

**Stewart Island / Rakiura
Community & Environment Trust**
for people for environment



**Stewart Island / Rakiura
Community & Environment Trust**

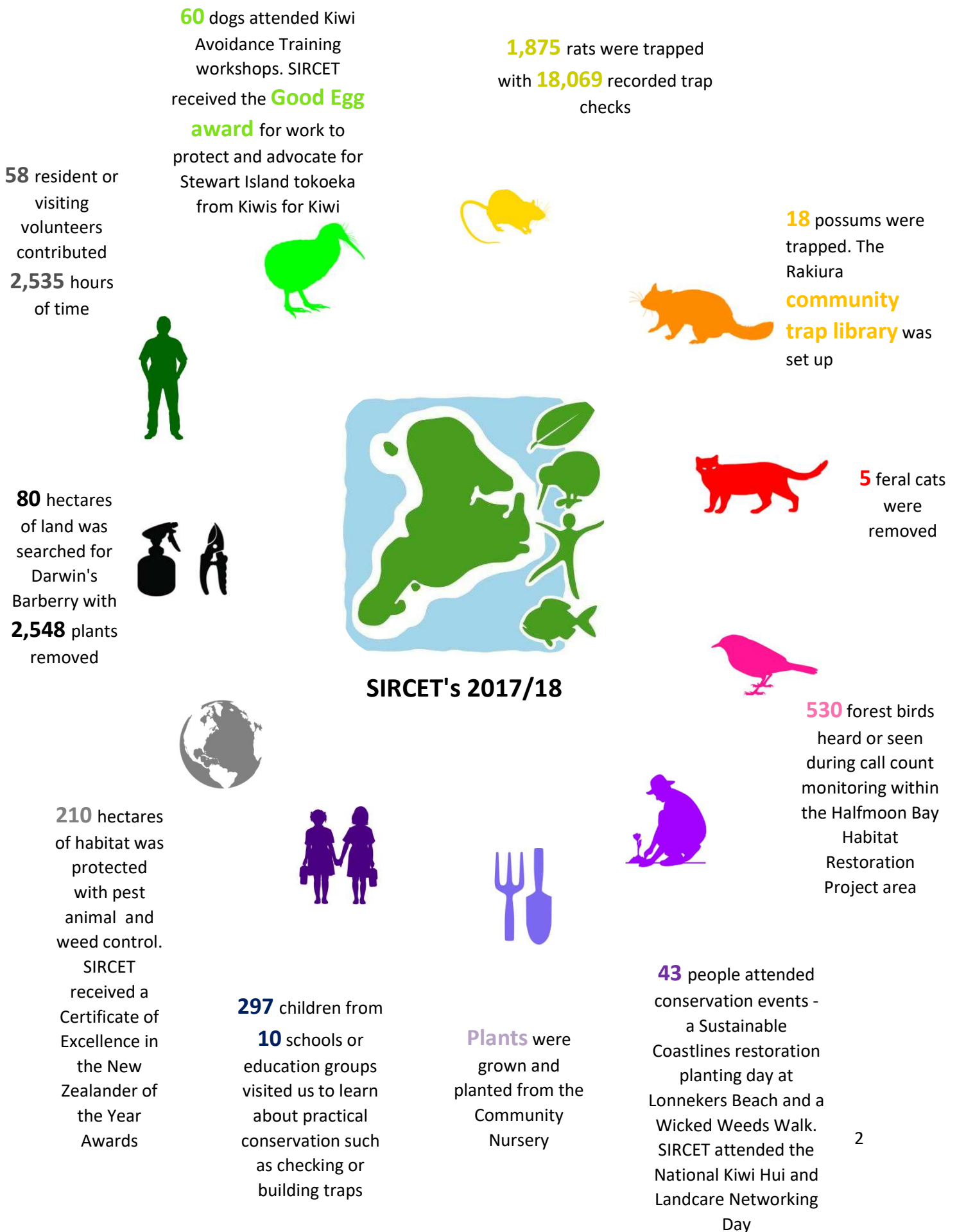
Annual Report
1st July 2017 – 30th June 2018

