



Volunteer Lunch Invitation

It's time to celebrate 10 years of trapping and planting! We want to thank everyone who has contributed to make this project the success that it is.

If you have trapped, weeded or planted on the Waimea Inlet over the year, you are invited to join us on
Sunday 17th November from 11.30am at The Playhouse, Westdale Road

Lunch will be provided, drinks to be purchased.

Please RSVP by 10th November to Kathryn bandedrail@gmail.com

Invitation from the Waimea Inlet Forum

The Waimea Inlet Forum invites you to come and hear about the recovery of wildlife around Pearl Creek and the Waimea River delta. This is a free event. See details over page.

The Tasman District Council, Waimea Inlet Forum, Tasman Environmental Trust, Battle for the Banded Rail, Forest and Bird, and Tasman Bay Guardians have all been working hard to restore the habitat in this area, and now their combined efforts are making a real difference.



Waimea Inlet Forum

For information about the Battle for the Banded Rail please contact
Project Manager, Kathryn Brownlie on 544 4537 or bandedrail@gmail.com
For trapping information or support contact Field Officer, Tracey Murray
on 540 2227 or 027 286 5866 or bandedrail@gmail.com



waimeainlet.wordpress.com

Come and hear about the recovery of wildlife around Pearl Creek and the Waimea River delta

Where: Constance Barnicoat Room,
Richmond Public Library, Queen Street, Richmond

When: 5.00 to 6.30 pm on Monday 4 November

free entry - everyone welcome

Speakers:

Paul Fisher on the fernbird surveys

George Daly on the creation of bittern habitat

Tracey Murray on the pest trapping

Monique Patterson on the inanga habitat



Banded Rail Survey

Our sixth biennial survey for banded rail footprints took place on October 12th which was a beautiful morning on the estuary.

Initial results are very encouraging with banded rail footprints recorded in more areas than in our past surveys. There were also prints found in an area that last had recorded prints in 1981!

It's great to have this data and have affirmation that trapping and habitat restoration efforts are working.

Many thanks to Graeme Elliot of DOC for educating us and supporting the project.



Survey volunteers being inducted on what banded rail prints and poo look like



Trapping Results

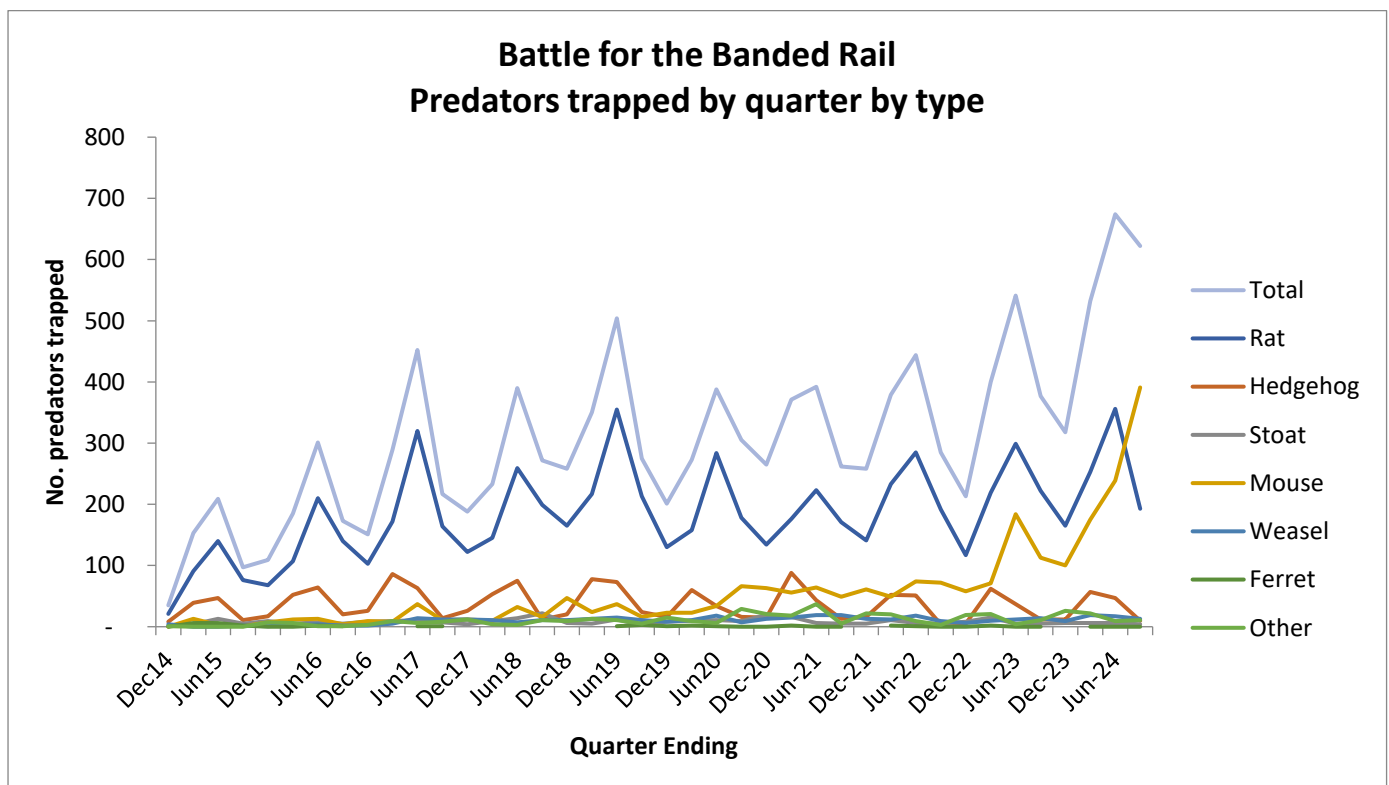
The total catch for the September quarter was 622 and is our highest quarter 3 recorded. Total catches since 2014 is now 12,370. There are 1,259 traps in the network.

