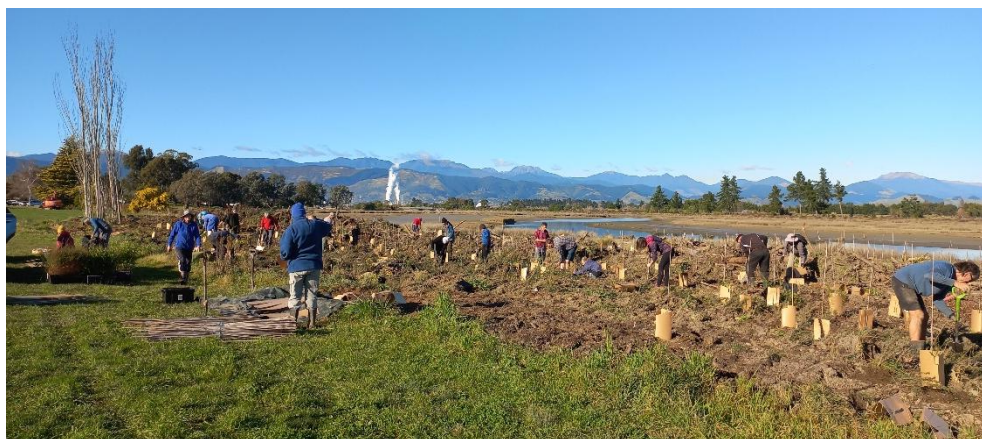


## Planting season underway

During June and July three community planting mornings were held. We still have three more coming up. See the details on the last page of this newsletter.

The heavy rain events meant one postponement as the surface flooding made access to the site impossible.



*Best Island, adjacent to Greenacres Golf course*

## Banded Rail in Art

While native to New Zealand, banded rail can also be found in Australia and some Pacific islands. Pacific Island countries have issued postage stamps featuring banded rail over the years. Here are a few of over 30 stamps that we have come across on the internet.



For information about the Battle for the Banded Rail please contact Project Manager, Kathryn Brownlie on 544 4537 or [bandedrail@gmail.com](mailto:bandedrail@gmail.com)

For trapping information or support contact Field Officer, Tracey Murray on 540 2227 or 027 286 5866 or [bandedrail@gmail.com](mailto:bandedrail@gmail.com)

## Trapping Results – Record Quarter

The total catch for the June quarter was 1,260 and is our highest quarter ever, driven by the highest quarterly catches recorded of rats and mice. We also had a new record of 24 weasels being trapped in the quarter. Total catches since 2014 is 15,036. There are 1,267 traps in the network.

