



Vision

The forests and beaches of Abel Tasman are once again filled with the birdsong that awakens and delights visitors.

Kia whakaoho te mauri o te Ata-hapara. Kia rongu, Kia Kite, Ki te reo koro tui o Te Tai tapu

Trapping Report - August 2018 by Alistair Sheat

Overview

Traps are checked by Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers twice per month. The results from trap checking are recorded and entered into the DOC “Animal Pests – Trapping” internet-based application that allows systematic recording of trapping results, data analysis and reporting of rats and mustelids (stoats or weasels) caught by volunteers. The trapping database has recently been updated with new ways of presenting data as presented in this report.

A total of 102 mustelids and 1,572 rats have been caught by Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers since August 2015 when records first were stored in the database. Historic records show that between October 2010 and August 2015, 158 mustelids and 2156 rats were caught, making a **grand total of 260 mustelids and 3,728 rats caught since October 2010.**

May to August 2018 Trapping Results

Trapping results for the four months of May to August 2018 (table 1) show 153 rats and 5 mustelids were caught.

Table 1: Mustelids and rats trapped for May to August 2018

Line	Mustelids	Rats	Average Percent Rats Per Month Per Total Trap boxes	No of Trap Boxes on Line
A	0	79	16	127
B	0	7	4	39
C	1	7	8	23
H31/1 to H31/12	1	4	8	12
H1 to H62	0	27	11	62
Marahau	1	9	20	11
Stilwell	0	10	11	22
Tinline	0	4	13	8
Pitt Head	2	6	5	32
Lines Combined	5	153	12	336

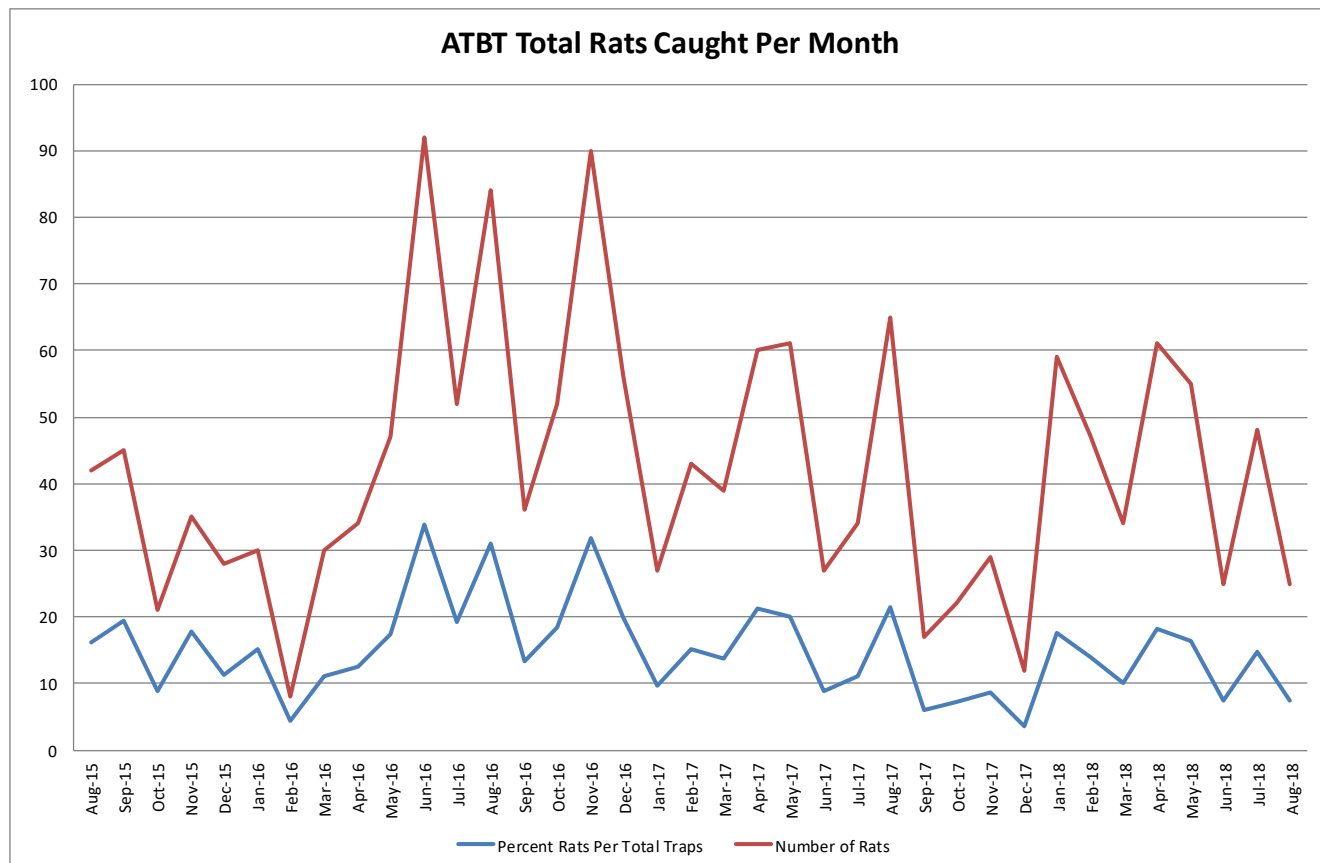
Note: The rats and mustelids noted as caught are from checking traps twice during the month, except for Stillwell and Pitt Head lines that are checked monthly.

