

# TASMAN-NELSON CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS NEWSLETTER

(Since 2009)

April 2018

*To promote, help and assist conservation in our area*

**Welcome** - More *constructive* destruction of pests, both of weeds and predators: reports and activities from around our region ~

## **Otuwhero Trust: Bruce Reid Reports;**

Hi Will

The wetland is in full recovery mode with a huge input from Terry and Naomi Stanbridge and other volunteers. Most of the damaged fences are restored and access to our remaining traps (19 were lost in the Gita storm) has been restored. Parts of the tracks are silt covered (and still boggy!!) or covered in log slash but overall we are functioning again. Tree recovery from silt is continuing.

On top of all the recovery work Terry and Naomi, with the support of volunteer groups, have installed a new network of 67 traps in the adjacent Nell's Bush on the hills north of the wetland. Baits have been laid and already rat kills have been noted. We await with interest what pests inhabit this new area. Anyone who might like to monitor, bait and clear pest kills on a track once a month would be welcomed by Terry and Naomi.

Contact phone or e-mail details are listed below.

Pest kills for March on the wetland:

Mice	25
Rats	17
Mustelids	4
Possums	1

Rats killed in Nell's Bush; number 10 so far.

Terry Stanbridge ph 527 8656 e-mail: [nate@farmside.co.nz](mailto:nate@farmside.co.nz)

A big thanks to Pic's peanut butter and Placemakers Motueka

**Contacts:** Bruce Reid. - [breid.mot@kinect.co.nz](mailto:breid.mot@kinect.co.nz)  
or Terry and Naomi Stanbridge; [naote@farmside.co.nz](mailto:naote@farmside.co.nz)

## A Change of Editor

From May this year the Tasman Environmental Trust (TET) will be taking over the collation and distribution of the Tasman-Nelson Conservation Volunteers Newsletter.

We are honoured that Will Rickerby, who initiated the newsletter in 2009, and has as nourished and administered it ever since, has entrusted us with the task of continuing his valuable work.

We want to reassure readers, and contributors to the newsletter, that we will honour Will's original spirit and intention for the newsletter by including all contributions without editing unless required for clarity and length. Tasman District Council is adding it's support to the newsletter, but will not exert any editorial control over its contents.

We believe that the eclectic nature of the newsletter, and the variety of voices it contains is its great strength. We don't want to lose that. In fact we hope the newsletter will benefit from TET's strengths as an organisation which already supports many local environmental projects.

### **THIS IS THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE MANAGED::**

#### **1. NEW NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR**

Instead of Will, the newsletter will be coordinated by Ro Cambridge. Some of you will know Ro already from her work on the *Live & Let Live Project*.

#### **2. NEW EMAIL ADDRESS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

The address for contributions will change to [newsletter@tet.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@tet.org.nz) , but never fear, during the transition period Will has agreed to forward any emails which arrive in his email box.

#### **3. CONFIDENTIALITY**

We will send the newsletter to everyone on Will's email distribution list. We promise that the addresses will not be shared with any third party – they will be used ONLY to send you the newsletter, - nothing else. If you are at all unhappy about receiving the newsletter you can “unsubscribe” at any time.

#### **4. DEADLINE REMAINS THE SAME** - The end of each month.

## From Paremata Flat & Uri (Bishops Peninsular), Cable Bay:

### Ian Price Reports:

Hi Will, Giving up on trying to identify rodent movement patterns out at Delaware Bay, on Paremata and MPRD we consistently had catches through the month, Uri not as active then come 24/26 March we got a significant spike in mice and also rats on all lines, why?, you tell me. Monitoring on Uri was at 30% with the most activity near the road the same with Paremata, though the two legged rats (weka) interfered with a number of stations at Paremata.

For the month we have removed 157 mice 12 Rats 1 Weasel and 8 Wasp nests over all the lines.

Cat sign has been present at Paremata and have been working three live capture traps with no success, initially caught weka but after tossing them all around while in the cage they have not gone back in, (I think) one thing I do admire about them is their intelligence, however we are losing bait without the trap going off except where the bait is attached to the trigger, have they learnt what traps they can enter carefully without triggering to secure the bait and the one they cannot?, or is this just random, I would need a camera to observe. On Uri there are two adults and three chicks and one of the adults as soon as they pick up you are checking the traps follows you picking up any caught mice and then gives a call and soon after a juvenile turns up.

Once again a very big thanks to Ewing's eggs and Pic's peanut butter for their generous support.

Every Tuesday from around 8.30 till around 3 pm we undertake weed control by way of grid searching through the plantings, join us at Paremata Flats Reserve if you are keen or you want to learn how to undertake an effect weed management programme with your ecological restoration.

