

# Omoana Bush, NZ Native Forest Restoration Trust







# Values and Threats – Omoana Bush

## Values (condition assessment):

Mammals: Long-tailed bats in the area

Birds: Western brown kiwi, NI fernbird, NZ falcon, NI robin, Whitehead, Shining and Long-tailed cuckoo

Lizards: *unknown*

Insects: *unknown*

Freshwater fish: Long-finned eel

Plants: *unknown*, Tawhirikaro (*Pittosporum cornifolium*)

## Animal threats (condition assessment):

Possoms, feral goats, wild pigs, feral cats, stoats, weasels, ferrets, rats, hedgehogs, wandering dogs. Red = Target.

## Monitoring and detection:

Kiwi – acoustic listening devices

Bats – bat recorders

Mustelid detection – tracking tunnels

Possoms – residual trap catch (RTC)

# Plan your approach

## To think about:

- Distribution of biodiversity values.
- Distribution of threats
- Vegetation cover
- Topography
- Access
- Best practice - layout for traps and bait stations, monitoring
- Resources:
  - Dollars \$\$
  - Labour force; cut tracks, establish & check traps, monitoring, contract hunting, establish & fill bait stations.
- Relationships with key stakeholders– landowners, neighbours, contractors, organisations i.e. Council, DOC, QEII

**You need to prepare a Plan before you start.**

# Plan of attack – Omoana Bush

## To date

- Acoustic listening devices were deployed for kiwi
- Liaison with the key stakeholders
- Tracks were cut and marked using a contractor. Tracks were located along the central spur and back boundary.
- Signage

## Planned

- DoC200 predator traps will be installed (one for each ha along tracks), and set.
- Tracking tunnels set for monitoring of mustelids
- Tracks cut and marked along the side spurs
- Feral goat control - mustering & contract hunting
- Wild pig control – contract hunting
- Philproof possum bait stations will be installed. Bait options: 1080, Brodifacoum, Diphacinone/Cholecalciferol, Feratox.
- Bat detectors set
- Kiwi listening – acoustic devices and people
- Fence maintenance

# Feral cats & Hedgehogs – what are your options

## Feral Cats

- Use fresh bait i.e. mince, fish, fat & cat biscuits, cat food. Do **not** use salted bait.
- Urban areas & dwellings: Live capture cage traps (check daily)
- Rural/native habitat
  - SA cat trap - elevated on a ramp or tree limb
  - Timms trap - elevated on a ramp or tree limb
  - Modified Coni bear or Coni bear. Best in a cubby to prevent non-target capture.
  - Live capture cage traps (check daily)
  - PaPP bait for cats (Connovation). 3km neighbour notification & CSL req.
  - Shooting – eyes shine green at night in a spotlight

## Hedgehogs

- Use fresh bait i.e. fish, fat & cat biscuits, cat food, chicken, eggs
- Traps need to be on raised sets (ramps) to prevent non-target capture
- A24 traps
- DOC 200 and 250 traps (in tunnels/boxes)
- Leg hold traps – check every 24 hours
- Fenn traps under covers
- To be effective you need high density trapping (25m spacings)

# Fine tuning in the field

## Bait and lures

- Change baits every check. Salted baits need to be removed from the site as it is unpalatable.
- Vary the bait. Fresh rabbit (winter), salted rabbit (summer). Pilchards. Jelly meat or cat biscuits. Mince. Eggs. Blood and bone. Peanut butter for rats.
- Spray bottles with lures i.e. blood.
- Fresh soil disturbance.

## Maintenance

- Clearing around the trap i.e. hand clearing, spraying with herbicide
- Oil with Fisholine (odourless) or vegetable oil (wire brush first to avoid gumming). More often in coastal areas. Stainless traps just need wire brushing.
- Set the trap off every check. Use a 80g soft weight to check trap is triggering.
- Replace any broken or worn parts as needed.
- Hygiene is very important. Wear disposable gloves. To prevent the spread of disease i.e. Leptospirosis, Toxoplasmosis, and human scent on traps.

# Fine tuning in the field II

## Trap locations

- Look for natural corridors i.e. saddles/low points on a ridge, waterways, drains, bush margins, hedgerows/flax/*Astelia*, spurs/ridges, abundant fruiting/flowering plants.
- In areas of field sign
- In a small area shift a trap if it doesn't catch anything. The trap will need to be re-numbered and marked with a GPS.

## Reading field sign – look around you for evidence of your target animals

- Tracks – mud, sand, around water
- Scats, urine, scent
- Browse, bite marks, scratching
- Runs – natural pathways for animals
- Hair, fur or feathers
- Kills – broken eggs, carcass, bones
- Sightings of animals



# Vertebrate Toxic Agents (VTA)

- VTAs are substances designed to kill animals with back bones e.g. rats, stoats, rabbits, feral pigs and possums.
- Highly dangerous
- Use is controlled by several laws to protect people and the environment
- Information on VTAs - Product label and Safety Data Sheet (SDS)
- Rules for use include; bait colour, keeping people out of the area, keeping records of use, notification/signage, distance baits must be kept from waterways
- Approved handler is someone who has been certified to use very hazardous substances.
- You need to know; hazards of the VTA, how to protect people, operating equipment used, what to do in an emergency, and legislation.
- A person who does not hold the required Approved Handler Certificate or Controlled Substance Licence may work under the direct supervision (within sight and earshot) of a properly certified person

For information & application forms:

- [www.business.govt.nz/worksafe](http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe) Notifications & Forms Certification of People

# Controlled Substances License

- Required to use most hazardous VTAs.
- Ensures only qualified 'fit and proper' people can use them.
- Needed for; cyanide, phosphorus, PAPP, 1080, microencapsulated zinc phosphide, DRC 1339 (Starlicide), pindone soluble concentrate 34 g/l, magnesium and aluminium phosphide (>3kg pellets).
- You must be:
  - At least 17 years old
  - Need to use the VTA for your work
  - Be a 'fit and proper person' (NZ Police Consent to disclose)
  - Have an approved handler test certificate for the VTA
- Contact: Mark Savage, Environment Officer, Taranaki Regional Council  
0800 736 222 or [mark.savage@trc.govt.nz](mailto:mark.savage@trc.govt.nz)
- Wait as processed in groups of 10. Renewals and new licenses.
- Cost \$170
- Approved Handler Test Certificate issued by TRC
- Valid for five years