

Stoat Incursion Report Chalky Island - Sept 2022

Island or island Group: Chalky Island and Passage Island

Result: 25 stoat scats on Chalky 3 dens, one cache site and a display pad. Also found 2 stoat scats on Passage Island.

Operation date range: 9 - 16th September 2022

Dog handler: Brad Windust

Pest dog name: Wero

Pest target: Stoats

Objectives: Incursion response

Operational Conditions: Fine and wet on and off.

Date	Work carried Out
9th	<p>Had a brief about the work, health and safety and biosecurity. Then got the helicopter to Te kakahu o Tamatea</p> <p>Jake and myself put Wero through the kākāpō training. He went well. While doing it he found two scats at the same spot. We got settled in then went for a 2 hour walk where he found 3 more. He also indicated a spot where I think the scat had been trampled into the mud on the track and a small log where it has been rubbing its ass glands.</p> <p>Scat M01. There was one old scat and one medium on the same. E1099045 N4880444</p> <p>Scat M02 E1099150 N4880264</p> <p>Scat old 03. There were two very old scats together. One was just a tiny bit of fur. E1099508 N4879916</p> <p>Scat old scat 04. There was a yellow feather in it, likely a mahua. E1099242 N4880171</p>

10th	<p>Sadly I found quite a lot of scat and sign today and it was widespread. One site was very active: two scats, tui cache, mohua feathers and a lot of scent, probably gland rubbing. I could have found more but didn't want to disturb the area. The boys put a camera up. They also put another camera up where we found very fresh scat. I stuck to the tracks to cover the most area and get a feel for the island.</p> <p>Display pad, dead tui.</p> <p>E1098884 N4880991</p> <p>F05</p> <p>This small scat looked fresh, but that may be from sea splash.</p> <p>E1099420 N4880862</p> <p>F06</p> <p>E1098229 N4880978</p> <p>F07</p> <p>E1097939 N4880305</p> <p>F08</p> <p>E1097939 N4880305</p> <p>Old 09</p> <p>E1099431 N4878884</p> <p>M10</p> <p>E1099475 N4878652</p> <p>F11</p> <p>E1099681 N4878722</p> <p>M12</p> <p>E1099600 N4879266</p> <p>M13</p> <p>E1099590 N4879302</p>
11th	<p>I hunted down the Pinnacle Rock peninsula. It looked like good territory for a stoat, and I was surprised I didn't find more. Sometimes wero has indicated and there is no scat. This is mostly on a log that goes across</p>

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	<p>the track where a scat has been knocked off and trampled into the mud, or less likely, but possibly gland rubbing.</p> <p>F14</p> <p>Very fresh, on a classic stoat marking site, but didn't look like a stoat scat, stinks like a cat scat. I now think it was a kākāpō scat. There might have been a stoat scat on the same log and I just saw the kākāpō one and grabbed that.</p> <p>E1100547 N4880983</p> <p>M15</p> <p>E1099672 N4880191</p> <p>Old16</p> <p>E1098989 N4880374</p> <p>Old17</p> <p>E1098930 N4880461</p> <p>Old18</p> <p>E1098906 N4880480</p> <p>Old19</p> <p>E1098709 N4880554</p>
	<p>We worked the Wiremu track, then I wanted to hunt off track around and out further from fresh scat I had found. Sure enough I found a big den site. I realised straight away what it was and we quickly moved right away, so not to disturb it. I tied Wero up and went quietly back to check. There were 3 entrances, maybe more, one looked well used. There was the biggest pile of scat I've ever seen. I GPS marked it and Got a little piece of scat. i Moved away then flagging taped it back to the main track. We then hunted out to Gap 3 trap where I found a fresh little scat around a lot of bird borrows below Gap 3 trap. Stoats love titi chicks.</p> <p>Den site. E1098461 N4880904</p> <p>Old 20</p> <p>E1098321 N4880954</p> <p>F21</p> <p>E1098304 N4879458</p>

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13th	Not very nice weather so rested the dog and helped go through trap setting, despatch, protocols. Put live traps out at Big Den site and other hot spots.
14th	<p>Hunted down between the two tracks that lead down to Chalky Point. There are a lot of good areas here and I would've liked to spend more time. Wero indicated, what I thought, was a very old den. He seemed to think there was scat beside it but it was too old for me to see. Then a bit later on Wero smelt something quite away-off so I followed him down to a fresh scat outside a den. There were kākārīki feathers along the log a bit. Rusty set up a camera and we decided it was best to set the live trap (Holden) there with stoat bedding.</p> <p>Old den, no scat.</p> <p>E1099484 N4878962</p> <p>F22 Den 2.</p> <p>E1099627 N4878654</p> <p>Day 7</p>
15th	<p>I went down to the beach off Pinnacle Point. You want to keep your dog close here as there's massive drop offs and the track is not marked. Thankfully I didn't find anything down there, however it was bitterly cold and a steady rain while we were trying to work it. I then hunted off track around the Island to Gap 6. When returning home, (because Wero was cold and stuffed) I went past the tui cache site and mohua feathers, (about 25m) and Wero got a big wind of smell and went running back. It was a massive pile of stoat scat outside a den with what looked like yellow brains shit. I've seen it once before outside a den I think it's like a trophy. The den wasn't like the last ones it was into tussock. I GPSed it and put flagging tape out to the track.</p> <p>F23 Den3</p> <p>E1097933 N4880308</p>

16th	<p>Flew to Passage Island and walked the trap line. The track was easy to follow. Wero indicated on a very old stoat scat. He smelt it but it took a bit to locate the exact spot. (I got it on video) Then again further on he did the same on another very old scat. He was very interested in another spot and looked and looked but could not locate the scat. He ended up indicating a spot of moss where it may have once been. I didn't hear any Mohua all day, however there were plenty of saddlebacks.</p>
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Target pest observations: My gut feeling is that there's more than one stoat on the island. I hope I'm wrong, and we will soon know but 25 stoat scat and 3 dens, one cache site and a display pad is way too much sign for one stoat. I found a lot more scat on the tracks which isn't surprising as they use them to get around rather than running through the wet fern and so mark on them to communicate with each other.

Recommendations/Comments

I think you've got an excellent team spearheading this incursion, Maddie, Claire and Alex, a great mix of talent. To back it up though, I think you need a good team of trappers on a planned out rotation so there's always at least one professional, trusted, trapper on the Island. Plan for a 12 month + operation.

I would keep baiting the doc200's and A24's, but the main focus should be on social lures, in the live traps and fake dens with Fenn traps.

Live traps should be mixed up how they are set. Some out in the open, some with moss nicely laid over them, others in a pile of small logs, and some up on big tree logs, make sure these ones are sturdy. If the traps don't have remote sensors, set all the live traps close to the main tracks. Two people can halve the island up and

check dozens each a day. If possible, try and get trappers to check them before they hand over to the new trappers. It's bad trapping practice to have a trap in the field not set.

If possible, get remote sensors on live traps which means you don't have to keep checking, leaving smell and have more time to get more live traps out and off track.

Research whether Cacophony cameras will work out there. These give real time footage, this can be invaluable information.

Not because I need the work, but I would recommend using Wero and myself once a month, or more, to find new locations to target. Wero works very close to me, so there's a large amount of nooks and crannies that didn't get covered. Also finding play sites and fresh cache sites can be really useful. Some stoats become very protective of their kill and you can put it in a live trap as bait.

Another good live trap is the double ended cage trap with the doors only open an inch. Remote sensors can be attached to these. A despatch protocol will have to be made. The trappers at Tawharanui Sanctuary have made a despatch box that fits over the end.

<https://www.maintracgroup.com/collections/cat-traps/products/collapsible-tunnel-trap>

If you can get fresh dead stoats, take the opportunity. Rubbing their smell about traps really helps.

Discuss whether it's possible to use a judas stoat.

Any other observations: It is likely one female stoat has got here and dropped her kit, this time last year. If so, none of the female's will be pregnant.

If this is not the case, the females will be pregnant, and about to den. The numbers will explode exponentially.

In case this is the scenario, I recommend a plan is developed if it has not already been done, to move quickly and evacuate all Nationally Critical, Endangered, Vulnerable and Nationally Increasing birds and lizards off the island.

Passage Island: We found two stoat scats on Passage Island. Both scats were very old, however it is highly probable there's a stoat there, and we should assume there is. We only walked the trap line which isn't that long. To be honest, it's hard hunting over a new island for the first time. Weighing up how dangerous it is for the dog with drop offs and sinkholes, and how much time it will take etc. I will be able to do a much better job next time, now I have better knowledge of the island.

I recommend 6, or preferably more cameras are set up pointing at stoat bedding pegged down. Whoever set up the cameras on Chalky did a good job, something similar would be great.

Sadly doc200 traps are not up to the job. The more I work Wero around through doc200 trapping projects (even my own) the more I realize they catch a few but most stoats just ignore them. The ones on these Islands are even worse with the Kea safe fronts and side entrance. In my opinion it's little wonder nothing has been caught. It's why Caroline King always says, it's not what you're catching, it's what you're not catching. If it's established for certain there is still a stoat on Passage, I would target it the same as Chalky using live traps using social lures.

As hard as it is to find funding to use Conservation Dogs for Island surveillance it ends up being cheaper in the long run. We can't rely on tracking tunnels, cameras and traps. Most Islands are checked twice a year, Spring and autumn.

I hope this report is useful. I will prioritise this incursion over any other work. Please ring me any time to bounce ideas around.

Brad n Wero

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Stoat Incursion Report Chalky Island - March/April 2023

Island or island Group: Chalky Island and South Passage Island

Result: Stoat scats on Chalky, 3 lots of prints on beach and an old woodpigeon cache with an abandoned stoat nest.

One stoat scat on South Passage Island.

Operation date range: 29th March to the 4th of February 2023

Dog handler: Brad Windust

Pest dog name: Wero

Pest target: Stoats

Objectives: Incursion response

Operational Conditions: Fine and wet on and off, very little wind.

Date	Work carried Out
29th	<p>Fresh scat (F01) on the house solar panels framing. Since 22 Feb 2023. The camera picked the stoat up there the night before on the 28th. The camera had been moved and was not facing the panels. But it's likely the scat was on the 28th.</p> <p>Scat (Old 02) was very old, basically just dirt.</p> <p>Scat (Old 03) I marked as Old however it was since 22 Feb 2023. It was on the same bit of moss it always marks on just near Cam 27. You could just make out yellow feathers in it, which I found interesting because there's a lot of young titi at the moment, yet he's still hunting mohua. 7.4km 5 hours.</p>
30th	<p>I decided to hunt up the North end where he'd been seen visiting Fake Den 1. Wero found two scats not too far away, side by side on the same clump of moss he always marks on. One was black the other was brown and snotty looking. He then found another two side by side at the old F23 den on the track. We also found fresh stoat prints on Zero beach. There were prints where he had been playing. This may be a random play site or an area he often plays. If it's a regular place, then it would</p>

	make a good site for a trap, maybe set in sand with a cover of some sort. He then went running, full tit down the beach, then went up into the bushes where a Holden trap was. 12km 9 hours.
31st	Another beautiful day but no wind. The area the dog is covering is much less with no wind. When I got down to Gap 3 and I saw Wero catch wind and bee lined for something tail wagging madly. He was indicating on a stoat nest right beside a dead wood pigeon. It looked to me to be one to two weeks old. My feelings is that it caught it and carried it back to its den but it couldn't get it down the hole so it camped up beside it. There was a good looking, possible, den site right there, a dracophyllum growing along the ground covered in moss etc. Nothing suggested it was in use though. Later on in the day, I found kākāriki feathers. It may have been karearea but I thought it looked more like a stoat just because the feathers were close together and it was in very tight bush. 10.6km 8 hours.
1st	Rained overnight then showers off and on. We did the Mad track loop, and a bit of bush bashing, but got too wet and cold so came back. Two scats at different places but on the same making sites he always makes on. 7.3km 4 hours
2nd	Wet day. I went and hunted around the old den 22. On the way Wero indicated under a small log. I could not see any scat, it didn't look like a den, I wondered if the stoat had just waited there between heavy showers during the night. I marked it and put some flagging tape up. 10km. 7 hours.
3rd	Had a meeting about South Passage, then went hunting along the top of very tight bush, above Sealers. Found prints on Sealers Bay near the start of Falcon track. It looked like it had been playing in the sand again. Home to pack and clean up for flight tomorrow. 6 km. 6 hours.
4th	Flew to South Passage. Had a look around where the fresh scat was and headed over to the slip where the other scat had been found. Wero indicated a medium fresh one. It has just started to get a tiny bit of mold on it. It was definitely not there last time though so less than 41 days old. We decided not to stay the night on South Passage because the forecast was rain all day Wednesday so not good hunting and if the chopper couldn't pick us up, Thursday was also forecast for rain all day.

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Target pest observations and ideas:

In hindsight I'm annoyed with myself for not getting a couple of cameras at the woodpigeon possible den site. It feels like a hot spot to me, I always seem to find something there. I still think Fenns with the proper covers would be good there, pegged down with a bit of the natural surrounding vegetation over them.

<https://www.philproof.co.nz/two-fenn-traps-double-trap-cover-set.html>

When my dog indicates on fake dens, it nearly never indicates at the entrance rather on top or small gaps the smell is coming through. On camera the stoat seems to do the same. I recommend building a couple differently, like long bits of plywood in an upside down V shape, traps and bedding inside then covered in sticks and logs so the smell comes out the ends where the entrances are.

The stoat really seems to love the beaches and plays there. (Photo of prints attached).

Like having different baits, having different traps, might get him caught by his curiosity. For example, once I found where a stoat had been playing on an old foam mattress that had washed up. Another time one had been playing on and under a piece of tin, and often on bridges. Getting creative like wrapping run-throughs in foam, covering them in sand etc might help. Having a feather dangling from Cotton in the trap might get his attention. The mirrors are an awesome idea. I also have been wondering if new play site traps set down along the beach should not be baited. I wonder if this makes him cautious when he smells the lure. Obviously having a good mix of everything will be best.

I think all the scat this time, were found where he has marked before. On things like the same little clumps of moss or logs.

Fake Den 6 had lots of fresh prints around it, but the camera had not got one photo of him there. Beach cameras might miss a lot, if the camera lenses fog up at night.

South Passage Island:

South Passage Island is bigger than it looks and not an easy island to hunt. I was pleased to get down to a little bit of coast before it cliffed out. I found a large titi colony there too which will be good to keep checking. The really dense dryer dracophyllum around the cliffs seems like a better stoat habitat but hard to hunt. I still think I should be finding more scat from a resident stoat, which made me wonder if weka would eat the stoat scat? Or if I need to check North Passage too, or maybe putting cameras there might be good.