### Maori Pa Road March Catch Comparisons

Year	Rat	Mice	Stoat	Weasel	Hedgehog	Line Checks
March 2015						
March 2016	3	54	1	1		10
March 2017	1	60	1			10
March 2018	6	60				11

### Uri March Catch Comparisons

Year	Rat	Mice	Stoat	Weasel	Possum	Line checks
03/2010						
03/2011	7	17			1	5
03/2012	5	24				5
03/2013	4	36				8
03/2014	18	26				11
03/2015	75	74				15
03/2016	1	23				10
03/2017	2	124				13
03/2018	3	55				13

## Paremata Flats March Comparisons

Year	Rats	Mice	Stoat	Weasel	Hedgehog	Rabbit	Cat	No of checks
03/2013	5	47	1		1	1		
03/2014	1	71	5					
03/2015	12	44	4	2	1			
03/2016	3	70	2	1	2			14
03/2017	6	65			2			11
03/2018	3	42		1				11

Check out our website [www.paremataflats.co.nz](http://www.paremataflats.co.nz) (thanks to Clint Fern for managing) and you will be able to follow our planting progress.

**Contacts:** ([ian.price@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ian.price@xtra.co.nz))

### Richmond Hills:

#### Native Bird Recovery Richmond

**Steve Liddicoat Reports:** On our line in Reservoir Creek, since October 2016 to March 2018 we have caught 69 mice, 20 rats, 1 stoat, 1 possum and 1 'other'.

#### Catches:

**Reservoir Creek Lines:** 8 mice, 4 rats & 4 possum.

**Jimmy Lee Creek Lines:** 1 mouse, 1 rat.

**Ron's Valhalla/Jimmy Lee Steps Line:** No catches.

**Griffin's Saxton Creek:** 2 mice, 1 possum.

Thanks to Sponsors: Ewing's Poultry; Sarah and Rick Griffin; &



### Rabbit Island Trapping Group:

#### Gillian Pollock Reports From the Mapua End of the Island:

Much less pig rooting, perhaps the weather scared them off to more benign climes.

Catches: 4 mice, 3 rats and 4 hedgehogs.

**Contacts:** Gillian Pollock [g.pollock@scorch.co.nz](mailto:g.pollock@scorch.co.nz)



#### No Report from the Eastern End of the Island:

**Contacts:** Jacob Lucas: Office:(03) 544 6382 Cell:021 811 253

Email: [jucas@fishandgame.org.nz](mailto:jucas@fishandgame.org.nz)

Thanks to Olsen's and



## Will's Gully Group: Richmond Hills (Since 1999).

### Bryan Riley Reports:

I have not had any luck catching any critters this month but will carry on setting traps in the area for a bit longer! Some traps have been set off with the bait taken but not a thing caught? I have used cheese in the traps this time so will see if the change of bait helps.

There seems to be good regeneration growth generally in the area due in some part I suppose to plentiful late summer rains?

**Alastair Reports:** Hi Will. Not much to report once again. One rat and 3 mice. Possum's still around and will re-set the traps after having been away down south half the month. Wekas also still present and am pleased to frequently see "dad" pheasant in the garden with his two "daughters". Or perhaps it's "mum & daughter". Wax eyes cleaned up all the grapes from the two grape vines in my absence. Not a single one left. And don't mention the pears, nashi pears and omega plums. They are now pecking their way through the far-from-ripe fuji apples! These birds come at a cost! Just as well one can buy them in the commerce. All for now and will go and set these traps. Regards to all, Alastair.

### Will Reports:

This month we have been busy preparing for the winter planting, weed eating around the existing plants, clearing weeds and places for the new plants, re-staking and also spraying the pest plants. Some walking track improvements have been made too. It has been surprising at the number of people who now walk the tracks and many new folk who haven't been up there before.

Planting has already started with Kevin providing about 45 plants and his friend Ross giving 14 kowhai plants for planting at Grassy Saddle.

We have two school groups to talk to this coming month so some prep required for them also. Another side is the damage to some traps, and water containers thrown around by unknowns just for the 'thrill' of it?

**Total Catches for Last Month:** 1 mouse, 1 hedgehog, 1 possum, plus 5 Asian wasp nests.

**Thanks to Sponsors:** Ewing's Poultry; Sarah and Rick Griffin, Tasman Holdings and Pic's Really Good Peanut Butter.



Contacts: willrickerby@gmail.com - ph 544 2929.

