

Waitutu Field Trip Summary

November 2018



Terry Greene

February 2019

Summary:

This report summarises the latest (Nov 2018) in a long-term series of 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. In addition the annual bird counts on the Waitutu and Poteriteri count grids were also completed and acoustic recorders deployed for bats throughout the Waitutu grid.

Weather:

The weather was mixed. During the first week (14th-19th Nov) the initial period was fine, dry and warm but then changed to several days of wet weather which made counting birds difficult. The weather during the second week (19th-25th Nov) was much better and was generally fine and warm throughout.

Personnel:

Poteriteri Hut: James Mortimer, Rod Hay, Michael Jones, Paul Robbins

Slaughter Burn Hut: Peter Dilks

Grant Burn Biv: Jenny Rickett

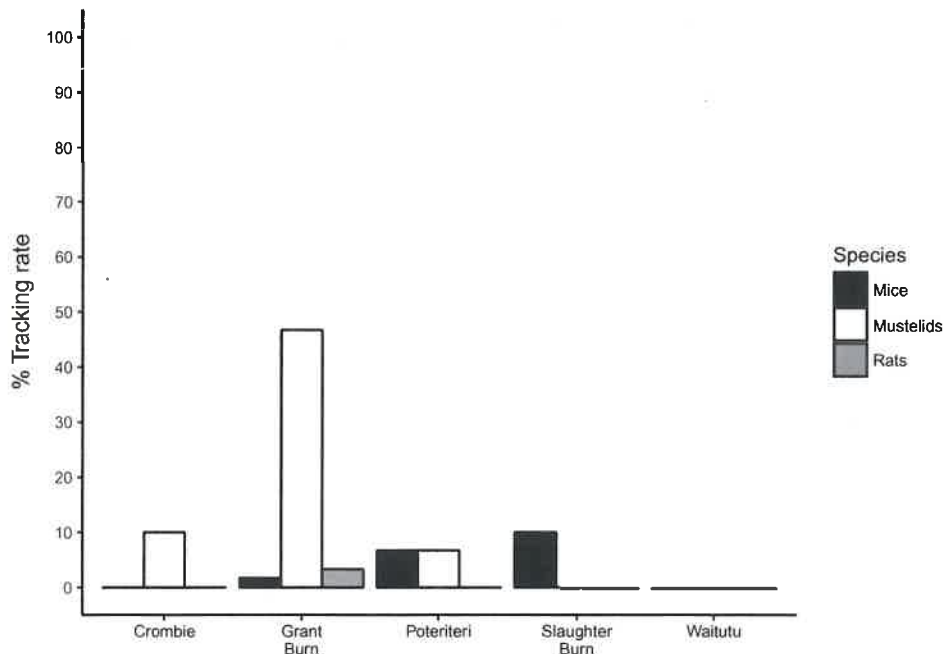
Waitutu Hut: Rose Collen, Moira Pryde, Jack Van Hal, Richard Earl

Crombie Biv: Stef Kirk

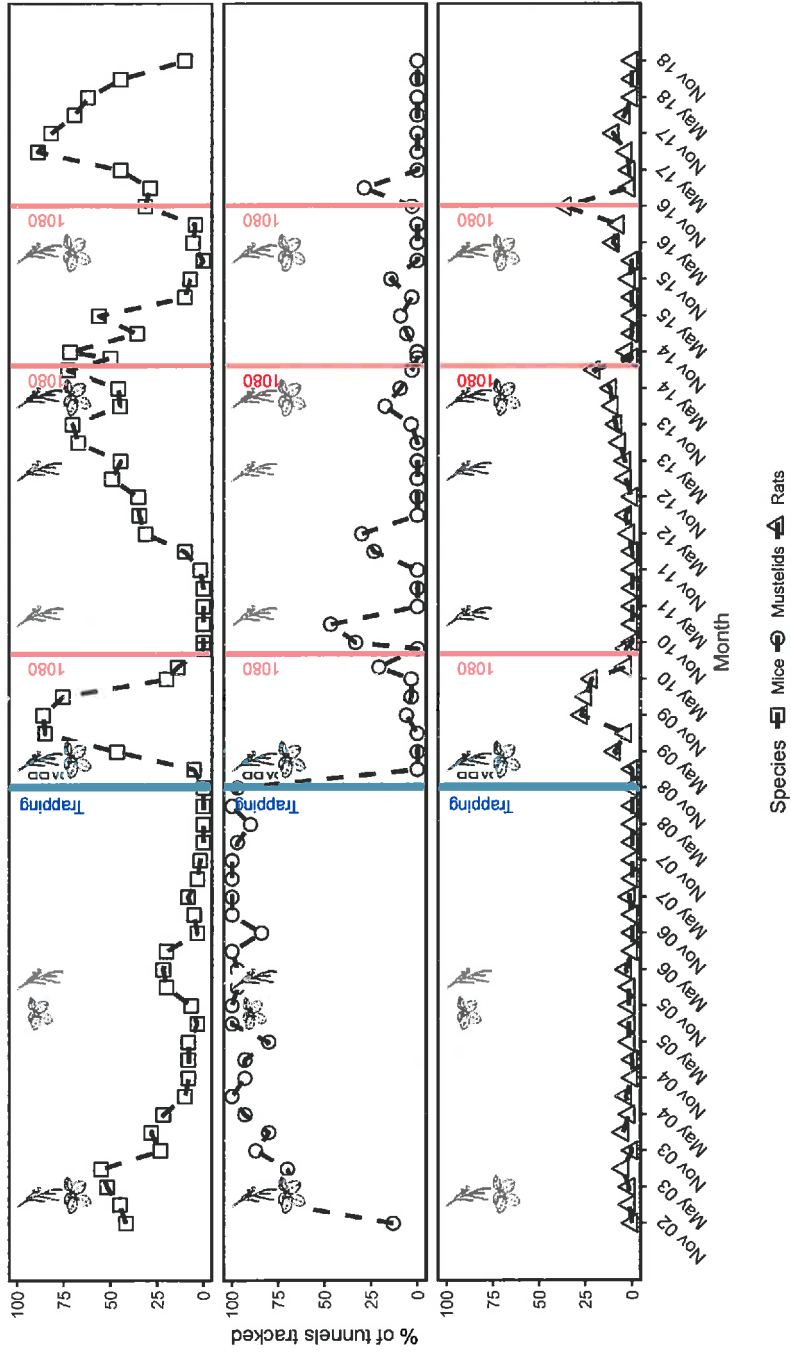
Tracking Tunnels:

