



**QEII National Trust**  
Open Space New Zealand  
Ngā Kairauhi Papa

REPORT TO QEII NATIONAL TRUST  
STEPHENSON FUND  
TSF201



Windy Hill Rosalie Bay Catchment Trust

May 2018

**429 Rosalie Bay Road**  
**RD1 Tryphena**  
**Great Barrier Island**  
**Telephone 09 429 0306**  
**email [lovebirds@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lovebirds@xtra.co.nz)**

The Windy Hill Rosalie Catchment Trust successfully applied for a \$20,000 grant from the QEII National Trust Stephenson Fund in June 2017.

The Trust's overall objective is to sustain and enhance the biodiversity of southern Great Barrier Island by removing invasive plants and animals creating a Sanctuary within which native species can flourish, threatened species can be protected, and species that have been lost to the Island reintroduced. The Windy Hill Sanctuary consists of 15 properties totalling 770 HA. Within the Sanctuary are three QEII Covenants – Little Windy Hill 116 HA, Speck 14HA, and Wheeler (Bell) 137HA.

The purpose of the funding was to meet the operational costs of employing a youth worker for our field team to undertake restoration work within the Covenanted areas and the larger Sanctuary. In September 2017, the Trust employed Abby Naismith for this role. Abby had previously been unemployed and at 18 years of age became the youngest member of our field team. Abby went through the first six months of his contract learning all aspects of pest management, species protections, weed identification and removal, and species monitoring with the Sanctuary field team. A new one year contract will ensure that training and upskilling will continue.



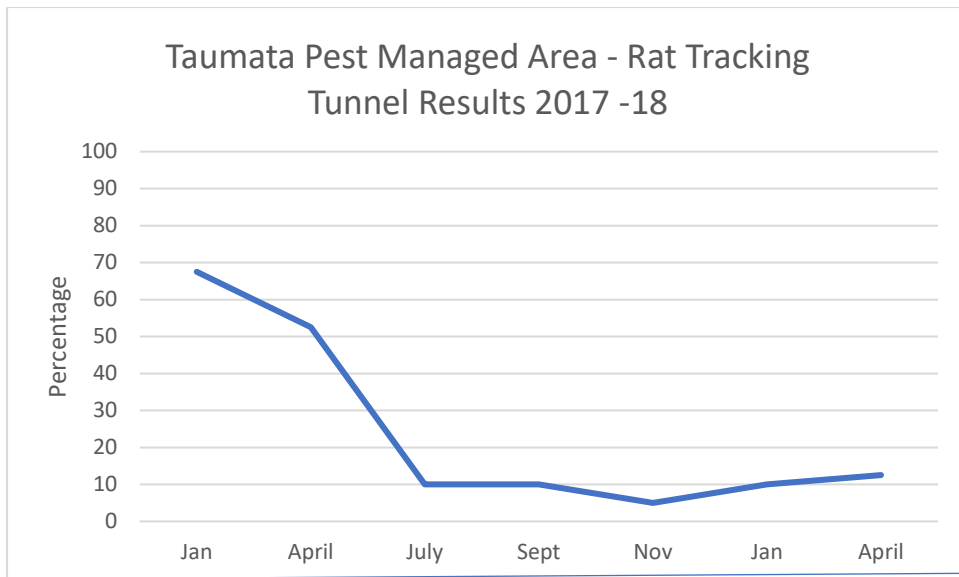
Abby Naismith

Abby has also learnt about being a reliable and conscientious field worker and how to work as part of a team. He has been fully briefed and continues to be involved in the Sanctuary's OSH programme and team toolbox meetings.

As a new area for the Sanctuary, much effort was focused on the Wheeler(Bell) covenanted area which is called the Taumata Pest Managed Area.

