

# **PREDATOR FREE TAURANGA & SURROUNDS**

# **PEST TRAP LIBRARY GUIDELINES**



Photo Credit: Stu Attwood

# INTRODUCTION

The Tauranga pest trap library (PTL) is a member of the 'Pest Trap Library, Bay of Plenty' initiative, with two further sister libraries based in Whakamārama and Waihi Beach. The concept behind the PTL's is to loan locals the right type of predator control device to remove problematic pests. The aim is to remove mammalian pests, so the birds, flora & fauna can re-establish themselves in the Bay of Plenty.

Tauranga has both large urban areas and a sprawling rural community, including orchards, dairy farms, and lifestyle blocks containing prime habitats for predators. There has been an appetite for a PTL with community members asking about the ability to borrow traps to eradicate target predator species from their surrounding land. These larger target species are commonly rats, possums, mustelids, hedgehogs, and feral/stray cats.

Funding from Tauranga City Council has been provided to establish a comprehensive PTL here in Tauranga. This has been achieved in conjunction with the mahi of Predator Free Bay of Plenty

## Statistics

- 25 million native birds are killed each year by our target species.
- We have already lost 76 species of native birds.
- 1 in 5 ground-nesting native bird nests are destroyed by hedgehogs.
- Stoats have been known to singularly wipe out native species to extinction.

## How do I get a predator trap :

- The Tauranga PTL will be run from Envirohub Bay of Plenty, situated at 31b Glasgow Street, Tauranga.
- Interested borrowers will need to make arrangements to visit the PTL during opening hours, 10am-2pm Mondays. Please email [predatorfreebop@gmail.com](mailto:predatorfreebop@gmail.com).
- Traps can be loaned for an initial 3 months, with the possibility to renew traps for a further 3 months, depending on demand.
- Bait recommendations and trapping tips will be provided.
- Paperwork will need to be completed, and borrowers will need to be competent in setting and baiting the traps in a safe manner.
- If you are interested in joining the Predator Free Bay of Plenty trapping team, please do not hesitate to email [predatorfreebop@gmail.com](mailto:predatorfreebop@gmail.com).

**Happy Trapping!**

# POSSUMS



Possoms alter the composition of the forest by heavily browsing their favoured food trees and can disrupt vital ecological processes, such as flowering, fruiting, seed dispersal and germination. To our indigenous fauna, the possum is both a food competitor and a predator. 'Nest cam' video have confirmed that possums eat eggs, chicks and adult birds; autopsies have revealed that they also eat a wide range of invertebrates.

- Feed at night and sleep during the day
- Live in trees but also move across open country and graze on pasture
- Often follow the same track, forming flattened paths about 20 cm wide
- Have an average home range of 200m in the forest, but will travel 15 times this length for seasonal food resources and have multiple nest sites
- Have favourite trees that are visited regularly, often recognised by extensive scratch marks in the bark and heavy browsing of leaves and fruit
- Are very curious and will investigate new objects in their territory. You can use this to your advantage
- Targeting fresh possum signs can also be effective. The presence of possum trails, extensive browse and fruit damage, scratch marks on trees, faeces etc can indicate where possums are present. For further examples of possum damage signs, go to the [Pest Detective website](#).



Possum



Possum faeces



Possum trail



Scratch marks



Fruit evidence



Possum prints

# POSSUM TIPS



## How many traps will I need?

- for backyard trapping under 1 hectare, one trap will suffice.
- for lifestyle blocks, orchards and farmland the following rule of thumb should be used; The home range for possums is 2ha, which helps determine distances between traps. The general rule is one trap per hectare for effective possum control. So, for example, if there is 20ha of possum habitat in your programme you should use 20 traps. Keeping with the one trap per hectare rule, the spacing of the traps should be 100m x 100m.

## Where should the traps be located and frequency of checking?

Traps should be located in possum habitat areas: ridges, tracks, road edges and near prominent trees especially kohekohe, totara, pine, pōhutukawa and macrocarpa. Targeting fresh possum signs can also be effective. The presence of run trails in grass, extensive browse and fruit damage, scratching on territorial and play trees, faeces etc can indicate where possums are present.