For progress reports check out our Facebook Page:  
*Wills Gully Conservation Group.*

## Keep Richmond Beautiful:

### KRB Joined in on the big Beachfront Clean Up Day

Lots of rubbish gathered up and disposed of in the right place.



If anyone is interested in joining KRB, contact Ron Argue [rpargue@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rpargue@xtra.co.nz); Greg Pickford [gregandalisonpickford@gmail.com](mailto:gregandalisonpickford@gmail.com) or Gordon Curnow [curnow2016@gmail.com](mailto:curnow2016@gmail.com)

## Rotoiti Ramblings: Friends of Rotoiti Notes:

(St Arnaud)

### Peter Hale Reports:

**Village Trapping March 2018** - Approximately 300 Traps Possum Trapping March

	Rat	Mouse	Stoat	Weasel	Bird	Sprung	Total
Black Hill Contour	1	6					7
Black Hill Walk	4	16					20
Black Valley Walk	2	12					14
Gibbs Walk	3	2					5
Holland Street	3	4					7
Lodge Road	1	9					10
Moraine Walk		21					21
Peninsula Nature Wlk	14	50				9	73
Peninsula Ctr Line	1	6					7
Robert Road	4	10					14
View Road		6					6
Ward Street		8					8
Water Tank		4					4
Catch Total	33	154	0	0	0	9	196

### Possum Trapping March

Trapping results from March show an increase in rat and mouse captures and the usual decrease in stoat captures. The last 2 checks of the Speargrass line resulted in 35% and 38% of the traps with captures, mostly rats.

Village	0
Mt Robert Rd	5
Rainbow Valley	3
Speargrass	4
Whisky Falls	11
Total	23

### Stoat Trapping March 2018

	Stoat	Weasel	Ferret	Rat	Hhog	Rabbit	Bird	Cat	Sprung	Total
Mt Robert Rd										
17 Traps				3	3					6
Rainbow Valley										
89 Traps				2		1				3
Rainbow Valley Trial										
152 Traps	1			13	5				1	20
Speargrass										
26 Traps	1			21	2					24
Tophouse Rd										
43 Traps				4		1		1	3	9
Whisky Falls										
82 Traps	4	2		18					4	28
Catch Total	6	2	0	61	10	2	0	1	8	90

January and February are the usual months for peak stoat captures with RNRP traps catching 26 in January and 35 in February and FOR traps catching 28 and 10 respectively.

DOC mustelid tracking tunnel results from March were 0% at Rotoiti and 23% at Rotoroa (the control site with no predator control). The low number of stoats at Rotoiti may be the reason for the increase in rats and mice however nothing in nature is that straight forward.

Kiwi monitoring has confirmed at least one nest was successful this season with a chick being detected on a trail camera. It is suspected that another nest has been successful but the chick has not been picked up on a camera as yet. FOR volunteers have been enjoying their experiences working with the great spotted kiwi. You may have read the report of the death of a kiwi chick in the Tongariro forest as a result of a volunteer and supervisor returning the chick to the burrow without removing the insulation tape around the legs. As a result of this unfortunate error Tongariro DOC staff are no longer allowing volunteers to handle the birds. I hope this does not extend to Nelson Lakes as both working with, and handling the birds, is “the icing on the cake”, a reward for all the normal trapping work.

Bat monitoring at Nelson Lakes over January and February has detected long – tailed bats at both Rotoiti and Rotoroa using automatic bat detectors. These recorders pick up the echolocation sounds of the bats as they fly past. The work will be carried out annually as part of a long-term dataset and may give an indication of how pest control in the RNRP is impacting the population. Landscape scale predator control in the Eglinton valley has had a positive impact on the short-tailed bat population there, see: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2018/rare-bat-on-the-road-to-recovery/>

DOC staff have received numerous reports of whio at Blue lake, the Travers and Sabine rivers and even one at the head of Lake Rotoiti hanging out with a family of scaup. These birds have probably dispersed from the Kahurangi National Park where landscape pest control has had a very positive impact. The newly established South Island captive breeding programme has also been very successful. 31 birds were released this season that were bred from 4 captive pairs. For more details on this programme see: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2018/cracker-captive-season-for-west-coast-whio/> .

The recent cyclones have taken their toll on seabirds with thousands of dead and sick birds being washed up on NZ beaches. Little blue penguins have been particularly hard hit and featured in numerous news reports of which this is but one: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/northland/102248189/Blue-penguins-washing-up-sick-and-injured-on-Auckland-and-Northland-beaches> .