Mouse tracking activity has continued to decline from the August 2018 trip. Mice were entirely absent from tracking tunnels in the Crombie, only two detected at the Grant Burn and one detected at Waitutu after the meat was put out. Few mice were also recorded at Poteriteri and Slaughter Burn making this visit one of the lowest for recorded mouse activity for some time. Rat activity was also very low. None were detected at the Crombie, Waitutu and Slaughter Burn sites and very few at Poteriteri and Grant Burn. Mustelid tracking was very low at Poteriteri and Crombie and entirely absent from Waitutu and Slaughter Burn. Tracking rates for mustelids at the Grant Burn remained very high and may well get worse as the impacts of the large mast event during the 2018/19 summer makes itself felt. Although the amount of possum interference was low it was nonetheless recorded at three of the five sites (Waitutu, Slaughter Burn and Grant Burn).

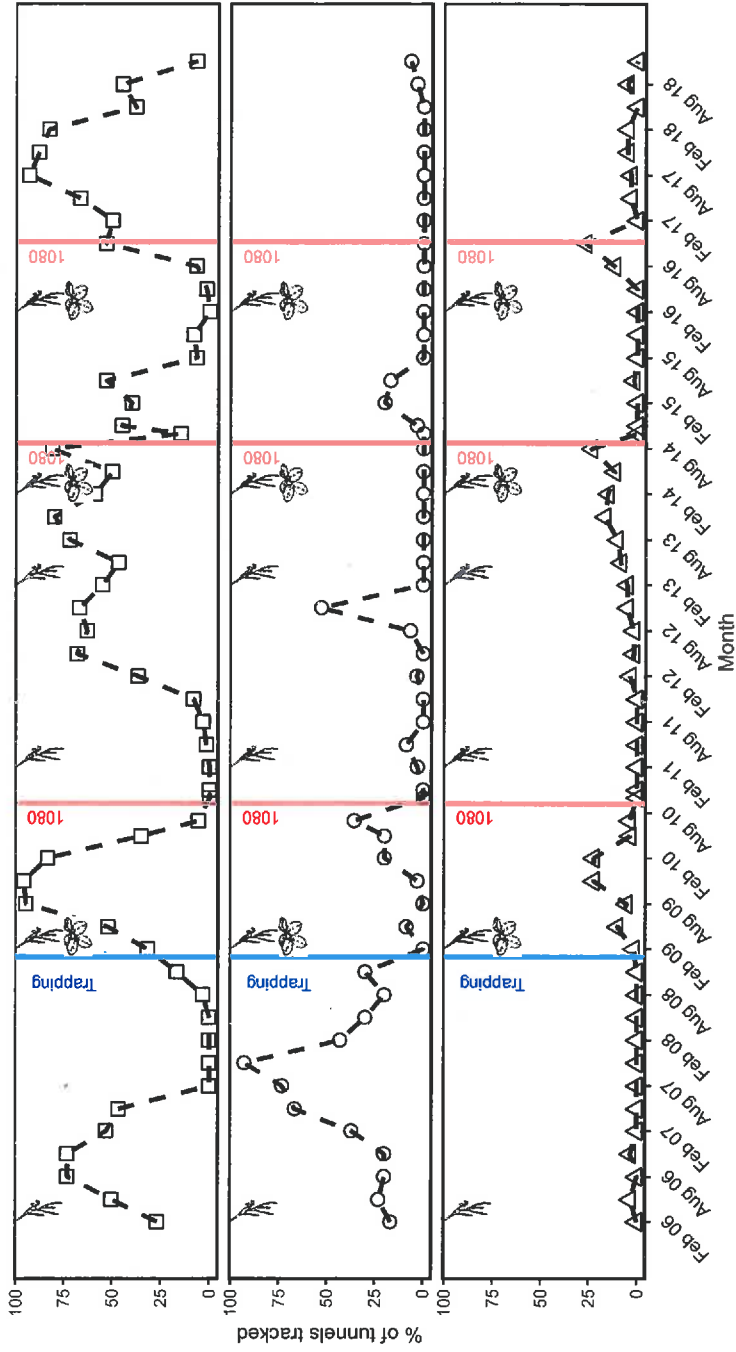
November 2018 - All areas - % of tunnels tracked



