



Captured on Camera

from [TET Facebook page](#)

Nope...it is not a wanted criminal, but it is a bird species that is very much wanted! This image of a Banded Rail was taken from a trail camera set up around the Waimea Inlet. One of our amazing volunteers had been regularly seeing Banded Rail near their property and now we have conclusive proof!

The thousands of hours that Battle for the Banded Rail volunteers put into checking traps and restoring habitat are so appreciated. So, to see these birds in a new location is very positive indeed!

Thanks so much to the Tasman District Council - Te Kaunihera o te tai o Aorere Community Grants Scheme for funding these trail cameras.



Planting Season begins 28th May

Our first planting on 28th May at Estuary Place in Richmond coincides with Climate Action Week.

Our full planting schedule for this winter is on the last page of this newsletter . Everyone is welcome and there are jobs other than digging!

If you would like to receive our weekly emails about planting days coming up through the season please email us.

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

Trapping Results

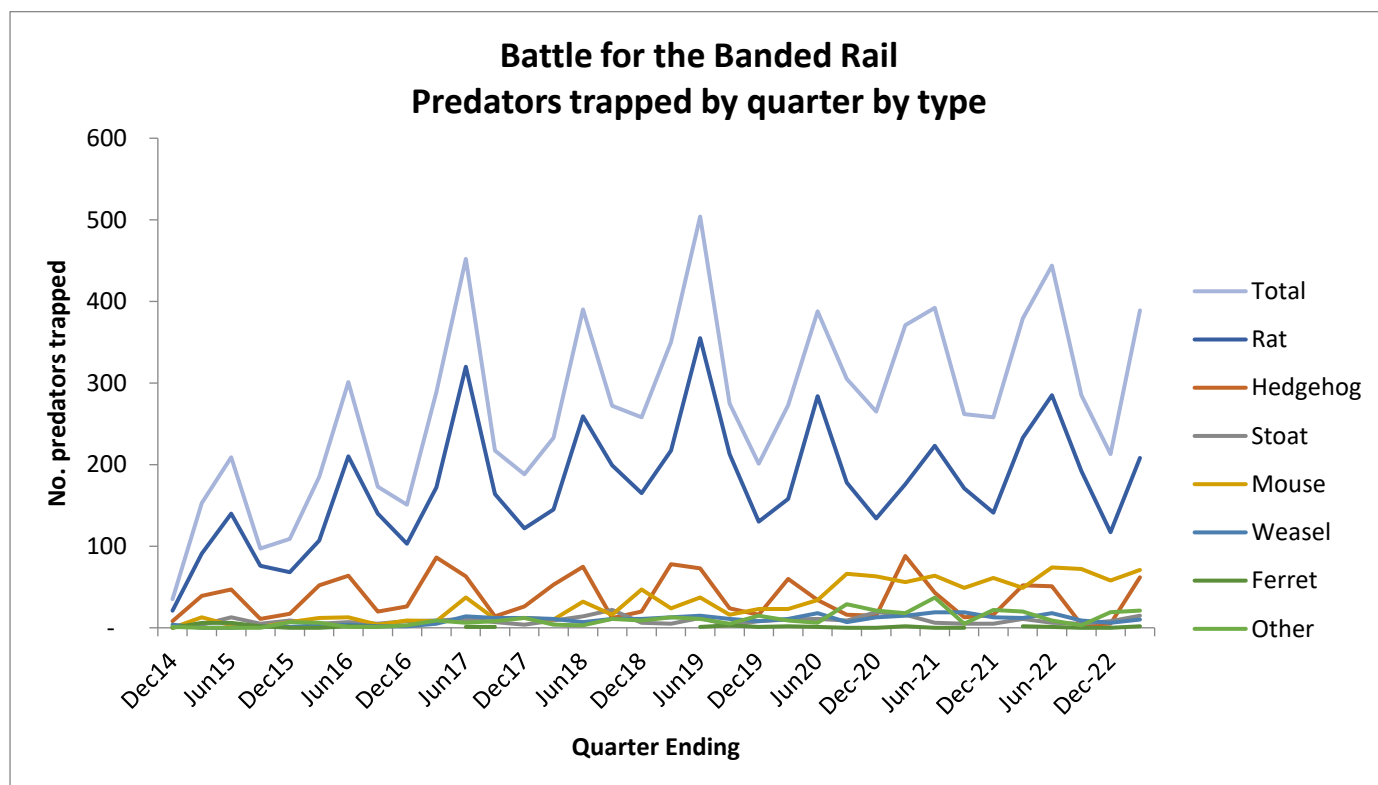
There are 1,100 traps in operation. The total catch for the March quarter was 389 and is our highest ever Q1 tally. Q1 last year was similar with 379 catches. Total catches since 2014 is now 9,236.

