



Fernbird | Mātātā Survey

A fernbird survey was conducted around the Waimea Inlet in January over five days. This was the first survey in six years and was led by Ingrid Hutzler of Birds NZ with *Battle for the Banded Rail* volunteers assisting.

The report is currently being written, but we are excited that ten fernbirds were observed this year, compared with one in the last survey. This could possibly be attributed to the trapping and habitat restoration work around the Waimea Inlet.



Volunteer playing fernbird calls during survey



One of the 10 fernbirds on a survey day. Photo Tracey Murray

Banded Rail Sightings

We hear reports of banded rail sightings in the Waimea Inlet more frequently these days. It's great that there are sometimes photos to go with them. These beautiful images were taken in January by Maria Clement.



Banded Rail at Maisey Embayment Photos: Maria Clement



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

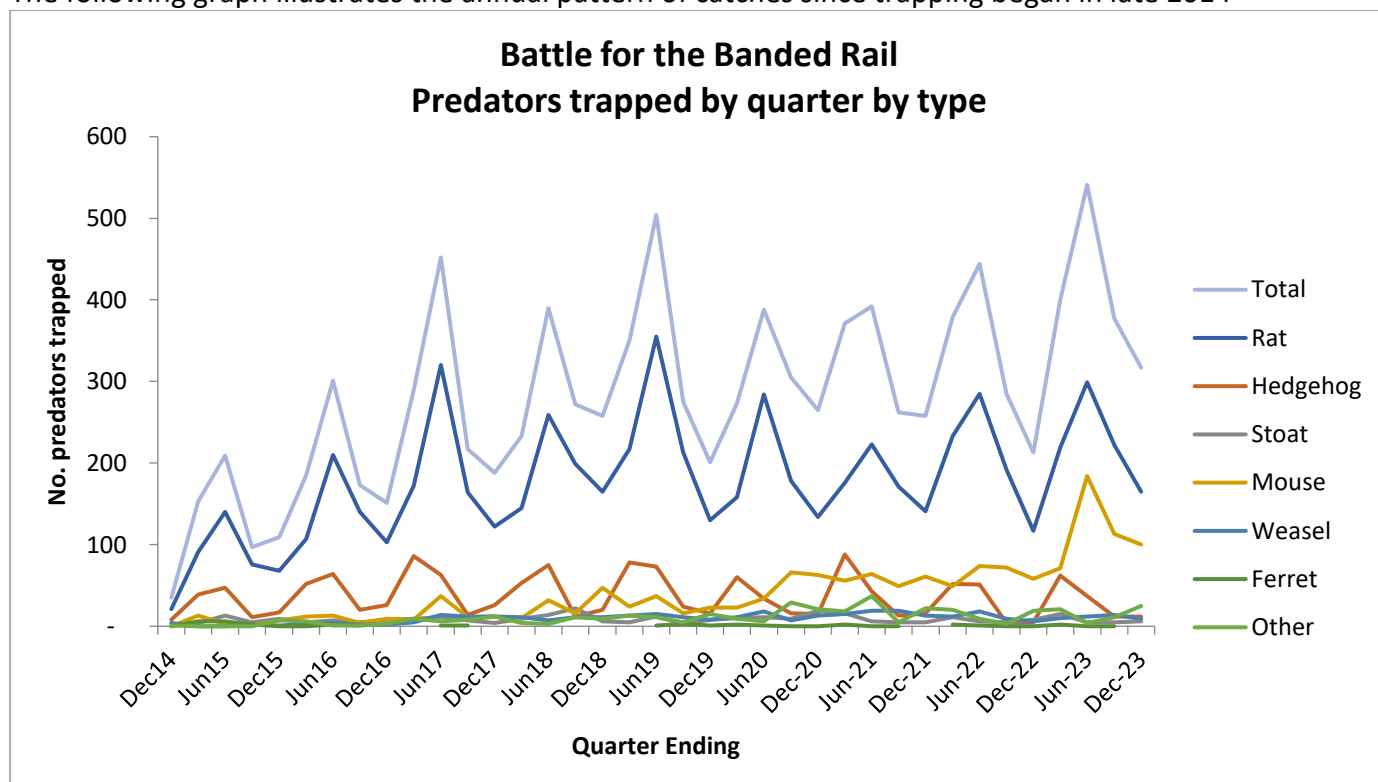
There are 1,161 traps in operation. The total catch for the December quarter was 317 and is our highest December quarter recorded. Total catches since 2014 is now 10,513.

