

# Waitutu Field Trip Summary

26th - 1st June 2018



*Terry Greene*

*August 2018*

## Summary:

This report summarises the latest (May 2018) in a long-term series a quarterly monitoring trips at five sites (Poteriteri, Crombie, Waitutu, Slaughter Burn and Grant Burn) within Waitutu Forest. Rodent and mustelid monitoring was carried out, seed fall collected and all traps checked, cleared if necessary and rebaited. Trap checks and maintenance of all trap boxes (new lid attachment mechanisms, new screws fastening traps to box bases and new non-target baffles) in the Waitutu-Slaughter Burn area was carried out by a separate team immediately prior to this trip.

## Weather:

The weather started off very wet with high streams and rivers evident but by 28th May conditions had improved markedly and the remainder of the trip was notable for fine clear days and heavy frosts over night.

## Personnel:

**Poteriteri Hut:** Richard Earl, Nelson Chant

**Slaughter Burn Hut:** Terry Greene

**Grant Burn Biv:** Peter Lei

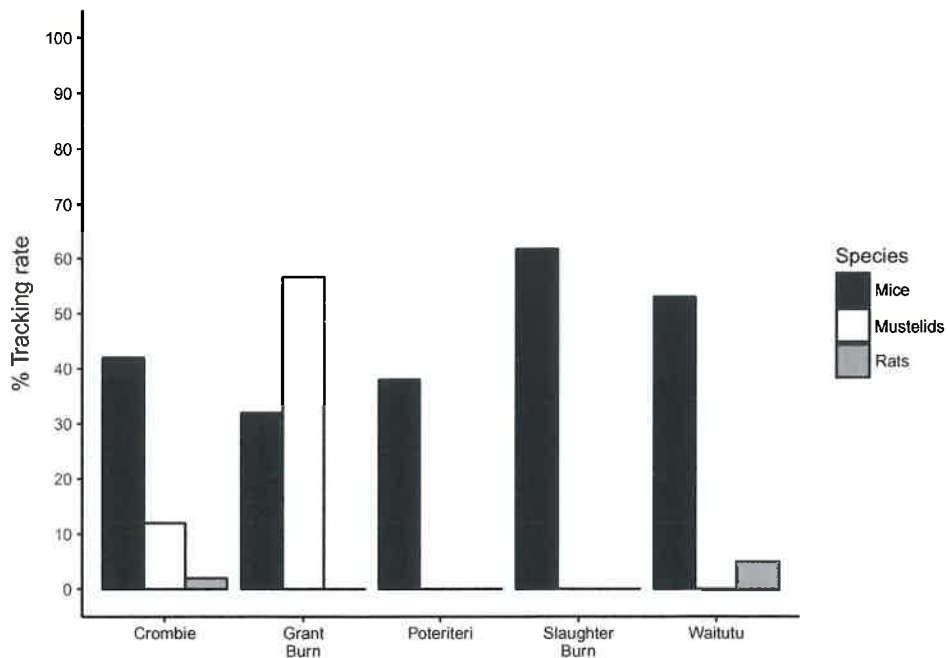
**Waitutu Hut:** Casie Heron, David Burlace

