



Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust

Trapping Report – December 2016

Introduction

Traps are checked and baited by Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers approximately twice per month. The results for trap checking are recorded and entered into the DOC designed “Animal Pests – Trapping” internet based application. The trapping application is a Geographical Information System (GIS) that allows systematic recording of trapping results, data analysis and reporting of rats and stoats caught by volunteers.

October to December 2016 Trapping Results

Trapping results for the months of October to December 2016 (table 1) show 198 rats and 13 stoats/weasels were caught. This is up from 172 rats and 3 stoats/weasels caught in the previous 3 months. The 13 of stoats/weasels caught is a very large increase. The percentage rats caught per month per total traps is becoming quite variable with C line at the highest rate (see chart below).

Table 1: Stoats or weasels and rats trapped for October to December 2016

Line	Stoats /Weasels	Rats	Average % Rats Per Month Per Total Traps	No of Traps on Line
A	2	100	26	127
B	1	25	21	38
C	1	26	38	23
H31/1 to H31/12	3	8	22	12
H1 to H62	5	32	17	62
Marahau	1	3	9	10
Tinline	0	4	17	8
Lines Combined	13	198	23%	282

Overall, 31 stoats/weasels and 782 rats have been caught Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust volunteers since August 2015 (when records first were stored in the database).

Note that the rats noted as caught are from checking traps twice during the month.

Pitt Head/Anchorage A24

The Pitt Head traps have had a very quiet time during the period with very low scores on strike counters and also very few gas cylinders requiring replacement so the two main clues to activity say there are not many rats and mice in the trapped area. Tracking tunnel checks tend to confirm this view with persistent rat prints in tunnels lying outside or on the edge of our trapped area and none at all inside.

This month 5 new traps were set up down toward the coast between Anchor Bay and Watering Cove to try and intercept pests coming along the coastline.

The lure is being changed to peanut butter for the next 6 months with Erayz in every 5th trap (hoping for a stoat).

The next planned part of the project is to double the current 120 hectare area of A24 traps by putting new lines slightly inland toward the coastal track and north through Torrent Bay to link between the Falls river project traps and bait stations operated by Project Janszoon and the coast.

Possum Control

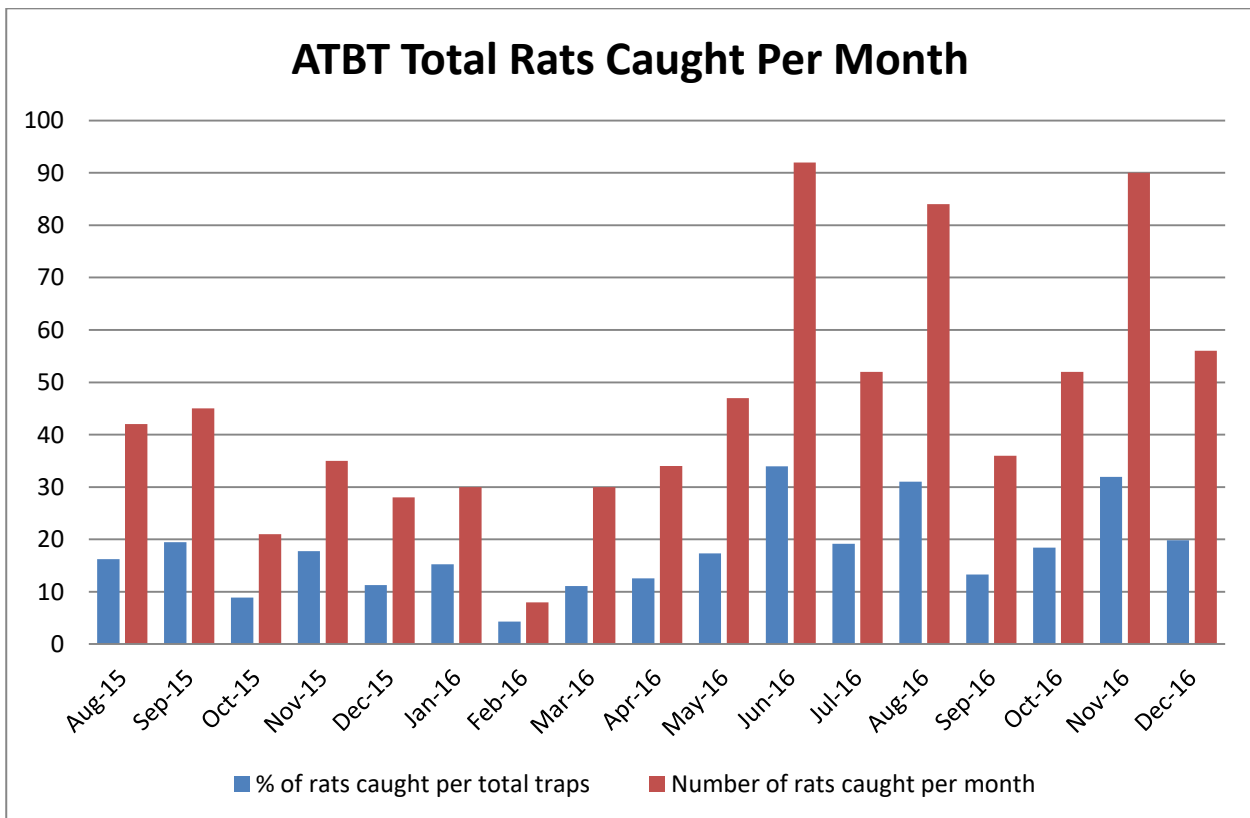
Following the Wax Tag survey, six new “volunteer friendly” Trapinator possum traps were installed in early November adjacent to existing Sentinel possum traps from A55 to A60. Both traps were baited with FeraFeed. To date only one possum has been caught at A56 in one of the Sentinel traps.

