



Goodnature Trap Project

Windy Hill Sanctuary, Great Barrier Island

Report 2 – July 12, 2016

293 Goodnature traps were put up in the Big Windy Hill Pest Managed Area between February 22 and 24, 2016. The programme requires that traps are checked monthly with bait refreshed and the trap set off to ensure its functionality.

Checks

1. **28-30 March** - 100% of traps functional. 16 ship rats, 2 kiore
2. **18-22 April** – 100% of traps functional , 6 ship rats
3. **23-26 May** – Not set off, 15 ship rats
4. **20-23 June** – 91% functional (gas failure – canisters replaced and trap fired), 6 ship rats, 3 possible kiore (small rats too decomposed to tell)

Two traps were set up in a Sanctuary garden area that has residential rails to check on by-kill possibility and checked every few days – none to date.



Find the 4 bodies...

Camera Interaction Recorded

Eleven cameras established randomly throughout the project area captured hours of footage between February and end of June. Two kills were recorded and following footage from one site showed a pig and a morepork scavenging the carcass.

The bulk of footage shows rats just passing by with little interest in the trap. From previous footage of rat interactions with the trap/bait station wooden boxes used throughout the Sanctuary this is not uncommon.

Rats that do explore the around the device often lick the bait off the tree, sniff the gas canister, climb over the device, and sniff up into the opening. Animals generally do quite a lot of investigation prior to putting their heads up into the device.

Other animals recorded included five cats, seven pigs, a black rabbit (deep in the bush), a morepork, and several blackbirds.

Cameras have now been removed.

Tracking Tunnel Results

25 tracking tunnels in the Big Windy pest managed area were monitored overnight between 4-7 April and again 4-7 July.

The result of **24% for July** was unchanged from the pre Goodnature January tracking tunnel index and the post Goodnature trap tracking tunnel monitor in April both 24%.

This was disappointing, however, it is not out of keeping with the elevated Tracking Tunnel results throughout the Sanctuary for July : by pest managed area – Windy Hill 15%, Rosalie Bay 30% , Benthorn Farm Bush 20% . Record numbers of rats have been trapped indicating elevated densities after such an exceptional growing summer season.

The next tracking tunnel run is planned for September which will be supported by additional chew card monitoring.

Summary

It is early days in this two year project.

While the tracking tunnel index of 24% was relatively high it is in keeping with the elevated results from the rest of the Sanctuary. The traps have been 91-100% reliable and kills are occurring well after the bait had been refreshed indicating acceptable longevity of the bait.

In August all gas canisters and bait pottles will be replaced. The bait will be replaced by the new self-baiting pottles design which is expected to keep dripping out bait for 6 months and reduce the number of checks required.

Judy Gilbert

Sanctuary Manager