

Biosecurity Local Board General Update

Month/Year: 14th January to 14th February 2018

Officer's name: Jeremy Warden

Hauraki Gulf Controlled Area- Great Barrier Island

Plague Skink Shoal Bay Wharf

Approximately 200 chickens were established into an enclosure during December 2017 after intensive trapping of the cell. Non target native skinks caught were released outside of the area and the plague skinks marked and released back into the chicken cell. Chickens have had daily checks and food and water has been replenished as needed. During early February 2018 they had their wings clipped and a count carried out confirming all birds are accounted for and healthy. Since this time the flock have progressively moved through the area clearing the ground of vegetation and sifting through leaf litter for food.

The chickens are due to be moved to another cell at the beginning of March 2018. Once moved trapping will occur to assess the chicken's effectiveness at preying plague skinks.

Trapping has been going in the 'trap-only' cell but no further plagues have been caught (on top of the two removed to date). We are working with Jacqui Wairepo to identify a second 'trap only' cell with higher plague skink densities.



Plague Skink Surveillance

- A skink captured and given to Biosecurity from Okupu reserve was identified not to be a plague skink.

Argentine & Darwin's ants

Work on the 2017/18 monitoring and treatment is close to completion.

- **Darwin Ants** – monitoring was carried out at the Mohunga site on 30 November 2017 with no Darwin's detected.
- **Argentine Ants** – monitoring and treatments carried out at the following sites:
 - **Gray Rd** – This season the team conducted some perimeter monitoring to check for spread of the infestation. It was discovered that the site now includes two small areas in the Claris landfill and a small area across the road. Two treatments were carried out at two week intervals with ant droids used in sedge land difficult to access.
 - **Sugarloaf** – Delimitation monitoring determined that the treatment area needed to be extended to include the headland ridge above the

campground. Two ground application treatments were carried out with ant droids used on steep sections.

- **Sandhills** – The second treatment at this site was carried out. Ground application via caulking guns and ant droids used in areas hard to access.
- **Blind Bay Rd** – The second treatment of the small population at this site was carried out involving both ground application and pottles containing the ant bait.
- **Masons Rd** – the second treatment at this site was carried out involving ground application.
- **Okupu** – Monitoring picked up three small separate infestations within the 2-hectare site. Both ground application and baited pottles were used during treatment.
- **Mulberry Grove** – Monitoring of this site is almost completed with only the school grounds left to do. The only population of argentine ants detected has been found at the bottom of Rosalie Bay Road. Once monitoring is completed the necessary treatments will be carried out using ground application and pottles containing the ant bait.

Argentine Ant Surveillance

Contracted surveillance monitoring has been carried out in the following areas:

- Medland Rd – below Mitchener Rd to The Lane
- Okupu – foreshore properties and sun beam
- Tip Shop
- Mulberry Grove development – large area where pines were felled. Argentine ants detected here
- Blackwells pig pens
- Aotea Contractors
- Thomas road – at end of road
- Kaitoke lane- end of road

Biosecurity have received a number of inquiries from residents concerned over large concentrations of ants on their properties. This is attributed to the wet/humid weather we have been experiencing over the summer. All identified not to be Argentine ants.

- Contractor report of suspicious ants from a Kaitoke Lane development were identified not to be Argentine ants
- Samples taken from a large number of ants reported at Claris Crossroads by property owner were not Argentine ants
- Stockpile of sand at landfill scheduled to go back to Awana Beach monitored for Argentine ants. No ants detected so permission granted by biosecurity for its relocation with conditions attached.
- Sample of ants from Awana settlement area were identified as white footed ants
- Information on Pathways management provided to Auckland Transport to provide to their contractors. This was as a result of road vacuum truck operating within the demarcated Argentine ant sites without any provisions made for the safe disposal of potentially contaminated material.

Weed Control

Total Control

Ergeria was located in a small pound at Great Barrier Golf course. Ergeria was eradicated in 2010 from the main golf course pound so this is a new find. Auckland Council Biosecurity will work with the golf Club on its eradication and try and source the

origins of this plant. Voucher specimens have been sent to Auckland War memorial Museum herbarium.

Three Juvenile Royal fern plants were discovered by Shanti Morgan in the wetland at the back of the golf course whilst placing traps for volunteers to service.

SWI

- **Moth plant**
 - Masons Rd has been completed with a small amount found and removed from site.
 - Port Fitzroy site has been started.
- **Kahilli Ginger** – the Okupu site has this season had a perimeter check carried out only. A single juvenile plant was located. A small amount of follow up work is to be carried out here to ensure there is no further spread in the area.
- **Pennywort** – the three Claris sites including the land fill have all received treatments. A follow up treatment is scheduled in the coming weeks.
- **Glyceria Maxima** – the first of two treatments at the Awana have been carried out.

Other

Herbarium samples of *Mariscus seeminnianus* collected from Sandhills Road. This is the first record of this species in New Zealand. This is a tropical species of which Allan Herbarium in Christchurch has four samples, all collected from Tonga or Vanuatu. The plant which is a sedge is starting to naturalise which is a concern as most exotic Cyperaceae are very competitive and can displace native wetland plants. We are currently discussing the plants removal with the owner to prevent it spread into the surrounding environment and establishing on Great Barrier Island.



Mariscus seeminnianus

Wharf and Airport Mustelid and Rodent Pest Surveillance (December 2017)

- Port Fitzroy – 70% Bait take, 1x rat caught in DOC200, 1 x Wax tag=Rat
- Tryphena – 10% Bait take 0x Ship Rat caught in DOC200. 0x Wax tag=Rat
- Whangaparapara – 41% bait take 3 x Ship Rat in DOC200's. 0x Wax tag=Rat
- Okupu – 80% bait take. 0 x Rat caught in DOC200, 0x wax tag=Rat
- Claris airfield environment –42% bait take
- Claris residential – 18% bait take

Bait Stations at Transfer Sites (December)

- Southern Stations – Medlands 0%, Okupu 0%, Puriri bay 100%, Mulberry grove 0%
- Northern Stations – Motairehe 0%, Okiwi 100% & Kawa 50%

Private Jetties & Boat Ramps

| Location | DOC200 | Bait Station | Wax tag |
|--------------------------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Yates | 0x Rat | 100% | 0 |
| Jetty | 0x Rat | 12.5% | 0 |
| Pickards | 0x Kiore | 100% | 0 |
| Stellins | 1x Rat | 0% | 0 |
| Whangapara Jetty | 0x Rat | 0% | 0 |
| Okupu Boat Ramp | 0x Rat | 0% | 0 |
| Mulberry Grove Boat Ramp | 0x Rat | 0 | 0 |
| Puriri Bay Boat Ramp | 0x Rat | 100% | 0 |

Conclusion: No new species of pest animals detected, bait consumption (Diphacinone) very high at Port Fitzroy with some of the stations empty. Minimal interceptions of rats in DoC200.

Good Nature A24 Traps

November 2017 windy tracking tunnel results for the Big Windy Hill A24 Management area came back at 32% compared to the control (do nothing) area which came back at 22%.

ALP an Co2 gas swap scheduled for 21st to 23rd February.

Canadian Goose

The individual pictured below was spotted by Medlands Causeway on DoC estate (12/2/2018). DoC was immediately notified and a staff member responded the next morning with a shotgun and successfully shot and killed the bird. We are hoping that this is lone none or failed breeder moulting its wing feathers.

