



Lesson plan 10

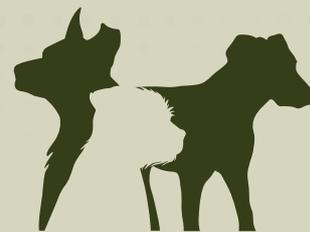
Paws on Patrol

Gadget the rodent pest detection dog



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

**Kiwi
bank.**



**CONSERVATION
DOGS
NEW ZEALAND**

KEY

▶ = links to videos 🔗 = links to websites 🔍 = links to pages within this resource

Learning intentions

This lesson plan has been developed to support learning about the Conservation Dogs Programme and the threats that are posed by rodents. It should be completed after viewing ▶ [Paws on Patrol episode 10: Sandy and Gadget](#) in the *Animals* series.

To learn more about Conservation Dogs, Predator Free 2050, biosecurity and how to take conservation action in your local community, visit 🔗 www.doc.govt.nz/education-conservation-dogs.

Upon completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to:

- ▶ understand the important role Conservation Dogs play in protecting New Zealand's unique biodiversity
- ▶ understand some of the effects that introduced pests/predators such as rodents and mustelids have on the environment
- ▶ determine important biosecurity actions that help keep predator-free sites such as offshore islands and mainland sanctuaries pristine when visiting them
- ▶ begin to understand the role that predator-free islands such as Codfish Island/Whenua Hou play in protecting our unique biodiversity.



Curriculum links

Achievement objectives

LEVELS 1-4 SCIENCE

Nature of Science: Investigating in science, Communicating in science, Understanding about science, Participating and contributing.

Living World: Ecology. Recognise (and explain) how living things are suited to their particular habitat and how they respond to environmental changes, both natural and human-induced.

Science capabilities: Engage with science.

LEVELS 1-4 SOCIAL STUDIES

Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources.

Key competencies

- ▶ Thinking.
- ▶ Use of language.
- ▶ Relating to others.
- ▶ Participation and contribution.

Key vocabulary

Biodiversity: The variety of living things in a place. The greater the number of living things, the more 'biodiverse' the place is.

Biosecurity: Actions to keep New Zealand free of unwanted organisms (introduced predators, weeds and diseases such as kauri dieback and myrtle rust) and to control, manage or remove them if they arrive in the country.

Introduced pest/predator: An animal or plant species that has come from another country and is threatening New Zealand's living things and environment. Introduced predators were brought to New Zealand by people via ships and through the transportation of goods.

Pest/predator-free island: A protected area that has no mammalian pests/predators, allowing native wildlife to be kept safe.

Rodents: A group of mammals that are distinguished by their strong, constantly growing incisors and lack of canine teeth. They constitute the largest order of mammals and include rats and mice.

Tangata whenua: The Māori people of a particular locality or the original inhabitants of New Zealand.

Quarantine area: A clean space with benches/large desks, a vacuum cleaner to remove seeds from bags and shoes, disinfectant spray to clean shoes, a brush to clean clothing, and a rubbish bin and sealed containers for food items that are not in sealed bags/lunch boxes.

Activity ideas

Activity 1: Watch  [Paws on Patrol episode 10](#) and have a class discussion to summarise the story. Then watch the video a second time and ask students to think about the three key points in the story. They can then share these points with a buddy and compare ideas. You could ask students the following questions to support the discussion.

- ▶ What characteristics or qualities does Gadget have that make her suited to detecting rodents?
- ▶ How do trained Conservation Dogs benefit the environment and conservation?
- ▶ What can you do at school or in your own backyard to protect and restore nature?



Gadget the rodent pest detection dog. Photo: Whitebait Media

Activity 2: Find out about Codfish Island / Whenua Hou or any predator-free islands that are close to you. Consider the following questions.

- ▶ Why do we need predator-free islands?
- ▶ What are the benefits of them?

Activity 3: Discuss/brainstorm ideas for actions people should take before visiting a pest-free island or mainland sanctuary.

Help keep our Hauraki Gulf islands pest-free

Check your bag and gear for these pests.

Visiting overnight? Before you go:

- ▶ Check your bedding, tent and other camping gear carefully for stowaway pests, soil and seeds.

Boaties and kayakers:

- ▶ Check your boat or kayak thoroughly for pests, soil and seeds – before you leave and between islands in the Gulf.
- ▶ Keep an eye out for signs of pests e.g. droppings, chewed wiring etc.
- ▶ Keep pest bait/traps on your boat or kayak, and where it is stored.
- ▶ Leave your pet at home or on your boat.

What to do if you find a pest:

- ▶ Destroy any pests – don't throw them overboard alive.
- ▶ Call 0800 DOC HOTLINE (0800 382 468) to report sightings of pests.

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Activity 4: Raise awareness about important biosecurity actions in your community by setting up a cleaning/quarantine area in your school.

- ▶ Quarantine areas are typically clean spaces that contain benches/large desks, a vacuum cleaner to remove seeds from bags and shoes, disinfectant spray to clean shoes, a brush to clean clothing, and a rubbish bin and sealed containers for food items that are not in sealed bags/lunch boxes.
- ▶ Two or three students could be assigned as quarantine officers and check that bags do not contain any rodents, Argentine ants or skinks; that shoes and clothes are clean of dirt and seeds; and that all food is in sealed bags/lunch boxes.

Activity 5: Learn more about kākāpō using the  [Kākāpō Recovery](#) education resource.

Supporting resources

Useful links

Pest-free islands

- ▶ Visiting pest-free islands:
 www.doc.govt.nz/pestfree

Introduced pests/predators

- ▶ *Investigating introduced predators in your green space* resource:  www.doc.govt.nz/education-introducedpredators
- ▶ Introduced predator factsheets:  www.doc.govt.nz/education-introducedpredators
 - ▶ Mice factsheet
 - ▶ Rats factsheet
 - ▶ Stoats and other mustelids factsheet
 - ▶ Hedgehogs factsheet
 - ▶ Possums factsheet
 - ▶ Cats factsheet

Further information

For additional resources to support teaching and learning in nature, visit DOC's conservation education webpage:  www.doc.govt.nz/education.

To learn more about our amazing Conservation Dogs, check out DOC's *Conservation Dogs Programme education resource* at  www.doc.govt.nz/education-conservation-dogs.

For further information on the Conservation Dogs Programme, visit  www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-dogs.