**Contacts:** Peter Hale [pajhale@gmail.com](mailto:pajhale@gmail.com)  
FOR [www.friendsofrotoiti.co.nz](http://www.friendsofrotoiti.co.nz)

## The Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust:

Extracts from their March 2018 newsletter:



A total of 92 mustelids and 1,324 rats have been caught by Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers since August 2015 when records first were stored in the database. Historic records show that between October 2010 and August 2015, 158 mustelids and 2156 rats were caught, making a grand total of 250 mustelids and 3,480 rats caught since October 2010.

Trapping results for the two months of January and February 2018 (table 1) show 106 and 15 mustelids were caught compared to the 41 rats and 10 mustelids caught in the previous 2 months...

Table 1: Mustelids and rats trapped for January and February 2018

Line	Mustelids	Rats	Average Percent Rats Per Month Per Total Trap boxes	No of Trap Boxes on Line
A	1	61	24	127
B	0	3	4	39
C	2	9	20	23
H31/1 to H31/12	0	0	0	12
H1 to H62	7	14	11	62
Marahau	1	3	14	11
Stilwell	2	8	18	22
Tinline	0	6	38	8
Pitt Head	0	2	3	32
Lines Combined	13	106	16	336

Note: The rats and mustelids noted as caught are from checking traps twice during the month.

There was a very large increase in rats caught in January 2018 compared to November and December 2017. February's rat catch was slight down on January, but still high. The increase in the number of rats caught, particularly since December 2015, would be in part due to more trap boxes in operation as in the table below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Boxes</b>	<b>Trap type</b>
December 2015	H12 to H62	51	51 double set
March 2016	H31/1 to H31/12	12	12 double set
October 2016	B32 to B39	8	8 single set
May 2017	SW1 to SW22	22	11 run through double set and 11 ZIP double set
Nov 2017	PH1 to PH32	32	Pitt Head stoat line to complement the A24 traps
<b>Total</b>		<b>125</b>	

Interestingly two rats were caught on the Pitt Head stoat line in the middle of the original Pitt Head A24 trap area. Also, two rats were caught on the track between Watering Cove and Anchorage which is within the A24 network extension. See Appendix 1 for a map of the A24 network.

**Possum Control:** Based on possum 'hot spot' locations from the Wax Tag survey results, sentinel possum traps were selectively removed from between A26 and A80 and relocated into selected sites on Holyoake line, upper A line, B line and C line.

**Thirteen** possums were caught in the two months Jan and Dec 2018. **8** of the **13** were caught on the Holyoake line. Two possums were caught on A and B line and 1 possum caught on C line. These results show the value of the wax tag survey and redeployment of the sentinel possum traps

**Rat Monitoring** is undertaken quarterly in the park (February, May, August and November) and produces a Foot Tracking Index (FTI) presented as a percentage. There are five different predator control treatments in Abel Tasman National Park and monitoring is undertaken in each treatment area (Figure below). There are a total of 59 rat monitoring lines within southern Abel Tasman...

**Contacts:** Abby Butler - [atbirdsong1@gmail.com](mailto:atbirdsong1@gmail.com)

## **Silvan Forest** - Richmond Hills

### **Don Sullivan Reports:**

We have 24 rat traps and 10 DOC20 traps set out and for a start I just fed the traps for several weeks. Then the traps were set catching 12 rats; later caught 5 rats and since then nothing except for one weasel last month.

**Contacts:** ph 547 7705 [donselford09@gmail.com](mailto:donselford09@gmail.com)



Please come and join us at a Community Planting Day on the Waimea Inlet

Sunday 6th May	9am – 1pm	Maisey Embayment Access from 366 Coastal Highway – from Richmond direction need to u-turn at Westdale Rd as there are now double yellow lines
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	9am – 1pm	Bronte Peninsula on Stringer Embayment Access from 92 Bronte Road East
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> May	9am – 1pm	Manuka Island Follow sign to Manuka Island from Redwood Road
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	9am – 1pm	Bronte Peninsula North Park on Cardno Way (off Bronte Road East)
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> June	9am – 1pm	Research Orchard Road
Sunday 24th June	9am – 1pm	Stringer Creek Westdale Road opposite The Playhouse Café
Sunday 1st July	9am – 1pm	Hoddy Estuary Park Off Coastal Highway near Research Orchard Road
Sunday 8th July	9am – 1pm	Dominion Embayment Parking at 43 Apple Valley Rd (between Bronte Rd & Mapua Dr)

Please bring gloves, spade and drinking water. Wear solid footwear and clothes suitable for the weather conditions. Morning tea will be provided (coffee courtesy of Pomeroy's).

