

Biosecurity Local Board General Update

Month/Year: 14th May to 14th June 2017

Officers name: Jeremy Warden

Hauraki Gulf Controlled Area- Great Barrier Island

Plague Skink Shoal Bay Wharf

- Appointment of Wildlands as project managers for Shoal Bay Plague skink site
 - Site orientation 1st June
- Containment fence
 - The bulk of stage 1 has been constructed and has withstood heavy rain and wind
 - Identification of archaeological structures by Don Prince
- Trapping carried out along new fence structures, and at a recent Plague skink capture hotspot close to the fence. No Plague Skinks have been caught in the two weeks that traps have been open, however native captures are very low also. One Plague skink has been caught behind the wharf over the same period – again far fewer than normally caught in this area. Lower capture rates are most likely linked to reduced activity during colder weather.

Argentine & Darwin's ants

The second treatment was carried out within the Medland road site (Pauline Bellerby and Dave Shaw properties) 24th May. Uptake of the bait (xtinguish) was very good and this was both noted and photographed. Bait made available to landowner to continue doing spot treatments.

Argentine ant and Plague skink surveillance

- Ant sample brought in from Rivendell Nursery confirmed to be Argentine ants. Ant bait made available for owner to carry out treatment.
- Ant sample brought in by Aotea Family support were not Argentine ants
- Inspect materials for Argentine ants before they leave 270 Shoal bay Road at the request of the owner. Identify nest at the front of this property and apply direct treatment
- Plague Skink surveillance 52 Blackwell drive
 - Visual search identified a number of copper skinks
 - Install 20 tracking tunnels and run tracking cards for 8 days. Only rodent imprints returned
 - IST cards deployed and will be run for a period of time
- monitoring carried out at known ant sites to reinforce seasons work
 - Okupu-finds of only Black ants
 - Medlands Heights-Argentine ants localised and present in small numbers
 - Crossroads-Black and Pennant ants (*Tetramorium grassii*) which resemble Argentine ants. No Argentine ants present.



Tetramorium grassii

Mulberry Grove & Okiwi Community Pest coordinators

Mulberry Grove

Rat numbers have dropped from last month (Juli still has to get in touch with some property owner). Juli has received new traps and wooden boxes to distribute as she finds ones that are no longer working.

Matt has been resetting the traps at the school but ideally we will get the children to do this. Matt and Juli will need to have a meeting with them to introduce this and ensure health and safety is considered.

Okiwi

The report for this project is currently being completed. Essentially, it recommends that rat and cat control occur over the area from the start of the Okiwi settlement down to the River Reserve. Two properties within this area are not interested in being involved but are on the outside of the area so can be easily accommodated. Rabbit control is recommended as well. It is acknowledged that control of one pest in isolation of others can throw things out of balance. There is a suggested number of rat killing stations required for this area. The recommendation is to use traps rather than toxins for rats and cats, making the most of new technology as it becomes available. Toxins are a possibility that most residents will consider with sufficient information supplied. Rabbits are an issue for most and the report recommends that the DOC and AC continue to work together on a control programme for rabbits in the Whangapoua basin. There is a desire to see pest control extended further through the basin to protect Pateke habitat in particular.

A number of people undertake pest control on their own properties and the school are involved on adjacent land as well. The Waterhouses are looking to extend traps down the Okiwi Stream marginal strip. The recommendation is to work with these existing initiatives and encourage them to continue (a number of these do use toxins). There is a desire to see any project undertaken, provide work and training opportunities for local residents.

The report recommends that as part of any control programme, monitoring is undertaken that aligns with that undertaken for other pest control programmes around the island. Data gathering is recommended, but it is not believed critical to gather accurate information about all kills, the results will be indicative of activity in the area.

Kaitoke Fire Ground Weed Control

Aristea control west end of main runway –vegetation removed and weed matt being laid to suppress future regrowth. This will have clay fill spread over the top.

West Coast Weed Surveillance

Coastal Weed Surveillance:

Further survey work has occurred at Harataonga, and around Whangapoua estuary. Several Lantana were found at Harataonga and removed.

SWI Weed Control

- Remove 4 smilax plants that were clustered around a post on Island Bay walkway
- Smilax removal Cape Barrier Road-only a few plants found on the sea ward side of the road

Total Control

- Lantana removal back of Sandhills road
- Madeira vine removal Mabeys farm
- Madeira vine removal Cape Barrier Road (Anne Kernohans)
- Madeira vine-Site visit to Mulberry Grove School stone wall
 - Meet stone mason and mark out area of infestation.
 - Regular visits to remove Madeira vine and Climbing Dock tubers
 - Weed matt being laid where tubers were present before wall is reconstructed. This is to act as a barrier should any tubers be missed.

Wharf and Airport Mustelid and Rodent Pest Surveillance (May)

- Port Fitzroy –27% Bait take, 1 unidentified rats caught in DOC200, 1x Wax tag=Rat
- Tryphena- 14% Bait take 2x Ship Rat caught in DOC200. 0x Wax tag=Rat
- Whangaparapara- 63% bait take 2 x Ship Rat in DOC200's. 0x Wax tag=Rat
- Okupu -100% bait take. 0 x Rat caught in DOC200, 0x wax tag=Rat
- Claris airfield environment – 65% bait take
- Claris residential-25% bait take

Bait Stations at Transfer Sites (May)

- Southern Stations- Medlands 0%, Okupu 0%, Puriri bay 50%, Mulberry grove 0%
- Northern Stations- Motairehe 0%, Okiwi 100% & Kawa 75%

Private Jetties & Boat Ramps

Location	DOC200	Bait Station	Wax tag
Yates	1x Rat	75%	0
Jetty	0x Rat	50%	0
Pickards	0x Rat	100%	0
Stellins	0x Rat	0%	0
Whangapara Jetty	1x Rat	0%	1x Rat
Okupu Boat Ramp	0x Rat	0%	0
Mulberry Grove Boat Ramp	0x Rat	0	0
Puriri Bay Boat Ramp	1x Rat	100%	0

Conclusion: No new species of pest animals detected, bait consumption (Pestoff Brodifacoum) has decreased in Port Fitzroy.

Rats not so much a problem in DoC200's over the past month.

Feral Pigs

Further Pig damage reported from Community Facilities on Station Rock Walkway.

Myrtaceae seed bank support

Seed collection from Kaiaraara and Windy canyon and earmark plants for future collection

Rabbits

- Assessment of Environmental Effects and permission to use Vertebrate toxins agents on Department of Conservation administered estate granted to Auckland Council. Pindone and Magtoxin applications will be carried out when it fits into leases grazing regime.
- June rabbit relative abundance spotlight counts at Awana and Kaitoke. In comparison to Feb/Mar counts Awana numbers are down and Kaitoke slightly up.

Good Nature A24 Traps

Spot check on 20 lures revealed 1 was empty, 3 had not dispensed bait at all 1 had bait build up on the trigger and had outgassed.

Extrapolated across the Big Windy Hill A24 project means there is likely to be a large number of devices not working. Windy Hill have requested Good Nature look into these problems.

Last tracking tunnel monitoring at Windy Hill came in at 32%, a lot higher than anywhere else in Windy Hill Sanctuary.

Rats continue to be caught in snap traps on two sample trap lines in the Good Nature area with significantly higher catches of kiore which supports the theory that these animals are not entering the A24s in numbers sufficient to keep tracking tunnels down.

Rodent Dog Surveillance

Assist with surveillance on the Noises Islands in the inner Hauraki Gulf. No Rodents detected.