Pitt Head and Torrent Bay A24 Trapping

All A24 traps have been through the 5-year maintenance and are back in service. A total of 325 Goodnature A24 self-resetting traps are now in operation across Pitt Head and Torrent Bay.

Question 1: What is the trend in rat numbers caught by ATBT volunteers?

The chart below shows the monthly % rats caught per total trap boxes (blue line) and rat numbers caught per month (red line) since August 2015.



The chart shows the rat catch continues with the up and down pattern.

Trap additions since August 2015

The increase in the number of rats caught, particularly since December 2015, would be in part due to more trap boxes in operation as in the table below. An additional **204** traps from Anchorage to Awaroa have been added to Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteer responsibilities. These will be reported at a later date.

Date	Location	Number of Boxes	Trap type
Pre Dec 2015	A, B, C, H	211	Single set DOC150, H1-11 double set DOC150
December 2015	H12 to H62	50	Double set DOC150
March 2016	H31/1 to H31/12	12	Double set DOC150
October 2016	B32 to B39	8	Single set DOC150
May 2017	SW1 to SW22	22	11 run through double set and 11 ZIP double set
Nov 2017	PH1 to PH32	32	Double set DOC150 Pitt Head stoat line
Total additional		125	
Grand total traps		336	

Question 2: Where were rats caught in May to August 2018?

The map below where rats were caught over the four months May to August 2018. Numbers in red circles represent clusters of rats caught in adjacent traps. Green triangles indicate only one rat caught in a trap.