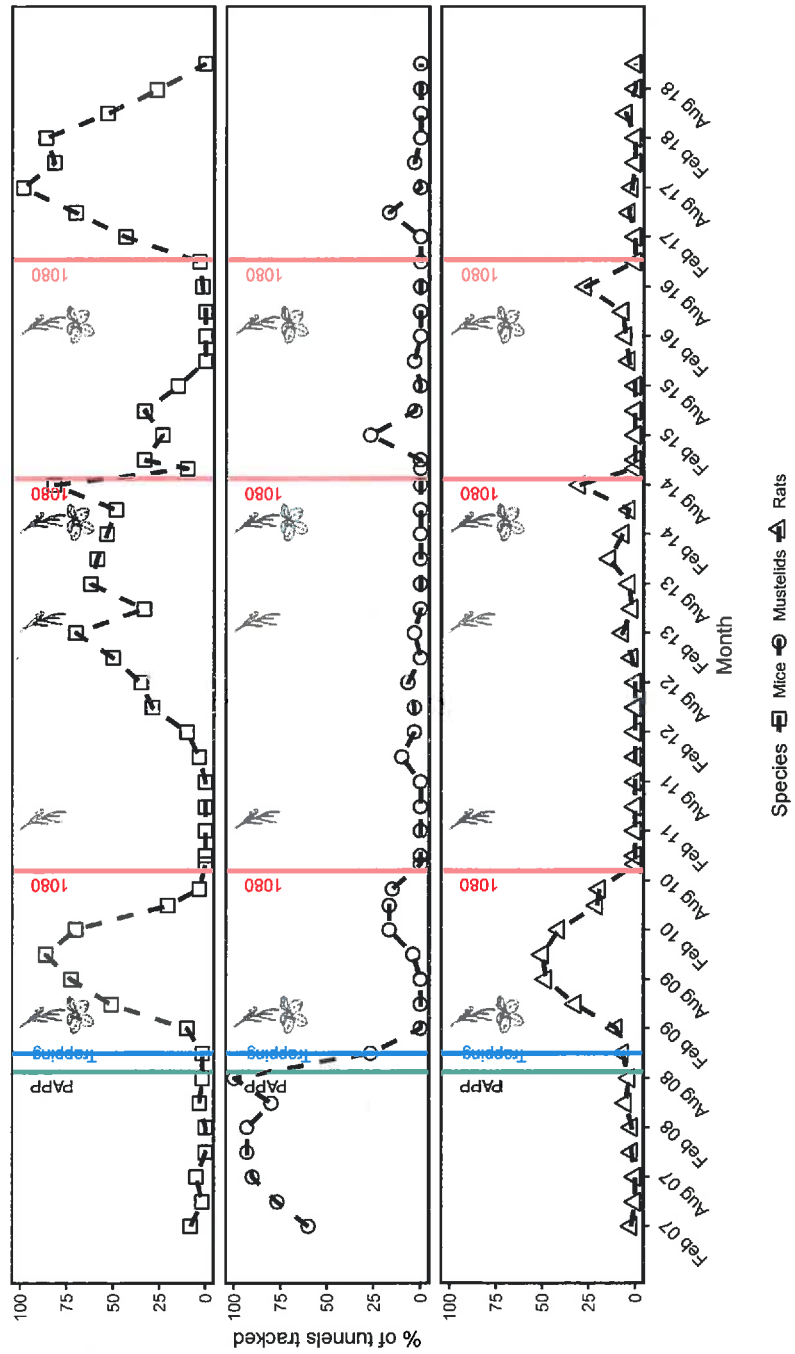
Slaughter Burn - % of tunnels tracked



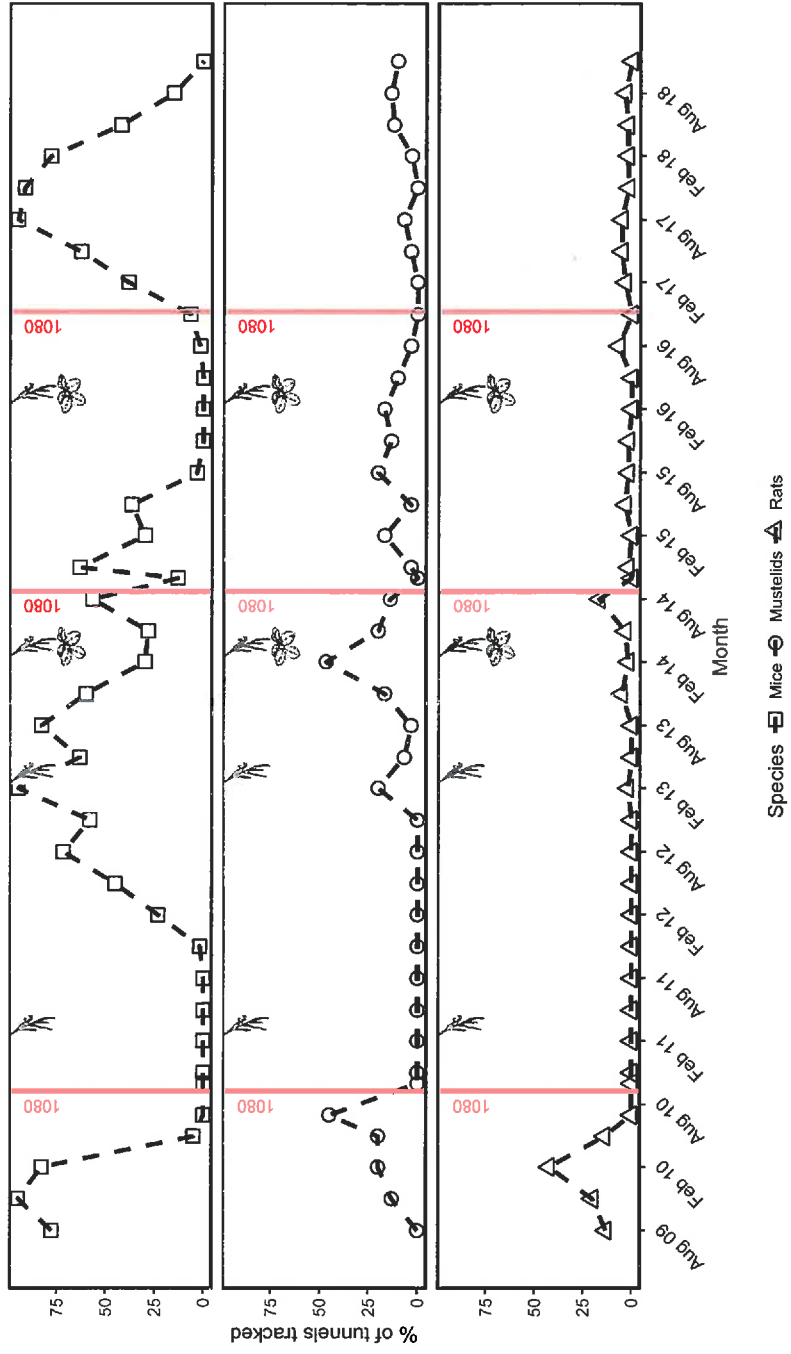
Poteriteri - % of tunnels tracked



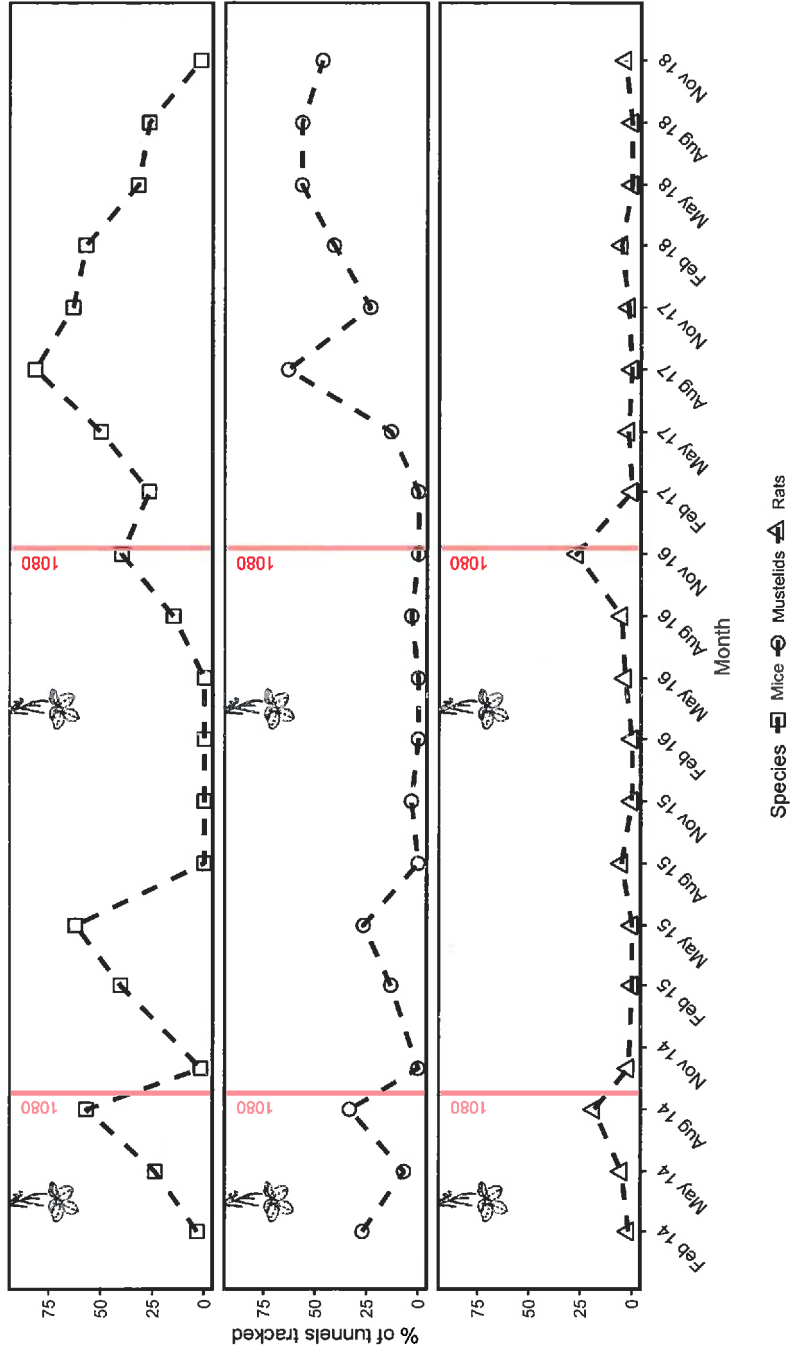
Waitutu - % of tunnels tracked



Crombie - % of tunnels tracked



Grant Burn - % of tunnels tracked



Stoat traps:

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

	Aug 2018			Nov 2018		
	Waitutu	Poteriteri	Total	Waitutu	Poteriteri	Total
No. of trap boxes checked	200	58	258	200	58	258
Mice	0	2	2	1	0	1
Rats	13	0	13	13	1	14
Stoats	9	6	15	2	2	4
Weasels	3	1	4	1	2	3
TOTAL	25	9	34	17	5	22

All stoat traps in the Poteriteri and Waitutu/Slaughter Burn blocks were checked and rebaited with fresh salted rabbit meat. The number of mice, rats and weasels captured in traps remained at very low levels seen