

PEST CONTROL

FACT SHEET
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Traps and poisons are used to control predators in and around the Ōhope Scenic Reserve.

STOAT CONTROL

Stoats are serious kiwi enemies. They attack nests and kill kiwi chicks.

Once kiwi get above 1000g in weight they can defend themselves against stoats.

To protect the chicks and young kiwi birds, a network of 440 stoat traps are maintained by volunteers all year round in the reserve.

There is one trap for every 2 hectares inside the reserve. Outside the reserve, there is a trap every 7 or 8 hectares.

Ferrets and wild cats can also get trapped because they are attracted to the same bait as the stoats. These animals are also a threat to kiwi.

At least three adult kiwi are known to have been killed by cats in the reserve.



Whakatāne Kiwi stoat trap.



RODENT AND POSSUM CONTROL

Rats, mice and possums compete with kiwi for food, especially when conditions are dry.

Within the Ōhope Scenic Reserve rats and possums are controlled using poison in bait stations.

Bait stations are plastic containers attached to trees that are filled with toxic bait. They keep bait in good condition and keep birds from eating it.

Rats and possums visit the bait station to feed. There are 2000 bait stations spaced at 75m intervals through the forest. They are filled by a contractor who is licensed to handle the toxic baits.

Poisons are only used prior to the kiwi nesting season. If animal numbers are low, the poison operation is not needed.



Volunteers refill bait stations.



Rat raiding fantail nest

KEEPING KIWI OUT OF TRAPS

Kiwi and other flightless birds (like weka) often get caught in traps set on the ground.

Possum trappers are asked to follow guidelines to protect kiwi and weka in Whakatāne and Eastern Bay of Plenty regions. These guidelines are available from the Department of Conservation (DOC).

Leg-hold traps can be set above the ground. The best way is to use nails or brackets to mount the trap on a tree, between 35cm and 70cm from the ground.

Leg hold and live-capture traps must be checked every day.

If a kiwi or weka is injured by a trap, it must be taken to a vet as soon as possible. If you find a bird in a trap, remove it, keep it safe and contact your local DOC office immediately.



Possum in leg hold trap



Rat in trap



Cat in live capture trap



Ferret caught in Fenn trap



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Kiwi chick killed by stoat