

12 November 2025

Whare Kaupapa Atawhai/
Conservation House 18
Manners Street Te Aro,
Wellington

6011
doc.govt.nz

Ref: OIAD-5762

Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 17 October 2025, in which you asked for details regarding mouse numbers in the South Westland Predator Free area between 1 June 2024 & 17 October 2025.

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

- 1. Confirm if an increase in mouse numbers at ZIP and DOC Camera's in the South Westland extermination zones has occurred?*
- 2. Can you indicate the area or areas involved where cameras show an increase?*

Within the wider Predator Free South Westland area, DOC does not undertake camera monitoring with the aim of detecting mouse presence. DOC does have cameras aimed at measuring kiwi abundance, on which mice are sometimes detected. This detection is not measured to understand trends on mice.

Within a smaller area of the actively managed South Westland area, DOC is undertaking mouse monitoring in conjunction with pakihi skink monitoring. This is within the Ōkārito pakihi and North Ōkārito. This monitoring been undertaken for the past year. Data is indicating an increase in mice in North Ōkārito after the elimination operation and a higher level of mouse presence than what is normally expected of a wetland, in the pakihi.

The graph provided in figure one summarises the mouse trends. This graph was provided to DOC on a meeting with ZIP held 5 November 2025.

ZIP tracks mouse activity using percentage-based camera detection rates, but the consistency of their monitoring network has varied over time due to changes in block coverage and the mix of standard trail cameras and AI-enabled cameras used.

Whilst DOC does hold some summaries of this information from ZIP, the data is not held in full. It may be better to request this directly from ZIP. Their details are info@zip.org.nz.

- 3. Are other animals, birds, lizards and insects found around these cameras?*

Yes. Camera monitoring frequently detects a range of species.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the OIA.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on DOC's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K Beckert', is positioned above the printed name.

Karl Beckert
Acting Director National Programmes
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Mouse trends

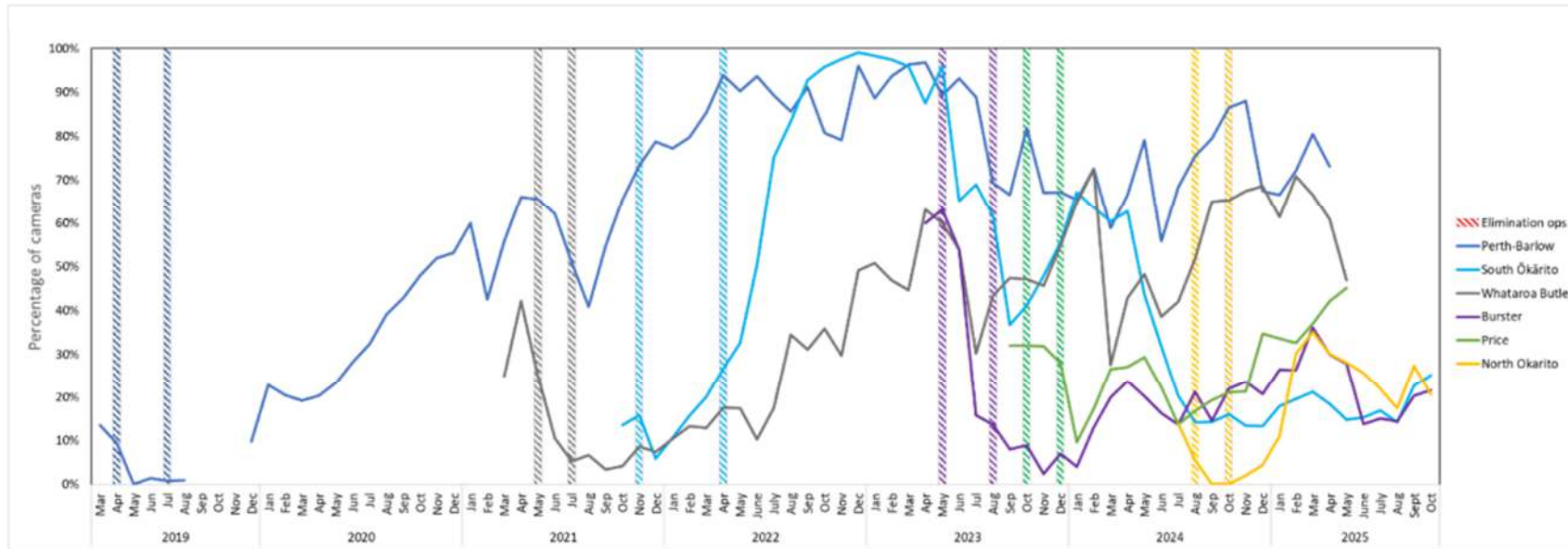


Figure 1: ZIP Camera detections of mice (% of camera network) since 2019 across the PFSW managed area. Vertical bars are aerial treatment operations corresponding to the same colour trend lines. Ground operations are ongoing throughout this period.