Catches by Year by Pest Type

Sector	Rat	Hedgehog	Stoat	Weasel	Mouse	Ferret	Other*	Total for Quarter	Total since 2015
Mapua to Bronte	27	20	2	7	12	-	5	73	2,290
Bronte to Hoddy Peninsula	48	12	3	-	3	-	3	69	2,479
Waimea West/ Appleby Hills	40	11	3	2	3	2	3	64	2,029
Waimea Delta to Monaco	93	19	7	1	53	-	10	183	2,438
Total for quarter	208	62	15	10	71	2	21	389	
Total since 2015	5,898	1,273	293	318	1,075	36	343		9,236

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

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



Trapping & Monitoring News from Tracey Murray

Forget 'cute Mrs Tiggy-Winkle': Hedgehogs are much-loved, but they wreak havoc

Source: Stuff February 2023

Hedgehogs devour many native species and can be more prolific than rats. Yet they remain much-loved, fed and protected by some Kiwis, thwarting pest control efforts.

Hedgehog history

The first pair of hedgehogs arrived in New Zealand in 1869 met with a dubious reception from the Canterbury acclimatisation society, which was presented with the animals by Mr D Robb.

The society, tasked with bringing in familiar British species, touted them as being “of invaluable service in keeping down the grub”, reported The Press at the time, but queried “whether the amount of good done by hedgehogs is counterbalanced by their partiality for eggs and young birds”.

Those early reservations went unheeded, and over the following decades dozens of hedgehogs were imported and quickly established themselves in the wild. Early settlers enthusiastically helped their spread, with railway guards dropping them off at stations across the South Island.

The prevalent belief amongst colonists was that hedgehogs would eat slugs and snails in domestic gardens, much as they did back home in Britain.

Hedgehogs spread like wildfire without the cold winters and predators they contended with in the UK and Europe. They had plentiful food, including invertebrates, ground-nesting birds, small lizards and other amphibians. It was paradise for them, and the controls on their numbers that are apparent in their native range were not here, so they just spread.

By 1939 there were so many hedgehogs that they were gazetted as vermin, and a bounty of sixpence per snout was imposed. Over the following nine years bounties were paid on 53,600 snouts



Hedgehogs can eat 160 grams of invertebrates per day, and a study in the Waitaki river basin found a single hedgehog with 283 native wētā legs in its stomach. That's 47 wētā in a 24 hour period!

In contrast, in the UK hedgehogs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. There, they've suffered devastating losses in recent decades, and the [British Hedgehog Preservation Society](#) was launched in 1982 to try and arrest their decline.

Hedgehogs are not inherently bad, they're just in the wrong place.
Click [here](#) to read the full article.

Some other loved hedgehogs



Bogor by Burton Silver



Playing croquet in Alice in Wonderland



Sonic the Hedgehog



Mr Pricklepants from Toy Story

New Volunteers Needed for Traps

Every now and then volunteers retire from their lines and we need someone new to take over. It is preferable to have a local person for each line, but not essential. If you are already involved in checking traps and could encourage a neighbour or friend to help out it would be most appreciated.



Appleby Hills. There are approximately 60 houses in this estate and a very nice walkway that winds its way below the houses through some open grassland and also through some lovely patches of bush and a couple of ponds. There will be 10 - 12 traps to check here, mostly on this walkway.

Westdale Road. These traps are in the process of being relocated and will need a volunteer to check around 15 traps in 2 locations.

Hoddy Road. There are six traps on the estuary edge which will need to be accessed through private property. They are well marked and the property owner is happy to provide ongoing access. Ideally this will be someone living on Hoddy Road.

If you are able to help please contact Tracey directly on 272865866 or email pukeko92@gmail.com

Habitat Restoration Update from Kathryn Brownlie

Plant Releasing & Maintenance on Friday mornings

Our Friday mornings will continue until planting begins. It's one thing to plant the plants, but the maintenance helps ensure they thrive and survive.

Friday 28th April will be at Maisey Embayment. Access from 368 Coastal Highway. Morning tea is provided on the last Friday of each month.

Bring drinking water, a weeding tool if you have one you like to use and wear gardening gloves. We will also have tools available for you to use. If you are interested in joining us at one or more of these mornings, you can let me know or just turn up.



I send out an email earlier in the week to confirm the Friday location to our 'Weeding Group'. If you would like to be added to this distribution list, please let me know.

Minister of Conservation learns about Battle for the Banded Rail



On a recent visit to Nelson, Minister of Conservation Willow-Jean Prime took time to meet with Tasman Environmental Trust to hear about their work in our region.