in the August trap check in both blocks. In contrast, the number of stoats captured declined markedly despite this being the time of year when young stoats should be emerging from dens and dispersing.

Acoustic bat survey Waitutu block:

A comprehensive survey for bats within the coastal Waitutu bird count grid was conducted during the November visit. 46 acoustic recorders were deployed on either the 20/11/18 or the 21/11/18 throughout the grid and left out for three to four nights. This survey resulted in 176 bat detector nights that were suitable for detecting bats and recorded 18,916 files. Disappointingly no bats were detected during this survey (or any of the preceding surveys) despite the excellent conditions. It seems likely that bats have been entirely lost from the area or have been reduced to extremely low numbers.

Bird lists and annual counts:

Annual bird counts were conducted on the Poteriteri and Waitutu grids. Unfortunately the weather experienced at Poteriteri was less than ideal with persistent wet weather and is likely to impact on the numbers of birds recorded.

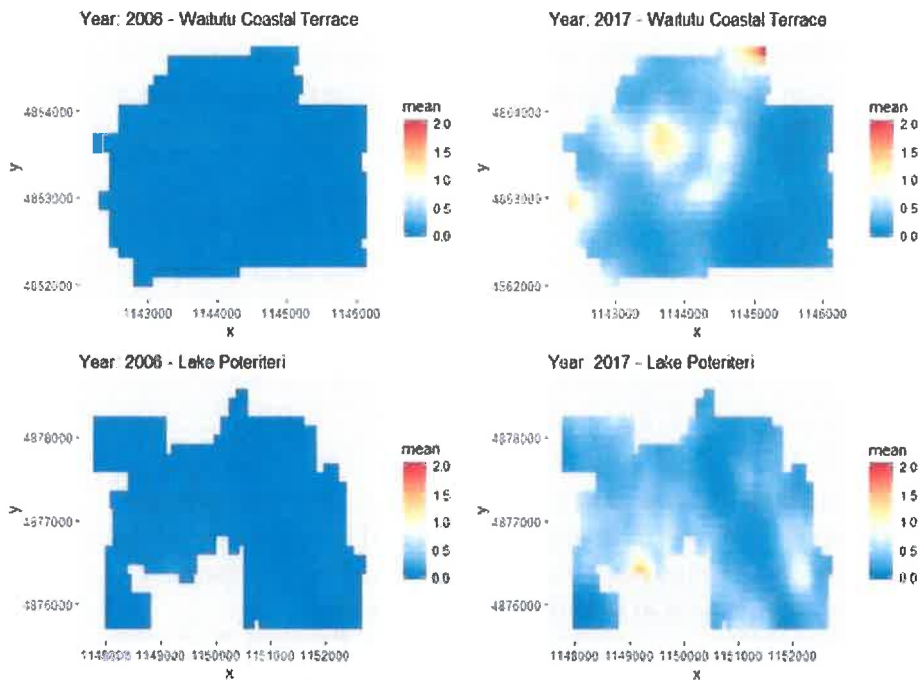


Figure 1: Spatial distribution of SI robins on Waitutu and Poteriteri grids in 2006 (before integrated pest control) and 2017 (following pest control)

Fortunately the weather was much improved for the Waitutu counts. Once the data from the 2018 counts have been entered preliminary analysis of all counts is scheduled to proceed with the view to eventual publication. An example of the output of the spatial modelling conducted on robins in both blocks is presented above.