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SIRCET's 2017/18 Overview



Chairperson's Report

Letitia McRitchie

It's been another busy year for SIRCET with the usual highs and lows. Our volunteer hours are climbing again, and it's great to see our Pest Manager Willy Gamble grow this program and impart his enthusiasm to others. Willy's passion for community conservation shows in the dedication he brings to the role

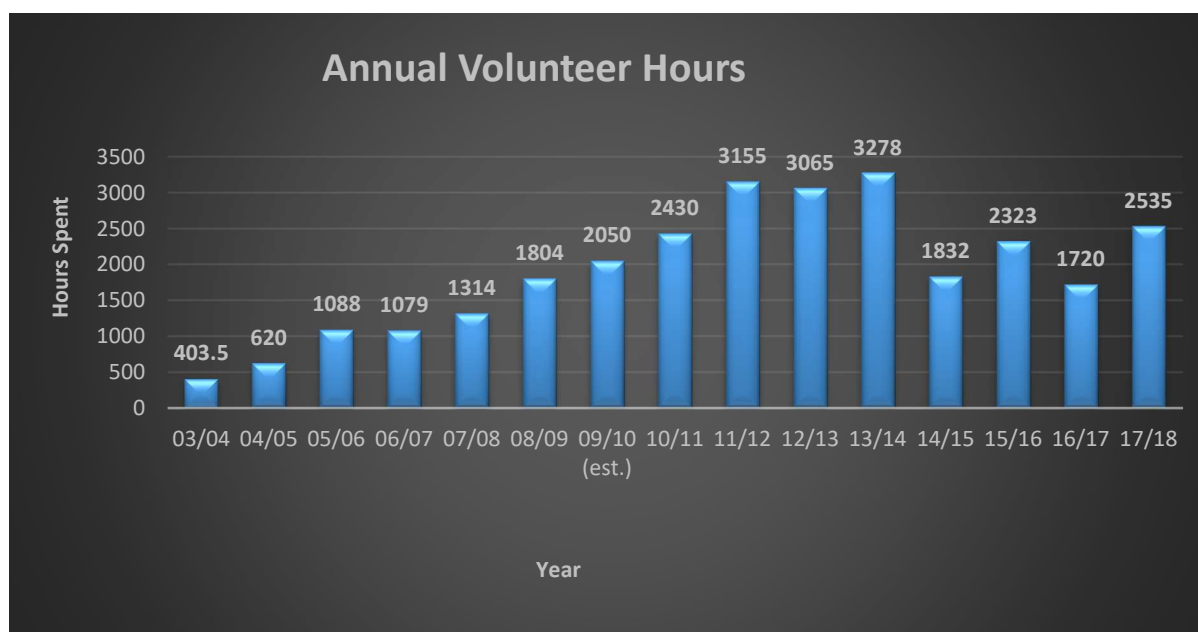
This year saw the sad departure of our Administrator Shona Sangster. Shona brought consistency and knowledge to the role and helped to keep the Trust moving onwards and upwards. We were fortunate to have an immediate hand over to Bridget Carter who brings with her enthusiasm and a strong background in conservation

A huge thank you to my fellow trustees who put in many volunteer hours to keep our Vision afloat. Sometimes it's hard to remember why we are bogging ourselves down in the amount of work required to keep our Trust adhering to the rules and regulations (GST, payroll, Charities Commission reporting, funder reporting, auditing, etc) our employees funded, safe, happy and with the resources they need to undertake the real work: Controlling pests and making our local environment the best it can be. Having to operate as a business with volunteer management is a huge ask and I thank all of those who help us.

Looking forward we need to attract new funding and new trustees if we want the trust to continue in the same format.

Volunteers

During the 2017-2018 year, fifty-six volunteers contributed over 2500 hours to a variety of SIRCET projects including: animal pest control and monitoring, weed surveillance and control, maintenance of Lonnekers Beach plantings, Trust administration, nursery tasks, species monitoring, Kiwi Avoidance Training days and educational workshops. Volunteers ranged from dedicated local residents to visiting volunteers, DOC volunteers, visiting school groups and our own hard-working Trustees.