Question 1: Are rat numbers increasing relative to previous months?

The chart below shows the monthly % rats caught per total traps and rat numbers caught per month since August 2015 when data was first entered into “Animal Pests – Trapping” database.

Note that trap line H31-1 to H31-12 has only been in operation since March 2016 and H12 to H62 since December 2015 so the results prior to April are not directly comparable to now. Also 7 new traps have been added to B line since October 2016.

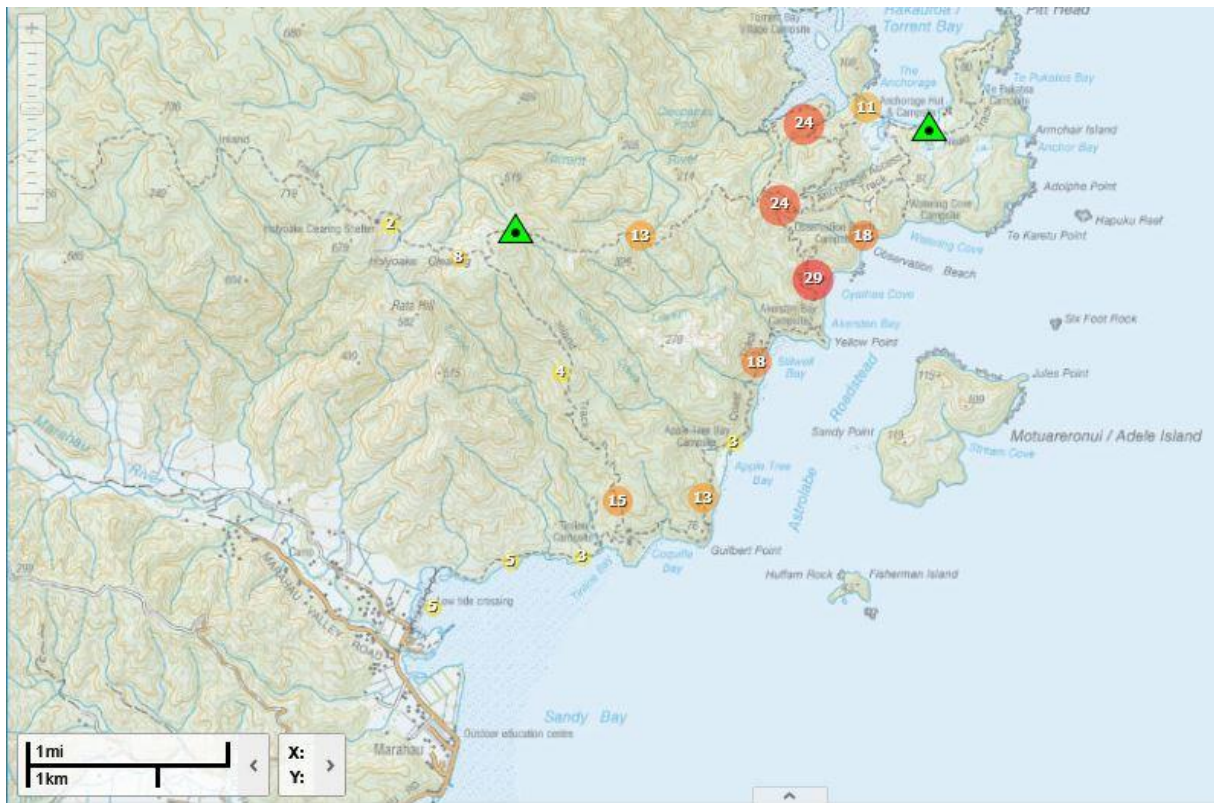
The chart shows there was an increase in rats caught since September, with the largest number caught in November.



Question 2: Where are rats being caught?