Figure 4: Rats trapped May to August 2018

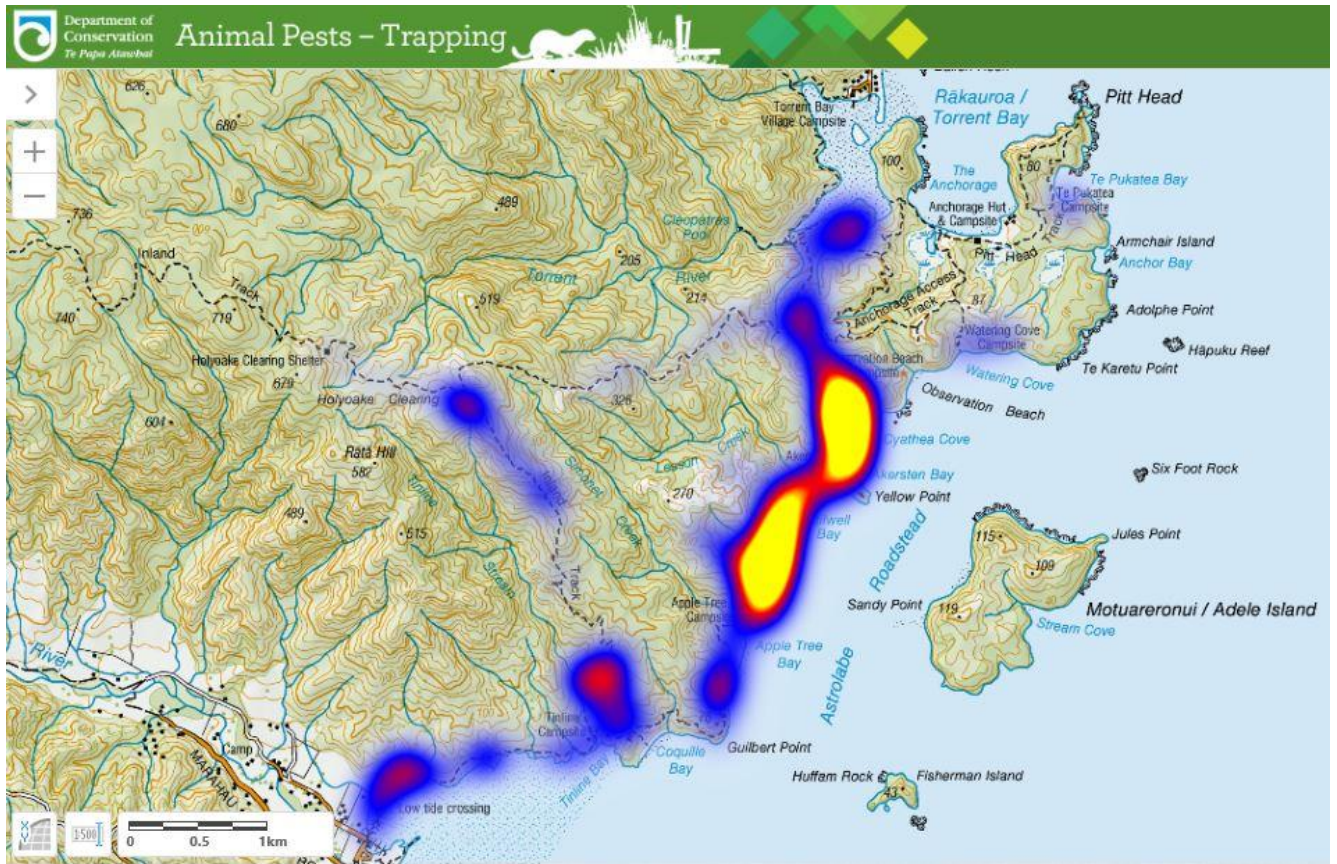


The cluster map shows in the last four months the highest density of rats caught were along the Coastal Track between Apple Tree Bay and Cyathea Cove with the highest cluster density above Cyathea Cove.

Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust has applied for a Lottery Grant called “Heart of the Park” for extending the current A24 trapping network. The extended network will include the area behind Cyathea Cove so it is hoped that this network will reduce the number of rats caught along that part of the Coastal Track. This should help both birdlife in the area as well as reduce the risk of predators crossing the Astrolabe and invading Adele Island.

Over the four months, eight rats were caught on the Pitt Head and C lines well within the Pitt Head A24 network area.

Another way of representing the trapping data via the DOC “Animal Pests – Trapping” internet-based application is a “heat map”. The heat map also shows where the highest density of rats from Apple Tree Bay to Cyathea Cove. Yellow colour indicates the highest density of rats caught, whereas blue colour indicates lower densities.



