

Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust

Trapping Report – June 2016

Introduction

Traps are checked and baited by Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers approximately twice per month. The results for trap checking are recorded and entered into the DOC designed “Animal Pests – Trapping” internet based application. The trapping application is a Geographical Information System (GIS) that allows systematic recording of trapping results, data analysis and reporting of rats and stoats caught for the area of the Park that Trust volunteers have stewardship over.

The general format of this report is for showing the impact of the work of volunteers in the Able Tasman Birdsong Trust. The report also poses specific questions that might come up from seeing the trapping data. Answering these questions will help guide the work of volunteers trapping predators and protecting native birds.

June 2016 Trapping Results

Trapping results for the month of June 2016 (table 1) show significant numbers of rats being trapped, particularly for the Anchorage B (B line) and Cyathea Cove (C line).

Note that the rats noted as caught are from checking traps twice during the month.

Table 1: Stoats and rats trapped for June 2016

Line	Stoats	Rats	% Rats Per Total Traps	No of Traps on Line
A	1	41	32%	127
B	0	14	50%	28
C	0	14	61%	23
H31/1 to H31/12	0	3	25%	12
H1 to H62	0	19	31%	62
Marahau	0	0	0%	11
Tinline	0	1	13%	8
Lines Combined	1	92	34%	271

The June trap check on the A24 project at Pitt Head/ Anchorage included a lure change from Chocolate to Cinnamon and reintroduction of Rabbit based lure for mustelids at each 5th trap. General indications in June were that the pest population continues at very low levels. 23 counters showed 10 strikes in total and gas replacement was needed for 22 traps of which 14 had operated for 6 months or more. These are similar to indicators in May. May tracking results showed 3 rat footprints for a 7% score up from 3% in February but still under the 10% max target. Significantly 2 of the 3 tracks in May were in tunnels outside trap lines on the coast.

Figure 1 shows the general location where rats are caught. The map shows more than 50% of the rats caught are in the Anchorage/Cyathea Cove area. The area is adjacent to the Pitt Head area where bush robins have recently been introduced. This demonstrates the value of trapping rats to protect native birds in the Park.

The map below shows numbers in red, orange and yellow circles. These numbers are the number of rats caught in neighbouring traps in a clustered circle. The green triangle is where there is a rat caught in a single trap, but not in general proximity to other rats caught.

Figure 1: Density of rats trapped in the month of June 2016



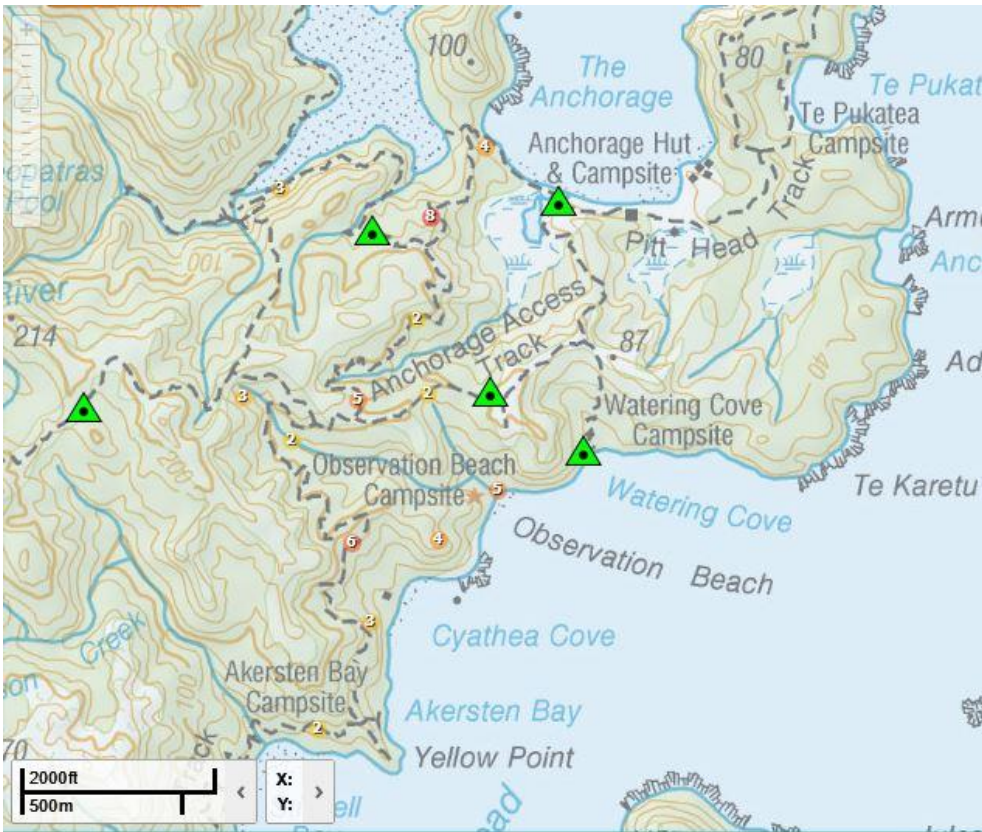
The map indicates higher rat densities between Cyathea Cove and The Anchorage, and near Tinline

