

FEBRUARY'S TRAPPING REPORT

A Weka in Marahau

The traps are doing their job! Members of the trapping team - Craig, Moppy and Peter, Tom, Eric, Mike and Lorraine, Jim and Janet, Georgina - managed to get rid of lots of rats this month and are still catching stoats, but no possums. Robert's sighting of a weka in Marahau is proof that trapping is beginning to produce the results we all work for - great news!

At this time of year wasps are hovering around dead animals caught in traps and at times are so thick that trappers opted for safety first, leaving traps unset!

No vandalism has been reported for quite a while but trap M4 which lives under one of the causeway bridges was washed away again by a very high tide. The replacement will be chained on.

Other updates

Adele Island is free of predators. Allan and other Birdsong volunteers have done a great job with the Department of Conservation to achieve this. The Island has been checked several times since a Stoat was caught on the island and tracker dogs have been across twice. One more check will be done in March. On this check the extra lines will be decommissioned, a patch of Montpellier Broom weeded and the track around the Island improved. Allan is looking for four or five volunteers to give him a hand. It is very rewarding to work on the Island with lots of Bellbirds and South Island robins flitting around. Allan's number is 5278229.

After March, the dust will have settled enough to revert back to three monthly checks but there is always a risk that a rat or stoat will find its way to Adele because the Mainland Defence line cannot prevent that entirely.

Overall the checking regime DOC has delegated to Birdsong is working, and during the next breeding season we will ramp up the checks on Adele and Fishermans Islands. We will also reinforce the mainland lines and will place extra traps near likely launching spots i.e. beaches and headlands.

While out trapping we talk to people on the track who are curious about our work, thus fulfilling an important role in informing and educating the public. Let's keep our profile in the public eye by wearing our Birdsong vests as much as you can, even on the Watertaxi!

Safety and Health requires us to report any accidents or 'near misses' while out in the field. Please feed them back to me, so we can improve on how we do things and are seen to be proactive. Two Anapens for on the spot treatment for severe allergic reactions (Wasps) have been added to the kits.

I will write more about the progress on Pitt Head and other upcoming Birdsong Activities & News after the checks in March.

Trapcheck results 3 February, 2013

M11 rat, 5 rat, 15 rat, 17 rat, T3 rat, 26 rat, 29R mouse, 31R mouse, 36 rat, 42 stoat, 48 stoat, 49 rat, 55 rat, 60 rat, 61 rat, 66 rat, 68 rat, 71 rat.

Total: 14 rats, 2 stoats, 2 mice

Observations/for the records: M4 lost due to high tide, M8 needs to be locked, 2 bait gone, 7 bait gone, 17 trap left unset, 21 needs wire grill restapled, 27 R needs peg, 28 bait gone, 41 tag missing, 69, 73, 78, 79 bait gone, 80 sprung.

Trapcheck results 18 February, 2013

2 rat, 6 rat, 14 rat, 20 rat 25 rat, 31R rat, 32R rat, 33R rat, 35R rat, 35 rat, 41 rat, 56 rat, 57 rat, 62 rat, 66 rat, 68 rat, 69 rat, 74 rat, 75 rat, 77rat, 79 rat.

Total : 21 rats !!

Running total : 804 rats, 102 stoats, 81 possums, 14 mice , 4 H hogs, 1 quail.

Observations on the records:

M4 not replaced yet, T3 sprung bait gone, 17 sprung, 18 sprung bait gone, 21 suspected kill, too many wasps to check kill not recorded, 25 needs bait holder, 27 R sprung, 32 not cleared (too many wasps) kill recorded, 33R not reset (too many wasps) kill recorded, 40, 43, 46 bait gone.