When one technique stops working it is worth changing to something new. Swapping between Flipping Timmy's/Trapinators and using different lures will increase your success. This will also help to remove the cunning or trap shy animals (usually the older possums) that have learnt to avoid certain traps or techniques.

With all traps, the Animal Welfare Act 1999 requires that they are checked every 24 hours after setting, to avoid any unnecessary suffering or pain to any animal caught.

## Safety precautions with children & non-target species

To avoid any chance of endangering children or catching non-target animals such as cats, follow these basic precautions: •

- Neighbours will be notified, asking them to keep their cats in at night.
- Keep fingers clear of the front of the trap at all times.
- Traps should be located in a tree or on a fence, out of reach of children
- Set the trap in the late afternoon/early evening.
- Release the set trap early in the morning.
- If you are concerned, ensure that the family cat is restrained indoors while the trap is set. Some breeds of cat and young cats may become inquisitive and enter a set trap.
- To satisfy curious companion cats when the new trap arrives, put the unset trap out for several nights with a mixture of curry powder and flour on the ground around it - this should discourage them
- Do not use any food types as bait which will attract cats, such as bread, jam and meat.

# POSSUM TRAPS

Two commonly used possum traps in NZ are Flipping Timmy's and Trapinators. Both are National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) approved traps. There are other traps available on the market, but we do not have these stocked at the Tauranga PTL.

- When using a Flipping Timmy/Trapinator, they need to be stable and secured by screwing them to a tree, fence, or another suitable upright surface.
- Flipping Timmy's/Trapinators are best baited with a piece of fruit, e.g. apple (sprinkled with cinnamon), some lemon or orange peel, etc. If using citrus fruit, be sure to remove any fruit flesh, and only use the actual peel, so that the bait pins in traps do not corrode from the acids in the fruit. Use medium-sized pieces of fruit (e.g. one-eighth of an apple) to encourage possums to reach into the trap with their mouths instead of hands. Do not be tempted to use large pieces of fruit, as this can affect the trigger mechanism and make it harder for the possum to set the trap off.
- You should only place bait in these traps while they are unset, to prevent accidental triggering of it and potential injury as a result. Traps should be kept clear of debris to allow correct function and not discourage pests from entering the trap. The sensitivity of these traps can be altered by bending the bar backwards or forwards.
- To attract possums to the trap, make up some 'blaze' and throw a handful of this outside the trap. Blaze can be made by mixing white flour with a good dash of spice such as cinnamon. This will help to attract animals by sight, smell and taste. This is best used during dry weather.
- To prolong their life, do not set them off if empty unless absolutely necessary, as the force can crack them.
- If your trap has stopped catching, change its shape by placing a rock or branch on top, or moving it a few meters. This may cause a curious possum to investigate this 'new' object.
- Place the traps at least 2 meters off the ground - this will ensure children and animals are free from harm.

Please watch the attached video links to observe how to set the [Flipping Timmy](#) and [Trapinator](#) safely.



Flipping Timmy



Flipping Timmy set



Trapinator



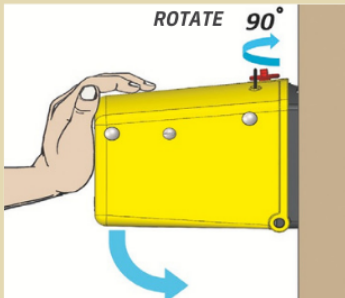
Trapinator set

# FLIPPING TIMMY

## OPERATING & SETUP INSTRUCTIONS

The Flipping Timmy has been ergonomically designed to be mounted vertically to a tree or post for ease and speed of use and greater effectiveness. The following user instructions are a quick guide to help you get started.

### SETTING YOUR TRAP



**ROTATE 90°**

Support the top box with one hand and rotate the red button 90 degrees to unlock it. With the top box now free to pivot, guide it downward until it comes to rest on the tree or post.

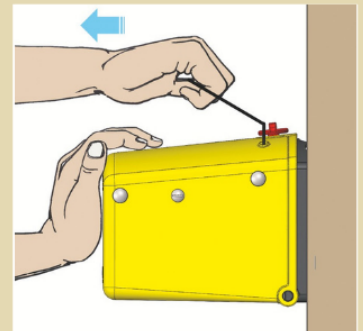


With the trap unset, it is time to bait up. See the separate baiting instructions for how to prepare and attach bait.



