



**ASB Community Trust**  
*Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau*  
supported by **ASB**



## **TRAPPER'S REPORT**

### **PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST CHARITABLE TRUST**

**(April 2014)**

The forest has been abuzz with birdlife over the last month as a result of our autumn fruiting natives. Tui numbers in particular are incredible at the moment with large groups being seen on a regular basis squabbling over the berries of the heavily fruiting kahikatea trees, all whilst singing the beautiful melodies they are so well known for.

Tomtit presence is also at a high as they come out of presumably successful breeding season with countless birds being seen throughout the forest curiously observing as I go about my business. It's great to see these birds in such abundance. With the continued trapping efforts, hopefully we can protect these birds throughout the winter months and into the next breeding season.

On the trapping front, the mustelid catch rate is continuing to gradually decline as we near the end of the peak mustelid season. Stoat numbers in particular seem to have dropped off significantly with none being caught on either of my lines over the last month. However, weasels still have a presence with a couple being caught around the Amalin Drive area.

Rat numbers, on the other hand, are on the rise with several traps snaring one, if not two along both the Amalin Drive and the Whau Valley trap lines. This increase is likely due to a combination of factors such as the abundance of berries produced by our autumn fruiting natives such as kahikatea, karamu and kanono, as well as the decline of mustelids which are well known to prey upon rats.

I've been informed by Max that new traps have arrived and will be put in place over the following weeks. These traps will fill in any gaps along the current trap lines, further increasing their effectiveness as well as offering further protection to our native flora and fauna.

*Bevan Cramp*

**Trapper (Part-time)**