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Arapaoa Kiwi Trust News

May 2025



ARAPAOA KIWI TRUST
MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

Great start to 2025 - Our Project Manager's Update

Last year we had a big year installing an additional 500 traps across the whole length of the island. This year another 250 traps, equipment and various baits are planned to be installed for Stage 4 thus giving the project approximately 1300 traps and 60 cameras by the end of the year. Stage 4 will start to fill in the gaps in the trap coverage and the identified areas requiring a higher density of traps. This will make a huge difference to the stoat population going forward.

We currently have 1032 traps and 49 cameras installed. These are all serviced monthly by our team of part-time contractors and volunteers.

We are now starting to see a difference in the stoat population. There are a few areas we believe where we have caught the resident populations and are now just catching the occasional transitory stoat passing through. The number of these areas will increase as we continue.

Our thanks to the recent funding received from The Rata Foundation and Pub Charity. Both of these organisations make a big contribution to our annual funding. We are currently waiting for the decisions on a number of other grant applications, and also talking with new potential sponsors. Fundraising is a never-ending job and we are very grateful to our funders and sponsors.

This map shows the current trap locations in red -



Current Trap Count

Total traps	Stoats Caught	Others caught (eg rats)
1032 (1022)	277 (221)	1274 (1040)

Figures in brackets are from Jan 2025

Cameras	Camera Nights	Stoats Seen	Cats Seen
48	28,189	96	719

Trail Cameras & Landcare Research

We have just completed our feral cat monitoring project with Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research and are currently redeploying our trail cameras right across the island on all our trap lines. This will give us a good idea as to the remaining population of stoats and cats and where we need to increase our trap density.

(with ink paper) for pest monitoring, but tracking tunnels are not so great for monitoring stoats (and don't work for cats). Right from the start of the project, we were advised to use trail cameras for our monitoring. Check out our latest [YouTube video](#) to see what they see. Unfortunately, our cameras are not cheap by the time you have to buy 2 sets of batteries, SD cards, etc, as well. We service the cameras about every 2 months - checking the batteries, changing the SD card and adding more fish oil to the lure.



A huge thank you to The Rata Foundation for another year of operational funding, fantastic! This funding supports the project administration and operations as we head into our 4th year of trapping and monitoring.



THANK YOU to Pub Charity who has partially funded Stage 4 traps this year. This is fantastic!

Arapaoa Island. The birds are very inquisitive and want to stick their head into everything. They are attracted to all the lures we use for stoats and cats.

The traps we use are all designed extra long to prevent the weka sticking their long necks in and getting caught. We have to use a grill at the end of the trap with a hole small enough to prevent weka getting in. You may notice much shorter traps used in other projects around the country - they don't have to worry about weka.

Our cat traps all have to be mounted high up off the ground (1.2m) with a steep ramp to prevent weka getting in. So this means we have to build a platform for the cage traps up high. This makes it much harder for us to site, as well as less attractive to any cat.

From the latest [YouTube video](#), you can see that the weka are very attracted to our camera lure. Often 90% of the camera images are of weka.



In the first couple of years, we installed around 100 A24 self resetting traps as part of the network. We are now in the process of removing them as we are finding them not that effective for trapping stoats. We had to mount them up high (1.2m) and place a ramp leading up to it, to prevent weka getting killed by the traps. This makes the traps much less attractive to the stoats. They did work well for rats, but they are also expensive to maintain with lures, gas and batteries.



[Thank you](#) to our **Waikawa Boat Club Volunteers**

The Waikawa Boat Club volunteers are now monitoring the Wharehunga Bay, Double Bay, Ngaruru Bay and Hitaua Bay traps.

Please get in contact with [Steve Dawson](#) should you wish to be part of our volunteer group.





Cats

What do we see on our trail cams?

We have a network of around 50 trail cameras around Arapaoa Island to monitor stoats and feral cats. But we see quite a bit more. Here are 6 weeks of images compressed into 3 minutes 45 seconds. Check out our latest [YouTube video](#)

Visit our Website

We have refreshed and updated our [website](#) with our thanks to Craig Brand.

Subscribe to our Facebook Page

We have a [Facebook](#) page and would love it if you followed us and share our posts.

Thank you to our grant organisations who annually provide us with funding and to our local sponsors who support the project:



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Meet Arapaoa Kiwi Trust Team

Steve Dawson - is the Project Leader, Volunteer and Founding Trustee. Steve is retired and lives in Waikawa. Steve is a coastguard volunteer and is also Past Commodore of Waikawa Boat Club. Steve owns a classic wooden launch and is passionate about boating and the Marlborough Sounds.

Email steve@arapaoakiwi.org.nz



Mark Denize – Founding Trustee. Retired, has lived in Stingray Bay, East Bay, Arapaoa Island since 2001. Mark is actively involved in local conservation including Forest regeneration carbon credits, predator trapping and much more. Email markdenize@gmail.com



Ben Wybourne – Founding Trustee. Lives in Murchison and also in East Bay on the island. Email bluewave@mshop.co.nz



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Marlborough Sounds, its environment and loves to hike and sail.

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