Catches for Quarter 3 2024 Sector by Pest Type

Sector	Rat	Hedgehog	Stoat	Weasel	Mouse	Ferret	Other*	Total for Quarter	Total since 2015
Mapua to Bronte	42	8	1	4	13	-	2	70	2,817
Bronte to Hoddy Peninsula	39	-	-	1	4	-	2	46	2,878
Waimea West/ Appleby Hills	65	2	3	2	208	-	1	281	2,829
Waimea Delta to Monaco	47	-	-	6	166	-	6	225	3,846
Total for quarter	193	10	4	13	391	-	11	622	
Total since 2015	7,403	1,450	309	402	2,279	36	491		12,370

* includes rabbits, birds and unspecified catches from Goodnature A24 traps where the species caught is unknown

This graph illustrates the annual pattern of catches since trapping began in late 2014



Things to do at this time of the year to make your trapping more effective

- Time to start ramping up rodent control with pulse baiting (alternate baits for variety). Rodents are hungry at this time of the year as fruits disappear
- Intensive rabbit shooting will reduce the survival of spring juvenile rabbits which limits the food supply for mustelids and feral cats
- Mustelids start leaving the nest mid/late November. Populations begin to peak. Consider extra trap checks
- Increase trap checking and servicing to protect breeding birds
- Now is a good time to clean and recalibrate your traps. They should be active at 80g plate trigger weight (Predator Free NZ).
- Eggs are common in the landscape, best time to use fresh eggs in traps. Blow eggs at the trap entrance. Ensure the egg is horizontal on the nails. Dirty hens or duck eggs covered in poop are best.



World first: revival of the rat-specific toxin

[Home](#) / [Research](#) / [Techniques and technologies](#) / World first: revival of the rat-specific toxin

OCTOBER 22, 2024 SAMUEL SCOTT

A new breakthrough in predator control is on the horizon — a rat-specific toxin that leaves birds, pets, and livestock unharmed. Scientists worldwide have been exploring how to make it palatable to rats. We spoke with Dr Lee Shapiro about a new norbormide formulation and method, which he believes will be “an essential new tool in the predator free toolkit.”

Read full article on Predator Free NZ’s website [here](#)

Battle for the Banded Rail Trapping Survey

Over the next few months, I will be doing a survey on our trapping project and volunteer input. The aim is to make sure that we are following DOC best practice, and to find out what could be improved with our trapping, both from the coordinator aspect, and also from the volunteer aspect. This will be a phone survey as I would like to make personal contact with each of you and run through a series of questions. Thanks in advance for your help.



Habitat Restoration Update from Kathryn Brownlie

Plant Releasing / Maintenance Schedule

We have just begun the important work of plant maintenance. This involves hand clearing weeds from inside plant guards, straightening guards or removing them if the plant is big enough. We meet each Friday morning from 9 – 11am and on the first Sunday of the month where morning tea will be provided.

Friday 25 October	9-11am	Research Orchard Road
Friday 1 November	9-11am	Mapua Embayment (access 126 Aranui Road)
Sunday 3 November	9-12 noon	Bronte Peninsula (access #24 Bronte Rd East)
Friday 8 November	9-11am	Hoddy Estuary Park
Friday 15 November	9-11am	Bronte Peninsula (access #92 Bronte Rd East)
Friday 22 November	9-11am	Moreland Place Reserve, Mapua
Friday 29 November	9-11am	Apple Valley East (access #43 Apple Valley Rd)
Sunday 1 December	9-12 noon	Cardno Way, Bronte Peninsula
Friday 6 December	9-11am	Bronte Peninsula (access #8 Bronte Rd East)
Friday 13 December	9-11am	Manuka Island
Friday 20 December	9-11am	Maisey Embayment



10 Years of Habitat Restoration

We've achieved a significant milestone with the completion of our 10th planting season.