1080

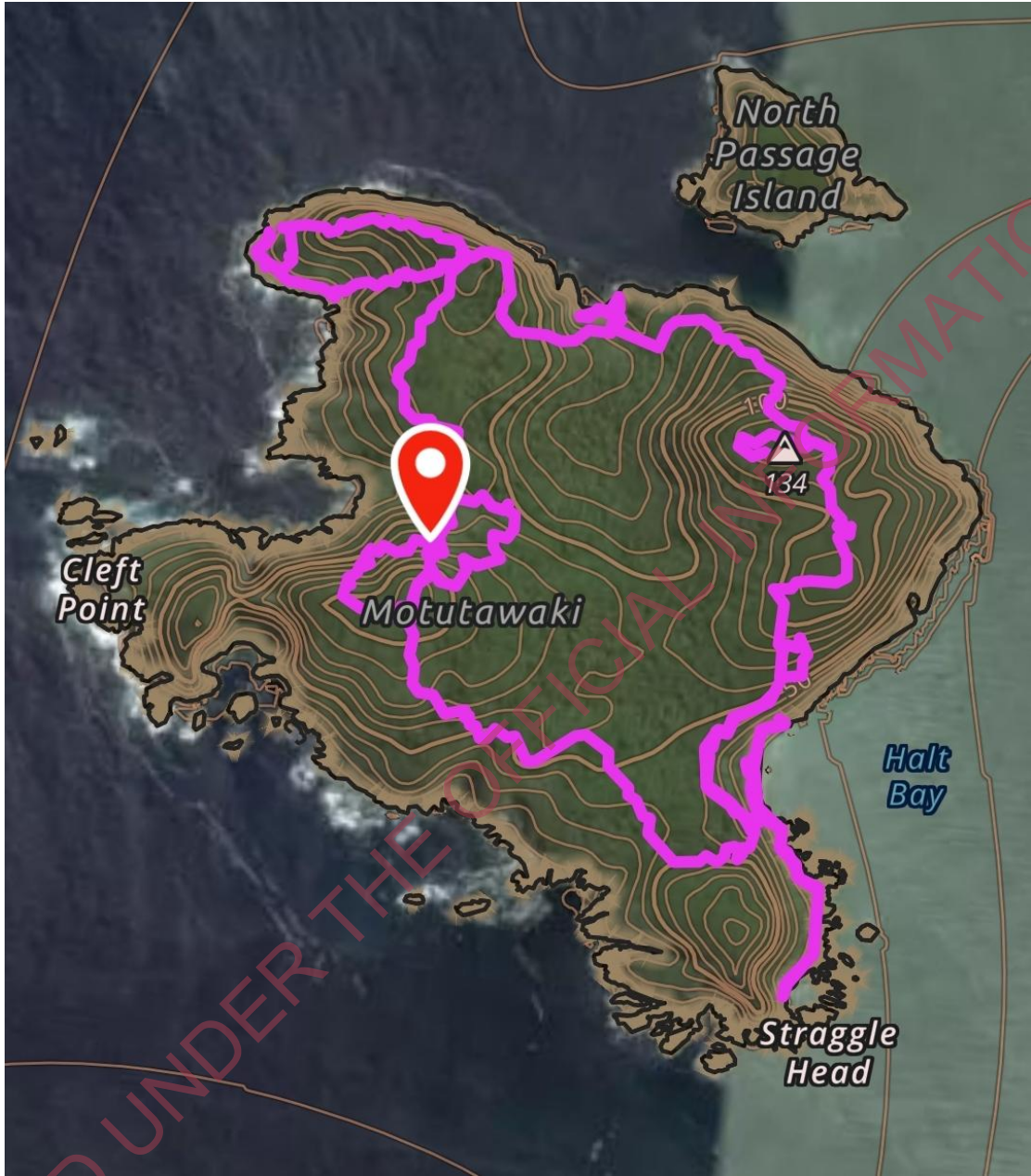
With the warming climate, I think it would be wise to send a request to the right people, asking that 1080 is used every 3 years around mainland perimeters of pest free Islands in Fiordland. This will free up stoat territories, so that young dispersing January stoats can set up an uninhabited territory, before reaching the Islands. Particularly on Great Island.

I hope this report is useful. Please ring me anytime if you have questions or just want to bounce ideas around.

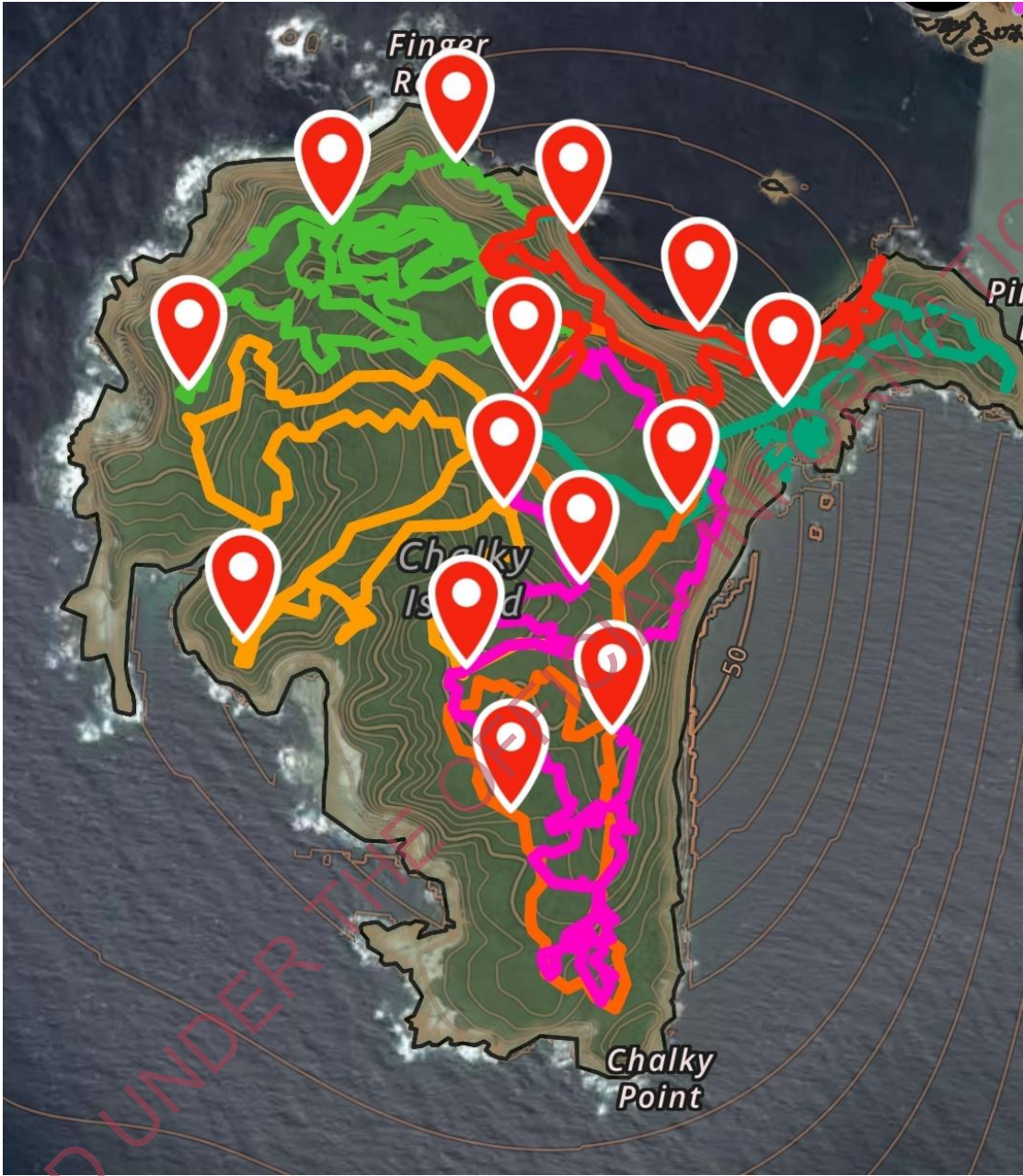
Brad n Wero

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New Seat



old



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Stoat Kill Trap Run-Through I set up.

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Stoat Incursion Report Chalky Island - January 2023

Island or island Group: Chalky Island and Passage Island

Result: Chalky 15 stoat scats, 2 dens, one was old. Two play sites. Also found 2 stoat scats on Passage Island.

Operation date range: 24th January to 1 of February 2023

Dog handler: Brad Windust

Pest dog name: Wero

Pest target: Stoats

Objectives: Incursion response, find stoat sites of interest for trappers to target.

Operational Conditions: Mostly fine on Chalky with little wind. Wet, hot with no wind on Passage Island.

Date	Work carried Out
24th	Had a good briefing about the work, health and safety and biosecurity. Then got the helicopter to Chalky Island. It was very hot when we arrived so waited till it cooled down then went for a walk around the loop. Wero didn't find any sign.
25th	We hunted down Falcon then around the beach and over to Beach track. Then went up and around back to where the prints were seen on the other side of Falcon. Wero indicated 4 stoat scats. F01, Old 01, M02, M03.
26th	We hunted around the Wiremu catchment. He only found one scat (M05) at the old large den site.
27th	Did the main track around the island. Wero indicated on a classic scat log. There was a scat (M06) which looked like it had fur in it, somewhat different to others. It may even look like that bedding material which is strange. We then went out to GAP 3 where he indicated two scats. There was a patchy row of flax the scats were in. Good denning or caching area. Later on he indicated on a lump of moss which had old

	<p>bones from a bird (tui?). There was no scat that I could see but it was a strong indication. Very close to GAP5. Then later on he indicated again on the moss right beside two holes at the base of a big dead tree. I could not find the scat, it may have been there but I could not see it. I called it Den 1 and we put a camera on it.</p> <p>M06, M07, M08, Old cache, Den 1.</p>
28th	<p>Well this morning we only got to the heli pad and Wero put his nose up and off. His tail was going for it and he was smelling all around the solar panels then indicated on a fresh scat. The scent and scat was fresh as fresh. It is the perfect play site, which make the best places to catch them. This has been by far the best find of the week. We set an Edgar and run-through there and put a camera up to see how often he uses it. The dog had walked all around the solar panels the night before and did not show any interest.</p> <p>F09 left there, play site.</p> <p>Play log</p> <p>M10 Old den 2.</p> <p>Old 11</p> <p>Indicated no scat.</p> <p>M12</p>
29th	<p>Today I tried to fill in the gaps I hadn't been. Along the cliff I thought there was a kakapo moving through the bush. I caught a glimpse of it, but couldn't tell what it was. My dog heard it too, so I had to not react as I can't show interest in anything alive. We also found a scat on the same dead standing totara he indicated on last time in September.</p> <p>Old 13, I saw a stoat or kakapo, M14.</p>
30th	<p>We hunted back around the cliff above Beach, then dropped down. I came across a large tawaki penguin nesting/moulting site and at the end of it was a patch of tui feathers. Then I hunted around the pinnacles, where I found the head of an adult sea bird and a patch of wood pigeon feathers. It may have been Falcon; the dog didn't seem to be interested. Slow day as I was walking around borrows all day.</p> <p>Big Penguin Colony, Tui feathers, Bird Head, Pigeon Feathers, Scent Log.</p>

31st	<p>It was a bit wet in the morning and the dog was stuffed so I only walked around the island once. We found a fresh scat on Seal track, we had walked past there a couple of times before and it was not there. Packed and cleaned up.</p> <p>F15.</p>
1st	<p>We flew to Passage Island. At the bottom of the big slip I saw Wero start to show interest and then he indicated on a scat (PI F1) Then around the other side of the Island he was having a good smell of a hollow punga with moss on it. To me it looked like a good stoat play log. Wero left it, I waited and he came back and half heartedly indicated on it. I marked it as (place of interest). Then he indicated another scat, a lot fresher near a DOC200 trap. Picked up and flew home.</p> <p>PI F1, PI F2.</p>

Target pest observations:

Chalky- We found 15 stoat scats, most of them up the Northern end of the island.

I found 2 dens. Den 1, I think, was recently used. He indicated on the moss right beside two holes at the base of a big dead standing tree. I could not find the scat, it may have just been stoat scent gland rubbing.

Den 2, I felt this was an old den site, just because of the age of the scat, but I could be wrong. The scat (M10) was beside a hollow root that ran towards a dead standing tree that had another hole at the base. Dog was not interested in the other hole at the base.

Both dens didn't really feel like busy dens, unlike the last ones I found in September that had large piles of scat outside. I think there might be a big difference between winter dens where the stoat stays cooped up, and summer dens where it just spends a night. It will be interesting to see what the cameras reveal.

Two play sites. The best one being the solar panels. Depending on how often he uses it, this one could be the best place to catch him. Happy stoats playing accidentally run into traps.

<https://youtu.be/HESe9voNWXs>

The other one was along a little, not so well used, track behind the solar panels. The dog scented along to this log that had scent all over it. I think he'd been playing on it.

Passage Island. We found two stoat scats again on this trip, and a place of interest a stoat had used to play or rub its smell on. It was quite hard hunting as everything was very wet, very humid, and no wind.



Recommendations/Comments

I think you've got an excellent team spearheading this incursion. It takes a lot of patience and trying new things to catch a well fed adult stoat.

I would keep baiting the doc200's and A24's, but the main focus should be on social lures, in the live traps and fake dens with Fenn traps.

Live traps should be mixed up how they are set. Some out in the open, some with moss nicely laid over them, others in a pile of small logs, and some up on big tree logs, make sure these ones are sturdy.

If the traps don't have remote sensors, set all the live traps close to the main tracks. Two people can halve the island up and check dozens each a day. If possible, try and get trappers to check them before they hand over to the new trappers. It's bad trapping practice to have a trap in the field not set.

It was a shame to see so many live traps out in the field not set. In my opinion they should be a priority.

If possible, get remote sensors on live traps which means you don't have to keep checking, leaving smells and have more time to get more live traps out and off track.

These guys can sort nodes out for you.

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I thought the Run Throughs looked really good, and trappers had done an excellent job with them. I think it would be good to paint the two wires black on some of them, and putting some up high on fallen logs screwed down would be good.

New traps. I recommend getting a heap of Holden live traps. Te korowai o Waiheke have been having a great run lately with these traps. I think a pulse of using them along the foreshore could work well.

Also, I think there's a use for the standard Fenn traps inside the black purpose-built covers, particularly 4 or 5 tucked into the flax bushes at GAP3 were we found scat M07 M08.

There is a creek that runs from where we found the tui feathers to the sea. I reckon the stoat will be using this creek to hunt birds bathing and drinking there. A good place for a fake den.