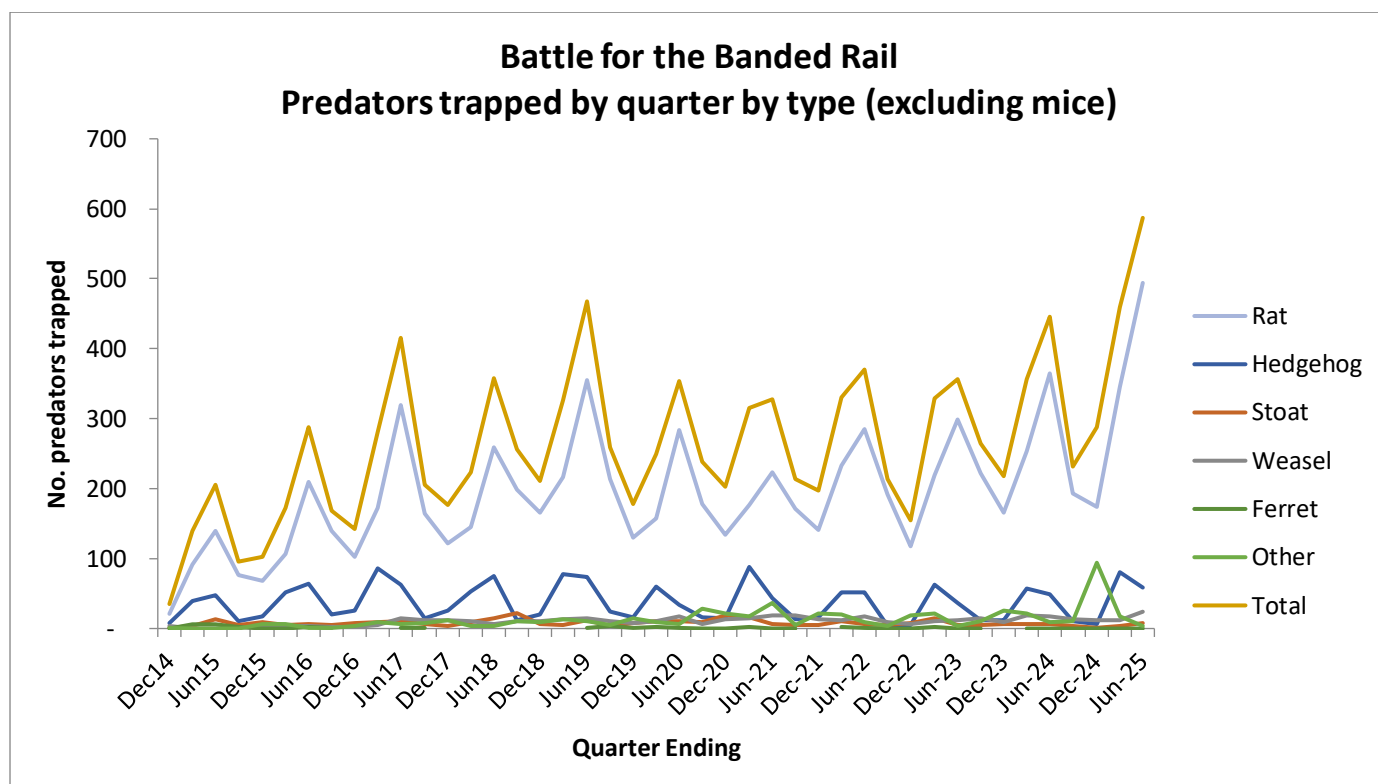
### Catches for Quarter 2 2025: Sector by Pest Type

Sector	Rat	Hedgehog	Stoat	Weasel	Mouse	Ferret	Other*	Total for Quarter	Total since 2015
Mapua to Bronte	94	22	-	4	17	-	2	139	3,088
Bronte to Hoddy Peninsula	63	9	1	2	19	-	1	95	3,078
Waimea West/ Appleby Hills	179	10	3	6	505	-	-	703	4,221
Waimea Delta to Monaco	158	17	4	12	132	-	-	323	4,649
Total for quarter	494	58	8	24	673	-	3	1,260	
Total since 2015	8,417	1,596	321	450	3,616	36	600		15,036

\* 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.

We have excluded mice from the graph as they are not our target species, and the catches were skewing the graph results. We are still recording them in the table.



## Trapping & Monitoring News from Tracey Murray



### Live Let Live Feral Cat Trapping

For the last 8 years, we have run a program at Pearl Creek reserve and the surrounding area to live capture feral cats. The residents in the immediate area are notified, and their cats are microchipped so that if they are caught then they can be released after being scanned with our microchip scanner.

Most years we have caught between 6 - 8 feral cats, but this year likely due to the amount of rain and wet ground, only one feral cat was caught.

This year we also successfully elevated the traps to prevent weka being caught as this has been a problem in previous years.



### Tips And Tricks By Cam Speedy

Cam Speedy is a well known predator control guru and swears by his recipe for flour blaze to help attract rodents and possums. It's easy to make and can be good to try to change things up if your traps have not caught for a while. Rodents prefer the aniseed or peanut essence. Cam Speedy's flour blaze recipe is a mix of flour, icing sugar, and flavouring. It is used to create a visual and aromatic lure near traps.

