



The first stoat traps were laid around Alice Nash Memorial Heritage Lodge in snow. Photo by Darren Peters.

Oroua valley stoat trapping project

About the project

A line of DOC 200 stoat traps will be set in the Oroua Valley catchment within the Ruahine Forest Park to control stoats in the area. Stoats prey on the eggs and chicks of our native birds and are a critical threat to our endangered species.

Why we are doing it

Blue Ducks (Whio) are nationally endangered; their status is similar to Kiwi and Kaka.

They are one of three types of water fowl in the world that spend their entire lives on fast flowing river systems (the others are in New Guinea and South America).

The main threats to Blue Duck are habitat loss and stoats.



The threatened native Blue Duck will be protected by the stoat trap line. Photo by C.S. Robertso

Who is involved

The Manawatu branch of the (NZDA) is working in partnership with the Department of Conservation. NZDA will provide the traps and bait, and organise volunteers to check and re-bait traps. DOC will provide technical support and advice, and monitor the Blue Duck population to determine whether or not the trap line is effective.

The project is supported by sponsors Horizons Regional Council, Endeavour Community Trust and Zeagolds.

The proposed trap line



This is the NZDA's proposed trap layout. Your suggestions are welcome. Contact Weka or Andrew with your feedback (see contact details below).

How it will work



The planned trap line will extend for 40kms. So far, traps have been laid from the car park to Alice Nash Memorial Heritage Lodge and up to Iron Gates Hut.

We are applying for lottery funding to purchase more traps, GPS units, and helicopter time to transport the traps into the hills.

Trapping is an effective tool for controlling stoats.

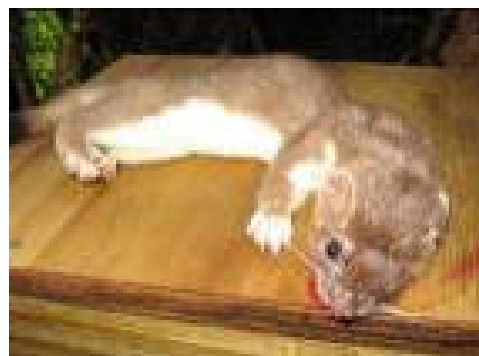
The traps are DOC 200 traps; wooden boxes that have a single-set tunnel configuration with spring-loaded clamps. They are triggered by the stoat's own weight as it moves across the treadle plate.

The box prevents birds from accessing the trap, disguises the trap, and protects it from the weather. Tunnels also seem to draw stoats' interest.

The red dots show the area where traps have already been laid.



Volunteers Marty Taliaard and Dries Taliaard set a trap on the first stage of the Oroua trap line. Photo by Darren Peters



A stoat removed from a trap during the first monthly check. Photo by Andrew Mercer



A stoat trap ready for action. Photo by Rebecca Lewis



Volunteer Toni Hoggard packed and ready to lay out the traps. Photo by Darren Peters

How you can help

We need volunteers to help lay out the traps and to check them each month.

Once the traps are in place, they need to be cleared of dead animals and re-baited at least once a month. The bait could be eggs, or salted possum or rabbit meat.

Contact details

If you'd like to be involved or want to find out more, contact Weka on (06) 356 8747 or Andrew on (06) 355 0496