Bait. Curiosity could kill the stoat. Using pulses of different scents, otter, meerkat, ferret, cat, keep trying different things. Getting freshly shot whole rabbits to rub along the ground making trails to traps, and rub over traps and then bait with large chunks could be a good first set when trappers first arrive to the island. Fresh mutton birds chopped into big chunks might work well. Also using a couple of the ZIP MotoLure mayonnaise lure dispenser with cameras to see if you can get it hooked into eating mayonnaise then set trap with mayonnaise bait. It would also be good to see how good they are at picking up stoats on Pest Free Islands.

Because the play site at the solar panels is a highly modified site, it should be much easier to catch him there as he bounces around playing. Maybe placing a couple of run-through and screwing them down on the wooden beams he runs along and a couple of live traps.

Please don't hesitate to ring me about anything.

Brad 'n' Wero

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Te Kakahu/Chalky Island Incursion Response - Mustelid Dog Surveillance Report

Site: Te Kakahu Chalky Island

Operation date range: 5th - 14th December 2022

Dog handler: Angela Newport (DOC)

Pest dog name: Macca


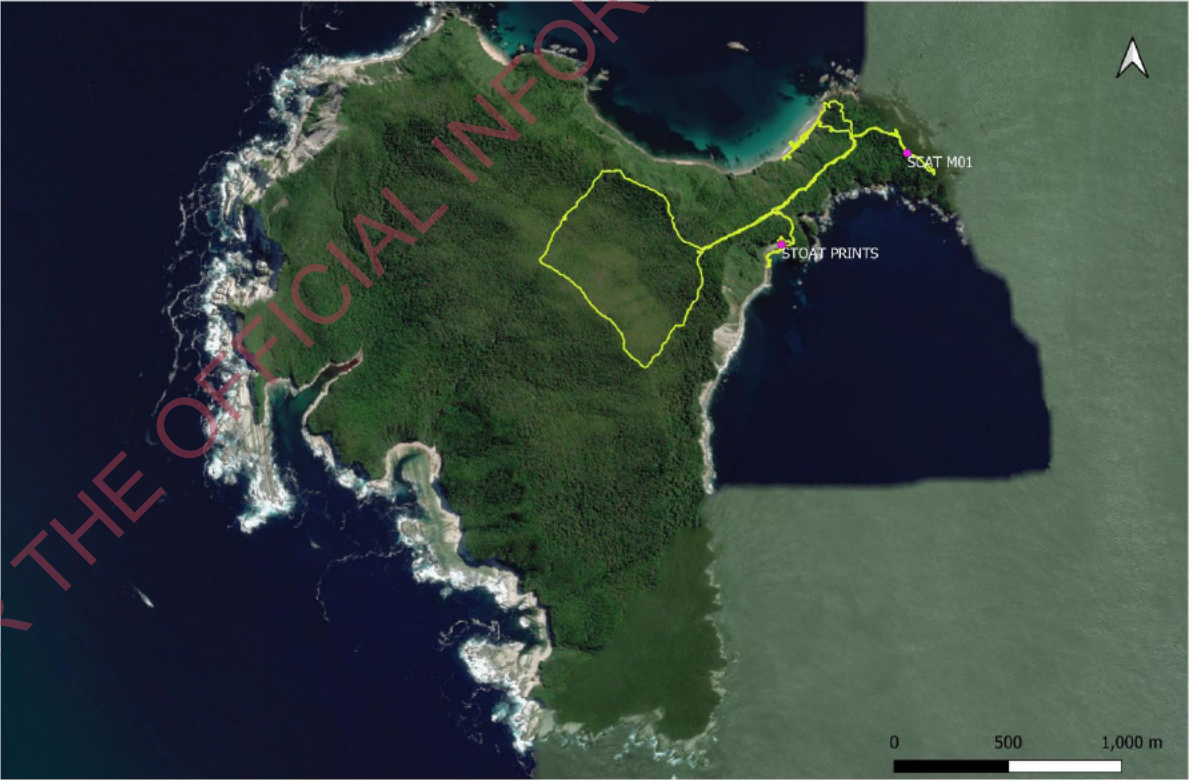
Pest target: Mustelids

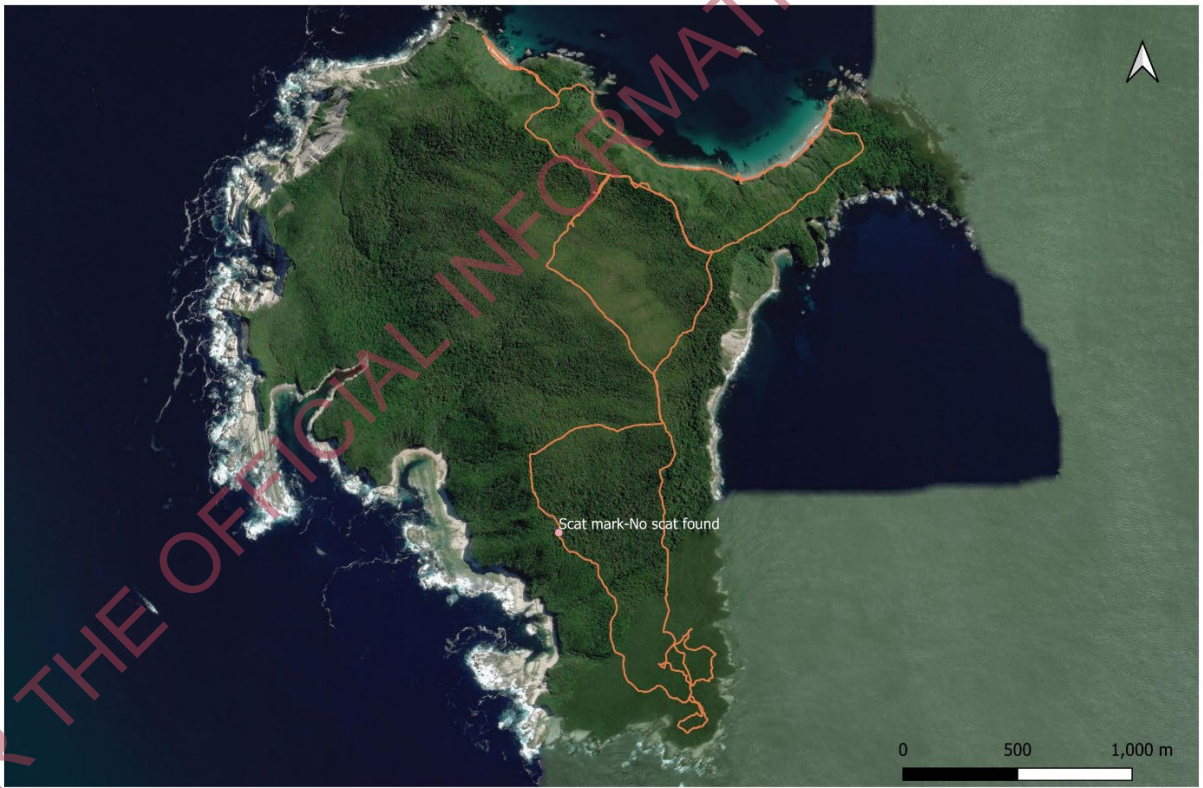
Objectives: Incursion response surveillance

Operational Conditions:

On average the weather conditions were relatively good- we had two wet days, and three with overnight rain, making searching the next day challenging. The temperature was mild throughout and the wind was nil to light for the majority of the trip. Ground conditions were damp. The rain on the first night was relatively heavy, filling the creeks and streams and making tracks quite wet and muddy. The last day on Passage was quite wet, with rain overnight and a bit more wind. This meant that conditions while on South Passage were not ideal, with only 2 hrs of dry weather to work in later in the day.

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Date Conditions Hours	Work carried Out	Results
5 th Dec Showers/rain intermittent, set in @5pm. Nil wind HT 1035hrs 1200-1700hrs 5 hrs	<p>Arrived on Island 1030hrs- camp setup, catch up with Stef and Kim (trappers). Headed out at midday. Walked Divide-Nicar(east)-R'coaster-Pinnacle-South little beach-Mad-H'stroke.</p> <p>*Two scats on Pinnacle track in same place- one old, one medium</p> <p>*Day old stoat prints on south beach at CAM04 (no footage associated). No scent associated.</p> 	

<p>6th Dec Rain overnight and into morning, easing at 8am. Nil wind HT 1120hrs 0900-1830hrs 8.5hrs</p>	<p>Waited for the rain to ease and dry out a little. Started out at 9am. Day dried out at midday. Worked Divide-Nicar(east)-Mad-Off track near Den F22-Off track around Titi at southern end-Seal-G'beer-Mad-H'stroke-Hut</p> <p>Back out @ 1530hrs. Nicar(W)-Falcon-Zero-Beach-Falcon-Sealers bay (LT)-R' coaster-Nicar-Hut</p> <p>* Marked a couple of places on the track like it was scat but couldn't find anything- too trampled.</p>	 <p>The image is an aerial satellite photograph of a coastal region, likely a island or a small peninsula. A track is marked with an orange line, starting from the top left and winding through the interior towards the bottom right. A specific point on the track is labeled 'Scat mark-No scat found'. The terrain is mostly green, indicating vegetation, with some rocky or sandy areas visible near the coast. A scale bar at the bottom right shows 0, 500, and 1,000 meters. A north arrow is located in the top right corner.</p>
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7th Dec
Dry night,
fine day,
sunny. light
dew.
Northerly
developing
HT 1200hrs

0730-1630hrs

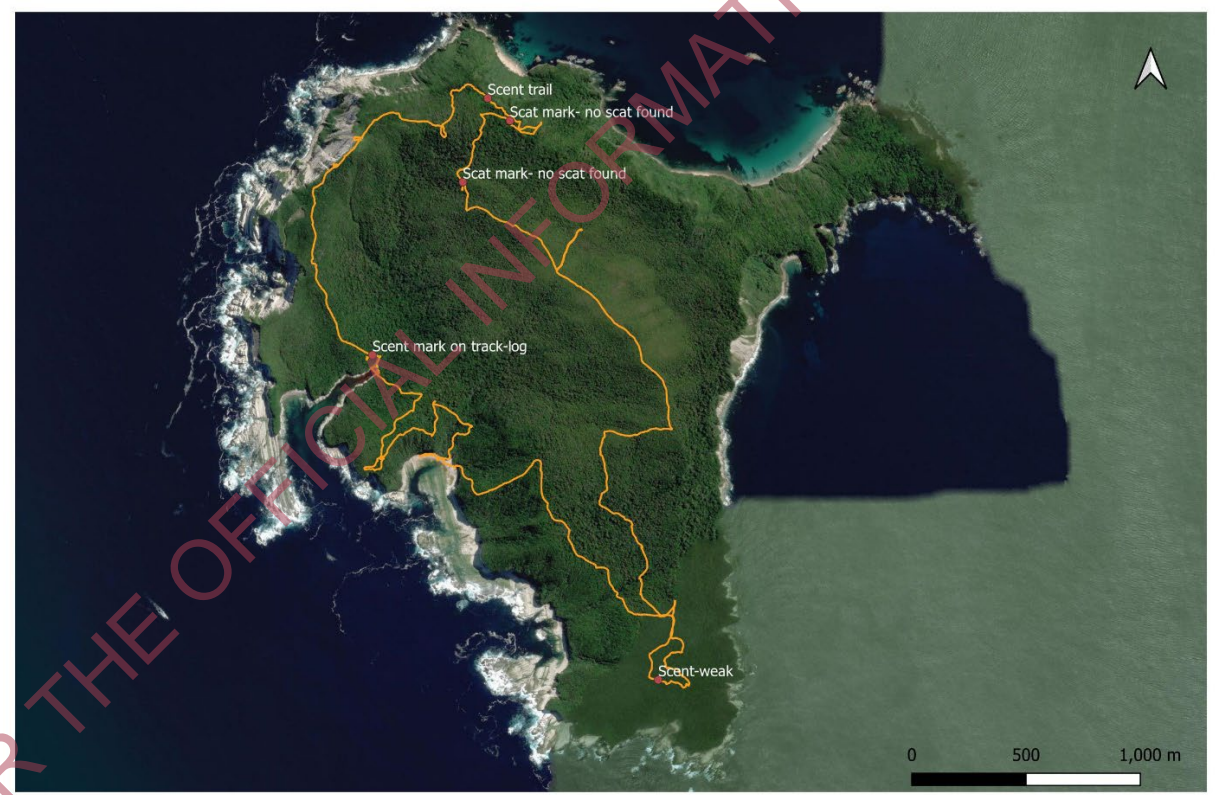
9 hrs

Worked Wiremu-Valley-Nicar-
Den F23-Titi along cliff tops-
Nicar-Coves-Out to Gap 3 (Titi)-
Beach at cove-Seal-Lost-Off
track to Den F22-Mad-Lost-Off
track north between G'beer and
H'stroke-Hut

***2-3 indications on Nicar- no
scat found but a place where it
would have been, or scent
marker.**

***Scent trail through Titi north
of Den F23 (weak)**

***Scent trail down small
catchment west of Den F22.
Lost it in creek.**



8th Dec
Relatively fine night,
light showers all day.
Strong Northerly
HT 1240hrs
0800-1700hrs
9hrs

Worked Divide-Catchment to
Coves track-back up Divide-
Wiremu-down catchment to
main creek-Nicar(W)-Wiremu-
catchment upstream-Nicar(W)-
Falcon-Sealers beach(HT)-Off
track to R'coaster-Off track to
south little beach-coast-up
Tawaki track to Nicar-Hut

***Scat on Wiremu track below
Valley junction- M02**

***2 x scat and scent marker on
log crossing creek. Old 04 and
M03**



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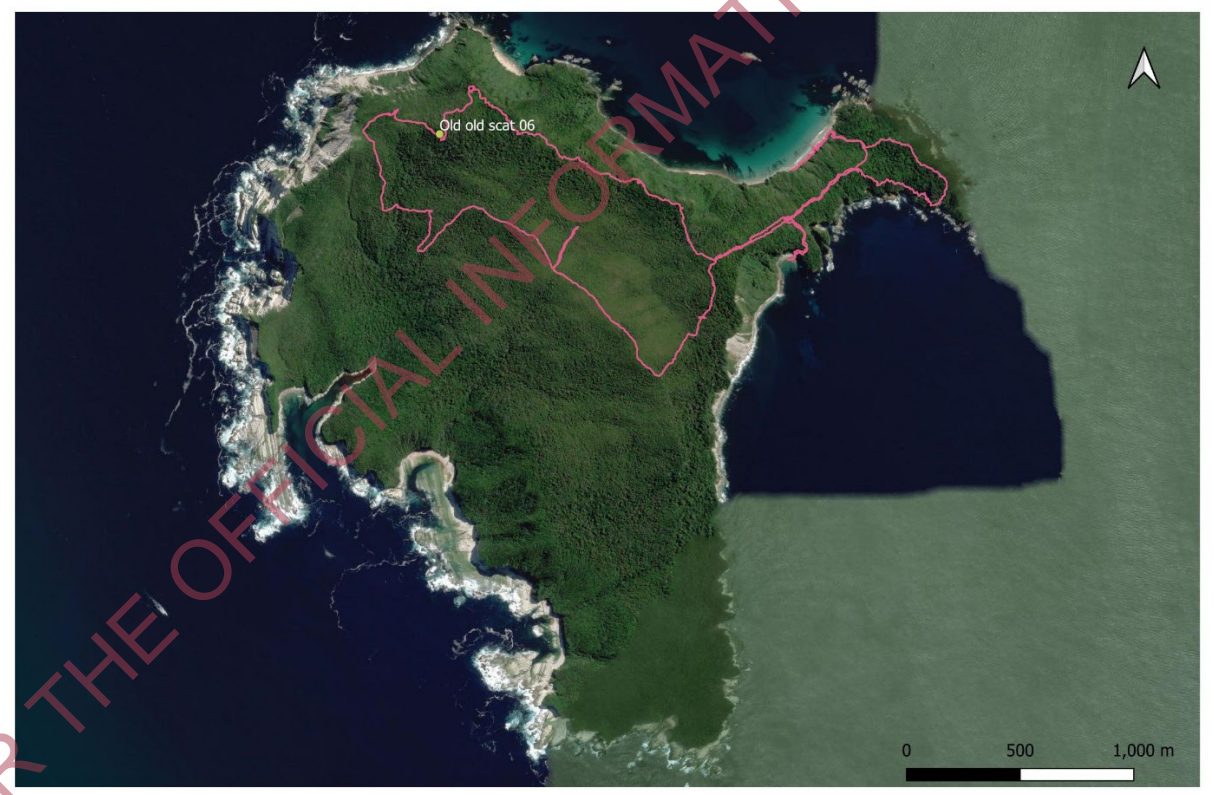
9th Dec
Relatively
fine night,
dry and
overcast
until 3pm
then rain
HT 1320hrs

0800-1500hrs


7 hrs

Worked north end of island.
Wiremu-Nicar-Titi area-Nicar
cliff edge to R'coaster-
Sealersbay, checked beach-
Pinnale off track-Titi-Little south
beach, checked beach and dune-
Mad-H'stroke-Hut.