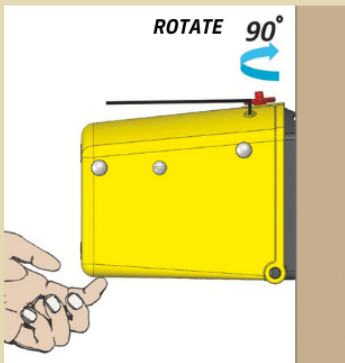
**ROTATE 90°**

With bait in place, guide the top box back to its closed position and rotate the red button 90 degrees to lock it.



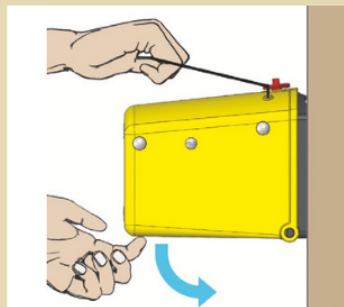
With the palm of one hand pushing against the top surface, use the other to pull the resetting cord firmly toward you until you feel the trap is set.

### UN-SETTING YOUR TRAP

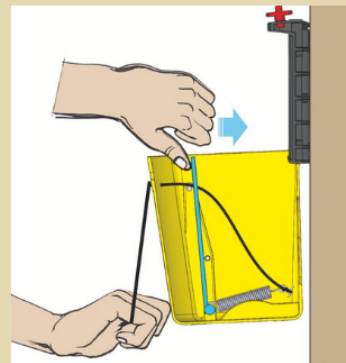


**ROTATE 90°**

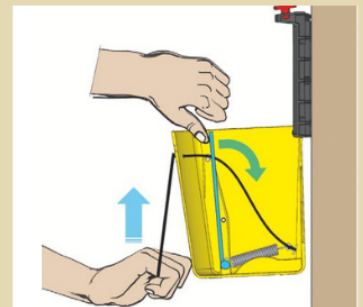
While supporting the top box with one hand, rotate the red button 90 degrees to unlock it.



Now grab the setting cord with your free hand and pull back to keep tension while you slowly guide the trap downwards until it comes to rest on the tree or post.

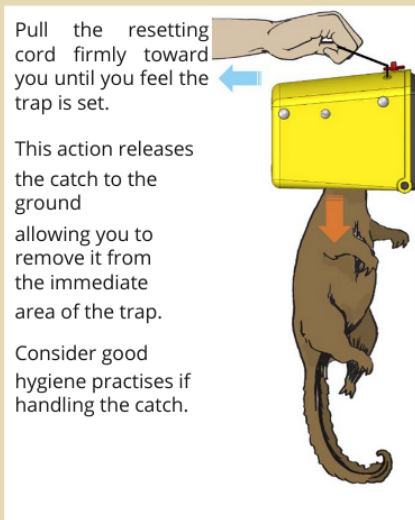


Gently push the back of the protruding bait bar forward, while keeping tension down on the setting cord.



Once you feel it go over centre and start to release, slowly allow the setting cord to be drawn back into the trap, releasing the spring tension, and unsetting the trap.

### RELEASING THE CATCH



Pull the resetting cord firmly toward you until you feel the trap is set.

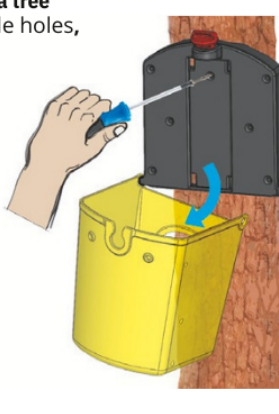
This action releases the catch to the ground allowing you to remove it from the immediate area of the trap.

Consider good hygiene practises if handling the catch.