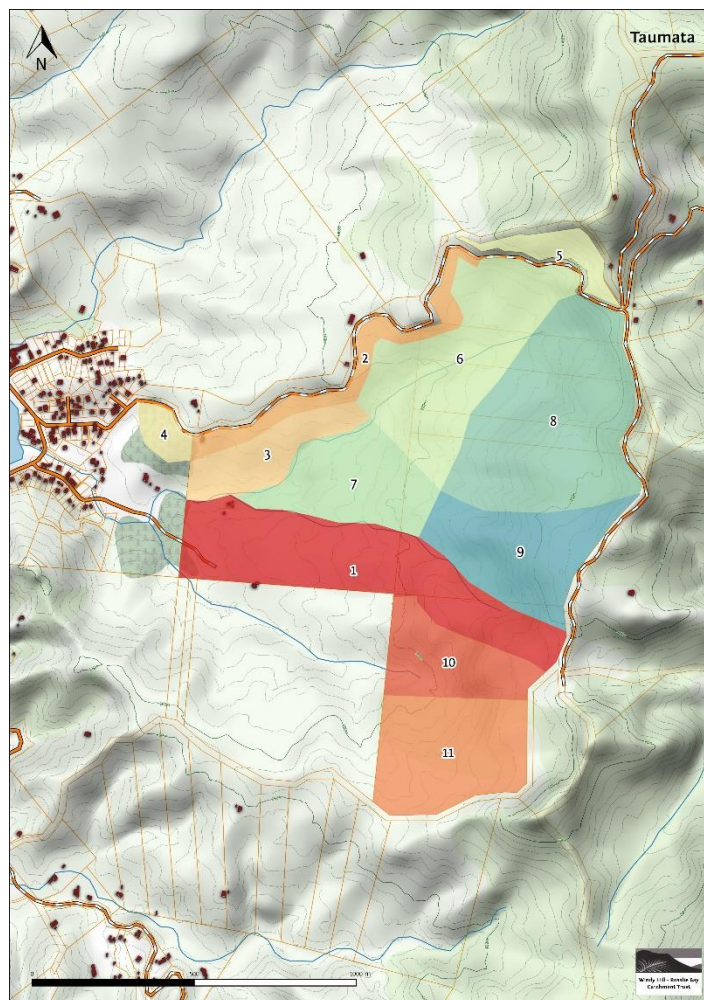
Management for rats began in Taumata in January 2017 utilising a new method of locating sites for bait using GPS and avoiding the cost of tracks and wooden stations by stapling baits into trees. Over the year there were three 'pulses' (when bait is put out and then fully retrieved) of RatAbate (diphacene) - two over six weeks and the third over one month. Bait in 150 gram bags was placed in a 25 x100 grid over the entire covenanted area. The pulses totalled just 16 weeks of the year with the remainder of the year not needing to be actively managed for rats. So, not only is the Trust researching cost effectiveness but also looking to reduce the amount of time that baits are present in the environment.

Over the year the field team undertook rat tracking tunnel monitoring and the graph below plots the success of this method from beginning baiting in January through to April 2018.



This method is being continued through 2018 and will be fully assessed at the end of that time.

Weeds were also a focus for management in Taumata. Hakea, gorse, blackberry, pampas, pines, and mexican devilweed were all identified and methods for removal of each weed identified. The area was broken into zones and work prioritised.



Wheeler (Bell) covenant zoned for weed management

Over 300 pines have already been poisoned and a good start made on the smaller weeds in zones 2, 3, and 11. Abby fully participated in all aspects of the Taumata pest managed area, in September and October, working alongside a team from Hillary Outdoors who undertook weeding in the Taumata area as part of their community work.

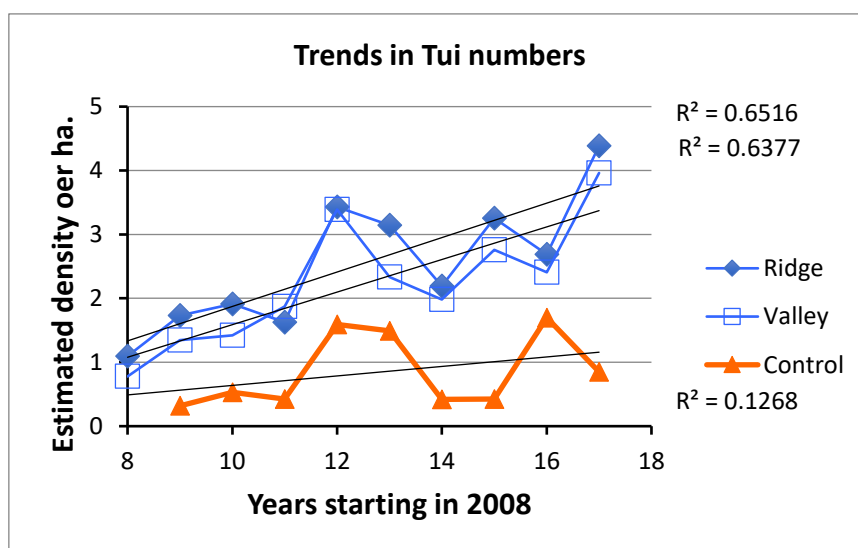


Abby (first left) with the Hillary Outdoors students

Within the Little Windy Hill and Speck (Benthorn Farm) covenanted areas integrated pest management continued. In 2017, 2543 rats and mice, 12 cats, 14 pigs, and 2 wasps nests were removed from the greater Windy Hill Sanctuary area.

A comprehensive monitoring programme is carried out to assess the response of native species to reduced predation and competition.

Bird Monitoring carried out in December 2017 shows the continued increase in tui, kaka and kereru. The graph below plots the rise over tuis compared to the unmanaged Control Site.



Monitoring of lizards, weta, invertebrates, seedlings, and freshwater stream species are carried out at specified intervals.

Birds abundance is the highest of anywhere on the island within the Sanctuary and elevated abundance of geckos and some skinks recorded compared to the unmanaged Control sites.

Abby has benefitted hugely from this employment opportunity and the Trust is highly appreciative of the support this generous Stephenson Fund grant has given to our ecological restoration programme within the covenanted areas and the greater Windy Hill Sanctuary. Thank you.

We look forward to hosting the QEII National Trust in the Sanctuary in May.

Judy Gilbert  
Trust Manager