



Battle For The Banded Rail

Newsletter: March Quarter 2024

Planting Season begins Sunday 26th May

Our first planting on 26th May at Pukeko Lane coincides with Climate Action Week and runs through to the beginning of September. See the full planting schedule for this winter at the end of this newsletter.

Everyone is welcome and there are jobs other than digging. A great morning tea is also provided.

If you would like to receive our emails about upcoming planting days through the season please email us bandedrail@gmail.com



Click [here](#) to see other Nelson Tasman Climate Action Festival events



Predator Free Regional Hui invite for 17 & 18 May

This free event being held at The Headingly Centre in Richmond should be very worthwhile for anyone involved with trapping. See more details later in the newsletter.

Tracey will be there flying the *Battle for the Banded Rail* flag on both days.



Sign on Miramar Peninsula trap

This trap was spotted in Wellington. A novel way to let those who can read know what the wooden box is for!

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

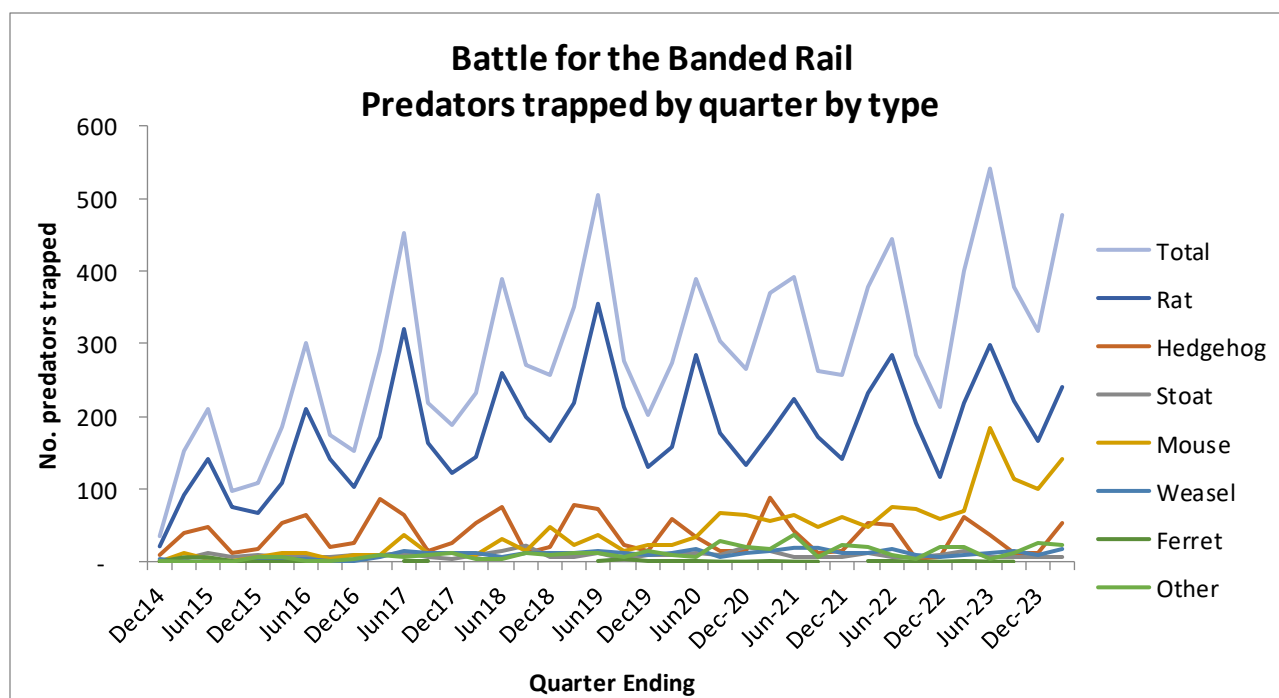
Another 1,000 has ticked over with catches now over 11,000. There are 1,156 traps in operation. The total catch for the March quarter was 477 and is our highest March quarter recorded. Total catches since 2014 is now 11,006.

Catches for Quarter 1 2024 Sector by Pest Type

Sector	Rat	Hedgehog	Stoat	Weasel	Mouse	Ferret	Other*	Total for Quarter	Total since 2015
Mapua to Bronte	52	23	-	7	9	-	6	97	2,622
Bronte to Hoddy Peninsula	65	13	1	3	16	-	3	101	2,738
Waimea West/ Appleby Hills	28	5	3	1	6	-	2	45	2,294
Waimea Delta to Monaco	94	12	1	7	109	-	11	234	3,352
Total for quarter	239	53	5	18	140	-	22	477	
Total since 2015	6,832	1,387	298	371	1,614	36	468		11,006

* 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



A beautiful picture for our art gallery!



"Kiwi (top right) watching a stoat approach a trap", drawing by Sam Thomas, aged 8, of Auckland. Inspired by the book "It's my egg and you can't have it" by Heather Hunt and Kennedy Warne, given to Sam by his great uncle and aunt, Peter and Margot Syms, local Mapua trappers.