### MOUNTING THE TRAP

**Fasten** with provided screws, you can detach the yellow box to make this easier.

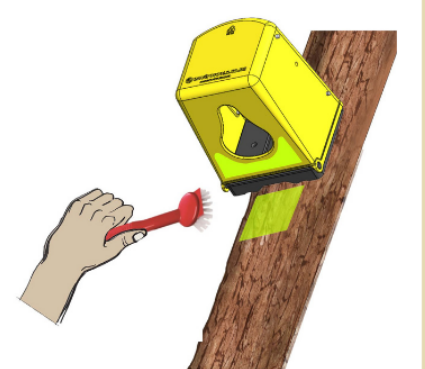
**When mounting to a tree or post**, use middle holes, when mounting on a flat surface use outer holes



**Note** you can also purchase large cable ties and use these through the slots in base - this is particularly good for punga trees.

### CLEANING THE TRAP

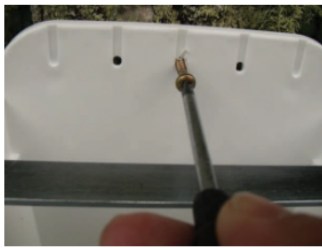
**Remember** clean traps catch best. If your trap gets dirty, we recommend a scrubbing brush to scrub down the trap and surrounding area.




**Watch how to bait the Flipping Timmy**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeFSu5el\\_KQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeFSu5el_KQ)

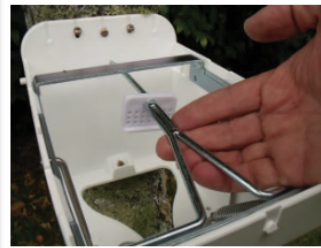
# Installing your Trapinator



1. Mount trap to designated tree, about 2 meters from the ground. Remove lid and screw in 3 nails where holes are apparent



2. At the base of the trap, place screw in the hole provided. Your trap is now firmly positioned!



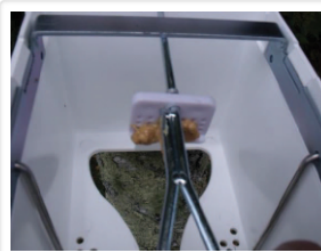
3. Lift up bait bar as shown above



4. Rotate plastic biter upwards



5. Apply suitable bait paste



6. Return the plastic biter facing downwards



7. Refit Trap lid



8. You can add some paste on the tree and bottom of the trap to attract possums



9. Using side lever, push forward to set the trap



10. Trapinator is now ready to catch possums. Once a possum is caught the lever will fire forward. To remove possum simply reset the lever.

Source



**Watch how to bait the Trapinator**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=looHelAgMJg>

# MUSTELIDS



Mustelids include weasels, stoats and ferrets. They are now some of the top predators in New Zealand ecosystems.

Flexible and opportunistic in their diet, a change in abundance of their normal prey can cause a rapid shift to alternative food sources. This prey switching has implications for pest control operations; for example, removing a key food such as rats or rabbits may cause mustelids to prey more on native birds.

All mustelids are good swimmers and can prey on animals up to three times their own body weight. They can breed rapidly in response to the availability of food – rats, rabbits and mice are staples but, birds, bird eggs, lizards and invertebrates are also targeted.

Mustelids have fast metabolisms and need to eat one-third of their body weight every day. They cannot store fat in their bodies.

In general, mustelids are difficult to trap, and only trapping to a high standard will bring about increased survival rates for native birds.

There are many lures, but the ones we have held success with are whole eggs, Erazz Rabbit Jerk, stinky Chinese Shrimp Paste (Supermarkets) & Eggsellent.

Keep a watchful eye out for them and their tracks and droppings.



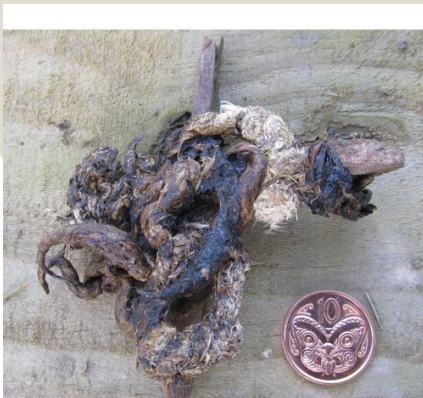
Stoat



Stoat + baby rabbit



Ferret



Ferret droppings



Stoat droppings



Lures



# MUSTELID TRAPS



## How many traps will I need?

- For backyard trapping under 1 hectare, one trap will suffice.
- For lifestyle blocks, orchards and farmland the following rule of thumb should be used; For zero density in your area use one trap per 8-10 hectares.
- Traps on loan for catching mustelids include the DOC 200 and DOC 250. DOC 200s are designed specifically to catch weasels and stoats, with the larger DOC 250 are needed to trap a ferret.