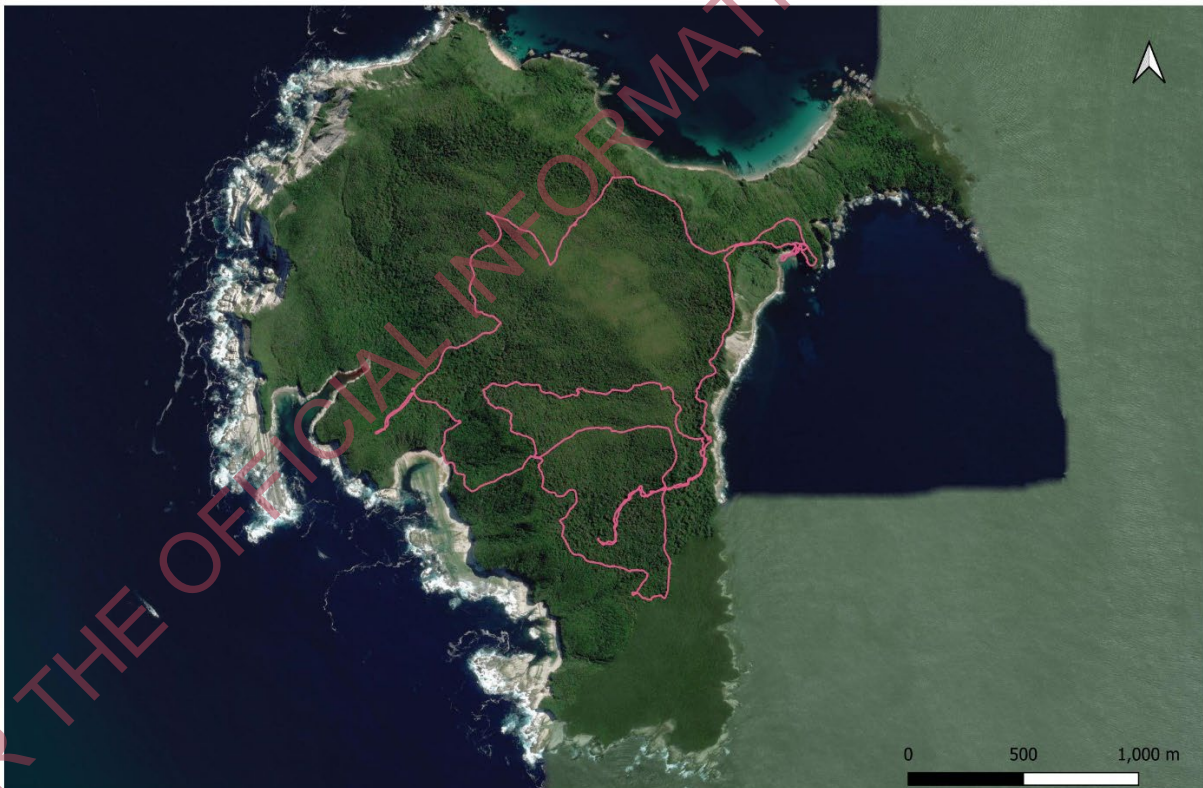
***One old trodden scat on Nicar.
No other sign**



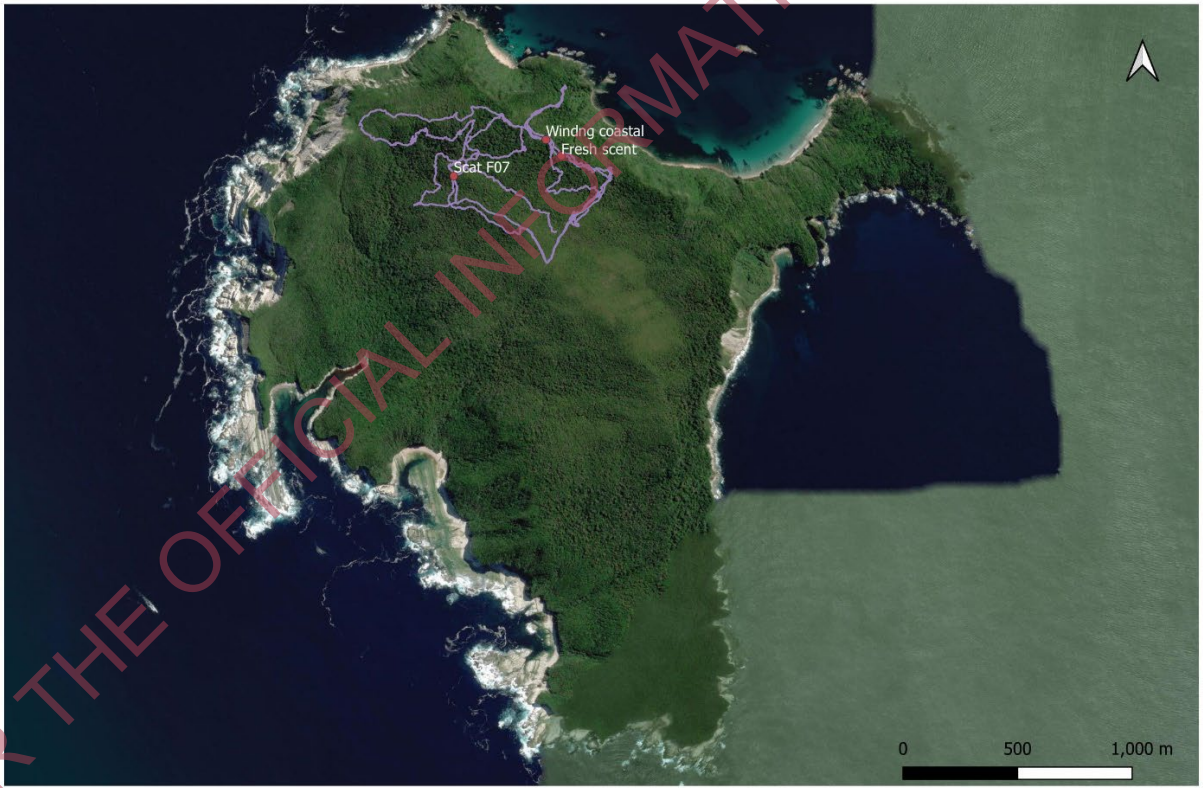
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<p>10th Dec Rain overnight, showers all day, a break between 8-11am. Nil wind HT 1400hrs 0800-1500hrs 7 hrs</p>	<p>Divide-H'stroke-Mad-Off track to east when can to cliff edge- Den F22-Seal colony/Titi-Off track either side- other track between Seal and Mad,North of Lost-G'beer-Mad-H'stroke-Hut.</p> <p>Pretty wet, not good for scent work. Mac stopped and indicated around a tree between Mad and Seal, just south of G'beer, but couldn't take it anywhere in the wet bush.</p>	 <p>An aerial photograph of a coastal region, likely a tropical island or peninsula, showing dense green vegetation and a dark blue sea. A yellow line traces a path through the land, starting from the coast and moving inland. A label 'Scent' is placed near the path. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates 0, 500, and 1,000 meters. A north arrow is in the top right corner.</p>
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<p>11th Dec Showers overnight, damp ground but dry day. Nil wind HT 1430hrs 0800-1700hrs 9 hrs</p>	<p>Headed down to south beach Edgar set/ CAM04- then back up and south off track along eastern cliffs to Fake den 5-Down catchment north of G'beer-Back to G'beer/Seal Junction- off track to Mad-up to G'beer-down to Coves-Divide-then off track to Wiremu-back to hut No sign detected</p>	
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<p>12th Dec Dry overnight, fine cool morning. Fine day, warm. North-westerly developing HT 1500hrs</p> <p>0800-1400hrs 1600-1800hrs</p> <p>8hrs</p>	<p>Off track to Divide down catchment to west past Heli pad- towards Valley track- then worked tracks and off track between Wiremu and Nicar.</p> <p>*Scat on valley track M07- at a spot Mac had marked on 7th.</p> <p>Cameraman for dog squad arrives at 3pm.</p> <p>Worked out along Nicar and Falcon for camera shoot.</p> <p>*Scent indicated on Nicar between Divide and Falcon- heading down towards coast</p>	 <p>The image is a satellite map of a coastal region. A network of tracks is visible, with several segments highlighted in purple. A red dot on one of the tracks is labeled 'Scat F07'. Another red dot on a track closer to the coast is labeled 'Winding coastal Fresh scent'. The map shows a coastline with a bay and some inland terrain. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates 0, 500, and 1,000 meters. A north arrow is located in the top right corner.</p>
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13th Dec
Dry night,
fine dry day.
Warm until
arvo then
clouded
over. Good
breeze NW
HT 1545hrs