Other stuff.....

Slaughter Burn

- An abundance of mistletoe flowers on the ground on the western side of the Waitutu river. Less on the other side of the river
- A stoat was seen at WTR23

- Significant fresh pig rooting on track below Slaughter Burn Hut, on the WWA grid and on the WTL line near trap 19
- 13 deer seen on the Slaughter Burn riverbed between the 20 Nov and 23 Nov 2019 - a record 7 seen on the 21 Nov. One other deer seen on WTR line sunning self in a clearing

Poteriteri

- Pig seen and shot. Deer seen.

Waitutu

- Deer seen at S17 and near South Coast track. No pigs seen
- Kea heard several times near M line and kaka very common
- Also commented on the abundance of mistletoe flowers
- Few fantails and long-tailed cuckoos about
- Suggested an extra person and an extra day be tacked on to trip to remark some of the bird count lines that are becoming difficult to follow.

Crombie

- Plenty of deer around the old deer pens. One shot near hut clearing.

Grant Burn

- Only significant comment was on the wet weather for much of the trip
- Sample to test for Didymo collected from Grant Burn
- Fantails very rare and no ruru heard or seen

Table 2: Birds seen at each site - Aug 2018

Species	Poteriteri	Crombie	SB	Y22	GB	Comment
SIPO						
VOC						
Grey Duck						
Par. Shelduck	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Black Shag	Y					
WF Heron						
NZ Falcon	Y			Y	Y	
Kereru	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Kea	Y		Y	Y	Y	Heard near M line Y22
Kaka	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
YCP		Y		Y		
Parakeet sp	Y			Y	Y	
Ruru	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Rifleman	Y			Y		
Grey Warbler	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Bellbird	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Tui	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Mohua		Y				Heard at Line 6 Crombie
B Creeper	Y		Y	Y		
Fantail	Y	Y		Y	Y	Low numbers - heard once GB
Tomtit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
SI Robin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Silvereye	Y			Y		
Blackbird	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Song Thrush	Y		Y	Y		
Starling						
Chaffinch	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Greenfinch	Y			Y		
Redpoll	Y					
SBBG				Y	Y	
Pied Shag						
LT cuckoo	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Fernbird						
Dunnock	Y			Y		
Black Swan	Y					
Pipit						
Shining cuckoo	Y			Y	Y	
Welcome swallow	Y	11				
Scaup	Y					

Waitutu Field Trip Summary

December 2018

Jenny Rickett
December 2018

Summary:

In response to the upcoming 2018/19 mast season extra trapping trips have been planned to help protect nesting kaka and other forest birds from predators. Traps were checked, cleared and rebaited between the 17-20th Dec in Waitutu and Poteriteri.

Volunteers also undertook an un-scheduled one-night rodent tracking tunnel monitor at Grant-Burn hut.

Weather:

The weather was hot and dry for the entirety of the trip, with just a light shower on one evening. The forest was very dry with most creeks and streams dried up.

Personnel:

Poteriteri Hut: Casie Heron
Slaughterburn Hut: Stef Kirk
Waitutu Hut: Jenny Rickett
Grant-Burn Hut: Mathew Greene and Elissa Mah

Bird Lists:

Kaka were seen and heard at all sites each day. A kea was heard flying over Slaughterburn hut and a ruru was present each night. Falcon were heard twice around the Waitutu hut but not at other sites. Bellbird, tui, tomtit, robins, kereru and grey warbler were regularly heard at all sites. Fantail were also recorded at each site, being more conspicuous than in the Nov trip. Canada geese were observed on Lake Poteriteri near the hut (4 in the morning, 10 in the evening) on the 19th. They were also heard at Slaughterburn hut on the 17th and a flock of 12 observed flying overhead on the 19th. Two black swan were observed on Lake Poteriteri.