A more detailed view of some of the higher rat density areas around Cyathea and The Anchorage are in figures 2 and 3.

A more detailed view of the high rat density area near Tinline is in figure 4.

Question 1: Are traps doing enough near Pitt Head to protect native birds, particularly species that have recently been released such as the bush robin?

Figure 2: Rat densities caught in June 2016 near Cyathea and Anchorage.



The above map shows the rats caught near Cyathea and Anchorage are spread between Cyathea Cove and the western end of The Anchorage. The three green triangles at Watering Cove, on the Anchorage Access Track, and near Anchorage Hut & Campsite show only 3 rats in total were caught adjacent to Pitt Head.

Figure 3 below shows traps B22 to B15 and C20 to C23 had no rats caught (yellow triangles), indicating that the Pitt Head area is being well protected from rats, apart from near Anchorage Hut & Campsite and Watering Cove Campsite (green triangles).

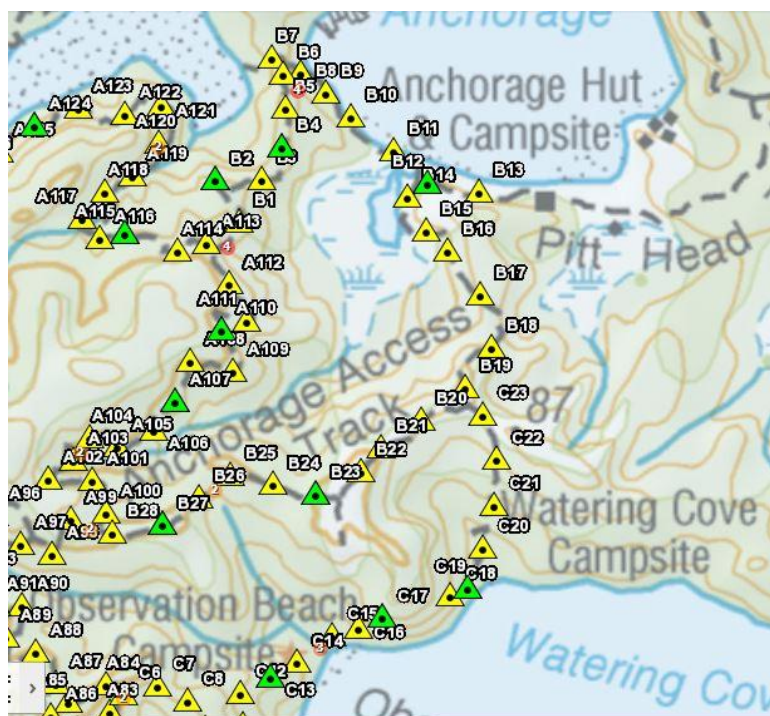
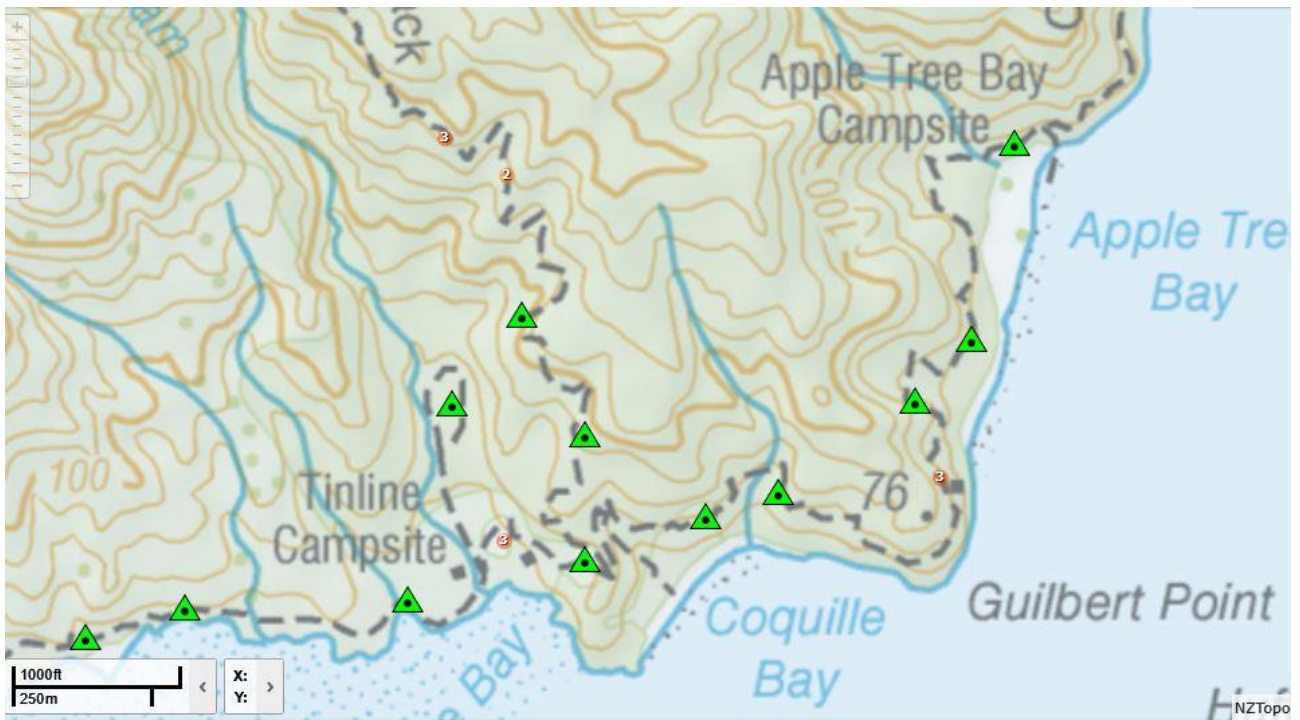