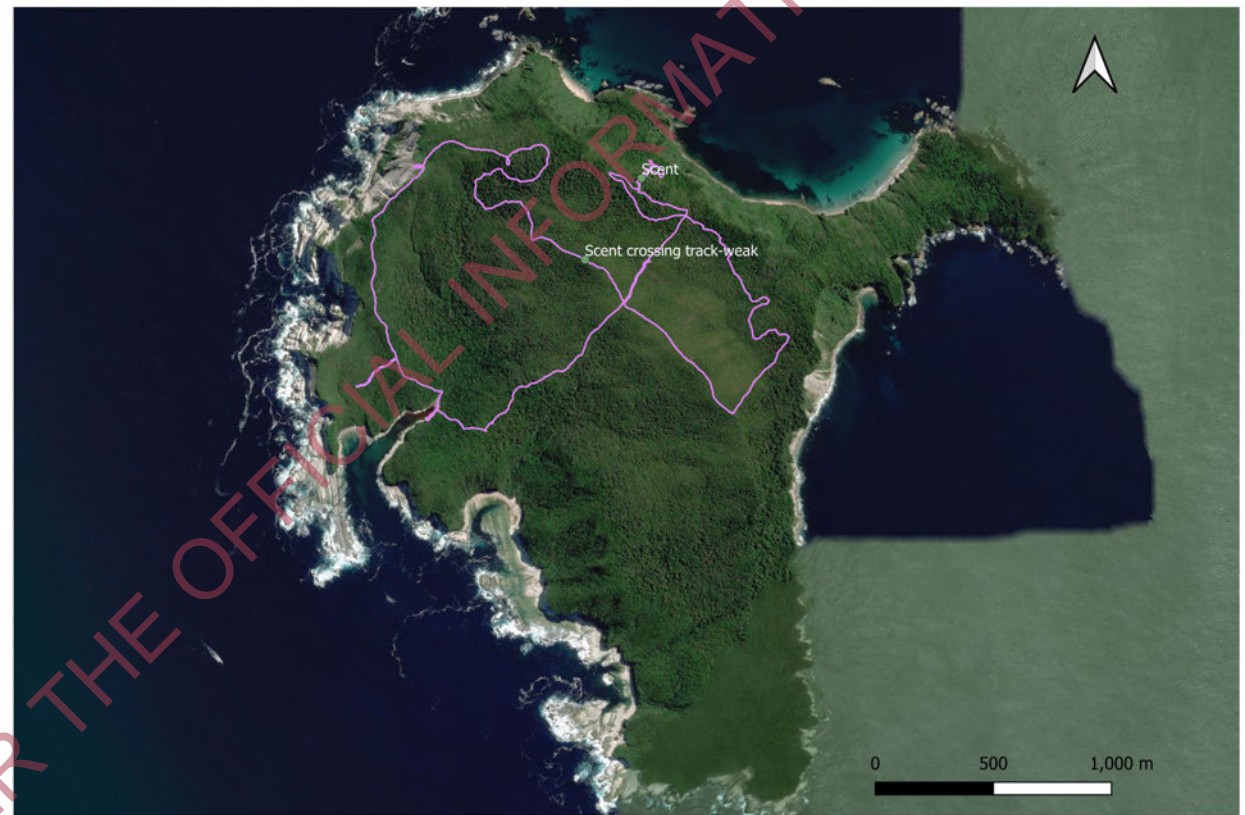
8hrs

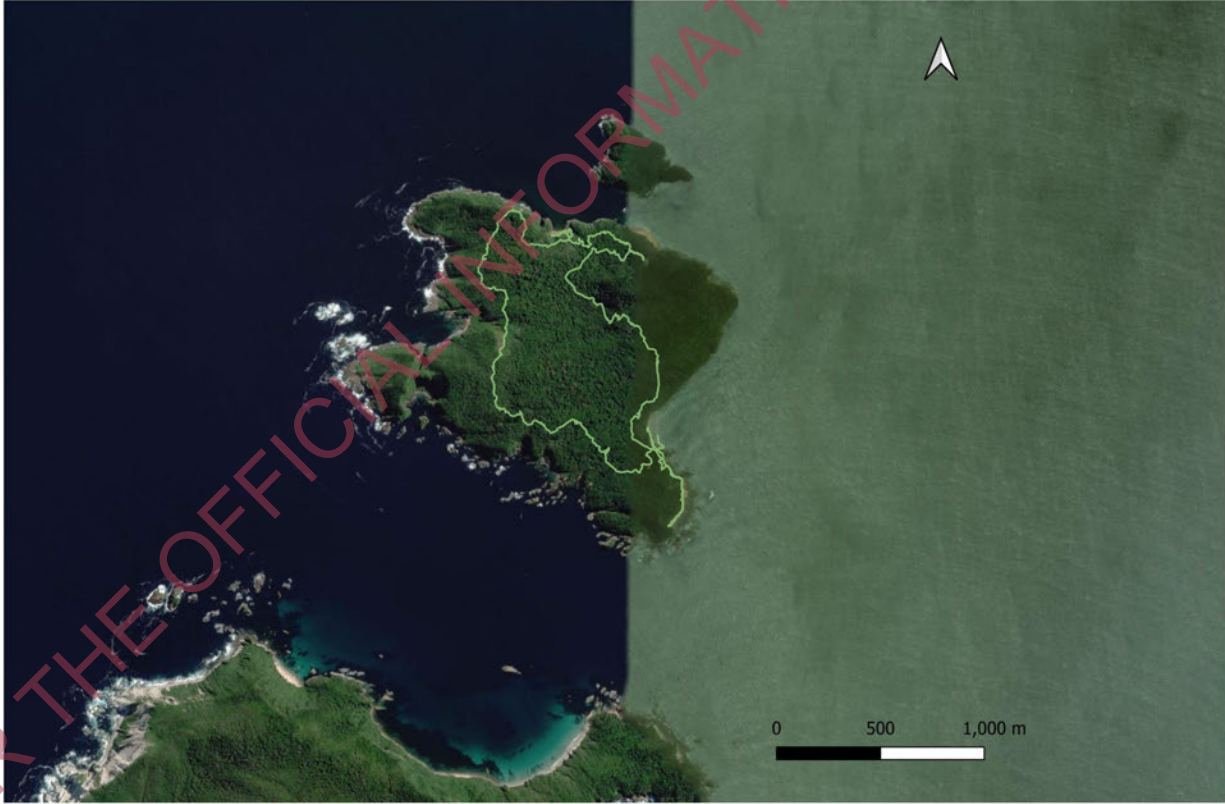
Worked Divide-Wiremu-Valley-
off track to catchment-then back
to Valley-Nicar south to Coves-
Divide and back to hut. Worked
with cameraman for morning.

***Slight indication across track
on Wiremu 200m above Valley
junction- along a log**

Went back out in the afternoon
without the cameraman.
Worked either side of Nicar (N),
revisiting area of indication from
previous night. Then Worked
between Nicar and Heat stroke
before returning to hut.

***Macca tracked down towards
the coast from the track,
working methodically, lost it
when vege got drier in
Dracaphylum and Ponga. This
was where fresh scent was
indicated on the previous day**



<p>14th Dec Rain overnight, rain and wind first thing, eased to showers. Didn't clear until 2pm- NW wind HT 1630pm</p> <p>1100-1600hrs</p> <p>6.5hrs</p>	<p>South Passage</p> <p>Got dropped off by Helicopter at 11am in wet weather. The tide was still low so we covered as much of the sandy beach from landing site as possible before heading up to the internal track. Worked the track clockwise-covering the Titi area off track on the northern side and the small sandy beach there too. Pick up at 1600hrs.</p> <p>No sign detected</p>	
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Target pest observations

- Fresh prints (day old maybe) CAM04 Little South Beach at Pinnacle on 5th December. Avoids camera. Prints follow Kiwi prints.
- Scat marker spot on Pinnacle track near end with Titi- 2 x scat- fresher one collected
- Scent detected down small catchment west of Den F22-lost at creek (weak)
- Three scats detected on lower half of Wiremu track. Two on a log crossing one further up towards Valley- all collected
- Scat detected on Valley track just below Wiremu junction. collected
- Scent detected running off Nicar heading down towards coast
- indication on a log crossing Wiremu track 200m above Wiremu Valley junction

Recommendations/Comments on surveillance system

The trap sets observed were in relatively good conditions. The trappers did report some old mayonnaise left in bottle caps in some of the run-throughs. I was not sure if these were meant to be baited but having old bait in them is probably not ideal. A lot of the Edgars and run-through trap sets were set in the middle of the beaten track, which meant the people walking the tracks daily to check things would most likely go around and consequently beat new paths that avoid the traps. In watching Maccas behaviour in this context- the first couple of traps he encountered in his path, he hesitated at the obstacle (the trap) and then went directly over them initially, but as he got used to them, he purposefully moved around them. This is interesting to note as a dog will look at an environment and how he moves about it in a similar way to other predators.

Some of the Edgar traps had a few cobwebs in the entrances. With the daily checking of these devices, it meant that the trappers would walk NICAR- MAD-SEAL-COVES and DIVIDE very regularly. Consequently, this made it hard to pick up sign on these tracks as boots trample the mud and moss, particularly when its wet. As the conditions of the tracks have got wetter and muddier, this may also have changed the stoat's behaviour in how it was choosing to use them. The increased human presence along these tracks could have also been a deterrent.

I would recommend shutting down the Edgar sets for a period to reduce the traffic daily along the tracks. The positions of the run-through sets could be looked at and moved slightly to adjust for the more likely pathway a stoat may travel. The camera footage and dog indications of the stoat over the last month could help with this.

The fake dens are well placed and set up. Unfortunately, after initially piquing his interest, I think the stoat has decided not to engage, so its time to change things up in terms of how they smell (and sound), to try and tempt his curiosity again.

The cameras have worked well, and I would recommend more sets on wider angle sites that can take in more of the track /environment, and have a better chance of detecting the stoat moving through.

Across the island there are many waterways that crisscross the landscape and provide good mossy corridors for the stoat to travel. Where these creek beds and streams cross the tracks are good sites for trap sets. Some of these waterways regularly fill up when it rains and then quickly drain, leaving some good mud pans not far off track that are good areas to pickup tracks in. The terrain off track is difficult in places with waterways up higher staying shallow and gentle, but then drop down into caverns lower down the catchment where the water has eroded the substrate away.

Threatened species and other prey species observations

We tried to cover good ground off track, and I have marked areas where Titi burrows were found and where Kiwi sign and Penguin occupation was also observed. The map of these points will be seen through with this report. There was very little evidence found to suggest that the stoat has keyed into the Titi areas yet, with only one scat and a bit of scent in a couple of the areas (Pinnacle and NW Nicar). It looked like the adults were probably still present on eggs in most of the sites. There will be chicks present soon, and this may be more of an attractant to the stoat.

The prints observed on the south beach (CAM04) were quite clearly following kiwi prints as I followed them up the dune system from the beach high tide line. The direction the prints headed also moved into a dense Titi area on the cliff edge above that beach. There are areas there very accessible for a stoat but not so accessible for us with dense Ongaonga and narrow edges running under cliffs.

There were still flocks of Mohua observed regularly, with many juvenile Tieke also observed. Kakariki were not as prevalent, seen or heard, in comparison.

Conclusions

It was difficult to find sign initially, with the dog indicating on areas of track that looked good for scat, but without been able to find anything. After a while we concluded that it was probably due to people walking over it daily, potentially knocking off and squashing the sign in situ. There had been a decent amount of rain prior to our arrival, however, the weather while we were there allowed for some good conditions to pick up new sign.

The sign detected in the Lower Wiremu /Valley track catchment seemed the area of most activity and where the freshest sign was detected. This area has good habitat and is below the big den site located by Brad and Wero back in September (F21 I think). From the feel of the island, and the sign, scent and camera footage detected while I was there, it seems that the stoat has changed its behaviour a little since mid-October. It is no longer engaging with traps and fake dens and has only been picked up on camera fleeting past, mostly along the edge of frame too. The only camera that picked up footage of the stoat behaving in a more animated way was CAM04 where prints have been found, and that site did not have much foot traffic or have a trap set there until after the footage was picked up.

The trapping methodologies, lures and camera setups need to be adjusted to better target his current behaviour, and also accommodate predicted changes that may drive what he does in future i.e. Titi chick season. Leaving the island unmanned for a spell will also be good, to allow for the human impact across the landscape to dissipate.

Although the DNA results from the scat collected from September gave high probability that there was one individual and it was a male, it is always important to not rule out worse case scenario (more than one stoat and/or a female)- we have had DNA be wrong before. As we move into the summer months there is more risk of incursion as the stoat numbers on the mainland adjacent will be at their peak, and young animals will be dispersing.

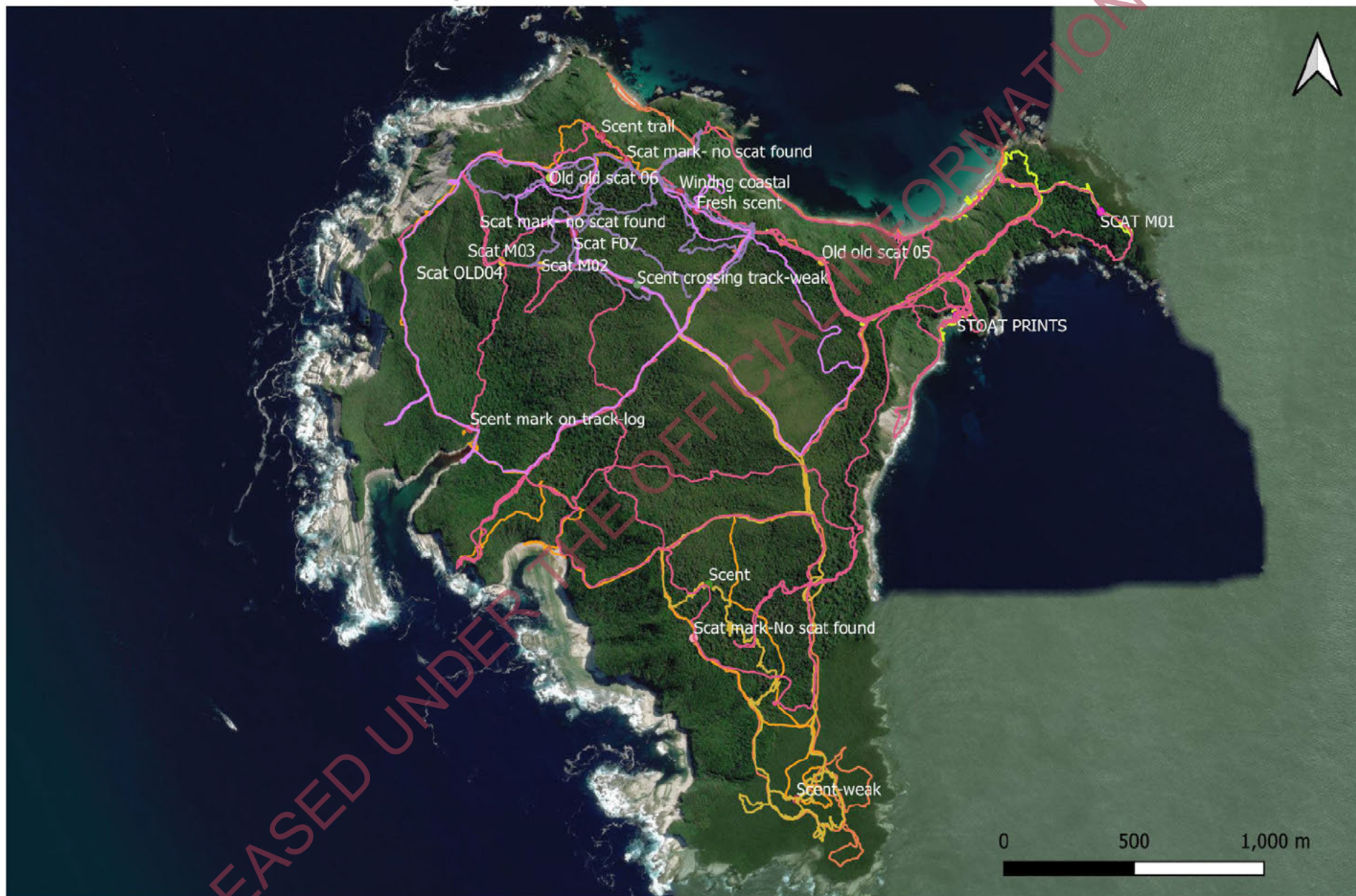
Planning for Dog handler team support

I recommend planning for regular dog surveillance visits to supplement camera and trapping efforts in the New Year. These visits should probably be least 7-10 day trips, 4-6 weeks apart. If a dead stoat is discovered in a trap, the dog surveillance regime may need to be revisited to accommodate for the changes to the scenario. Where the dogs will be used to help determine presence/absence post-dead stoat, a period of time (2-3 weeks) and (ideally) wet weather will need to pass before the dogs are deployed, to help with distinguishing old sign from new. I will also recommend where possible, that in this scenario we deploy two dog handler teams, a scat detection dog and a dog team also trained for scent detection.

I know the planning for this has already got underway, with the next planned visit set for the 15th -23rd Feb, Brad and Wero (scat detection). I have also tentatively put these dates in as support with scent detection if the incursion has moved to a presence/absence scenario by that stage. Currently we have three mustelid dog handler teams that are certified that can potentially help with the incursion. - Brad Windust and Wero, Myself and Macca and Miriam Ritchie and Alfie. For future planning, I am coordinating with these other handlers to support this incursion as part of my role with the CDP.

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Chalky Island Stoat surveillance- 5th-14th Dec 2022



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Te Kakahu Chalky Island and South Passage – Mustelid dog surveillance report

Island or island group: Te Kakahu Chalky and South Passage Islands

Operation date range: 11th May- 19th May

Dog handler: Ange Newport

Pest detection dog name: Macca

Target pest: Mustelid

Type of check: Incursion response

Objective: As per Task Assignment:

Gather intel that may help us determine;

A/ whether we still have a stoat on Chalky and

B/ whether we have a stoat on Passage, and its ID.

- Search both islands for any mustelid sign.
- Collect, record, label and store appropriately any evidence found.
- Mark POI and record tracklogs of ground covered.
- Produce report upon completion of field work.

Aim to cover as much of the islands as time and conditions allow, looking for scent trails, locations of interest and scats. Remove all scat you find.

Summary:

Chalky- We managed to get out on the ground most days despite the persistent wet conditions. There were a couple of good (but short) windows of weather where I could work Macca more effectively off track. We utilised the tide window and the beginning of the trip, and patches of dry weather to focus in and around the coastal area (Zero beach/ Falcon ridge and Sealers Bay), where two beheaded Titi carcasses were located to try and determine whether there was any evidence of mustelid presence to help with determining the predator responsible. We focused on Titi areas where possible, as it is their fledging period and young birds can become vulnerable to predators during this time. We also aimed to cover areas where activity had been detected in previous visits to help determine whether activity had ceased after the capture of a stoat in April.