Battle for the Banded Rail was included in this visit and we were pleased to be able to show the minister around one of our restoration sites. She was impressed with our achievements and the incredible volunteer support that the project has behind it.

Kathryn, Battle for the Banded Rail project coordinator, Hon Willow-Jean Prime, Minister of Conservation and Sky Davies, Tasman Environmental Trust Manager on the Waimea Inlet

Estuaries – a brief overview

What is an Estuary?

An estuary is a semi-enclosed embayment, with a free connection to the sea at one end and a freshwater supply at the other, and within which fresh and salty waters mix. Estuaries filter out sediments and pollutants from rivers and streams before they flow into the ocean.

Estuaries have ecological, economic and cultural values and are one of the most productive ecosystems on earth. The largest estuary in the world is the Gulf of St Lawrence which connects the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.

Estuaries in New Zealand

There are about 300 estuaries around New Zealand's coastline including the South Island fiords. Most are barrier-enclosed estuaries. Kaipara Harbour in Northland is the largest at 947 square kilometres at high tide and 409 square km exposed as mudflats at low tide. NZ's estuaries range from small lagoons to extensive wetland harbour systems.

The largest estuary in the South Island is New River Estuary next to Invercargill. It receives fresh water mainly from the Oreti and Waihopai Rivers and has an area of 4,100ha.

Waimea Inlet

The Waimea Inlet is the area inside a line connecting the Tasman Bay shoreline of Mapua, Moturoa/Rabbit Island and Tahunanui Beach.

It is the second largest estuary and largest semi-enclosed estuary in the South Island. It covers 3,455 ha (34.5 square kilometres), has 12 islands and 22 contributing waterways.

The largest island Moturoa/Rabbit Island incorporates its traditional name and the name that became popular with European settlers in the 1840s, probably due to the abundance of rabbits on the island.



Painting by John Gully c1875: The Waimea Plains and cultivated country near Nelson. Alexander Turnbull Library

Plant Patch **Tauhinu** -
Conservation status: not threatened

Ozothamnus leptophyllus - **Cottonwood**

Its name comes from the Greek 'ozo' meaning to smell and 'thamnos' meaning shrub. This alludes to the fragrant foliage when crushed. *Leptophyllus* means with slender leaves.

Tauhinu is not an iconic or well-known NZ native plant. It is a bushy shrub with small silver green leaves with fine silver hair beneath, is fast growing to 2 metres in height and is found throughout the country mainly in coastal areas. It has cream flower clusters from December-March and fruits from March-April. The down-covered seed heads are dispersed by the wind. It prefers a sunny location and is frost hardy. It also makes a good nurse plant for more tender plants.



In the east of the country tauhinu is known to readily colonise bare hillsides and pasture. It gradually becomes denser in paddocks if there isn't good grazing pressure or pasture competition. Farmers sometimes control tauhinu and historically it has been mispronounced as 'tarwinny'.

Some other facts about tauhinu:

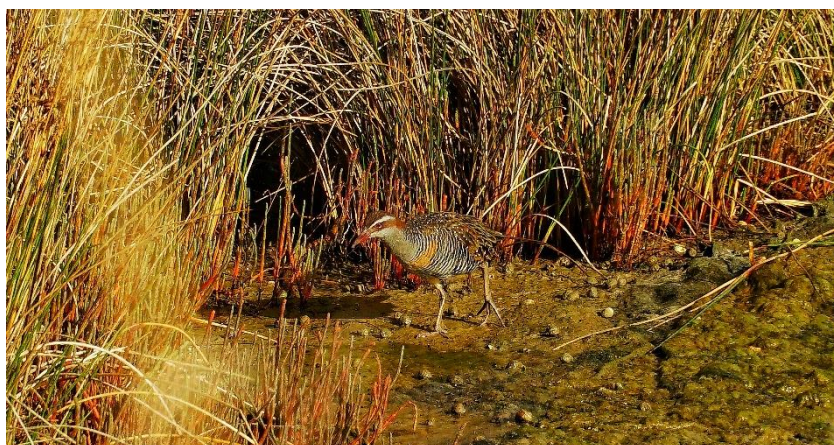
- Weta have a special relationship with tauhinu and can be found on plants at night throughout the year. They feed on the new shoots and flowers.
- Traditionally fish hooks were made of tauhinu tree roots as it is a strong wood. The hooks were further hardened by fire.
- Formally known as *cassinia leptophylla*
- It is listed on Massey University's weed database 'a perennial scrub weed with small rounded leaves'.
- *Battle for the Banded Rail* volunteers have planted 800 tauhinu



Banded Rail in Motueka

Lindsay Thompson photographed this banded rail in the rushes on the Motueka Inlet Walkway in March.