Figure 4 below shows rat densities near Tinline.



The map shows that the rats caught a spread, apart from small clusters of three rats caught near Tinline Gilbert Point, and part way up the Inland Track towards Holyoake Clearing.

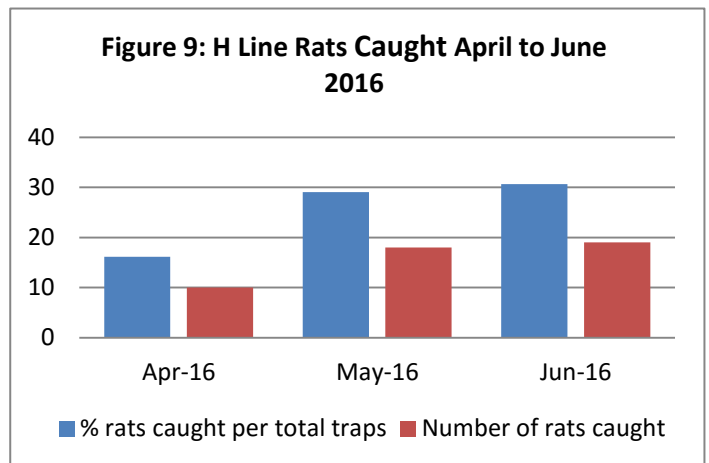
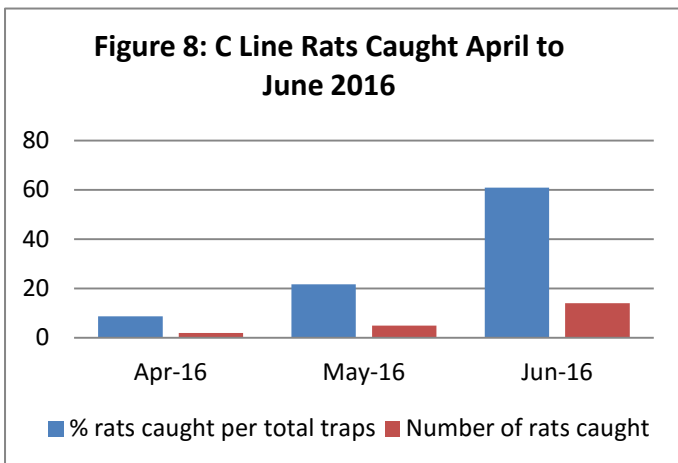
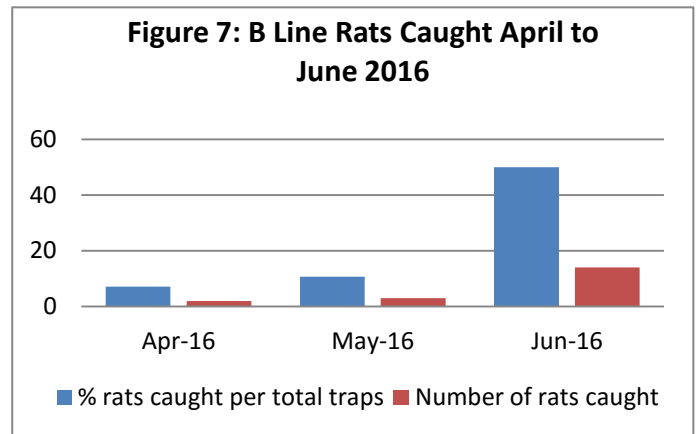
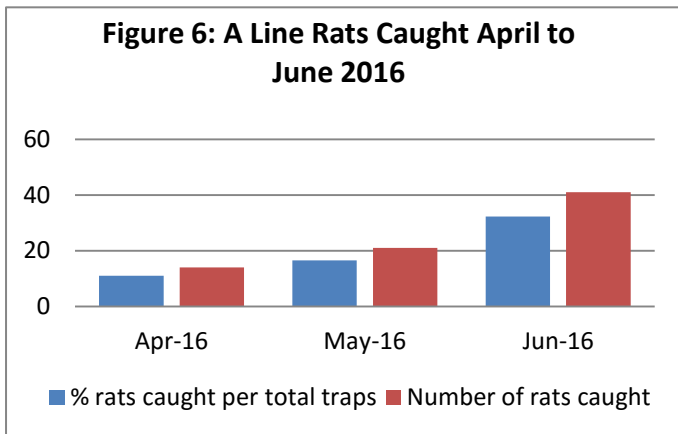
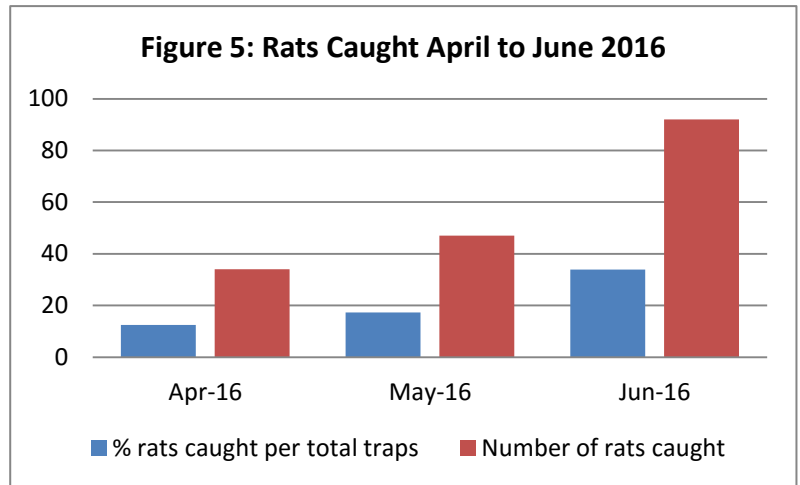
Question 2: Are rat numbers increasing relative to previous months?

Figures 5 to 9 show rats caught for A, B, C and H lines for the last three months.

Over the last three months there has been an increase in percentage of rats caught per total number of traps and the total number of rats caught.

The greatest increase has been for B and C lines.

A and H lines also showed an increase.



Tinline and Marahau lines have not increased over the last three months with one and six rats caught respectively. The six Marahau line rats were all caught in April.