

# BLACK SWAMP BUFFER ZONE

## PREDATOR CONTROL PROJECT (Issue 3 | March 2021)

Kia ora koutou, and welcome to our third BSBZ quarterly newsletter.

Well, six months in and we have already reached a huge milestone – trapping over 100 pests throughout Black Swamp!

Many thanks to those who have been recording your trap catches via Trap.NZ.

**We currently have 12 stoats, 51 rats, 11 possums, 40 hedgehogs and 1 mouse recorded, totaling 115 pests trapped to date.**

Excitingly, we are already beginning to see wildlife return in areas with well-established trapping. Banded rail and Fernbird are increasingly encountered in wetlands in and around Tara iti, so keep an eye or ear out for these reclusive birds.

Banded rail in particular may prove to be quite interesting if they successfully recolonise Black Swamps wetlands. Although once common throughout New Zealand, due to habitat loss and mammalian predators they are now restricted to pockets of salt marsh and mangroves in harbours of the upper North Island, and Nelson.

They likely utilised a much greater range of habitats in the past such as inland freshwater wetlands, but this use remains poorly investigated. If the species does make a comeback here, it may provide opportunities for further research and a better understanding of how to care for this secretive wetland species.

From March until July we move into our ‘winter season’ for trapping, and only need to check and rebait traps once per month. Of course you can continue to check them more frequently.

Quite a few stoats have been spotted around the Coal Hill Road area, with one neighbor spotting a group of five running through their yard, and another had a stoat walk across their deck!

Keep that bait fresh and hopefully this lot will encounter a trap in the neighborhood soon.



Photo by JJ Harrison

The At-Risk Banded rail



12 Mustelids



11 Possums



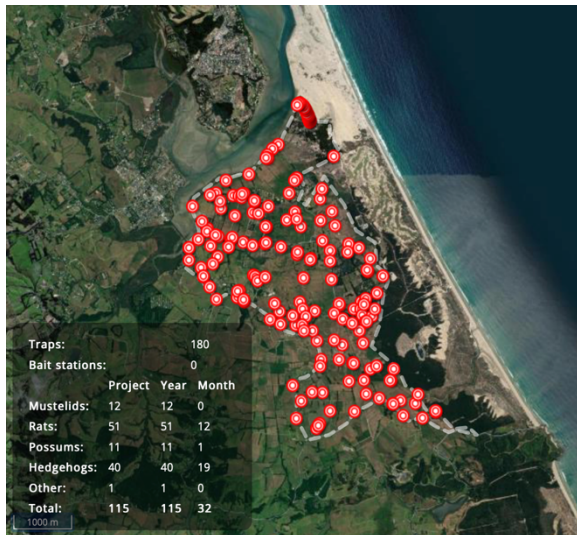
40 Hedgehogs



51 Rats

By the time our next quarterly newsletter reaches you we will hopefully have begun the expansion of predator control south into Tomarata-Te Arai and Pakiri. We're excited for these communities to get involved, and to create more safe habitat for our native wildlife to flourish.

We are also working on a website where you can access information about the predator control zones, the biodiversity we are protecting, resources for trapping, newsletters, and all things conservation in our area. I can't wait to have this ready for you!



We now have 180 traps set and ready to tackle invasive predators within our community!

If you're not using the Trap.NZ app or website ([www.trap.nz](http://www.trap.nz)) to record your catch data, you can text, call or email your records through to me.

As always if you have any issues, questions or need assistance with trapping contact me any time.

But for now, happy trapping, and thanks again for helping keep the wildlife in our community safe from invasive predators.

Ngā mihi, Alex.

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### CONTACT:

Name: Alex Flavell-Johnson  
 Phone: 021 065 9969  
 Email: [conservation@taraiti.com](mailto:conservation@taraiti.com)



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