South Passage- We managed relatively good coverage on South Passage in good conditions, however ground conditions remained wet. We were able to utilise good weather windows to get good search effort in over the two days. The track up to the top, and the availability of campsites has now also been resolved so this should make it easier to achieve an overnight stay in future for better coverage.

Results:

Te Kakahu Chalky Island - On the 12th of May, two predated Titi carcasses were found at Zero beach with heads missing and evidence of the carcasses been moved into or under vegetation. They were found as relatively fresh kills; however, the dog did not give any definitive indication of mustelid presence at the sites, only momentarily sniffing the carcass itself, and the drag marks leading up to one of them. No prints in the sand could be identified. There had been rain that morning around dawn. Carcasses were collected, photos taken, and evidence sent away for further analysis. A camera setup on site picked up a Falcon returning a day or so later to where one of the carcasses were found.

In searching the Island, no mustelid scent or sign was indicated by the dog over the ground we covered.

Date	Finding	Evidence (detection/ suspected/ no indication)	Confidence (Strong or low)
12/05/2023	2 x fresh Titi carcasses- predated and cached. Heads eaten off	Photos taken, Carcasses collected and swabbed.	Unsure- needs further analysis

South Passage Island - No mustelid scent or sign was detected over the ground we covered. We worked new ground where we could, covering the coastline around from Halt and then making our way off track up to the ridge closest to Chalky. We also managed to get down to West beach and work our way back up through the bush in surrounding area where a scat had been located near the track on a previous visit. Macca was finding and indicating on the scat deployed in front of cameras to test Weka interference.

The wet conditions made searching challenging at times on both islands, particularly off track on Chalky; however, some confidence can be taken with the contrast in results from the Coal Island survey (19th-24th May), conducted under similarly wet conditions in a similar environment. Stoats were found to be present there and Macca was able to find some evidence of activity most days, detecting scent activity and finding several fresh scats and a cache den site over a period of 5 days searching.

Recommendations:

Titi Carcasses

- Get expert analysis of Titi carcasses to determine likely predator.
- Get swabs tested with Eco gene for stoat DNA presence.
- Keep camera site on Zero beach at Titi carcass site.

Traps and surveillance network

- Keep all traps in good running order i.e., clear debris from mechanisms, clear cobwebs from entrances, check fake den sets are still able to go off and entrances are appropriate size (~60mm or less)
- Refresh bedding in fake dens across the island more regularly.
- Check beaches at the Northern end for prints and activity regularly.
- Run all cameras in situ from the bait trial as surveillance network for duration of incursion response- checking SD cards twice each trip if possible.

Tracks

- Track maintenance is required on NICAR around the western edge, and potentially on HEATSTROKE too i.e., logs in the mud holes to help with access across.

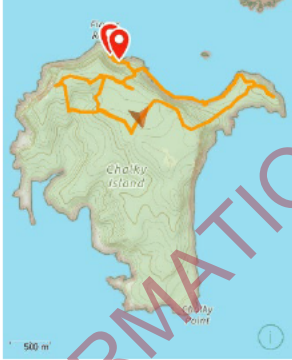

Future planning

- Continue to monitor surveillance network on both islands fortnightly through until at least the end of July (if no sign detected to date).
- Have detection dog surveillance for both islands at least 7 days a month, through until August to determine confidence in mustelid absence from both islands.




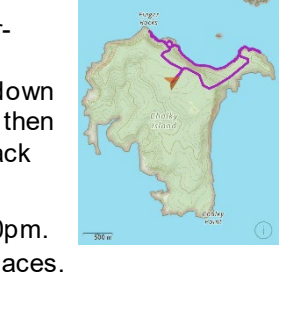
We did not find any stoat sign on South Passage, however, with the fresh sign that has been detected on South Passage Island sporadically over the last 5 months (~every other visit), this poses a risk that there is a second animal moving between the stepping stone islands but has potentially not yet made its way to Chalky but could (worst case scenario). The best-case scenario is that the sign we have been finding on South Passage was indeed the stoat caught on Chalky Island in April and he was moving between the two islands periodically. It is important to keep up the surveillance effort on both islands for a period to help ensure confidence that there is not a new animal present on these islands.

Health and safety: With the winter months, daylight hours are shorter and this needs to be taken into account for field operations and the achievability of tasks assigned.

Work diary

Date: Hours worked:	Work carried out:
<p>12th May</p> <p>6 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started out at around 0830hrs after rain. Worked from hut along Wiremu track to Nicar, back north to Falcon and down to Zero beach then Sealers Bay. Went off track around Titi burrows coastal side of Pinnacle track, then back up Rollercoaster and Nicar to the hut. Went and did Nicar-Valley-Wiremu loop later in the afternoon.</p> <p>Conditions: Showers, very damp ground conditions. Low wind</p> <p>Result: Found two predated Titi carcasses just behind the beach at Zero beach.</p> <p>Site 1 E1098674 N4881240 Site 2 E1098787 N4881179</p> <p>Both cached in Astelia with heads eaten off and fresh. Sand was clean of prints around sites due to rain. Carcasses collected and stored for examination.</p> <p>Macca only showed mild interest in the area, momentarily sniffing a sandy mound under the trees along the drag path of where the first Titi carcass was found. There was blood present there where the carcass was maybe eaten.</p> <p>Recommendations: Setup trail camera at Site 1 (dragged carcass) and will be checking the beach and wider area regularly for prints and any other sign.</p> <p>Carcasses/ photographs to be examined by Tech support, DNA swabs taken of wounds could identify predator. Site 1 and condition of carcasses could suggest a mustelid kill however no other mustelid sign was observed at the sites. Evidence of one carcass been dragged into vegetation at least 10m. Only other predators known on island are avian- Falcon or Skua</p> 
<p>13th May</p> <p>8.5 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started out at 0830hrs. Worked off track from Nicar to Falcon junction and then down to Zero track through titi area. Checked Zero beach for sign and any additional evidence- none found. Worked the point between Sealers and Zero beach off track through Titi area, then back up Falcon to work off track through Titi area north of Nicar. Then carried on south on Nicar to Coves and then went off track past GAP 3 trap to check that Titi area, before heading back north off track to meet up with Divide. Walked Heat stroke and Mad north and then off track to hut.</p>  <p>Conditions: Showers at the beginning of the day, longer dry spells later in day. Ground conditions wet in most areas except on higher more open ground where wind had dried it a little. Moderate wind</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign found. Off track was wet going. Not many burrows left occupied.</p>

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<p>14th May</p> <p>6.5 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started out at 1030hrs after heavy rain through the rain and into the morning. Worked Nicar and Rollercoaster, then out to Beach track, covering the coast around from the little beach. Then back up off track through Titi area to Mad track to head down to South loop. Worked off track to old den site at southern end then around to Ginger beer. Just before Ginger beer meets Mad again, we cut off track and ran parallel south of Heat stroke where vegetation was easier going. Met a Falcon at Beach track beach hunting the coast and cliff above.</p> <p>Conditions: Rain the night before, heavy at times through to 10am, then periodic showers. Ground conditions were saturated, and the vegetation was wet too. Not much wind.</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign found. Off track was pretty wet going.</p>	
<p>15th May</p> <p>6 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>South Passage Island</p> <p>Chopper landed us at Halt Bay on South Passage at 1100hrs. Started by working the coast from there around to the south. We went as far as we could go and worked our way up to the top at High point 99m. Worked off track to SP25 then took track clockwise to Fake den site 3. We continued past there off track down to the Western beach and checked there before making our way back up. At SP12 we cut off track to the East and followed catchment down then around to meet up with the track again SP41. Followed track back to Halt Bay for helicopter pickup at 1600hrs.</p> <p>Conditions: Fairly dry and clear the night before until rain showers between 4am-6am. Dry day after that. Ground conditions were wet, little bit of wind.</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign indicated. Only Weka and Penguin tracks observed on the beach</p>	
<p>16th May</p> <p>6 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started out at 0830hrs. Went via tracks to Falcon Junction then headed south off track to Wiremu stream crossing, then around off track to Divide/Coves track junction. Worked Coves track east to Ginger beer track junction, then off track through to Mad track. Headed north on Mad- Rollercoaster to Sealers Bay, then coast to Falcon track, up and back to hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Fairly dry and windy the night before, dry day until 1pm. Rain showers set in from 1pm. Moderate to strong winds. Ground conditions were damp in the morning but wet after 1pm (from Rollercoaster through to hut).</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign found.</p>	
<p>17th May</p> <p>3.5 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Heavy rain through the night and then most of the day. Stopped at 1.30pm. Went out at 2pm to walk Divide-Nicar-Falcon to Zero beach, checking live traps as we went. Covered a little of the titi area on falcon ridge, then went down to Sealers Bay. It was low tide so we walked the bay and then further around the coast to below Pinnacles track, then back up Rollercoaster and Nicar back to Hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Wet overnight and through the day until 1.30pm. Ground conditions were saturated and flooded in some places.</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign found.</p>	

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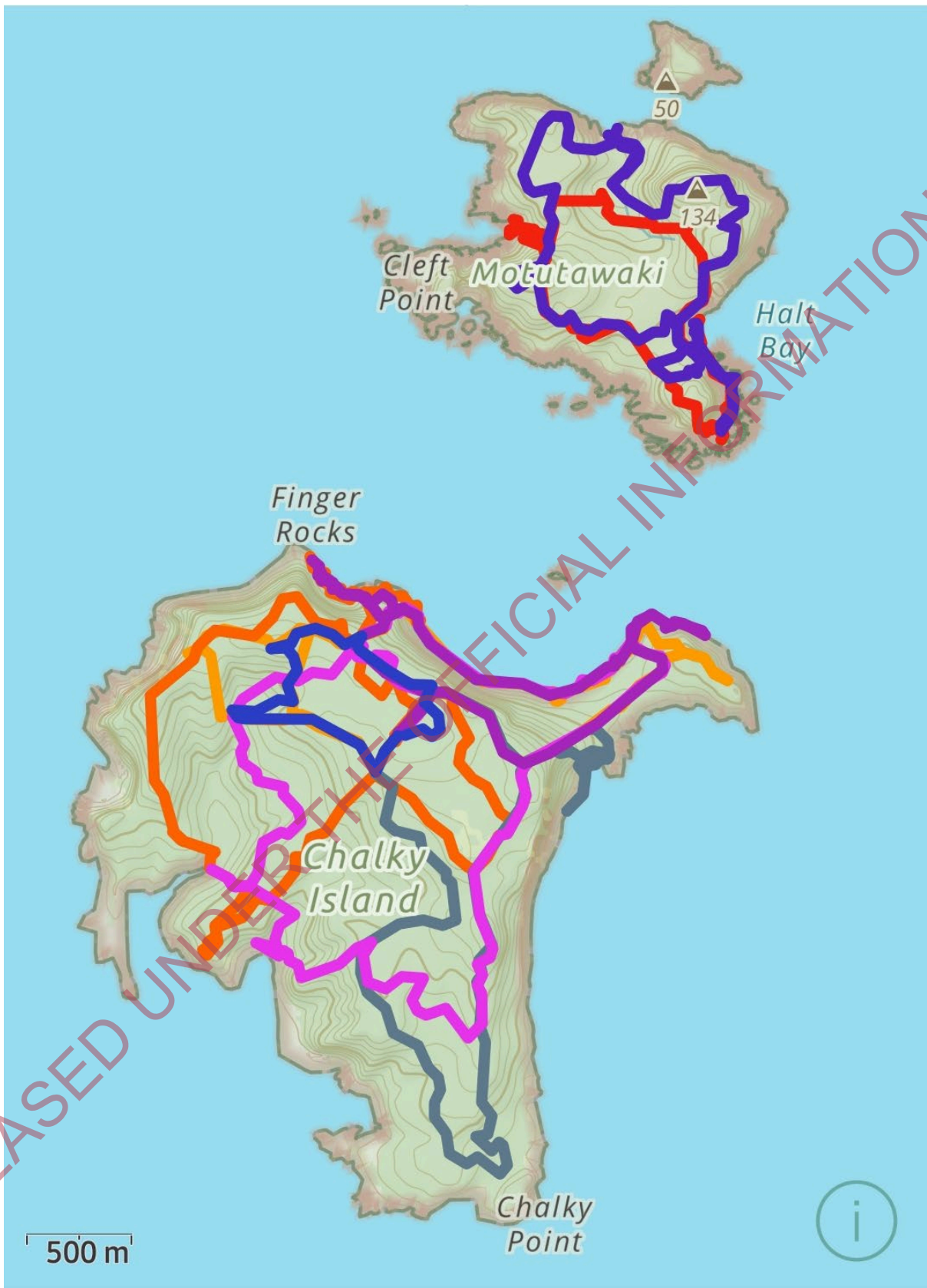
<p>18th May</p> <p>6.5 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>South Passage Island</p> <p>Started out at 0930hrs after helicopter drop off. Headed up and north on track anti- clockwise, working off track on the NE highpoints before dropping back down to the track near North beach. Covered what we could at North beach just off high tide, then continued on the track anti-clockwise around to the open rock face. Above this we went off track again to the west, and then tried to cover some of the interior but progress was hindered, and we were turned around by areas of very thick supplejack. Worked in between the track at the southern end before dropping down and covering the coastal area accessible from Halt Bay.</p> <p>Conditions: Dry and sunny weather all day, light breeze. Damp ground conditions. Good conditions for searching.</p> <p>Result: No mustelid sign found.</p>	
<p>19th May</p> <p>2 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Change over day- Coal Island</p> <p>We had 2 hrs in the morning before a pickup at 1100hrs to be moved to Coal island. We started out along Wiremu, heading off track at the creek crossing at the bottom, wokring upstream to Valley track. Followed Valley track up, and then went off track to the old big den site. Then covered Nicar back to the campsite on Divide, where we did a loop off track to cover some of the area in behind the hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Relatively dry overnight, and a dry morning. Some cloud. Damp ground conditions. Good conditions for searching.</p> <p>Results: No mustelid sign found.</p>	

Track logs:

Attached separately as ZIP files to email.

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Map of coverage- Chalky and South Passage



Chalky and South Passage Island – Mustelid and cat dog incursion report

Island or island group: Chalky Island and South Passage Island

Operation date range: 11th - 20th June 2023

Dog handler: Brad

Pest detection dog name: Wero

Target pest: Mustelid

Type of check: Incursion

Objective: A thorough search of Chalky and South Passage Islands for any sign of mustelids.

Summary I felt we got good coverage on both Islands, weather was good, just not a lot of daylight hours.