Catches by Year by Pest Type

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Nine Year Total
Rat	396	560	778	768	915	754	710	827	905	6,613
Hedgehog	122	162	189	160	191	125	160	112	123	1,344
Stoat	32	25	31	51	28	49	32	30	31	309
Weasel	7	11	43	40	47	49	66	45	45	353
Ferret	14	3	2	2	5	3	2	3	2	36
Mouse	24	38	68	105	100	186	230	253	468	1,472
Other*	8	11	35	27	44	65	83	51	62	386
Total	603	810	1,146	1,153	1,330	1,231	1,283	1,321	1,636	10,513

* 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

New volunteer needed for Hoddy Estuary Park trap line

This trap line has 23 traps attached to it and is in one of our initial restoration areas so has some well established habitat including a pond area. It would be ideal to find someone for this trap line who lives close by and is willing to check and re bait this trap line every 2 weeks. The traps are all DOC200's in boxes. Training is given on how to set the traps and use trap.nz to enter the catch data.

Please contact Tracey directly on 027 286 5866

New Zealand eBird

eBird is an app to record observations of any birds. Recorded sightings go into a database which can be used to inform science and conservation. While it might not seem that your sighting is important at the time, trends are very important for any conservation decision.

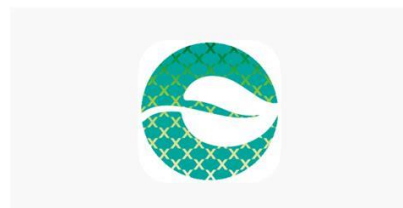
We encourage you to record sightings (or let us know) especially of banded rail, fernbird, spoonbill, kotuku/white heron and matuku/bittern. Take notes of time, place and estimated count of the species of your sighting.

There is plenty to learn with 95 different species recorded in Tasman District so far this month. We are planning to run an event for those interested on the use of eBird with Ingrid in the coming months.

Aotearoa Species Classifier App

A very easy to use app which almost instantly comes up with the ID of NZ native plants, animals and fungi. Put together by several universities, it is free to download.

Find out more about it [here](#)



Banded Rail and chick
Photo credit: Tracey Murray

Habitat Restoration Update from Kathryn Brownlie

Spot the Difference at Research Orchard Reserve

We began our plantings at the reserve in 2015. Additionally, in the last few years Forest & Bird have been working to restore native vegetation on an adjoining property, and a few trees have been felled as part of this work. We look forward to seeing the area becoming increasingly richer in wildlife.

2016



2024



Plant Releasing & Maintenance

Through spring we held eight plant releasing mornings. One of these was a Sunday morning and it was great to see some new faces able to join us in a weekend. This summer through to autumn we will meet each Friday morning from 9-11am and on the first Sunday of each month from 9am where morning tea will be provided.

Upcoming Maintenance Mornings

Friday 16 th February	Mapua Embayment (access 126 Aranui Rd)
Friday 23 rd February	Bronte Peninsula (access #92 Bronte Rd East)
Friday 1 st March	Bronte Peninsula (access #24 Bronte Rd)
Sunday 3rd March	Hoddy Estuary Park
Friday 8 th March	Apple Valley Road East (access #43 Apple Valley Rd)
Friday 15 th March	Bronte Peninsula (access #74 Bronte Rd E)
Friday 22 nd March	Bronte Peninsula (access #8 Bronte Rd E)
Friday 5 th April	Bronte Peninsula (access #62 Bronte Rd E)
Sunday 7th April	Moreland Place, Mapua
Friday 12 th April	TBA
Friday 19 th April	Cardno Way



Fridays are from 9-11am. Sundays from 9-12 noon. Bring drinking water and gardening gloves. We have tools you can use. Please let me know if you want to receive our weekly reminders.



*Plant releasing isn't
all hard work!*

Plant Patch *Cotula coronopifolia* - Bachelor's Buttons

Conservation status: not threatened

The name *Cotula* comes from the Greek kotule, meaning small cup, referring to the cupped area at the base of the leaves. *Coronopifolia* comes from *korone*, crow; *pous*, foot; *folius*, leaved; ie. crowfoot shaped leaves.