*Battle for the Banded Rail is a Waimea Inlet Forum project working with local communities. It aims to increase the number of banded rail and other estuarine birds on the Waimea Inlet by restoring habitat and trapping predators.*

For more information email us at [bandedrail@gmail.com](mailto:bandedrail@gmail.com) or phone Kathryn 544 4537



## **Encounter Solutions Ltd**

have designed and built the Celium Network, a long range wireless sensor network for pest control in remote and rugged terrain. Trap status is known in real time, thereby enabling you to only check the traps that have been sprung.



Auckland Council's trial of the Celium Network combined with use of long life lures in the Hunua Kokako Management Area showed a 94% reduction in hours required to service the network. The trial also showed that the Celium Network can increase the trap network by 60% for the same labour investment.

Hawke's Bay Cape to City data indicates a Celium Network covering the project footprint of 26,000 hectares will reduce labour investment by an average of around 70-75% over five years, with a reduction of around 4,000 person-hours on kill trapping operations alone.

A Node is attached to any kill or leg hold trap currently used in NZ, including the Goodnature traps. The Nodes are battery operated with extremely low power demands, batteries should last 8 years or more. The distance between the Node or trap and Hub could be 30 km or more. The Hub is solar powered and weighs only 12.5 kg, enabling easy portage to site. Up to 800 Nodes can communicate to a Hub, which then uses either a Satellite or the cell network to send data to a smart phone or web browser.

For more information contact Jamie Burrows by emailing [jamie@encounter.nz](mailto:jamie@encounter.nz) or visit <https://www.encounter.solutions>

## **DOMINION FLATS RESERVE**

**PLANTING DAYS** – The weekend of 19/20 May Saturday and Sunday  
And weekend of 26/27 May Saturday and Sunday



For another planting push to add to the fantastic looking reserve that is fast becoming a place to walk/ cycle/ exercise the dogs or just wander and admire the growth of those trees you probably helped to put in over the last four years.

We have 4000 more plants this year so we need all the help we can get. The growth this year has been phenomenal

and we now have plants we can look up to above our heads. Come and see for yourself.

Starting time 9am each day until midday; Wear suitable footwear and sunhat; Morning tea provided.

**Contacts:** n-h.bibby@actrix.co.nz



Neville and Helen Bidy at work in the reserve near Mapua.

## Trapping in the Wakefield Area

**Robson's Reserve: Edward Baigent Reserve: Falkners Bush:**

### Chris Tonkin Reports:

For the record I have recently handed over my Greenacres trap line to another Banded rail project enthusiast and am now concentrating my effort on the 18 victor traps I look after at Falkner's Bush, Edward Baigent Scenic Reserve and Robsons Reserve in Wakefield.

Combined tallies since September 2016 to date are; rats 54, mice 90 and stoats 3.

Having recently acquired three DoC 150 traps and I'm intending to set one at each location to see how many stoats I've been missing.

**Contacts:** tonkinchris65@gmail.com

### Trapping at Galeo Estate: Alex Robertson Reports:

Not a great deal except for the odd capture of rats and mice.

Of interest though: I recently watched a native falcon swoop down on a patch of rough stuff and then fly off with a mouse in its claws! - Nature's mouse trap?

## A Thank You from Will:

This is my last Tasman Nelson Conservation Volunteer's Newsletter and I wish to thank all the people who have made regular contributions to the newsletter over the last nine years.

My idea was to have regular updates of what fellow conservationists where up to in our area. To be useful for swapping information either with hints, working bees, observations and such.

At first I thought I should have enough contributions to send it out every two or three months but it never worked out like that. Right from the first newsletter I've had to edit contributions to keep it to a reasonable size and it's been sent out every month (except for January's) since then.

A number of groups have their own newsletter and I have taken the liberty of extracting what I think would be of interest to other groups and to help publicise their working bees and such.

I've treated the distribution list as for the newsletter ONLY, although I've had requests and sometimes demands, that I send out other material.

I can't go on forever so wish to pass it on in the hope that it will continue in the same vein, to serve all the conservation volunteers in our region, both the trapping and general conservation, to be independent, non political, in email form and hopefully, available from the TDC website in the future.

One thing though; it's your newsletter so make sure you keep it.

And now, I'll have more time to pull a few weeds, raise more native seedlings and listen to the birds!

Submissions/reports from voluntary conservation groups are welcome.

To subscribe, submissions, any queries, or comments -

email: [newsletter@tet.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@tet.org.nz) (ph: 546 7572)

To unsubscribe to this newsletter, send an email with

*"Regional Conservation Newsletter Unsubscribe" in the subject line.*