Here's a breakdown of the recipe and how to use it.

Ingredients:

- 10 parts flour
- 1 part icing sugar
- Optional: Peach, vanilla, cinnamon, aniseed essence

Instructions:

1. Mix Thoroughly: Ensure the essence is well mixed into the flour and icing sugar.
2. Apply: Sprinkle or rub the blaze mixture on trees below the trap, on the ground around the trap, or on the trap itself.

Tips for Use:

- The flour provides a visual attraction, while the icing sugar helps the mixture stick to surfaces.
- The essence adds a scent that can attract pests from a distance.
- The blaze helps pests locate traps more easily, especially at night.

Google Predator Free NZ or Cam Speedy predator control for more great information.



*Cam Speedy smears blaze on a tree trunk near a Timms possum trap. Image credit: PFNZ*



## Bird Chirp

### Royal Spoonbill    Kōtuku ngutupapa



The unique looking Royal Spoonbill is native to New Zealand and has a conservation status of 'naturally uncommon' but their numbers have been increasing. In 1977 only 52 birds were left, but in 2012 there were estimated to be 2,360 birds nationwide.

The Royal Spoonbill is a wading bird, and part of the Ibis family. It feeds on fish, shrimps, crustaceans, insects and frogs by swinging its bill from side to side in an arc, and in water less than 40cm deep. Its spoon shaped bill has vibration detectors and indicates when a fish is nearby allowing the bird to feed in murky water and snap its bill shut to catch its food. The bill is between 140mm – 220mm long with the female having a shorter bill and legs than the male. Spoonbill feed and roost in flocks. When flying they are in a line or V formation.

They breed in coastal areas in the North and in the South Island and tend to breed near White Heron and Shag colonies. They then disperse, in family groups, to estuaries and wetlands around the country, including the Waimea estuary. They started breeding in Okarito in the 1940's.

The Spoonbill breeds between October and March and typically lay 2-4 eggs, but only have one clutch. Bowl shaped nests are usually in the top of trees or in tall reeds, and they often return to the same nest for several years. Chicks are feed by both adults, and fledge after 7 weeks. They have a very distinctive breeding plumage growing long white feathers on the head and neck and also a yellow chest, and also a yellow patch above each eye, and a red patch in the middle of the forehead. After a courtship display lasting several weeks the birds pair up and are from then on monogamous.



Pomeroy's Coffee and Tea Company is a local business that was founded in 1989 that supports lots of community events such as school fairs and galas.

We are very grateful that they continue to support our community planting days by providing freshly ground coffee beans. It's a very important part of our planting!



## Did You Know?

### NZTSC: New Zealand Threat Classification System

NZTSC is a national system administered by DOC. It is a tool to assess species using objective criteria and information drawn from a wide range of experts. It determines the conservation status of any plant, animal or fungus that has a wild population established in NZ and for which there is sufficient information available.



They consider things like the current population size, population changes over the next three generations or 10 years (whichever is longer), whether its population stable or has declined in the past and whether the population state is a result of human-induced effects.

They are assessed into three umbrella classifications: **Threatened**, **At Risk** or **Not Threatened**.

#### Threatened

Species assessed as 'Threatened' face the greatest risk of extinction. Their statuses are assessed as:

Nationally Critical	<i>most severely threatened, facing an immediate high risk of extinction</i>
Nationally Endangered	<i>facing high risk of extinction in the short term</i>
Nationally Vulnerable	<i>facing high risk of extinction in the medium term</i>
Nationally Increasing	<i>small but increasing population still facing a risk of extinction in the medium term</i>

#### At Risk

Species 'At Risk' aren't considered 'Threatened', but they could quickly become so if conservation management reduces, if a new threat arises, or declines continue unabated.

