HQ or Serious Shooters at a cost of \$20.00 per year. Your membership card must be produced at the time of key purchase. Keys may not be lent or passed on to other persons, whether they are members or not. Non-Members can only enter the Range if accompanied by a current Financial Member. Any use of the range by non-members requires prior approval of the committee.

Membership Costs (Rotorua Branch)

Senior = \$90 (full benefits at local and national branch level)

Associate = \$60 (Unable to vote or enter national competitions. Does not receive H&W)

Junior = \$25 (Must be less than 18 years of age as at March 1st 2011. Full benefits apart from voting rights.)

Student = \$40 (Must be attending a tertiary institute or undergoing an apprenticeship. Proof must be provided.)

Superannuant = \$50 (Over 65 as at March 1st 2011. Full benefits)

Family = \$5 (Children or grandchildren)

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