Bachelor's Buttons, a button daisy, is an annual or short lived perennial herb which is salt tolerant and occurs at coastal sites, in inlets, bays and estuaries around New Zealand.

It grows in clumps on the margins of freshwater or saline pools. It is easily seen at flowering time with round yellow button like flower heads in summer. The leaves and stems are fleshy, and covered by a thick waxy cuticle which allows it to store fresh water in the leaves.

Native to New Zealand, Australia and southern Africa and can also be found in other parts of the world where it has widely naturalised in coastal areas, perhaps taken there by boat or maybe drifted across the sea. It can be found wide 1796 illustration by Jacob Sturm Inlet. Its seeds are buoyant and are dispersed aided by water.

It is one of the herbs to found in salt meadows along with glasswort, *Samolus repens* (sea primrose), *Selliera radicans* (remuremu) and *Thyridia repens* (native musk).



Samolus repens, sea primrose



Thyridia repens, native musk



A carpet of Bachelor's Buttons
at Research Orchard Road



Selliera radicans, remuremu



A Trip to the Sub Antarctic Islands

The Galapagos of the Southern Ocean *by Tracey Murray*

It was sensory overload on these incredible islands which I was lucky enough to spend 10 days visiting with Heritage Expeditions, along with my husband Craig, and also Kathy Chandler who is also involved with our Banded Rail project. One of our sons was on board as part of the crew which made it extra special.

The environment, unique plants and wildlife were almost overwhelming and there was so much to take in, and try to photograph. It is also so rich in history of failed farming, shipwrecks and the blubber industry which is horrifying to imagine.

One highlight was being surrounded by the sight, smell, and noise of hundreds of thousands of penguins with hungry squawking chicks to feed. Enormous elephant seals wrestling each other for the right to mate were another highlight, as were the Southern Royal, and Light Mantled Sooty Albatross gliding on the air currents and finding their mates amongst hundreds of others nesting on the cliffs. The numbers of every type of bird were outstanding. The mega herbs in stunning colours and huge tussocks, and beautiful rata forests were spectacular.



The islands were wild and windy when we visited with sea rough and the air temperature around 5 - 8 degrees. We first visited Snares Islands with rafts of the Snares Crested penguins, Fernbird and Tomtit. Auckland Islands, including Enderby was our first landing and full day walk on shore. We landed on and explored the coastlines by Zodiac, and each island revealed new wildlife species, plants and history to discover.



Macquarie Island was incredible with the numbers of penguins and elephant seals and sea lions so vast it was hard to take it all in. We had several landing here. This is an Australian owned island and has research stations and a group of scientists on it year round. Between each landing we ensured that our boots and clothing had all gone through biosecurity to prevent seeds etc from spreading between islands. During the few days at sea on the way to the Campbell Islands, we had opportunity to hear many of the knowledgeable crew give lectures and presentations which covered birds, wildlife, migration, plants and history.

As we arrived at the Campbell Islands the mist lifted to reveal thousands of nesting Albatross along the cliffs as we entered a sheltered harbour to Zodiac ashore for our last full day walk. We pushed our way through giant tussock and thick vegetation in gale force winds, to discover more incredible sights and wildlife over every ridge.

Our final leg of the journey back to Bluff was rough but luckily the sea sickness tablets did their job well, and it gave us all time to reflect on what really was a trip of a life time. I highly recommended this trip to anyone who has the opportunity to go.

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.

Motueka Catchment Collective



Few valleys in Aotearoa summon the same awe as the Motueka. The folded ridgelines, mystical light and breath-taking scenery receive deserved accolades. Residents of the Motueka Valley and its many tributaries are rightly proud of their awa.

The Motueka Catchment Collective was initiated in 2020 by concerned landowners in the Tapawera area with a strong collective desire to weave the communities in the Motueka catchment together, ensuring the wellbeing of the freshwater system and connected environment.

By organising meetings, educating each other and engaging the younger generation, local land-users are acting to protect and enhance the catchments as vital resources for the future. An inclusive community spirit binds residents, who identify with the watercourses as common threads. They swim, walk, fish, paddle, picnic and socialise with the flowing water. They encourage interest in the freshwater ecosystems, weave Mātauranga Māori knowledge and science together to generate a wave of enthusiasm to promote guardianship.

The Motueka Catchment Collective aspires to capture more local interest to inform decisions on priority actions, formulate plans and source funding.

Read more at [TET projects](#)