A trap is only useful if it is well serviced, has oiled working parts, and the metal parts are wire-brushed and filed. Good oils to use are Innox and WD40. WD40 is not as sticky as CRC and has a slight fish odour, which may be attractive to mustelids.

## DOC 200 trap in a wooden tunnel

- The entrance hole should be no larger than 60mm otherwise ferrets can enter the tunnel and pull out of the trap using their large facial muscles. A whole egg is a good lure, along with fresh rabbit, pilchards, Eryaz rabbit jerky, Eggsellence and Chinese Shrimp paste.
- Tilt your tunnel so that salty liquid from the bait runs out of the tunnel and not around the trap in order to avoid corrosion
- Check DOC 200s are working with a bundle of rags/old socks. Using a soft bundle rather just

## DOC 250 trap in a wooden tunnel

- The DOC 250 trap is one-third bigger than a DOC 200. It is specifically designed kill trap for ferrets, who have large facial muscles and are able to pull themselves out of a DOC 200.
- DOC 250 traps should be used where ferrets may be present. While there appear to be relatively low numbers of ferrets in the North Island compared to the South Island, ferrets kill adult kiwi and can quickly eradicate a local population.

## Identification

Telling these three species apart can be difficult. Ferrets are large mustelids (up to 1.5kg), usually with a dark facial mask and creamy-coloured body, with dark guard hairs giving an overall darker appearance from a distance.

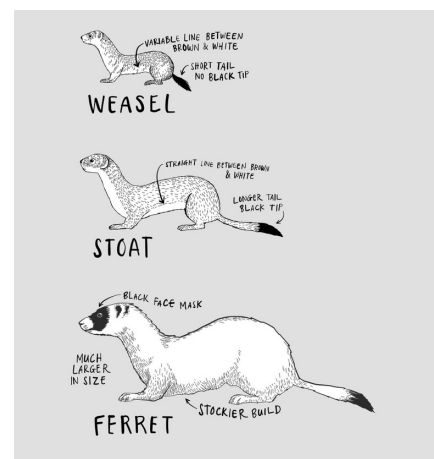
Stoats and weasels are cinnamon-coloured with a white underbelly, with stoats being larger and with a black-tipped tail. The line between the brown and white on stoats is straight, but on weasels is wavy and not even. Young stoats can look a lot like weasels. Ferrets are strictly nocturnal, but stoats and weasels often also hunt during the day.



Weasel



Stoat



# MUSTELID TIPS

## Select sites where mustelids are likely to hunt

- Stream edges
- Around the estuary
- Bushland edge
- Ridges
- Valley Floors
- Fence lines
- Outhouses or sheds
- Animal runs
- Crossings over watercourses
- Fallen trees
- Track/road edges even in open pasture

The best sites are where there are converging features like a stream crossing a track at the edge of bush or a field/garden/bush boundary. The Stoat featured in the previous photo was caught in bush at the edge of a car park with water nearby - lure = whole egg, The Weasel was caught along a shed line and had been observed as using this area as its run (in fact 3 were caught in the very same kill trap position) Lure = Erayz rabbit jerky & shrimp paste.

If you select sites that are beneath a tree canopy cover where possible the Mustelids are likely to be less concerned about overhead predators under trees and therefore more likely to enter a trap.

At the trap, site dig the ground over and keep the access open by providing a run, e.g. log over grass to trap site, or weed/spray around the site. It may take a few months to catch a mustelid. Don't be disillusioned by this, and ensure your traps are primed to catch at all times. If a trap is in a good place (as per details above) – only consider moving it if it hasn't been caught after 6 months. If a trap catches regularly, consider adding another trap nearby.