**Crombie Biv:** Stephen Macdonald

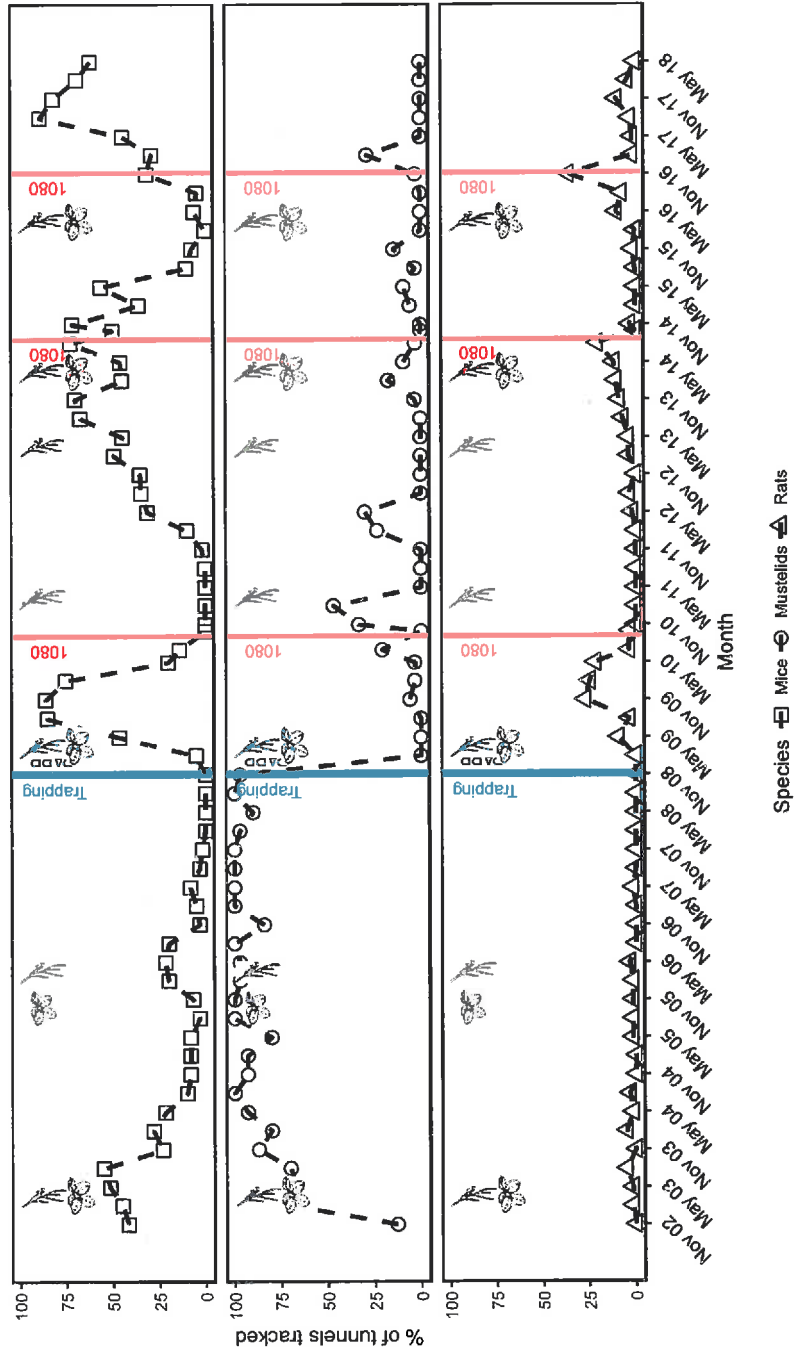
## Tracking Tunnels:

Mouse tracking activity at most sites had declined significantly since February 2018 but remained at similar levels at Slaughter Burn. Rat activity had declined even further at Poteriteri, Slaughter Burn and Grant Burn and was now undetectable. Rat activity remained very low at Crombie with a slight increase observed at Waitutu. Mustelid tracking was also very low and unable to be detected at Slaughter Burn, Waitutu or Poteriteri. Although mustelid tracking has declined at Grant Burn, detectable numbers of stoats and weasels were present with the tracking rate of stoats increasing in the Crombie area from 3% in February to 12% in May 2018. Possum interference at tunnels was also noted on two lines at both the Grant Burn and Slaughter Burn.