Declining	<i>population declining but still moderately common</i>
Recovering	<i>population increasing after previously declining</i>
Uncommon	<i>naturally or unnaturally small population and therefore susceptible to harmful influences</i>

Conservation Statuses of some species associated with the Waimea Inlet:

Banded Rail/moho pererū	At Risk-Declining
Fernbird/mātātā	At Risk-Declining
Marsh Crane/koitareke	At Risk-Declining
Australasian bittern/matuku-hūrepo	Threatened-Nationally Critical
White heron/kōtuku	Threatened-Nationally Critical
Coastal Peppercross	Threatened-Nationally Critical
<i>Atriplex cinerea</i> /Grey saltbush	Threatened-Nationally Critical
<i>Thyridia repens</i> /native musk	At Risk-Naturally Uncommon



*Grey saltbush and Thyridia repens. Images K Brownlie*



## Habitat Restoration Update from Kathryn Brownlie

### Planting Mornings



*Planting rushes at Research Orchard Road*



*Stringer Reserve, Stringer Road*

### School Plantings

We have been working at Sandeman Reserve with Nelson Prep School and Richmond School so far this winter. A few other schools will be getting hands dirty and planting this winter too.



*Before, During & After: Richmond School planting at Sandeman Reserve*



## Trapping Innovation at Farewell Spit

by Andrea McLeay, Pest Free Onetahua



**At the windswept edge of Te Taihu, where the land stretches into the sea, a quiet community trapping revolution is taking place — thanks to two dedicated locals, Neville and Paddy.**

Neville Underhill, a skilled (semi-retired) mechanic, and Paddy Gillooly, Manager of Farewell Spit Tours, have been working together since 2012 to trap invasive pests at the far reaches of Onetahua / Farewell Spit. Behind the scenes of the busy tourist operation, in a tucked-away corner of the workshop, is a mini-hub dedicated to pest control and conservation care.



What began with standard DOC 200 traps, has evolved into something uniquely innovative. With Farewell Spit Tour's investment in a large metal guillotine and Neville's craftsmanship, over the last few years they've designed and hand built around 70 lightweight, collapsible aluminium traps—based on the DOC 200 design but far more transportable (you can carry ten at a time!). Neville even paints each one in camouflage and leaf patterns to blend into the environment.

The traps are ever-evolving. Originally designed to be safe for weka, Neville has cleverly adapted them further to ensure they're also safe for kiwi, following the exciting recent discovery of kiwi in the Pūponga area.

Neville checks the traps monthly, with impressive results. Since starting, they've caught over 2,084 pests, including; 508 stoats, 776 rats, 660 possums and 18 weasels. Their trapping results are now regularly uploaded to Trap.NZ, supporting coordinated, transparent predator management across the region.



Farewell Spit Tours, a family-run business based in Collingwood, has deep roots in Golden Bay. Operating since 1946, the tours originally served lighthouse families as part of the weekly mail delivery service. Though the lighthouse was automated in 1984 and the families moved away, the conservation commitment remained. Paddy and his team now use custom 4WD buses built for comfort and the Spit's harsh conditions, ensuring visitors can safely experience this remarkable environment.

Farewell Spit Eco Tours takes their kaitiakitanga role seriously. Their mission is to protect the habitat and wildlife in this sacred place. Now, through a strong partnership with Pest Free Onetahua, Paddy and Neville are showing how we can work together, increasing pest control to safeguard Aotearoa's native species and wild places.



## Come and join us at a Community Planting Day on the Waimea Inlet in 2025

Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> August	9am – 1pm	Cardno Way, Bronte Peninsula North Parking on Cardno Way, off Bronte Rd East
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> August	9am – 1pm	Greenslade Park, Rough Island
*Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> September	*10.15 am – 1pm	Bell Island Access from Best Island Road *note Saturday and later start time due to timing of high tide affecting access

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](mailto:bandedrail@gmail.com) or phone Kathryn 544 4537