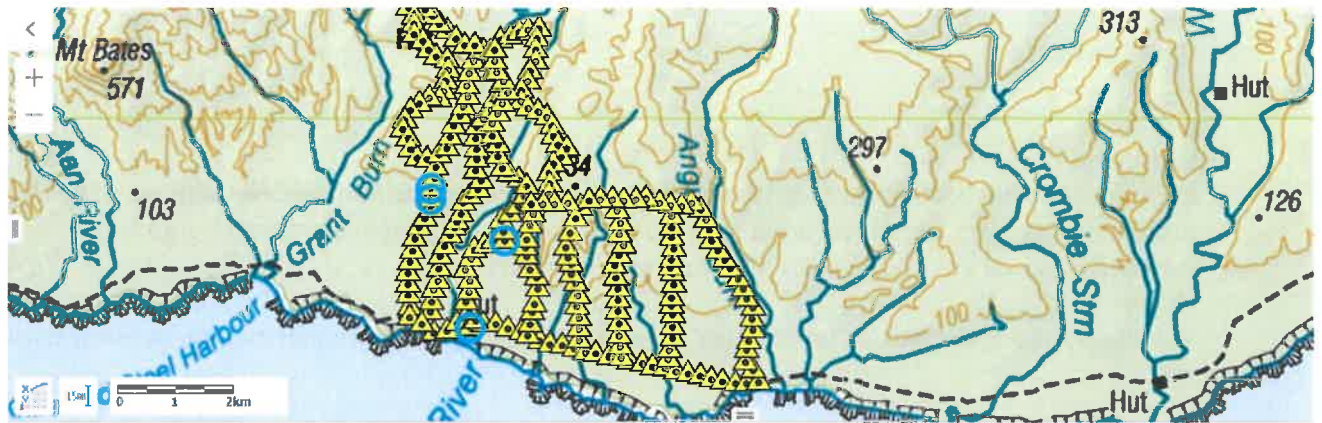
Grant-Burn rodent tracking tunnels:

Volunteers undertook an un-scheduled one-night rodent tracking tunnel monitor at Grant-Burn hut on the night of xx.

SPECIES TRACKED	DEC # OF TUNNELS	DEC % OF TUNNELS	NOV # OF TUNNELS	NOV % OF TUNNELS
POSSUM	16	26.7	2	3.3
MUSTELID	15	25	20	33.3
MICE	4	6.7	2	3.3
RATS	0	0	1	1.6

Stoat traps:

All stoat traps* were checked, cleared and rebaited with salted rabbit. Trap catches are indicated on the below maps via the blue circles.



Trap Records (4)

Area	Line	Tag No	Trap 1	Trap 2	Date Checked	Baited With	Baited On	Status
Waitutu	South Coast Line	SC7	Rat	Weasel	17 December 2018 5:11 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 December 2018 5:11 PM	Open
Waitutu	Terrace	TCE11	Stoat	Still Set	18 December 2018 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	18 December 2018 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	Terrace	TCE12	Stoat	Still Set	18 December 2018 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	18 December 2018 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	Waitutu True Left	WTL11	Rat	Still Set	17 December 2018 11:39 AM	Salted Rabbit	17 December 2018 11:39 AM	Open

*New Slaughterburn and Afterburn lines are not yet functional despite being shown on the above map



Trap Records (3)

Area	Line	Tag No	Trap 1	Trap 2	Date Checked	Baited With	Baited On	Status
Poteriteri	Ridge Line	R10	Mouse	Still Set	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Open
Poteriteri	South Line	S7	Stoat	Still Set	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Open
Poteriteri	South Line	S8	Stoat	Still Set	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 December 2018 12:00 PM	Open

Maintenance/Other:

Slaughterburn:

- New Slaughterburn trap line marked with yellow triangles from SB7 to SB20
- New Slaughterburn trap line marked with pink flagging tape from hut to SB7 and from SB 20- TCE 14

- Remainder of Slaughterburn trap line and all of Afterbrn trap line require marking with yellow triangles
- Need some orange triangles to tidy up track marking from hut to bridge
- WTL needs a good trim and extra yellow triangles down to trap 18
- TCE needs some trimming and yellow triangles from TVE 23-26
- WTR needs extra yellow triangles from WTR 20-the bridge

Waitutu:

- L54 & L55 need quite a bit or remarking with yellow triangles
- L56 & AB line much improved but could do with a little bit more yellow triangles

Poteriteri:

- Tracks much improved
- More yellow triangles needed for S-Line and S-Line end of TT line 6

Waitutu Field Trip Summary

January 2019

Jenny Rickett
February 2019

Summary:

In response to the upcoming 2018/19 mast season extra trapping trips have been planned to help protect nesting kaka and other forest birds from predators. Traps were checked, cleared and rebaited between the 15th and 17th January 2019 in Waitutu, Slaughter-burn and Poteriteri.

At Slaughter-burn the new traplines continued to be marked with yellow triangles ready for trap placement.

Weather:

The weather was mixed through the trip with some clear days and some wet.