## Frequency of trap checking

- Varies seasonally, and depending on what you are trying to protect, for example, traps during Dotterel nesting season are checked daily.
- Weekly trap checks from October to April, and fortnightly checks from May-September appear to be sufficient for native bird/ kiwi protection.
- Beware of autumn stoats which will be strong and intelligent and account for a lot of bird kills at this time of year, especially late chicks.
- If there are high capture rates of rats, consideration could be given to more frequent checks, primarily to remove rats from traps, especially in single-set regimes.

## Ferret prints



# BAITING THE TRAP



The DOC 200 has passed 'draft' NAWAC (National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee)\* guidelines as a humane kill trap for stoats, rats and hedgehogs. These setting instructions must be followed to meet these guidelines.

\* see NAWAC DoC traps humane report at [www.predatortraps.com](http://www.predatortraps.com)

Treadle and hole in baffle must be aligned

Setting loop

Sear

## Step one

Locating and screwing the trap in the tunnel:  
Use size 6 x 25mm rust proof screws  
Traps should be fixed with the treadle 5mm (approximately) from the side of the box and the baffle\*\*.

Drawings, Phil Waddington

Top of trigger arm \*\* 5mm

Treadle

## Step two

Setting the trap:

Pull carefully on the wire setting loop with your hand. Continue past the top of the trigger arm, allowing the trigger arm to drop onto the treadle. SLOWLY release pressure, allowing the bottom of the trigger arm to gently ride up treadle and catch on the sear.

Lure - pop and egg or meat/Erayz on pedestal

**Watch how to bait the DOC 200 & DOC 250**

**Watch how to use the setting tool**

# RATS



There are two main species of rat on the New Zealand mainland - the ship rat, able to climb trees, and the Norway rat, usually found near water. Both species are rapid breeders. A typical rat will be 15 to 20cm long with a further 20cm of tail

Ship rats are usually the most common rat species in surrounding forests. They come in several colours, usually black to light brown in colour with a lighter underside. In comparison to the Norway rat they are poorer swimmers, but more agile and better climbers. Ship rats tend to be nocturnal and Norway rats are diurnal.

Both species are omnivorous, with a preference for grains. In a suitable environment, rats will breed throughout the year, with a female producing three to six litters of up to 10 young. Ship rats live for two to three years. Social groups of up to 60 can be formed.

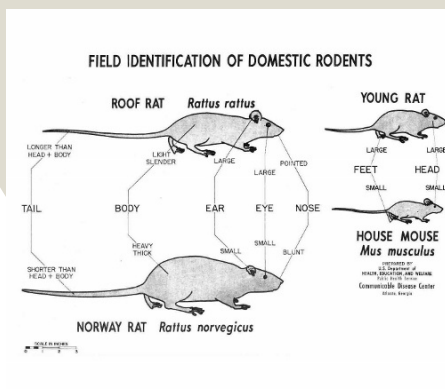
In New Zealand, ship rats have an unusual distribution, in that they are found everywhere through native forests, scrub, and urban parklands. Ship rats are the most frequent predator of small forest birds, seeds, invertebrates, and lizards,, and are key ecosystem changers due to this predation.

## Ship rat (*Rattus rattus*)

Very long tail - in adult this is longer than the head and body length combined. Very long thin ears - when you pull the ears forward they will generally cover the eyes of the rat. Smaller of the two rats, weighing around 150g.

## Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)

A thick tail is usually shorter than the head and body length. Small ears that can't be pulled forward over the eyes. Large, robust rat, weighing up to 500g.



Identifier



Identifier



Ship Rat eating Fantail chicks

# RAT TRAPS



The biggest threat to our native birds are the rats, who have taken over our native bush and urban areas. With one rat likely to kill up to 50 birds in its lifetime we need your help to get rid of rats and give our native species a fighting chance.

## Why is the species of rat important?

The type of rat present has implications for pest control projects. For example, having more ship rats around has implications for most tree-nesting birds including kereru and small birds. This is because they are more agile and better climbers.

Norway rats on the other hand are large and ground-dwelling, with potential impacts on ground-nesting species. They also prefer wetland and other water habitats (sometimes called Water Rat). Norway rats have larger home ranges than ship rats (500m vs 150m average), which will dictate your layout of control tools if just targeting one species in your project area.