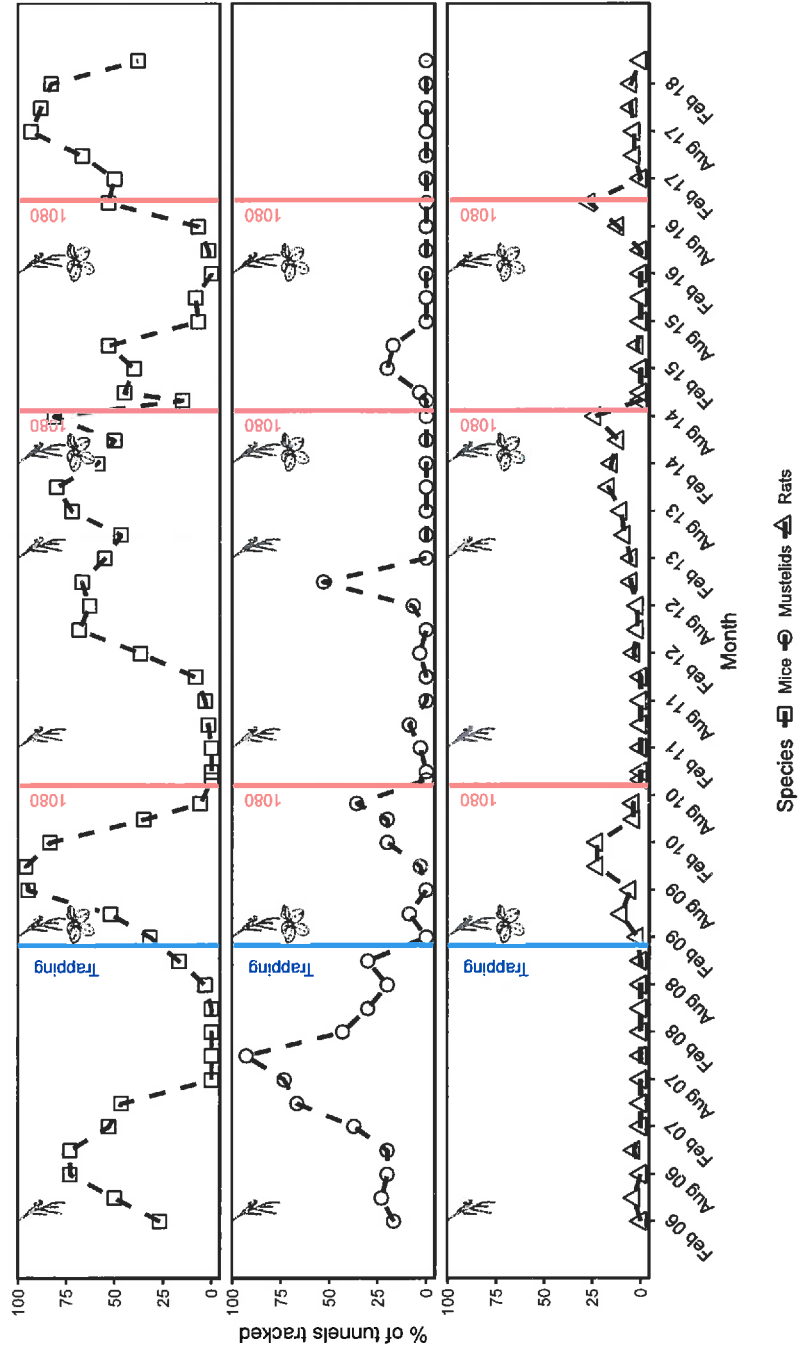
## May 2018 - All areas - % of tunnels tracked



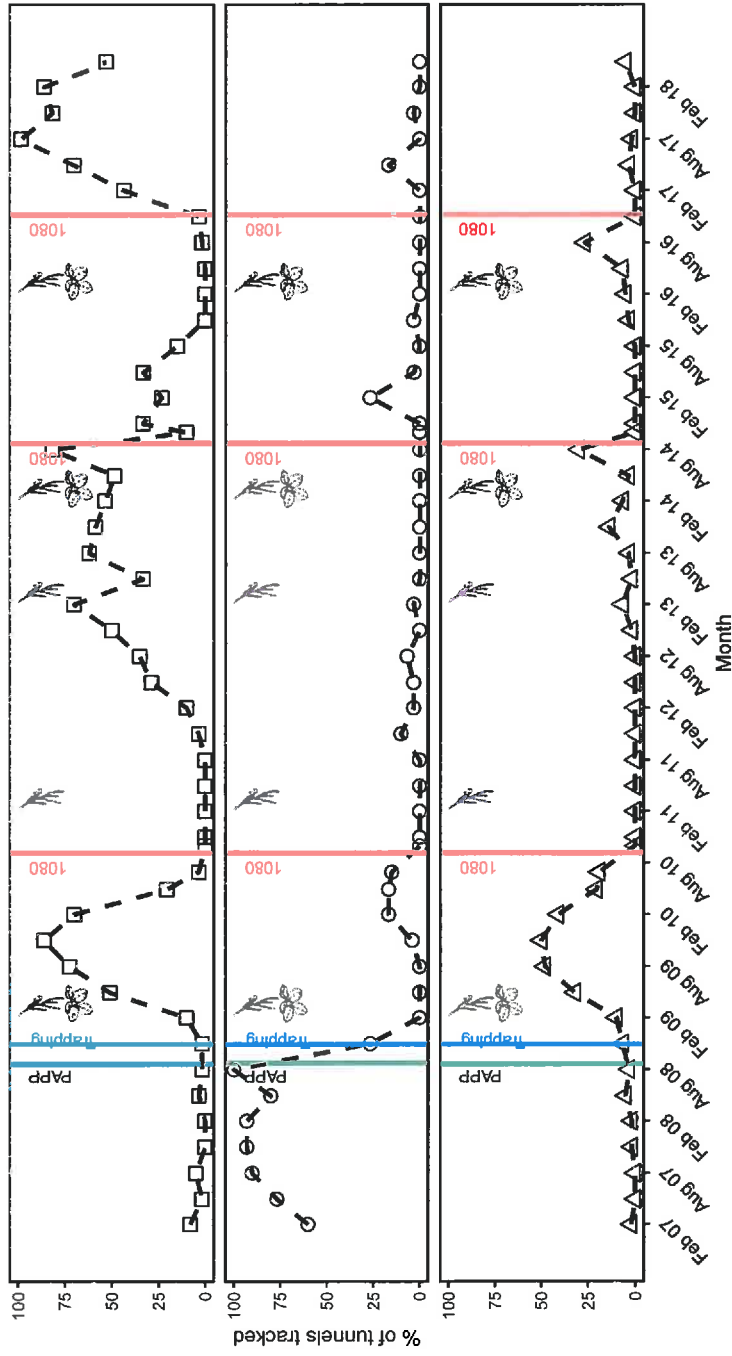
### Slaughter Burn - % of tunnels tracked