Results: We didn't find anything of interest on Chalky Island, no scat, no prints, no cachings.

On South Passage Island Wero indicated two very old stoat scats. The first one had moss growing through it. The second one was fresher, however still very old. When I reached to get the ball for his reward, he leaped forward, and his paw squashed the scat into the ground, and I couldn't find it to retrieve it. It basically turned to dirt. Sorry!

Recommendations I think the fake dens on Chalky are too much risk to non targets, and should now be shut down. I found two with entrances that were too big. (I fixed them). Because South Passage Island has been so unusual, I would not relax too much there, something might still turn up. Keeping in mind, the scats I found there were very old. But how old, I can't say. We didn't find any "very old" scats on Chalky.

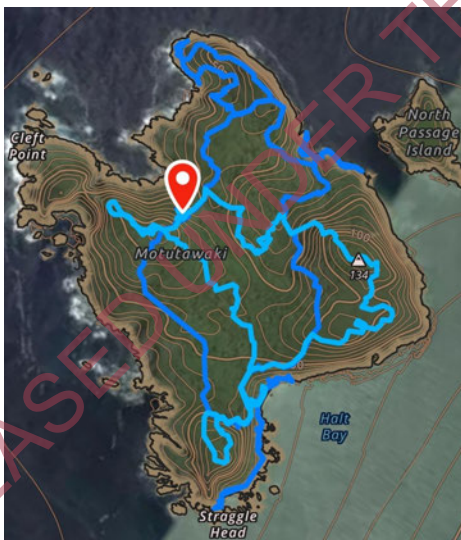
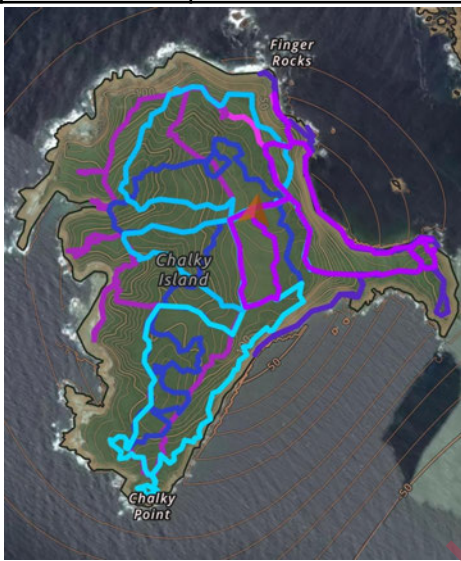
Keep up the trapping and camera network.

Health and safety: The introduction and H&S briefing was really good. And whoever cut the track up to the plateau on South Passage Island needs a medal, what an awesome job!

Work diary

Date: Hours worked:	Work carried out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Include any observations</i> • <i>Include weather and ground conditions, any recommendations and results</i>
11th Hunting hours 2.15 3.8 km	Traveled to Chalky. Set up the cabin, then went through how to safely set Fenn traps with Chris. Heavy rain set in. Once it cleared up we went down to Zero beach and I showed Chris how to service the fake dens. We then went and did fake Den 1 as well. Message Mon and told her I thought Chris was fine to re-bait the fake dens, but not releasing the Fenn traps. It would mean he would have to unbuild a lot of the den, to release them, then rebuild it. She agreed, leaving the fenns set, just re-bait. Wero was eager to check places he had found scat before, but nothing. He disappointingly ran on.
12th Hunting hours 6 12.4 km	We did the main track right around the Island, Wero didn't find anything, no indications, no scat. I did find a dead titi in the middle of the track, on Wiremu track. It had a cut in the back of its neck. Wero was not interested at all. My initial feelings is it's a kākāpō rape victim, falcon kill, or stoat. Took photos, GPSed, bagged and froze it. My mate Noel Hyed, a falcon expert I sent the photos to said this: "Hi Brad, it could well be falcon but I would have expected to see a few more feathers around the open wound. Falcons would bite to sever the vertebrae behind the skull like this, then pluck the immediate area to break into the flesh. It looks like it has just been torn into. Saying that they are quite soft skinned. Interesting that so little was eaten, maybe it was disturbed. I have Titi skulls from Adam's Is that have similar back of skull damage.
13th Hunting hours 7 10.7 km	We hunted down to Beach beach and along the coast, then down and around to Sealers Bay along to Zero and back.
14th Hunting hours 8 12.3 km	Hunted around the Wiremu then down south mostly off track.
15th Hunting hours 6.20 8.8 km	South Passage Island We hunted the main track out to the main titi nesting site, and the beach. When we got to the big slip Wero indicated on two very very old stoat scats. The first one had moss growing through it. The second one was fresher, however still very old. When I reached to get the ball for his reward, he leaped forward and his paw squashed the scat into the ground and there was nothing left to bag.
16th Hunting hours 5.30 6.4 km	Hunted off track most of the day. Double checked a couple of old hot spots. Got the chopper back at 2.45 to Chalky.
17th Hunting hours 7 10 km	Hunted down the east coast cliff to Chalky Point then around the sink holes area and back. Helped carry some traps back for Chris.

18th Hunting hours 6.45 7.8 km	A lot of bush bashing, filling in areas we hadn't covered.
19th Hunting hours 6 8.5 km	Checked beach for prints, then was hunting through the peatlands when Wero got a big splinter between his toes. He was in a lot of pain, I managed to pull it out, brought him home, gave him painkillers and put him to bed. He seemed fine in the morning. Dogs are tough!!
20th	Packed and cleaned up, and flew to Te Anau and had debrief.



Track logs: Attached with email.

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Te Kakahu Chalky Island and South Passage – Mustelid dog surveillance report

Island or island group: Te Kakahu Chalky and South Passage Islands

Operation date range: 11th – 17th July 2023

Dog handler: Ange Newport

Pest detection dog name: Macca and Almo

Target pest: Mustelid

Type of check: Incursion response

Objective: As per Task Assignment:

Gather intel that may help us determine;

A/ whether we still have a stoat on Chalky and

B/ whether we have a stoat on Passage, and its ID.

- Search both islands for any mustelid sign.
- Collect, record, label and store appropriately any evidence found.
- Mark POI and record tracklogs of ground covered.
- Produce report upon completion of field work.

Aim to cover as much of the islands as time and conditions allow, looking for scent trails, locations of interest and scats. Remove all scat found.

If opportunity can be afforded with Southern Winds, also check North Passage (Little Passage Island) for any sign of stoat presence.

Summary:

Chalky- We had wet squally weather the majority of our trip. This meant there was wet ground conditions, however the wind did allow things to dry off at times. There was enough dry weather during the days to get good effective search effort on Chalky. We aimed to cover the tracks, coast, and off-track in places to fill in gaps, working as best we could around the weather.

Passage Islands- We only managed one day of logistical support from Southern Winds due to weather and sea conditions. It was a still day to start with low cloud and drizzle. then rain set in at midday and the wind built up to a strong westerly. We had an hour on Little Passage in relatively dry weather, but with wet ground conditions due to persistent overnight rain. We covered the Trap track network. We then got transferred to South Passage at midday with rain setting in. We only had time to search the loop track before pickup. It was raining with saturated ground conditions; however, we did manage to search the slip face around trap 15A a bit more thoroughly in a brief break in the rain.

Results:

Te Kakahu Chalky Island – No stoat sign or scent was indicated by the dogs. Almo was new to this environment and the fake den sets, indicated on several of them, likely indicating on the bedding scent and remnants of inside.

North Passage Island- No stoat sign or scent was indicated by the dogs.

South Passage Island – Almo and Macca both indicated near trap 15A on the slip face on South Passage, however I think this was likely due to the old female bedding in that trap. No other stoat sign or scent was detected over the ground we covered.

Recommendations:

Traps and surveillance network

- Check beaches at the Northern end for prints and activity regularly- through duration of incursion response, and then incorporate this as part of ongoing surveillance.
- All remaining cameras (22 at last count) are left in situ for the duration of incursion response.
- A few cameras should remain on island at key locations as part of the surveillance network ongoing. These should be well placed, where they have successfully detected a stoat before while it has been moving through (rather than interacting with lured dens). Coastal areas would also be good.

Future planning

- We did not find any stoat sign on South Passage, however, with the unfavourable weather conditions, saturated ground conditions and limited time available to cover ground, this island should be a priority for the next visit in August.
- A BAU (Business as Usual) trapping and surveillance trip is planned for September on Southern Winds- Chalky preservation inlet trip- with a stoat dog on board. This trip should utilise boat support to get further confidence in Passage Islands (North and South) been clear of any stoat sign going into the breeding season.

Recommendations for future detection dog surveillance of these islands:

Twice annually- 3 days would be the minimum amount of time to have for searching Chalky, allowing for at least all tracks and accessible coast to be covered well. One good day is also needed for South Passage. North Passage can be covered well in an hour as the trap track network allows for this.

Where it will be incorporated into Southern Winds trip to Preservation and Chalky inlets, it is recommended that these islands are checked first before moving to Preservation due to highest biosecurity risk. Ideally the vessel would be in Chalky inlet for 4 days.

Health and safety:

The adverse weather conditions can be challenging. Having the right number of layers, good wind breaker outer layers, and keeping a dry layer for when standing still is important, particularly when waiting for boat pick-ups.

There are several rock landings required when working from the DOC boat Southern Winds, potentially in swell and wind. It is important to ensure people doing this work are competent and comfortable with this.

Other Observations:




The island felt relatively quiet this trip with a lack of bird life activity, been the low point of the season for many species through the colder winter months. Seal numbers present were also lower. Things should start picking up in activity with the coming months and the beginning of the breeding seasons for many.

After strong winds on the evening of the 13th, a large tree fall came down over the Nicar track between Divide and Mad. Coordinates E1099449 N4880729. A route has been flagged around it.



Almo was new to working on this island and had not encountered fake den setups or stoat bedding before. He has been trained to mark scent and scat in the same way and was reacting to the anal gland scent and bedding lures that were present in some of these sets. I tried to control him a bit in these scenarios so as not to disturb the set too much and getting him away from the set without discouraging him. Hopefully, things were left in good order.

I also did a scat lay for the dogs at one point at the top of Falcon track. There should not be any residual scent left by the time the next dog handler come through. The co-ordinates for this point are E1098879 N4880976.

Work diary

Date: Hours worked:	Work carried out:
<p>11th July</p> <p>4 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Arrived on island at 1000hrs in good weather conditions. Went out with the Kakapo ranger and Almo to conduct a Kakapo introduction. Once completed we started out while the weather was favourable. We worked from the hut down Rollercoaster track to Pinnacles and Sealers bay, covered some of the beach to the arches, then off track from pinnacles back to Beach beach track. Covered Beach beach around to rocky cliffs then worked back up Titi area on cliff edge to Mad track. Followed Mad-Heatstroke-Divide back to hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Dry weather, damp ground conditions. Moderate wind</p> <p>Result: No stoat sign or scent indicated</p> 
<p>12th July</p> <p>6 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started at 0930hrs and NW corner of the island, covering Wiremu – Valley, Nicar south down to boat cove and back up the Divide track to hut. Checked in with Southern Winds at mid-day to confirm plans re South Passage. Then continued, covering Nicar-Falcon- west end of Sealers, then Zero beach before heading back up and round to Wiremu track. Worked off-track across from Wiremu to Divide.</p> <p>Conditions: Cold, squally wind and hail showers passing through. Moderate wind from the SW. Damp to wet ground conditions</p> <p>Result: Almo indicated on Fake den 2- likely anal gland/bedding scent. No other stoat sign or scent indicated</p> 
<p>13th July</p> <p>1.5 hrs Chalky</p> <p>1 hr North Passage</p> <p>3.5 hrs South Passage</p>	<p>South and North Passage Islands</p> <p>Walked down to Sealers bay via R'coaster track to meet a boat pickup at 1000hrs. Got dropped off on North Passage with two trappers at 1100hrs. Worked the trap line tracks and got good coverage. Got picked up and moved to South Passage (northern beach landing) at 12noon. Worked the loop track anti-clockwise. Got picked up at 1530hrs and deployed back on Chalky at Falcon ridge end of Sealers at 1600hrs. Walked back up to the hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Heavy rain the night before, morning light drizzle then steady rain and gusty Westerly winds from midday. Wet to saturated ground conditions.</p> <p>Result: Dogs indicated at trap set 15A, likely old bedding in trap. No other stoat sign or scent indicated</p> 