Since the first community planting in 2015 we have achieved:

- 102 community planting mornings
- 57 school plantings
- 140 maintenance mornings
- 6 banded rail surveys
- 35 newsletters
- 27,300 volunteer hours
- 96,500 plants planted by volunteers



Plant Patch **Taupata** - ***Coprosma repens*** - **Mirror plant**

Conservation status: not threatened

Coprosma comes from the Greek kopros 'dung' and osme 'smell', referring to the foul smell of the species, literally 'dung smell'. *Repens* means creeping. The first taupata noticed by botanists were creeping specimens, hence the botanical name, but in less difficult conditions the plant can form a shrub up to 8 metres.

New Zealand has 58 species of coprosma, out of a total of around 90 species worldwide. 20 species are found in Hawaii and the rest are found in Australia, Borneo, Java, New Guinea and islands in the Pacific Ocean. All species have opposite leaves and most species have little pits, or domatia, between the midrib and main veins.

Taupata is native to NZ and is found on the edge of coastal forests and seaside rocks. It is one of the toughest coprosmas, has very glossy leathery leaves and is resistant to salt spray. Its form varies with its situation. In an exposed situation such as on cliffs, it assumes a prostrate habit. The leaves can vary in size depending on exposure to the elements.



All coprosmas are dioecious, meaning plants are of a single-sex. Both male and female plants are required to produce berries. Flowers are produced in spring and summer and the female plants produce bright orange ovoid fruit which is edible and a valuable food source for birds.

The seeds can be dried and roasted to create a coffee substitute, as *Coprosma* is in the same Rubiaceae family as coffee. This fact inspired experiments in the late nineteenth century by a Mr JC Crawford, who presented a sample of ground coffee made from these seeds to the Wellington Philosophical Society in 1877. 'The beans...,' he wrote, 'when roasted and ground have a splendid coffee aroma, and when made into coffee the result seems to be thoroughly satisfactory.'

Species of coprosma that *Battle for Banded Rail* has planted around the Waimea Inlet are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Coprosma propinqua</i> | mingi mingi |
| <i>Coprosma robusta</i> | karamu |
| <i>Coprosma lucida</i> | shining karamu |
| <i>Coprosma tenuicaulis</i> | swamp coprosma |
| <i>Coprosma crassifolia</i> | |
| <i>Coprosma autumnalisgrandifolia</i> | kanono |
| <i>Coprosma rhamnoides</i> | bucks-horn coprosma |



Coprosma repens; *Coprosma robusta*;
Coprosma foetidissima; *Coprosma propinqua*
Sarah Featon; circa 1885; New Zealand
Te Papa collection

A Few Words on the “Counting” Side of Conservation

by Anne Hilson

My first job after I graduated with an ecology-based degree in 1965 was with the Wildlife Service, an ancestor of DOC. On my first day at work, I was summoned to meet the director, who congratulated me on being the first woman scientist to join the Service. He hoped I would do as good a job as my fellow men, or preferably better, so that more women may be employed in the future. He would be watching closely. And he hoped I would not run off and get married. I put my left hand with its shiny new engagement ring behind my back and didn't wear it to work for several months.

My main project was with King Shags, endemic to the Cook Strait islands, and in small numbers of about four hundred in total since being hunted for their skins in the 19th century. The skins went to Europe where they were made into muffs; short hollow cylinders used for keeping women's hands warm, and as handbags. They are one of the largest and rarest shags, black and white with large pink feet. We wanted to know why the numbers had not increased now that they were officially protected.

My fellow scientists were great mentors. I was immersed in my passion for ecology, and much of the time was spent on small islands and large rocks in Cook Strait. We would head off for two weeks at a time, several of us working on our individual projects but collaborating where extra pairs of hands were needed. So, my colleagues helped me measuring eggs, and looking for parasites in nests, and ferrying me to and from rocky places with my binoculars and lunch. Two of the men were studying tuatara, and we all helped with catching and banding at night.



Image NZ Birds Online

On the islands we had to move on hands and knees to spread our weight as the ground beneath us was a mass of burrows of tuatara, penguins, and shearwaters. We each had a small pup tent for sleeping, and this was before the days when tents had inbuilt floors. Just on daybreak the penguins scuttled downhill back to sea, and the shearwaters fled downhill to a cliff for take-off. A tent in the way did not deter them, and as many birds went through the tent as went over it. We wore balaclavas to bed so we didn't get bird feet caught in our hair.