### Poteriteri - % of tunnels tracked

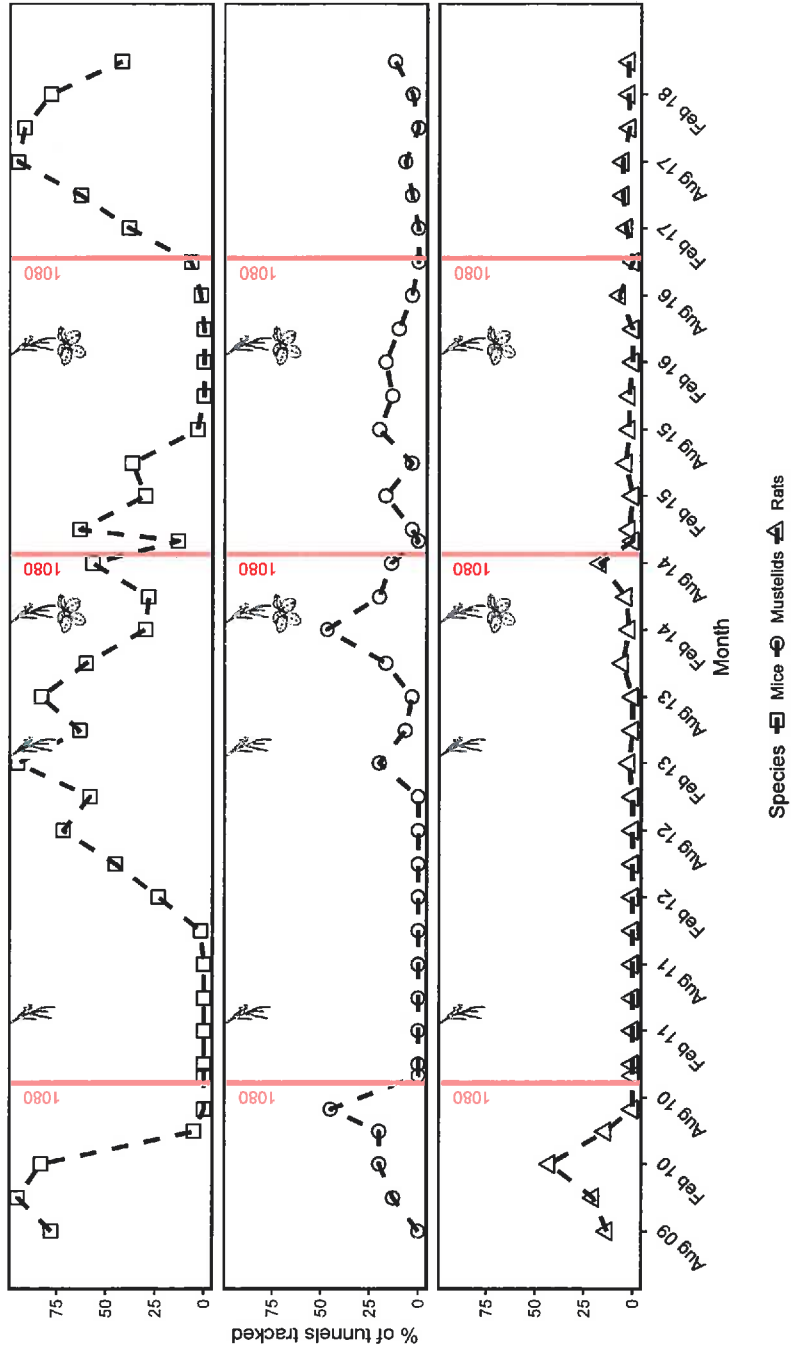


# Waitutu - % of tunnels tracked

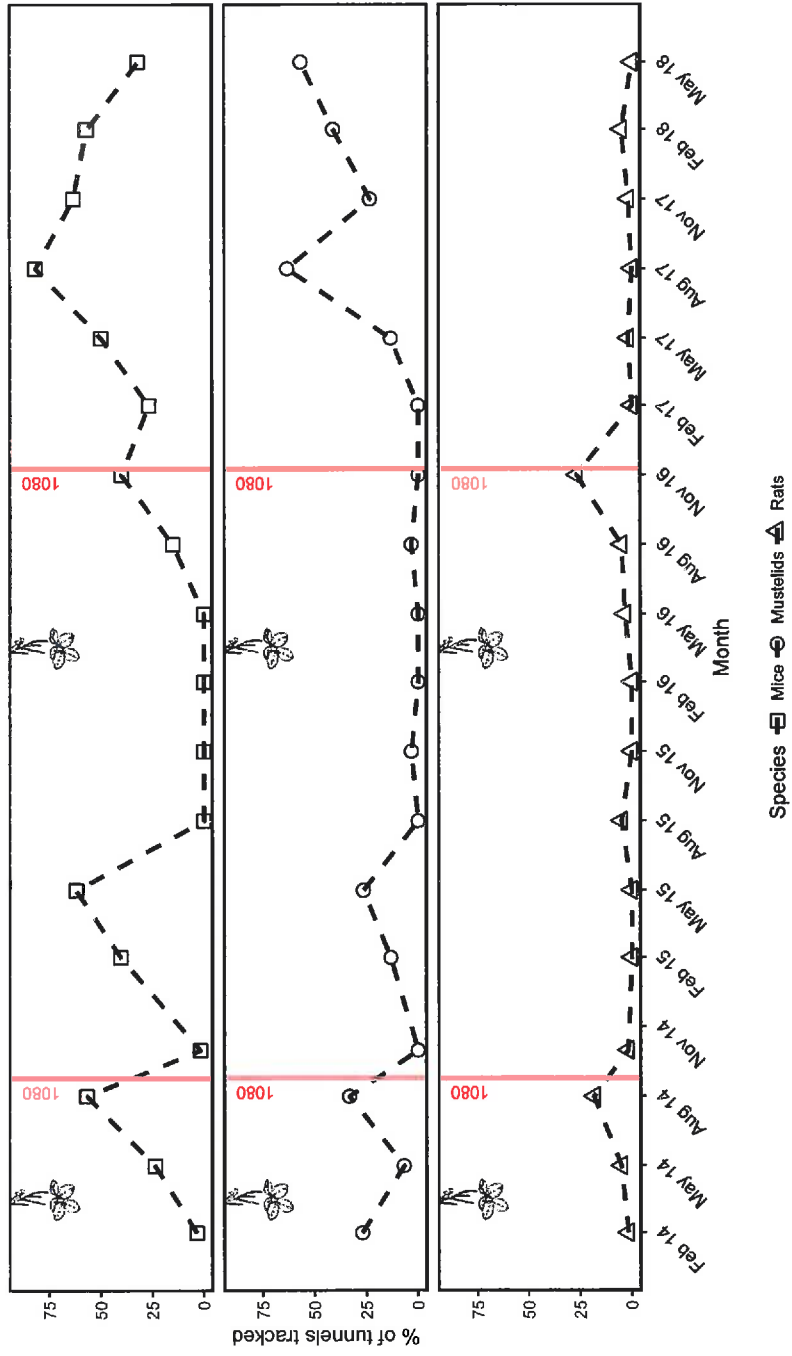


Species Mice Mustelids Rats

### Crombie - % of tunnels tracked



# Grant Burn - % of tunnels tracked



## Stoat traps:

Table 1: Animals trapped in this and previous quarterly check.