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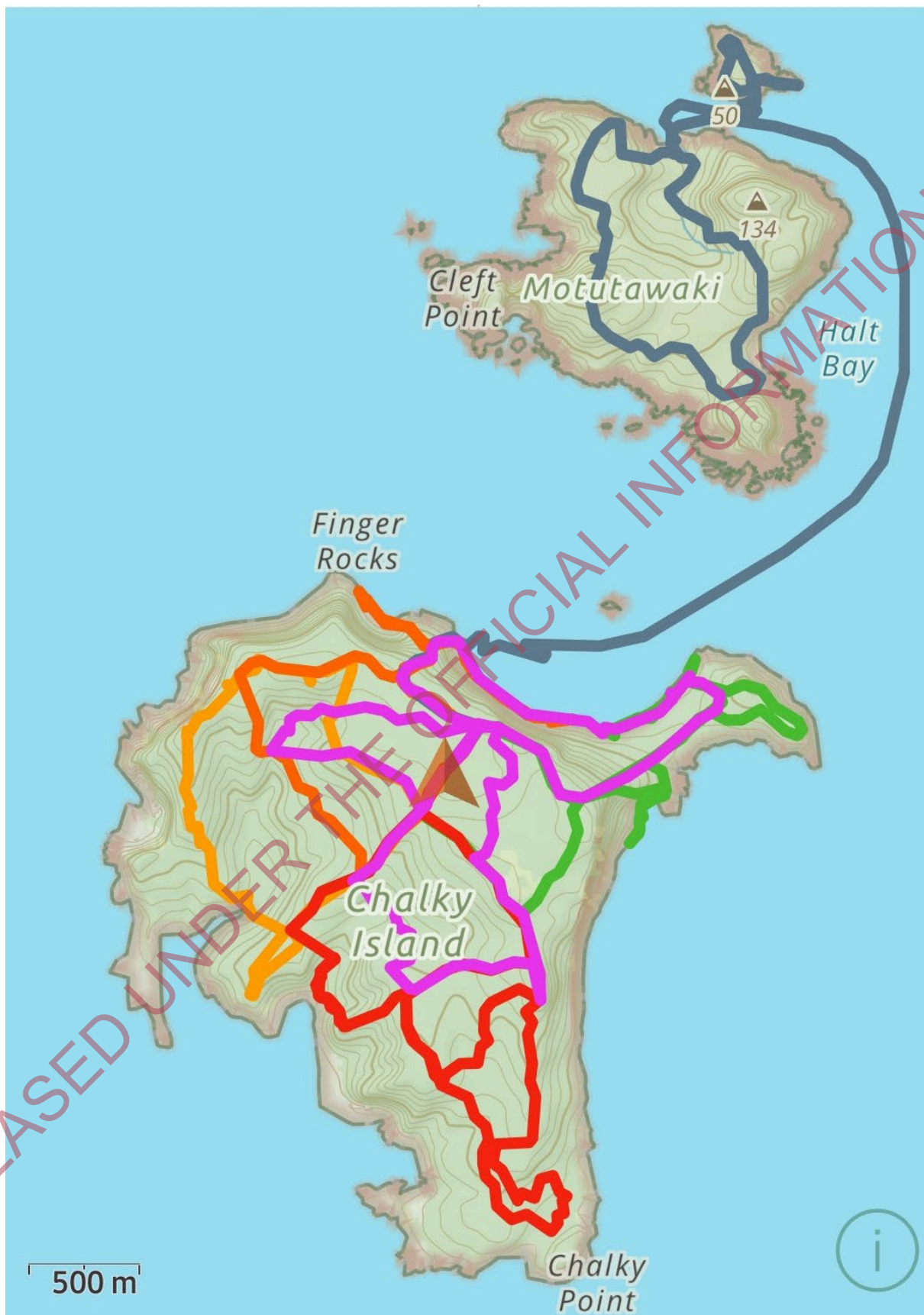
<p>14th July</p> <p>5 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Dried off some field gear first thing in the morning. Started at 1000hrs. Worked the southern end of the island. Headed down Divide onto Coves track down to Paradise cove, then up onto Seal track. Worked off track a bit down the bottom end as there weren't many seals around, then stayed off track through to Lost track. Went up Lost to Mad then up Mad to high point before dropping off track to work through to Seal- Ginger beer junction. Worked up Ginger beer- Mad- H'stroke back to hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Wet overnight, break in the rain in the morning then showers started up again at midday. Wet ground conditions.</p> <p>Result: Almo marked Fake den 3- likely bedding/scent gland lure. No other stoat sign or scent indicated.</p>	
<p>15th July</p> <p>7 hrs on the ground</p>	<p>Started out at 0930hrs. Worked the northern end tracks and off track as much as possible in the centre of the island. Then we headed down R'coaster to Sealers bay and covered the bay through to Falcon ridge at low tide.</p> <p>Conditions: Fairly dry and windy overnight, relatively dry day with strong winds. Damp ground conditions.</p> <p>Result: Almo indicated on Fake den 11- likely bedding/scent lure. No other stoat sign or scent indicated</p>	
<p>16th July</p>	<p>Hut day</p> <p>Conditions: Heavy rain and strong winds overnight- squally showers and hail through the day</p> <p>Went out in the afternoon and flagged a route around tree fall on Nicar track.</p>	

Track logs:

Attached separately as ZIP files to email.

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Map of coverage- Chalky and South Passage



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Chalky and South Passage – Mustelid dog surveillance report

Island or island group: Chalky and South Passage Islands.

Operation date range: 9th - 15th August 2023

Dog handler: Brad Windust

Pest detection dog name: Wero

Target pest: Mustelids

Type of check: Surveillance after incursion

Objective: Thorough search of Chalky and South Passage Island.

Summary: We got good coverage on both Chalky and South Passage Islands, and the weather was mostly great while searching.

Results: We found no sign of mustelid on either of the islands.

Recommendations. I recommend the incursion response is wrapped up, on both Islands, but with ongoing surveillance at a higher standard than previously. Cameras and a minimum of two mustelid dog checks per year, after dispersal season. Lots of animals like dogs are attracted to rotten eggs, this includes stoats. I suggest, if traps are not going to be serviced as regularly as mainland projects going forward, that eggs as bait are used. I've found rotten eggs with maggots boiling out the top, catch more stoat than fresh eggs.

Health and safety:

Everything was great, but thought I'd leave this photo here for a laugh.



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Work diary

Date: Hours worked:	Work carried out:
9th 6.1km 3 hunting hours	Traveled to Chalky, showed Sena how to set Fenn traps and do the fake dens then went hunting down Falcon along Sealers up Rollercoaster and back. No sign, good weather.
10th 8.6km 6:40 hunting hours	We flew across to South Passage and hunted there for the day. I put up a camera where Wero always found scat on the slip. It was CAM86 INC11. We then carried on and I put up another camera at GAP03. This area was not good for a camera so I put it nearby on the ridge. It was CAMZ1 INC32. We carried on and I put up another camera at GAP02. This was CAM01 INC45. The weather was great, but we didn't find anything.
11th 9.1km 7 hunting hours	We flew to South Passage again and searched the interior of the Island. The weather was excellent but we didn't find anything. We put a camera up at GAP01. It was CAM00 INC41. All cameras were marked with pink flagging tape.
12th 15.2km 7.30 hunting hours	The weather was great, but forecast for rain for the rest of the week. So we used this day to cover as much as we could using the tracks. We got a lot done, but didn't find anything.
13th 3km 1:5 hours	Heavy rain and wind so we had a hut day. We did manage to get out a bit in the late arvo and searched Zero beach.
14th 12.4km 6:36 hours	We searched Beach beach, then bush bashed the interior of the Island. Made it back just before heavy hail and rain.

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Track logs: Attached

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Te Kakahu Chalky and Passage Islands– Mustelid dog surveillance report

DOC-7455926

Island or island group: Te Kakahu Chalky and Passage Islands, Coal Island

Operation date range: 3rd – 11th Sept 2023

Dog handler: Ange Newport

Pest detection dog name: Macca and Almo

Target pest: Mustelid

Type of check: Incursion response

Objective: As per Task Assignment:

Gather evidence of continued absence of stoats on Chalky. Gather evidence of absence of stoats on South Passage.

Conduct a thorough search of both islands for any mustelid sign- priority on South Passage is slip area where scat has been found in the past. Then off track to points and areas not covered often.

Cover ground on Coal Island recording any indication of stoat activity

- Collect, record, label and store appropriately any evidence found.
- Mark POI and record tracklogs of ground covered.
- Produce report upon completion of field work

Summary

We flew into South Passage in dry fine weather with little wind on the 3rd of September and spent two days covering North and South Passage, with good conditions for searching. The fine weather held through until Wednesday 6th then we had some rain overnight. For the 5 days on Chalky Island at the end of the trip the weather was relatively good through to Sunday 10th. Good coverage was achieved in ideal weather and ground conditions.

Results:

Date	Finding	Evidence (detection/ suspected/ no indication)	Confidence (Strong or low)
3 rd - 4 th Sept	NIL Passage Islands	N/A	Strong
7 th - 11 th Sept	NIL Te Kakahu Chalky Island	N/A	Strong
6 th Sept	Coal Island- several indications on scent and scat	One old scat and photos of cache collected- positive scent indications	High/Strong

Recommendations

Passage Islands

This is the 3rd check of the Passage Islands since the last sign was detected in June (2 x old scat on slip). The last two checks completed by Brad and Wero, then me and Almo/Macca, have been conducted in ideal search conditions and ground conditions with no sign detected. If no sign is detected on SD cards collected from the September check, then I would recommend closing the stoat incursion response for these Islands, and moving back to surveillance mode, keeping a dispersed trail camera network in situ as part of annual surveillance monitoring for the islands.

Te Kakahu Chalky

Te Kakahu Chalky has had 4 good checks since the stoat was caught in April. The trap checks and Camera card checks have also been clear. This September check was a year since first detection of stoat presence on this island. We could not find any sign of stoat presence in our search. It is recommended that the incursion response traps are tidied up, and a dispersed network of trail cameras remain in situ to be monitored bi-monthly as checks allow, perhaps aligning with trap checks.

I would recommend checking the islands with detection dog surveillance twice a year- Spring and Autumn- for both mustelid and rodent activity. 5 days is a good length of time to get around the islands and check for sign (this includes a day on Passage islands)

Coal Island

I only had time to cover a couple of tracks so chose to do the longest route I could in the time allowed. This took me from Tims Landing across the catchments in the south hand then back north via Willans and Johans where there had been activity recorded in May. We got scent activity closer to Otago retreat this trip, first down in the catchment, then a couple of other areas around the south. Unfortunately, no fresh scat was collected however fresh sign and scent was indicated in several areas.

Health and safety

This trip was split in terms of responsibilities but was planned well. I was under the Southern Winds team lead for the first 4 days, and then deployed on Chalky Island where a separate FSI applied, and I followed check-in procedures as required. Everything went well, comms were good, and I felt well supported.




Other observations

This trip was a BAU (Business as usual) trip to the Chalky and Preservation inlets with Southern Winds. The volunteer trapping team were tasked with beginning the tidy-up of incursion response trap network on Chalky. Most Edgar traps were collected from the field, with 7 traps left at the Chalky hut, and two still out in the field as they could not carry out due to time. These two traps were moved to the main tracked to be collected- one is at F22 Fake den 3 track entrance off Mad, and the other is at ED03 flagging on Nicar track. From what could observe, all Run-through sets were set off and moved just off the track as requested.




The fake den sites were all visited, and Fenn traps removed and structure dismantled to some degree, however the sites were not checked for old bedding or remaining kit callers buried inside as I suspect the volunteers were unaware of these details. I endeavoured to visit every site and collect up old bedding and retrieve what I found. Two kit callers were retrieved from Beach Beach set (Fake den site 6) and F22 Fake den site 3 and returned to Te Anau biosecurity store.

The 3 off track camera sites on South Passage Island (deployed by Brad), do not have flagged access routes to them, however, are well flagged in situ. I navigated to them off track using the waypoints from TrapNZ that proved accurate. However, it is not easy to find a route to them unless you are familiar with the terrain off track on the island. For future checks, Brad or I can give some advice on how best to access if required, and our dog surveillance tracks could help people to navigate to them.



Work diary

Date: Hours worked:	Work carried out:	
<p>3rd Sept 6 hrs, 7.5km</p>	<p>Passage Islands (Worked Almo and Macca) Started out at around 1030hrs with Heli drop off at Halt bay. Worked the coast first and then focused on areas to the south before returning via the track to Halt bay for a pickup at 1630 hrs. We tried to get out to Cleft point from the land but it got too steep and sketchy just before we got to the narrowest part of the saddle. It was cliffy and steep on the other side too so not doable. There was too much swell running to attempt any dinghy landings along that coast. Conditions: Fine, dry weather, damp ground conditions. Low wind Result: Nil sign indicated. *Dogs indicated consistently on bedding that was laid out in front of cameras</p>	
<p>4th Sept 7.5 hrs, 7.9km</p>	<p>Passage Islands (Just worked Almo) Started out at 0830hrs. Got dropped on North Passage Island for an hour and searched ground on and off track there. Was moved to South Passage Northern beach landing at 10am. Worked west from landing and covered off track through the middle and focusing on the northern end of the island. Pickup at Halt bay at 1600hrs Conditions: Fine, dry weather, damp ground conditions. Low wind Result: Nil sign indicated *located and changed cards/checked battery life of the 3 off-track cameras deployed last check</p>	
<p>5th Sept 2 hrs, 3.5km</p>	<p>Chalky (Worked Almo and Macca) Started at 0900hrs and got dropped at Falcon ridge end of Sealers bay. Walked up track and down to Zero beach covering that. Then we headed back and up to NICAR and into the hut before heading back down to Sealers for a Pick up at 1100hrs. Checked fake den site 10. *Deployed on trap checks in Preservation in the afternoon. Conditions: Fine, dry weather, damp ground conditions. Low wind Result: Nil sign indicated</p>	

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<p>6th Sept</p> <p>5.5 hrs, 8.9km</p>	<p>Coal Island</p> <p>(Worked Almo and Macca) Got dropped at Tims landing at the southern end at 0830hrs. Worked OR down to Creek 1, then Johans track through the catchments to Willans track. Up Willans to Johans in the North, then we followed Johans to Moonlight bay for a pickup at 2pm.</p> <p>Conditions: Fine, cloudy, dry ground conditions, wind building to moderate through the day.</p> <p>Results: Scent and scat found at several locations (see map). No fresh scat collected.</p>	
<p>7th Sept</p> <p>4 hrs, 8.3km</p>	<p>Te Kakahu Chalky Island</p> <p>Drop off at 10am. Started from hut at midday. Worked H'stroke-Mad-Seal-Coves- Divide-Wiremu-Valley-Nicar.</p> <p>Conditions: Fine weather, moderate wind, damp ground after rain overnight.</p> <p>Results: Nil sign indicated.</p> <p>*1 Edgar at F22 fake den site 3 track entry off Mad track. 1 kit caller retrieved from fake den site 3.</p>	
<p>8th Sept</p> <p>8hrs, 14.2km</p>	<p>Te Kakahu Chalky Island</p> <p>Started at 0800hrs. Worked Nicar to Rollercoaster jnx, them off track south near cliff to G'beer. Down G'beer to Seal, off track between Seal and Mad, then from Lost north on Mad to Rochester jnx. Off track to follow cliff edge down to Beach beach. Coast then back up to R'coaster and out to Pinnacles via off track loop, Sealers bay and coast to Falcon. Falcon spur- Nicar- Wiremu- Divide- Hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Fine weather, dap-dry ground conditions, moderate wind. There had been showers overnight.</p> <p>Results: Nil sign indicated.</p> <p>*7 Edgar's, 3 nest boxes at hut. 3 runthroughs at hut.</p> <p>Checked and tidied up Fake den sites 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 1 and 7. 1 Kit caller retrieved from fake den 6 (Beach beach)</p>	

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<p>9th Sept</p> <p>6 hrs, 9.5km</p>	<p>Te Kakahu Chalky Island</p> <p>Started at 0900hrs. Worked Divide north to campsite then off track to Wiremu Nicar jnx. Then Nicar south, working off track towards GAP 6, then boat cove, up Coves to GAP 3 area, then up Divide, off track left towards Wiremu. Back up Wiremu to Divide, the H'stroke-Mad north, then off track through to Divide north of hut.</p> <p>Conditions: Fine weather, moderate wind, dry ground conditions. Dry overnight too.</p> <p>Results: Nil sign indicated.</p> <p>*1 Edgar trap on Nicar track at ED03. Checked and cleared fake den sites 4 and 2.</p>	
<p>10th Sept</p> <p>2.5 hrs, 4.1km</p>	<p>Te Kakahu Chalky Island</p> <p>Started 12.30pm after rain. Worked Divide S- off track at C16 Den 1 site- off track through to Gingerbeer track- Mad-Nicar-hut</p> <p>Conditions: Rain and wind overnight. Rain in AM. Ground conditions damp. Moderate wind</p> <p>Results: Nil sign indicated.</p>	
<p>11th Sept</p>	<p>Te Kakahu Chalky Island</p> <p>Packed up hut and flew off- back to Te Anau</p>	

Track logs: Attached in email sent with report as a ZIP file

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