New Zealand eBird

A month ago I attended an e-bird workshop run by Mark Ayre from Birds NZ. We meet at Kaiteriteri to learn to use the app and then went out into the field to practise recording birds.

E-bird is an international bird recording site and those that manage it are keen to get sightings recorded for all areas of NZ, and the globe, so that recommendations can be made on environmental issues and to see whether bird species are increasing or declining. Ornithologists scrutinise the recordings and ensure that they are likely to be correct for the area that the birds have been seen in. Recording of bird calls and photographs can also be added.

The eBird webinars are very helpful. Probably the first two (Atlas Webinar #1 and Atlas Webinar #2) are the most useful, if you don't have time to watch them all. Click [NZ Bird Webinars](#) to view them.

Recording birds can add another element to the time spent outdoors trapping and planting during the different seasons.

Happy bird watching!



Fernbirds return good sign for inlet conservation (Nelson Mail article 15 April 2024)

The number of rare native fernbirds in the Waimea Inlet is on the rise in a sign that that a community conservation project is making an impact.

A fernbird survey this year by the Battle of the Banded Rail group found at least eight of the secretive fernbirds in the inlet, compared to only one seen in a 2018 survey.

The surveys visited the same 20 potential fernbird habitats, using amplified calls to attract the long-tailed, well camouflaged birds that live in tangled shrubs on estuary margins.

Read the full article [here](#)



Photo: Ingrid Hutzler



Kia ora

Join us for a free two-day Te Taihu (Top of the South) regional hui hosted by the Predator Free New Zealand Trust and Tasman Environmental Trust on 17-18 May. Gain insights, strategies and connections to supercharge your impact.

On day 1, engage with expert panel discussions, a tradeshow, a community project expo and speakers, including:

- **Helen Blackie, Boffa Miskell**
- **Cam Speedy, Wildlife Management Associates**
- **Jessi Morgan, Predator Free New Zealand Trust**
- **Phil Hartwick, Pest Free Whitby Community Group lead**
- **Hemi Sundgren, Kotahitanga mō te Taiao**

On day 2, we have planned another talk by Cam Speedy and a series of field trips and practical workshops. This event aims to offer valuable insights for both the seasoned and newer predator free groups.

Be sure to register for each day and we look forward to seeing you there.



17 May - Day 1

9:00 am - 4:30 pm
The Headingly Centre
2 Headingly Lane, Richmond



18 May - Day 2

9:00 am - 2:30 pm
The Headingly Centre
2 Headingly Lane, Richmond

[Register for Day 1](#)

[Register for Day 2](#)

Habitat Restoration Update from Kathryn Brownlie

Plant Releasing & Maintenance

Our plant releasing has continued through summer and autumn. We are now taking a break with planting season around the corner. It has been great to revisit the sites we have planted over the years and volunteers often comment on how they enjoy seeing the habitat restoration progress as the plants get established. A huge thanks to all our 'weedies' helping with keeping the plants in the best condition possible.

'One Billion Trees' for Waimea Inlet Completed

In 2020, Tasman Environmental Trust was successful in securing a grant for the Waimea Inlet as part of the government's *One Billion Trees* programme. This funding has helped to make significant habitat restoration gains around the Waimea Inlet and has seen 93,000 plants planted on the margins of the Waimea Inlet, including Rabbit Island and Rough Island.

Planting has been carried out by volunteers, school groups, businesses, clubs, Department of Corrections and contractors. Combined with *Battle for the Banded Rail* volunteer plantings, the Waimea Inlet has seen 164,000 plants planted around its margins since 2015.

Te Uru Rākau MPI's feedback was positive and they commented that the project has made an enormous difference to the landscape and the environment, and that an amazing job has been done in bringing the community together for a common purpose.

It's been an incredible team effort that we are very proud of.



Before & After, DOC Reserve, Hoddy Peninsula



Planting day July 2021



November 2023

A stunning drone shot at Hoddy Estuary Park



Hoddy Estuary Park. Photo MPI

Plant Patch

Ngaio

-

Myoporum laetum

-

Mousehole tree

Conservation status: not threatened

Ngaio is a native salt spray-tolerant species found mostly in coastal areas of the North Island and the top of the South Island. It also grows in lowland forests.

Its name *Myoporum laetum* comes from the Greek *myo* meaning “to close” or “to be shut” and *poros* meaning “pore”, which refers to the ability of plants in this genus to exist in dry areas, or possibly to the appearance of the glands on the leaves. *Laetum* means pleasant or bright. The English name ‘Mousehole tree’ is due to the large holes sometimes found in its trunk, which are thought to be created by rats.

Each ngaio leaf is studded with visible oil glands. These glands are packed full of the toxin *ngaione* which has antibacterial properties but is also toxic to livestock (cattle, sheep, pigs and horses) causing liver damage. Ripe ngaio berries also contain ngaione.