I have tried to photograph a banded rail and I know it is no mean feat to achieve such a stunning image!



Celebrating Our Volunteers: Peter Kinder

Interviewed by Anne Hilson

One of Peter's earliest memories, from the 1950s, is of small mountains of dead rabbits on his family's farm in Otago. Rabbits were rampant on farmland at the time and were a serious threat to the grasslands and biodiversity. Later Peter was involved in pest control as a farmer in the Marlborough Sounds and then near the Kaikoura coast. Goats, possums, and pigs.

Possibly he may be the most experienced pest eradicator and biodiversity warrior of the *Battle for the Banded Rail* clan. But he very likely didn't anticipate continuing this when he and Mary retired to their "lifestyle block" near Māpua in 2010.



Peter Kinder

Initially Peter was involved in planting and weeding, until he found it became harder to stumble about in the vegetation. He has also been involved in maintaining part of the secondary pest barrier, or buffer area, a series of traps 300-500 metres inland from the trapline along the coast, preventing pests moving in from more inland areas. Initially he established a barrier of traps along a part of State Highway 60. DOC advised a trap every hundred metres. He had a very high success rate catching rats and mustelids (mostly weasels), but ceased work on this line when DOC began to worry he might be struck by a car. He now runs another buffer line in the Westdale Road area.

Peter is very adamant that we need more secondary barriers. Currently the area between Māpua and Redwood Road is covered, and it is intended that this buffer extends as far as Richmond.

Another concern for him is the effect of the growing depth of silt in the estuary. Rails will only thrive where there is a high quality and ecologically diverse habitat with rich food supplies. The source of crustacea and other food that they largely depend on is being affected by the overlay of silt from the Waimea River when it floods. He believes the loss of saltmarsh habitat is the main ecological effect on the estuary, particularly, he notices, in the area between Redwood Road and Bronte peninsula. This will likely increase with the growing floods due to climate change. "This is the single biggest limiting factor on the increase of banded rail", says Peter.

Peter's voluntary work also includes working at the A & P Showgrounds and being a Justice of the Peace. Thank you for all your work for the Banded Rail, Peter. We look forward to our continuing connection with you!

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.

Motupipi River Restoration

This project started in 2018 and has been a wonderful collaboration between Landowners, NZ Landcare Trust, Tasman District Council, Tasman Environmental Trust, Project Mohua, Manawhenua ki Mohua, Fonterra, Project De-Vine, Takaka Primary School and the community.

The Motupipi River is a small, spring-fed river that flows beside the township of Takaka and out to the Motupipi estuary. The river was obstructed by crack willows in several places and dense aquatic weed, with deep sediment build-up in many areas.

Over the last five years the crack willow has been poisoned in the whole catchment. There is ongoing work to remove any regrowth. Tributaries are having wetlands reinstated and the streams have been restored to a more natural, meandering flow. Many landowners have moved fences back and riparian planted thousands of new trees and native plants on their farms.

Tasman District Council tackled the most impacted reach of the river and removed a significant volume of sediment, re-meandered the stream, created artificial instream habitat structures and planted the banks. A new strip of land was purchased and there is now a public walkway along some of the river bank east of Takaka township.

It is hoped that as the habitat is restored it will again support thriving populations of freshwater fish, as well as birds and other treasured species. Pukatea trees are making a comeback in this lowland river too as once they would have been abundant here.

Read more at www.tet.org.nz





Come and join us at a Community Planting Day on the Waimea Inlet in 2023

Sunday 28 th May	9am – 1pm	Estuary Place, Richmond Access from Lower Queen St or from the cycleway
Sunday 11 th June	9am – 1pm	Moreland Place, Māpua Access from Moreland Place or Rana Place
Sunday 18 th June	9am – 1pm	Hoddy Estuary Park Access and parking at 232 The Coastal Highway
Sunday 25 th June	9am – 1pm	Research Orchard Road Reserve
Sunday 2 nd July	9am – 1pm	Manuka Island Follow sign to Manuka Island from Redwood Road
Sunday 9 th July	9am – 1pm	Sandeman Reserve, Richmond Parking at end of Sandeman Road
Sunday 16 th July	9am – 1pm	Bronte Peninsula Access from 50 Bronte Rd East. Park on Bronte Rd East
Sunday 23 rd July	9am – 1pm	Cardno Way, Bronte Peninsula North Parking on Cardno Way, off Bronte Rd East
Sunday 27 th August	9am – 1pm	Waimea Delta wetland Access and parking at the end of Cotterell Road

Please bring gloves, spade and drinking water. Wear solid footwear and clothes suitable for the weather conditions. Morning tea will be provided.



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

For more information email us at bandedrail@gmail.com or phone Kathryn 544 4537