

Pukenui Report – May 2024



Photo credit to Alfrey Brijs, Pukenui Ranger

Trapping

We have a total of 116 pests for this month they are as follows: 3 Weasels; 107 Rats; 1 Cat; 3 Possums and 2 Mice; Our total for the year to date is 374 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	3	0	107	1	0	3	0	2
YTD	12	6	335	4	6	6	1	4

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

All of the double tap toxin has been removed from the bait stations in blocks 1-31. This involved support to pull out toxin from the less desirable blocks and we would like to thank Joanna Skyrme from Tiakina Whangarei; Joyce Palmer and Rolf Fochs from NRC; and a big thank you to our trustees Zac Coffin and Simon Cocker. We are working with the data we have collected to see what patterns emerge. We have also begun our first foray into the WDC bait blocks, starting with block 32, in preparation for future Toxin operations.

(Alfrey) Monitoring has also commenced after the double tap toxin operation with tracking tunnels and ink cards. All went well and looking promising so far as not many tracks other than mice and a few rats. So, this indicates our toxin operation went very well. Data still to be conducted though to see final results.

I (Andy) managed to get out with Peter Luke with the start of the annual kiwi call count at site KL3 and heard several kiwis. There are plenty of Ruru out there also. It is certainly very different to be out in Pukenui after dark. Alfrey had her opportunity to learn about kiwi listening too and joined Trevor Thompson when he was doing site KL1.

I (Andy) enjoyed sorting out a more logical track for the Whero line, which Sarah kindly uploaded to TrapNZ. This is something that we discussed with Zac at our last meeting and our intention is to do, clean, logical lines for all of the traplines asap. This was a great way to put the new machetes to work too.

Next week will be a bit bigger with two large traplines, Andy and Alfrey will be working with each other on these traplines so we can get them all sorted out (track maintenance etc). In between doing a few more kiwi call count nights before the first window which closes on 14th June (weather dependent). We both attended the Kiwi Listening Workshop held by the trust and presented by Julia Brady (DOC) and very informative. Cannot wait to start using the Kiwi Coast Listening App.

Volunteers

It is certainly encouraging that we have had help from some of our younger volunteers this week. Both Craig Young (photo image (M)) and Hope Watson have been out with a solid day of Toxin pullout. Hope helped to finish off block 6 and we came across a possible kiwi burrow, our intention is to put up a trail cam and see what behaviour we can capture (photo image (R)). Craig came out and helped with Block 23.

We also started some training with a new volunteer Bridget Fyma (photo image (L)) which went well, and she seems keen to eventually take over the V line in the Coronation Reserve. Both Craig and Bridget have been added as members to our project via TrapNZ. This means they can “walk the line” via the TrapNZ app. No double handling with an excel spreadsheet to fill in pest catches afterwards.

Peter Luke continues with trapping and the Buffer Zone as with Trevor Thompson with the Red Line. Both Peter and Trevor have been invaluable with their support and wealth of knowledge especially with kiwi listening.



Photo credits to Andy Avery – Pukenui Ranger

General

There are some fantastic gullies around that area of Pukenui, one of the plants we identified was Parataniwha (*Elatostema rugosum*). 'The Māori name means "home of the taniwha" – a mythical monster. This refers to it frequently being found in damp gullies, at the foot of waterfalls, and in similar places of isolated intrigue where a taniwha might hide.' (see attached photo - parataniwha).

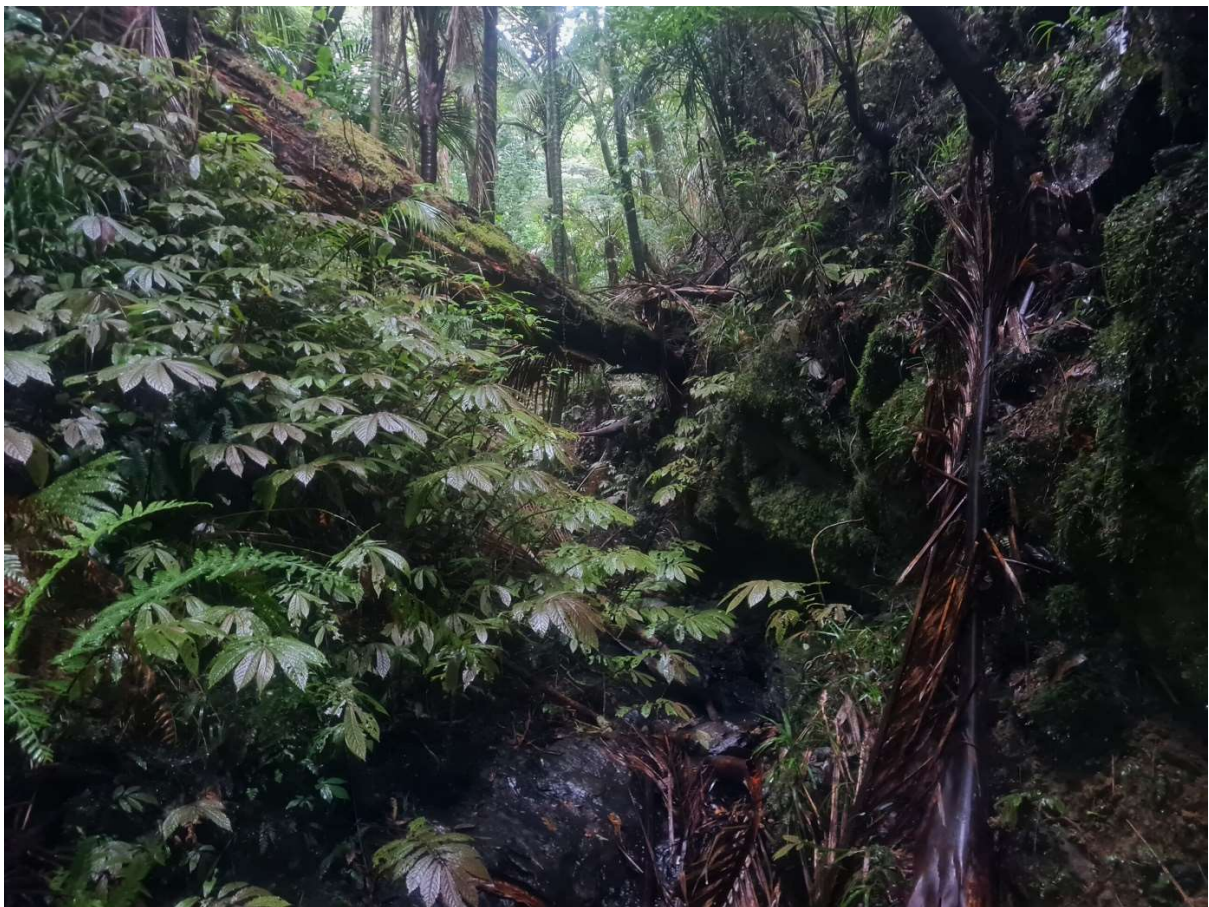


Photo credit to Andy Avery – Pukenui Ranger

Peter and Andy came across a couple of Kauri snails (*Paryphanta busbyi*) while out doing kiwi listening. The Māori name for the kauri snail is pupu rangi and apparently may live 20 years or more. I take the presence of these lovely carnivorous snails as a good sign for the health and biodiversity of the forest.