Ngaio has been used as a medicinal plant by Māori for toothache and skin complaints. It was also used as insect repellent; young shoots or leaves were rubbed onto the skin to repel mosquitoes and sandflies.

The Tasmanian ngaio or Boobialla (*Myoporum insulare*) is very similar. It has been commonly planted over the years, mistaken for our native species. The seed is spread by birds and it’s a problem as it hybridises and competes with the native ngaio in coastal areas. It can be identified by its smooth bark, green leaf buds and thicker leaves.



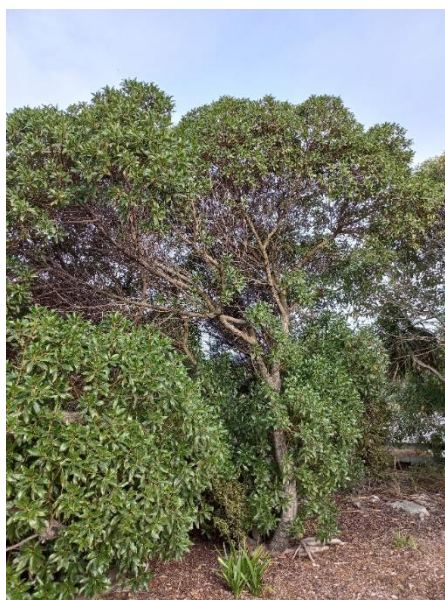
NZ ngaio leaf



NZ ngaio bark

The NZ ngaio usually has rough furrowed bark, black buds and serrated leaves dotted with glands. It’s flowers (10-15mm) are also larger than those of the Tasmanian ngaio (7-8mm).

The ngaio tree features in Māori moon mythology. It is said that the craters of the moon resemble a woman, Rona, and a ngaio tree. Rona was upset with the moon, Mārama, when he went behind a cloud and caused her to trip and fall, so she hurled insults at him. Mārama became so angry that he reached down and grabbed Rona and pulled her to the night sky. She grabbed on to a ngaio tree as she was pulled upward, but that tree was wrenched from the ground and remained with her on the moon.



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.

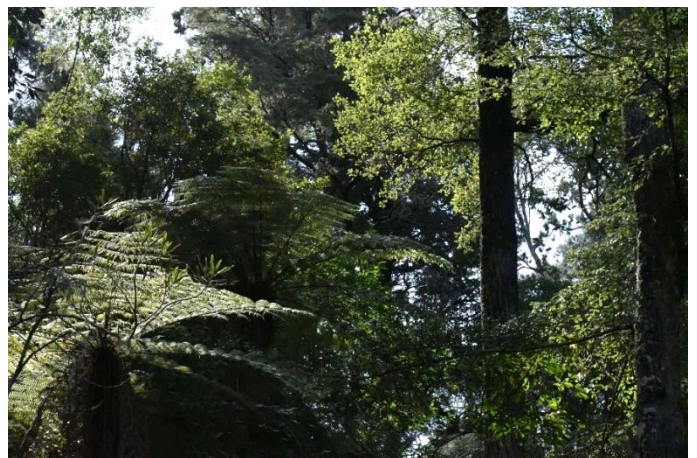
Friends of Beuke's Bush

Friends of Beuke's Bush are a group of locals who are working to create a unique public walkway in the Neudorf Valley, as well as protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the area.

At the heart of the walk is an 11 hectare remnant of mature primary native forest protected by a QEII covenant. The covenant contains over a hundred species of native plants, from giant rimu, tōtara, mataī and miro to ferns and orchids.

The bush supports abundant birdlife while the stream has populations of eel/tuna and freshwater crayfish/kōura. With the support of the Moutere Catchment Group we have already planted over 20,000 native plants along the stream either side of the covenant, and have active pest and weed control programmes. We are looking for funding and for volunteers so that we can continue this work and create a very special place for the community.

Read more at [TET projects](#)





Come and join us at a Community Planting Day on the Waimea Inlet in 2024

Sunday 26 th May	9am – 1pm	Pukeko Lane Access and parking from Pukeko Lane
Sunday 9 th June	9am – 1pm	Stringer Reserve on Stringer Road Parking roadside
Sunday 16 th June	9am – 1pm	Higgs Reserve, Mapua Access and parking cnr Mapua Drive and The Coastal Highway, or Dominion Rd and walk through the underpass
Sunday 7 th July	9am – 1pm	Cotterell Road Park roadside at the end of Cotterell Road
Sunday 28 th July	9am – 1pm	Bell Island Access from Best Island Road
Sunday 11 th August	9am – 1pm	Cardno Way, Bronte Peninsula North Parking on Cardno Way, off Bronte Rd East
Sunday 25 th August	9am – 1pm	Best Island Access and parking adjacent to Greenacres Golf Club
Sunday 1 st September	9am – 1pm	Greenslade Park, Rough Island

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