King shags are now counted aerially by drones, and the population had increased to 839 by 2015. The increase can probably be attributed by closer enforcing of their protected status. It is still one of the world's rarest seabirds.

Twenty years later, another interesting “counting” job involved counting numbers of sea otters in the Kuril Islands area of the Bering sea, between Russia and Alaska. for the Russian government. We were thirty volunteers who spent three weeks in a thick cold fog, randomly sampling numbers spotted in dozens of five-mile lengths of a grey and sometimes seething sea.



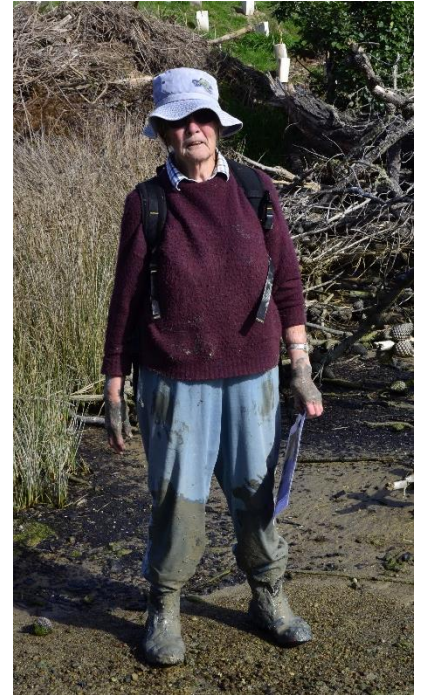
Image Wikipedia

I never tired of counting these smallest of marine mammals, the heaviest members of the weasel family. When the sea was calm, we would stop and watch them, and they would watch us closely and seemingly without fear, popping up and down in the water for a better look. Some floated on their backs, holding a sleeping pup. Others, also on their backs, ate the food they had gathered from the sea floor and tucked under their armpits; they would pick out a mussel, a crab or a sea urchin, holding it with their webbed front paws, crack the shell and eat the meat. Every so often they would roll over just once, the sea cleaning the debris from off their tabletop tummies. They showed absolutely no fear of a boatload of unfamiliar people.

Sea otter numbers had once been estimated as 300,000 but had fallen to about 3,000 at the time we assessed the population. The main threats are food availability, oil pollution, predation by orcas and conflicts with fisheries. They have very little blubber and need to eat food equal to their body mass every day. The numbers have now increased partly due to a surrogacy programme, and to addressing concerns with the fishing industry.

I feel very fortunate to have experienced these interactions with animals that are seemingly unaware of the potential human dangers. And, of course, it happens on a smaller scale too. I lived for some years in Hoddy Road, where whenever I sat on the deck with my coffee, I would be joined by tuis which would take sips whenever I put the mug down. Sometimes they would come into the kitchen to chase me along.

I have recently returned from an extensive visit to the southern part of Rakiura Stewart Island. There are about 580 residents there, and 45,000 visitors annually. Bird species include kaka, penguins, albatrosses, kereru, kakariki, pigeons, and kiwi. Predator control focuses on rats, possums, hedgehogs and feral cats. Mustelids are not present. We were told DOC is about to trial using 1080 to kill feral cats on the western side of the island. They are hoping to get the island to a point where they can provide a home for takahe and kakapo as well. The islanders see the benefits as enhancing high end nature tourism and increasing meaningful employment.



Anne getting her hands (and feet) dirty during a banded rail survey

Tasman Nelson ●●●●
Conservation Volunteers
NEWSLETTER



Have you read this monthly newsletter?

It has a roundup of trapping, news, events and learning opportunities from across our region.

Click [here](#) for the October issue

Project Spotlight

Battle for the Banded Rail is just one of Tasman Environmental Trust's current projects. Here is another project working with its local community in our region.

Mārahau Halo Trapping Project

The Mārahau Halo Trapping Project is a locally led, community based initiative to support ongoing trapping systems in the Abel Tasman National Park by creating several actively monitored trap lines in and around Mārahau.

Starting in March 2020, and with a goal of protecting the native birds (current and future) in the national park (Kākā have been sighted as far south as Stillwell Bay, 6km from Mārahau), we have established five active trap lines with over 130 rat, mouse and stoat traps. Our five trap lines compliment the work being done inside the Abel Tasman National Park and in the Otuwhero Valley and wetlands and by working closely with neighbouring conservation groups we are actively working towards a pest free halo around the southern entrance to the Abel Tasman National Park.



Banded Rail in Artwork