In addition to their impacts on birds, rats also have impacts on invertebrates and lizards and can also limit seedling germination, by eating fruit, seeds and young plants. Rats have a relatively small home range (about 1ha for ship rats) and this combined with their rapid breeding means that reinvasion of rats in a controlled area is generally very rapid.

Predator Free Bay of Plenty's goal is to get a rat trap into every fifth backyard in Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty. That would be around 12,000 traps to help turn the table on pests.



Predator Free Bay of Plenty give out a free victor rat trap and tunnel for each property. Please contact the community leader closest to you to pick one up, or grab one from the PTL when borrowing another trap.

The commitment we ask from you is to keep your trap set and baited at all times, and to log your kills online. This enables us to obtain further funding.

# RAT TIPS

When setting up traps, look for evidence of rats being present i.e. fresh droppings, rub marks, gnawing, or feeding activity. Pick trap sites that are naturally attractive, such as near-good food sources. Rats often nibble on seeds and fruits of native trees including nikau, karaka, taraire and kohekohe. Look out for fallen berries with the outer layer chewed away on. Rats prefer areas with water and good food sources.

## Rat trapping tips:

- Traps need to be cleared regularly – a trap with a dead rat in it is not available to catch others.
- Regular maintenance of traps is essential, including checking for worn pivots, weakened springs and broken trigger mechanisms.
- Victor snapback traps require periodic retreating with a preserving agent.
- When checking Victor snapback traps the trapper should carry spare traps, treadles and pegs. Treadles may be lost when the traps are sprung.
- Traps should be cleaned regularly with a wire brush – remove fur and remains of dead animals.
- Rats are nervous creatures. Ensure rat tunnels have good clearance above the trap
- There should be a 200mm gap between the end of the rat tunnel and the trap treadle
- Ensure traps are stable and do not rock around as this will deter rats.

## Frequency of trap checking

Initially, traps should be checked every one-two days. Once the catch rate drops (after about 5-10 checks), traps only need to be checked once every two-three weeks. When rat numbers increase, the frequency at which traps are checked will also need to increase.



Free PFBOP Trap Tunnel



# HEDGEHOGS



## Why are hedgehogs a threat?

The extent to which hedgehogs impact upon the New Zealand environment is only recently beginning to be understood in detail. Hedgehogs are proven to be a major predator on eggs of riverbed breeding birds such as our native NZ dotterel and black-fronted tern here at Waihi Beach and have been known to kill and eat chicks of a variety of other ground-nesting birds.

In the Mackenzie Basin, hedgehogs have been found to be responsible for one in five predator attacks on nests - this has a huge impact on fledgling numbers. We have suffered significant loss here at Waihi beach with complete NNZ dotterel nests falling foul to hedgehog attacks in and around the dunes and grasslands.

Hedgehogs have a voracious appetite for invertebrates and take many local endemic species. They are known to eat the rare giant native centipede, snails, wētā, and other rare insects. Hedgehogs also prey upon lizards, particularly in cooler periods when lizard activity slows, Skinks are particularly at risk as are endemic frog species.

## How do I know if hedgehogs are present?

Hedgehogs have a home range of 1.4km and prefer dry hillsides, sandy soils, coastal areas, and under wood piles. Presence can be confirmed through sightings, faeces, and monitoring with tracking tunnels.

### Hedgehog faeces

- Normally black or very dark brown
- Roughly sausage-shaped
- 1.5 to 5cm long
- Will have remnants of beetles etc



Hedgehog prints



Hedgehog tracks

# HEDGEHOG TRAPS



There is no specific control method for hedgehogs, but many are trapped in tunneled DOC 200 and DOC 250, which are powerful and effective kill traps. The tunnel should be placed along a natural runway so that approaching animals must either pass over the trap or turn back. Suitable sites are along fences, hedges or the banks of a stream, in the bush among tree roots, beside fallen logs or in dry culverts. The entrance must be cleared of leaves and weeds. They may also unwittingly be caught in live trap tunnels as with possums and feral cats and should be destroyed humanely.