Personnel:

Poteriteri Hut: Stephen MacDonald

Slaughter-burn Hut: Rose Collen

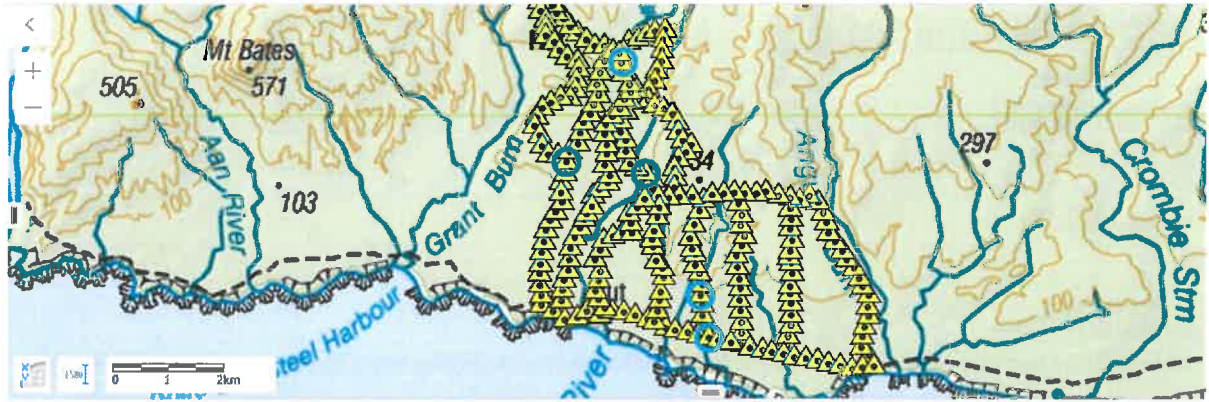
Waitutu Hut: Hamish Barrow

Bird Lists:

Robins, tomtit, kereru, bellbird, warbler, tui and brown creeper heard regularly everywhere. 1 kea heard in the Slaughter-burn area. Lot's of kaka heard at all sites. Canadian geese where again seen on Lake Poteriteri (8 seen) and 11 seen downstream from Slaughter-burn hut.

Stoat traps:

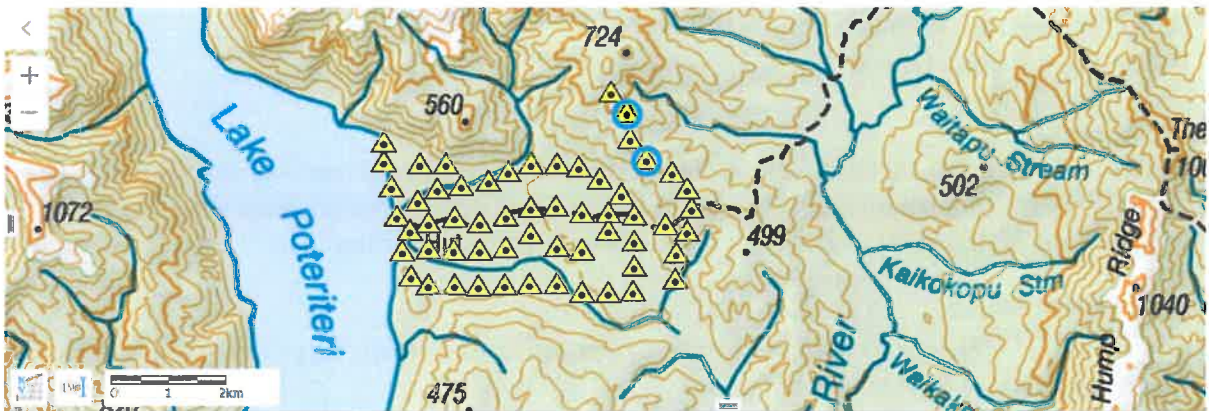
All stoat traps* were checked, cleared and rebaited with salted rabbit. Trap catches are indicated on the below maps via the blue circles.



Trap Records (5)

Area	Line	Tag No	Trap 1	Trap 2	Date Checked	Baited With	Baited On	Status
Waitutu	54 Line	54L4	Rat	Rat	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	South Coast Line	SC16	Rat	Still Set	17 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	Terrace	TCE14	Ship Rat	Still Set	17 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	17 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	Waitutu True Left	WTL18	Ship Rat	Ship Rat	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open
Waitutu	Waitutu True Left	WTL30	Stoat	Still Set	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	16 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open

*New Slaughterburn and Afterburn lines are not yet functional despite being shown on the above map



Trap Records (2)

Area	Line	Tag No	Trap 1	Trap 2	Date Checked	Baited With	Baited On	Status
Poteriteri	Ridge Line	R7	Stoat	Still Set	15 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	15 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open
Poteriteri	Ridge Line	R9	Stoat	Still Set	15 January 2019 12:00 PM	Salted Rabbit	15 January 2019 12:00 PM	Open

Maintenance/Other:

Slaughter-burn:

- SB2- - SB22 need yellow triangles, currently marked with pink flagging tape
- Afterburn line needs marking with yellow triangles from AF21 – AF24, currently marked with pink flagging tape
- Need some orange triangles to tidy up track marking from hut to bridge
- WTL needs a good trim and extra yellow triangles down to trap 18
- TCE needs some trimming and yellow triangles from TVE 23-26
- WTR needs extra yellow triangles from WTR 20-the bridge

Waitutu:

- L54 & L55 need quite a bit of remarking with yellow triangles
- L56 & AB line much improved but could do with a few more yellow triangles

Poteriteri:

- RV3 old trap still at site. Needs returning to base
- R5 needs new 13mm bolt as is broken out of the side and doesn't close properly
- S3 trap box lid split in two. Needs replacing