	Feb 2018			May 2018		
	Waitutu	Poteriteri	Total	Waitutu	Poteriteri	Total
No. of trap boxes checked	200	57	257	200	58	258
Mice	1	1	2	3	2	5
Rats	20	11	31	17	6	23
Stoats	20	9	29	23	9	32
Weasels	6	4	10	2	5	7
TOTAL	47	25	72	45	22	67

All stoat traps in the Poteriteri block were serviced and rebaited with fresh salted rabbit meat and a piece of 'Erase' bait. Waitutu and Slaughter Burn traps were checked and received a full service (new lid attachments, new non-target baffles and new screws holding each trap to the base) in the week immediately preceding this trip. Baits were also replaced with a mix of salted rabbit meat and 'Erase'. Fewer rats were caught this check in both blocks. Stoat and weasel catch rates remained very similar although weasel catch rates declined more at Waitutu. Presumably the relatively static numbers of mustelids being captured reflects the continued (though rapidly declining) abundance of mice being tracked in tracking tunnels.

## Bird lists for each site:

Kaka were seen at all sites and on most days but were generally quiet. Rifleman, grey warbler, bellbird, tui, fantail, tomtit and robin were commonly seen at all sites. A few juvenile ruru were encountered north of the Brown Burn at Poteriteri, and three pipits were seen along the lake front. A couple of long-tailed cuckoo were heard late evening and early morning at Poteriteri near the hut. A fernbird was seen in the scrub at the helipad by the Grant Burn Bivvy. Mohua were heard near TT line 2 in the Crombie.



## Other stuff.....

### Slaughter Burn

- Wet weather initially followed by sequential frosts.
- Birds very quiet.
- Hut robin has a taste for soap (or has a foul mouth).
- Two deer spooked and one seen
- Completed trimming WTR to hut track.

### Poteriteri

- Heaps of pig rooting throughout forest. Worst around TT line 1 and south around traps BL 2, 3 and 4.
- One pig shot numbers of others (including young) seen.
- Trap RV3 has been hit by a branch and needs fixing/replacing.
- Nice new bridge over the Black Burn
- Route from Trap R1 to S10 almost nonexistent and needs remarking with more permanent markers

### Waitutu

- More pigs seen near hut (two seen).
- Traps already sorted with additional maintenance.
- Some damage and repairs required to several seed rain funnels.
- Deer exclosures (including LCR at EWM) in good condition.

### Crombie

- One stag seen.
- Track trimming required between TT lines 5&4, 4&3 and in places 3&2
- TT line 5 rerouted to avoid increasingly wet and slippery gully in middle of line. TT 46-50 removed to new locations and route marked.
- Good route on GPS from Bivvy to TT line 5 for improved access to other side of circuit.

- Remaining tapes need removing and replacing with more permanent markers.
- Very cold and frosty.

### Grant Burn

- One stag deer seen 50 m from hut on coastal edge of bush.
- Buzzed by NZ Falcon on beach half way between Grant Burn and Aan River. Westies Hut visited - in OK condition.
- Possible Mohua heard but likely something else?
- Another rope rigged over Side Burn to help crossing.
- Some trimming of track and helipad vegetation.

Table 2: Birds seen at each site - Feb 2018

Species	Poteriteri	Crombie	SB	Y22	GB	Comment
SIPO	Y					
VOC						
Grey Duck						
Par. Shelduck			Y		Y	
Black Shag	Y		Y			
WF Heron						
NZ Falcon	Y		Y		Y	Single birds
Kereru	Y	Y	Y		Y	Common throughout
Kea	Y		Y	Y	Y	Commonly heard & seen
Kaka	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Relatively few seen/heard
YCP	Y					
Parakeet sp			Y	Y	Y	
Ruru	Y		Y			
Rifleman	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Grey Warbler	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Bellbird	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Tui	Y		Y			
Mohua					Y	
B Creeper	Y		Y	Y		
Fantail	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Common
Tomtit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Common
SI Robin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Common
Silvereye	Y		Y		Y	
Blackbird	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Song Thrush	Y					
Starling						
Chaffinch	Y					
Greenfinch						
Redpoll	Y					
SBBG					Y	
Pied Shag			Y	Y		
LT cuckoo						
Fernbird						
Dunnock			Y			
Black Swan						
Pipit					Y	On beach