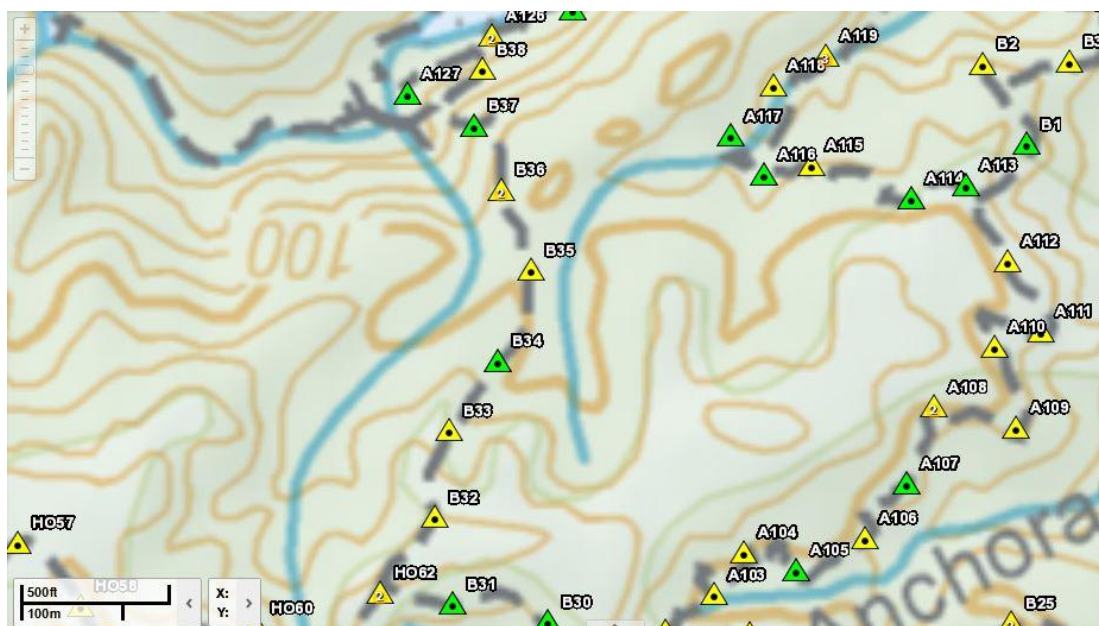
The map below shows numbers in red, orange and yellow circles. These numbers are the number of rats caught in neighbouring traps in a clustered circle. The green triangle is where there is a rat caught in a single trap, but not in general proximity to other rats caught.

Density of rats trapped October to December 2016



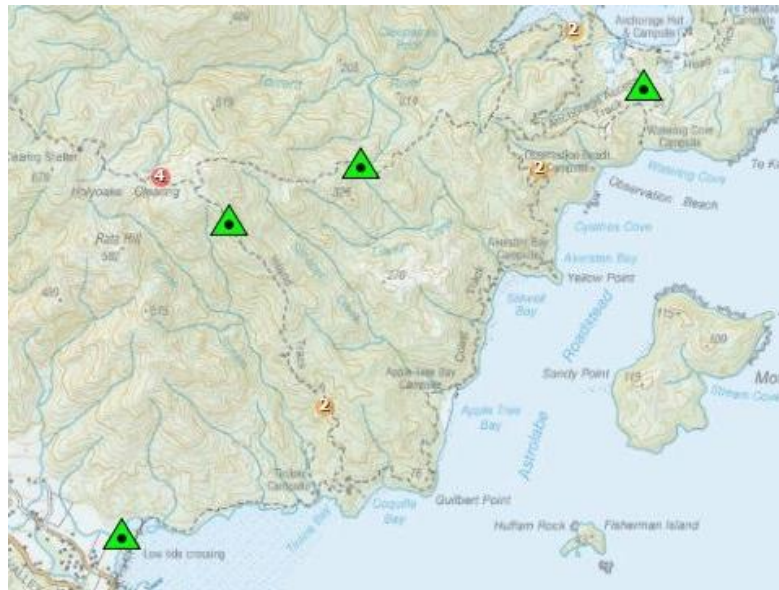
The map shows 107 rats (more than 50% of the rats caught) are in the Anchorage/Cyathea Cove area. This result is very similar to the July to Sept 2016 rat density.

The B trap line extension (B32 to B38) has been put in between H62 and A127. 4 rats were caught in the 7 traps from Oct to Dec 16 as shown below.



Question 2: Where are stoats/weasels being caught?

The map shows where the stoats/weasels have been caught in the last three months.



The map below shows where stoats and weasels have been caught since August 2015. There seems to be a different picture emerging where less stoats/weasels are being caught at the entrance of the park and more near Holyoake Clearing.



A big stoat caught near Marahau inlet in October and stoats caught near Holyoake clearing in December.

