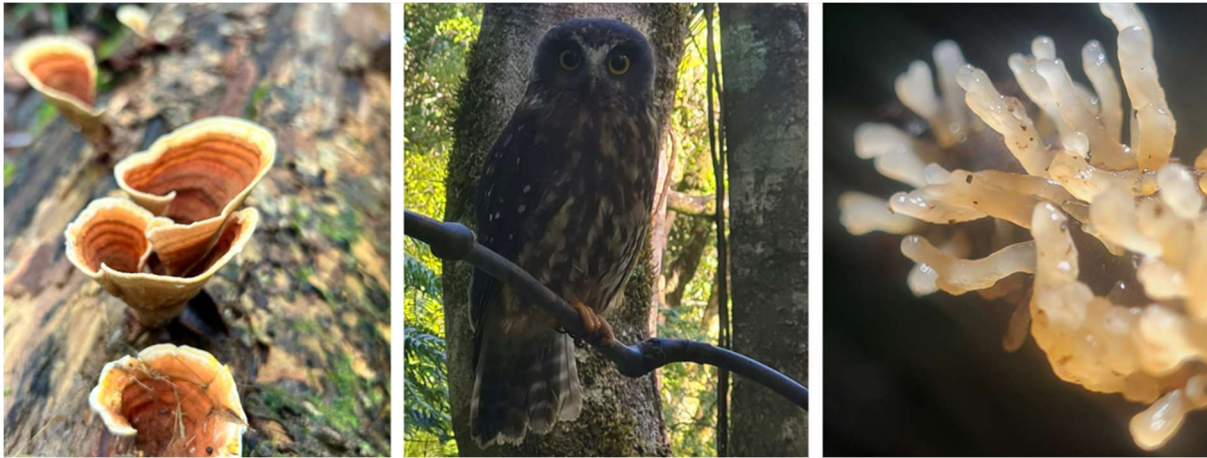


Pukenui Report – April 2024



Trapping

We have a total of 108 pests for this month they are as follows: 4 Weasels; 1 Stoat; 99 Rats; 1 Cat; 1 Hedgehog; 1 Possum and 1 Mouse; Our total for the year to date is 258 with the majority being caught in the forest. The main species being caught is rats.

MONTH	WEASEL	STOAT	RAT	CAT	HEDGEHOG	POSSUM	FERRET	OTHER
JANUARY	4	4	64	2	1	1	0	0
FEBRUARY	0	0	46	0	3	0	0	1
MARCH	1	1	19	0	1	1	1	0
APRIL	4	1	99	1	1	1	0	1
MAY								
JUNE								
JULY								
AUGUST								
SEPTEMBER								
OCTOBER								
NOVEMBER								
DECEMBER								
YTD	9	6	228	3	6	3	1	2

Comparison to previous years:

YEAR	WEASEL	STOAT	RAT	CAT	HEDGEHOG	POSSUM	FERRET
2017	1	26	273	8	22	2	1
2018	7	49	455	6	47	6	0
2019	7	30	457	2	52	3	2
2020	4	38	350	1	27	19	0
2021	4	15	489	14	26	9	0
2022	6	25	410	6	29	10	2
2023	11	23	665	8	31	20	2
Total	40	206	3099	45	234	69	7

Toxin/Bait Stations

It felt good to get back into the traplines, after focusing on the double tap toxin operation for so many weeks.

We have started the removal of the double tap toxin, and we are recording the approximate percentage of take in each bait station so we can ultimately generate heat maps of blocks 1 to 31 with Zac's help. We have also replaced some of the old and rusty cat traps with new ones which will be a lot safer to use.

Trap servicing was also the focus this month which includes - calibrating traps, replacing traps, oiling traps, removing nails, and replacing with bait hooks as well as the general cleaning and bait replacing. This is taking a bit longer than usual but will ensure that our traps can remain in the forest for a long time.

Volunteers

We met our newest volunteer Craig Young and did some training on the Green line with trapping. Craig is a NorthTec student and is particularly interested in trapping and pest monitoring, always needed! Peter, Trevor, and Julia have been doing their trapping lines so good to see the continued volunteering in this space. Thanks to Simon for his help on the orange line too.

General

I (Andy) have noticed quite a few mushrooms popping up out there, lots of small white ones in association with totara trees, it's been a bit of a solitary week, but I did make some cow friends today on the red trapline. It's an exciting time of year for those of us that enjoy the fungal life in the forest and mushrooms are popping up everywhere.

While retrieving toxin from Block 4 on I had a lovely encounter with a Ruru. I read online that Ruru (Morepork) are a powerful figure in Maori Mythology and are said to originate from the underworld. This individual certainly lived up to its reputation as a watchful guardian of the forest. (Photo top of page).

(Alfrey) The birds have been quiet this but then on a special day the forest can be absolutely brimming with life, many tuis and fantails are out. It is very beautiful to see. We also had an encounter with a Ruru (Morepork) on the public track, I swear they stare into my soul.

It has been wet and slippery out in the bush this week, having our new boots and now radios are certainly making it a lot safer for us Rangers while working alone out there.