Possum Control

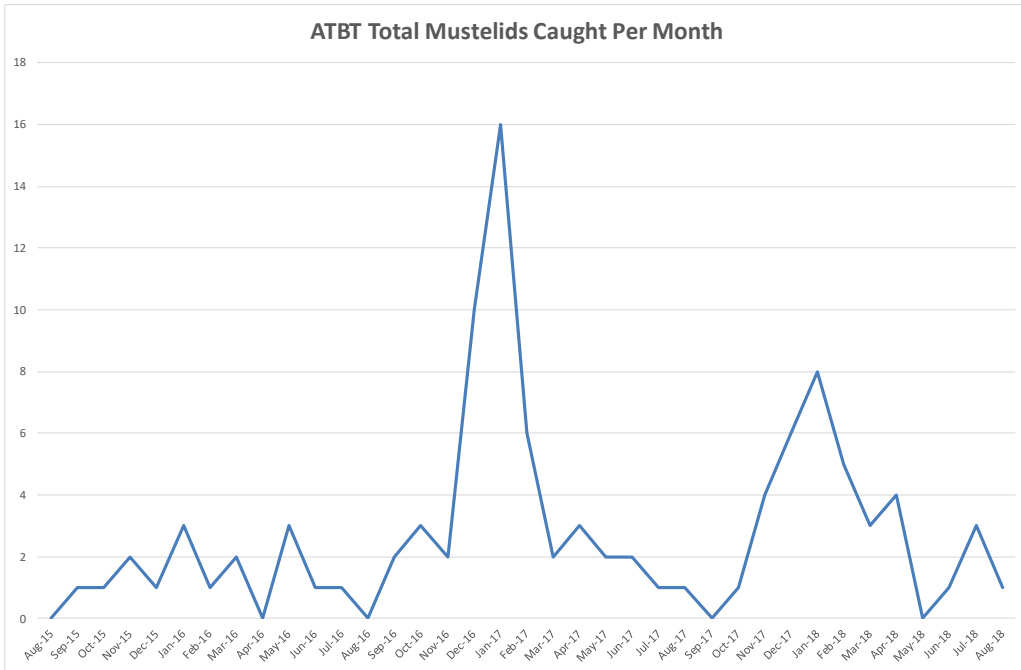
Following possum ‘hot spot’ locations from the Wax Tag survey results completed in August to November 2017, **Nine** possums were caught in the four months May to August 2018 making a total of **28** possums since December 2017.

Figure 5: Possums trapped May to August 2018 (Green triangles represent single possum captures)



Question 3: What is the trend in mustelid numbers caught?

Chart 2: ATBT total mustelids trapped per month from August 2015.



Mustelid numbers caught show a similar pattern compared to 2016. The peak in mustelids caught is in January 2018, similar to 2017, but lower numbers.

Question 2: Where were mustelids caught?

Figure 6: Mustelids trapped May to August 2018



Two stoats caught on Pitt Head. Three others scattered (Observation Beach, Holyoake Clearing, Marahau).

Why we take care of Abel Tasman National Park

Parklands school visit – tree planting and learning about predator control

The next generation of volunteers!!



Pointing out trap A1



Planting a beech tree at the beginning of Tinline Nature walk



For the birds as well



Banded rail (and next generation) in the Marahau estuary (photo by Craig Martin)



Bellbird – Korimako above Akersten Beach (photo by Alistair)

Fantail – Piwakawaka near Tinline (photo by Alistair)



Acknowledgements

A special thanks to all the Birdsong Trust volunteers who give their time checking traps (and acting as impromptu visitor advisors, guides, and promoters of Birdsong Trust work). Abby Butler (Volunteer Coordinator and adviser). Sian Reynolds and Jim Livingstone (DOC partners and advisers including PJ Pest Report, maps and trapping app advice). Andrew Macalister and Helen Lindsay (Project Janszoon (PJ) partners and advisers), water taxi companies for carrying volunteers into the Park, and finally to all the Park visitors who show interest and support for all the work of the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust.

Appendix: Map of trapping network in Abel Tasman National Park