Destroying animals must be done humanely. The standard that must be met is that any animal must be killed in a way that the animal is:

- Rendered insensible (this in effect means it must be unconscious), usually through stunning, and;
- Death immediately follows (heat and brain function being the usual tests)

For example, shooting an animal in the head achieves both outcomes simultaneously. . Death through the injection of pentobarbital by a vet also achieves this outcome. Waihi Beach Vets has a feral cat euthanasia policy in place, it would be best practice to talk to them about humanely euthanising any unwanted Hedgehogs.

Effective control of hedgehogs requires high-density trapping, such as traps at 25m spacing.

Always wear gloves to avoid leptospirosis and other diseases.



DOC 200 with a whole egg lure



Doug and his huge hedgehog



# CATS



All cats, whether feral or domestic, kill the same groups of native wildlife, including insects, eels, kōura (native crayfish), fish, lizards, native birds and birds' eggs as well as rabbits and rodents. They can also carry tuberculosis, toxoplasmosis and parasites harmful to humans and marine life.

Cats are generalist predators and can have large home ranges. It is estimated that feral, stray and pet cats kill up to **100 million birds** in New Zealand each year. They are a major predator of kiwi chicks and also eat eggs, lizards, invertebrates and frogs.

Cats are prolific breeders, the females usually take 6 - 9 months to reach sexual maturity but kittens as young as 4 months can become pregnant. Pregnancy lasts about 68 days, and litters are most commonly of 3-6 kittens. A female can have more than one litter each year. Stray cats have higher survival rates than feral cats and faster reproduction rates.

## **Companion cat:**

A domestic cat (including a kitten unless otherwise stated) that lives with humans as a companion, and is dependent on humans for its welfare.

## **Unowned cat:**

Unowned cats may be classed as stray or feral. A stray is a domestic cat which is lost or abandoned and which is living as an individual or in a group (colony). Stray cats have many of their needs indirectly supplied by humans, and live around centres of human habitation. Stray cats are likely to interbreed with the unneutered companion cat population. Some stray cats, especially kittens, may have a temperament which makes them suitable for re-homing, whereas others will not.

A feral cat is a cat which is not a stray cat, and which has none of its needs provided by humans. Feral cats generally do not live around centres of human habitation.



Western Bay Wildlife Trust footage  
of a cat killing Kororā juveniles

# CATS



## Capture options

Options include live capture or kill traps. When trapping for feral cats you need to be careful to avoid trapping domestic cats. Live capture traps include any secure box or trap so that it is safe to use around residential areas and these are the only type of trap available to loan from the PTL.

Feral cats can be very difficult to trap as they are naturally cautious and a previous bad experience will make them shy. Sometimes it is best to fix the door open for two or three nights until the cat is comfortable entering the trap, before setting it. Do not attempt to touch or pick up a wildcat, or even a kitten.

## Guidelines

- Neighbours will be notified, asking them to keep their cats in at night.
- The type of trap used for feral cat trapping is a live capture cage, meaning the animal is not harmed, just contained by the cage. It may also catch hedgehogs, possums, ferrets, or stoats depending on the type of lure used.
- Traps will be baited with fish, meat or cat treats (Cat Sensations)
- There is a legal requirement that cage traps must be checked within a short period of time after sunrise each day to avoid any distress, ensure that the borrower is in a position to do so when the trap is being loaned, and this being adhered to.
- There is the potential risk of attracting non-target animals, including birds. To reduce this risk, and to care for trapped animals, cover the trap top to prevent birds from seeing the bait from above.
- There will be a pre-arranged facility for humanely destroying the animal.

## If a cat is caught

- Precautions need to be taken when handling the cat – given that feral cats can carry diseases and are likely to be distressed when caught. Seek doctor's attention if bitten.
- If the cat is clearly domestic, then this needs to be released.
- Destroying animals must be done humanely. The standard that must be met is that any animal must be killed in a way that the animal is:
  - Rendered insensible (this in effect means it must be unconscious), usually through stunning, and;
  - Death immediately follows (heat and brain function being the usual tests)*For example, shooting an animal in the head achieves both outcomes simultaneously*
- Euthanasiation through a veterinarian also achieves this outcome. Coastal Pet Vet Papamoa has a feral cat euthanasiation service. It would be best practice to talk to them about humanely euthanising any feral cats that may be caught prior to undertaking any live trapping - Phone 0508 738 838.