Environmental Education and Events

SIRCET hosted six visiting school groups this year:

- Cobham Intermediate School
- Fiordland College
- Fairfield School
- Queenstown Primary School
- Saint Gerard's School
- St Thomas' School

Pest Manager Willy met with the Little Brown Kiwi Adventure Education group and the Ornithological Society New Zealand Southland Youth Camp in March and in April 2018 respectively, explaining SIRCET's work and taking them on a tour of Acker's Point.

There has been an increase in activity with the local Halfmoon Bay School. Highlights have included setting up a school trap line which is checked by students weekly.

The following community events were held over the year:

August 2017 - Sustainable Coastlines 'Love Your Water' Planting Day at Lonnekers Beach

October 2017 – Kiwi Avoidance Workshop

October 2017 - Great Kiwi Morning Tea

March 2018 - Attended Landcare Networking Day

April 2018 - Wicked Weeds Walk

April 2018 – Kiwi Avoidance Workshop

June 2018 - Attended National Kiwi Hui

June 2018 – Community Trap Library opening day

Funding

2017 – 18 was a better year for SIRCET with our largest expense (wages) being nearly fully funded. Wages were funded by Kiwis for Kiwi, Community Trust of Southland, Environment Southlands Environmental Enhancement Fund and the DOC Community Fund. Our War on Weeds team were funded by Environment Southland. Unfunded wages were covered by SIRCET's existing funds and donations towards specific projects

Project costs were covered by a variety of donations, grants and sponsorship. The local Lions club supported the purchase of Health and Safety equipment, Ship to Shore supported the purchase of a GPS, Pub Quiz funded the rebaiting of our Goodnature traps and Real Journeys and Sanford provided donations towards our operating costs. Our application to the Stewart Island Visitor Levy was successful and covered vehicle operating and running costs and trapping supplies. The Community Initiatives fund covered equipment costs for the War on Weeds team

We thank those who supported us financially this year, we couldn't run this project without your support!

Collaboration

2017-2018 saw a continuation of the great collaboration between SIRCET, the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Environment Southland. Both DOC and ES have been very supportive of the War on Weeds project. The support provided by DOC has gone beyond this one project however, to encompass many areas, and SIRCET are particularly grateful for the administrative support and clear lines of communication through the Community Ranger. SIRCET have been growing their relationship with the Predator Free Rakiura group

and the Rakiura Māori Land Trust. SIRCET have also been building a relationship with a new conservation trust on the Island, Mamaku Point, who have taken over management of the old Dancing Star project. We look forward to being able to collaborate further with them.

Media Releases & Awards

The SIRCET News publication was produced in June 2018, posted on the SIRCET website and circulated via email. Physical copies were produced for local businesses, some residents and for display in the Rakiura Environment Centre, Stewart Island Library, Stewart Island Flights Centre and the Stewart Island Experience 'Red Shed'. We are grateful to Southland District Council for printing these.

SIRCET articles were produced in the Stewart Island News publication throughout the year (in August, September, November and December 2017 and in January, April and June 2018). Articles covered updates on events, pest control and weed control work. Advertisements for 'rat traps for sale' were included in additional publications when an article was not produced.

SIRCET received a **Certificate of Achievement** in the Mitre 10 New Zealand Community of the Year Category of the 2018 New Zealander of the Year Awards.



In June 2018 SIRCET was recognised at the National Kiwi Hui, winners of a **Good Egg Award** for working with Tokoeka Kiwi; to acknowledge and thank the kiwi conservation projects and the individuals that support kiwi conservation.



Kiwis For Kiwi: *"The award was given to the entire team for their commitment to protecting Stewart Island's tokoeka population. From running kiwi avoidance training programmes for local and visiting bach owners' dogs to predator control, conservation advocacy engagement for visiting schools and their supreme efforts in the kitchen baking goodies for the annual Great Kiwi Morning Tea, Kiwis for kiwi's annual fundraiser".*



Photo: Anita Herbert of SIRCET (second from right) alongside other Kiwi Award recipients in June 2018

Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project

The Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project (HMBHRP) is SIRCET's primary project focusing on pest control and species monitoring on Ackers Peninsula. Pest control initially started in 2003 at Ackers Point to protect sooty shearwater/ tītī and little blue penguin colonies, and has since expanded to protect 210 hectares from Ackers Point to Golden Bay Road, Oban.

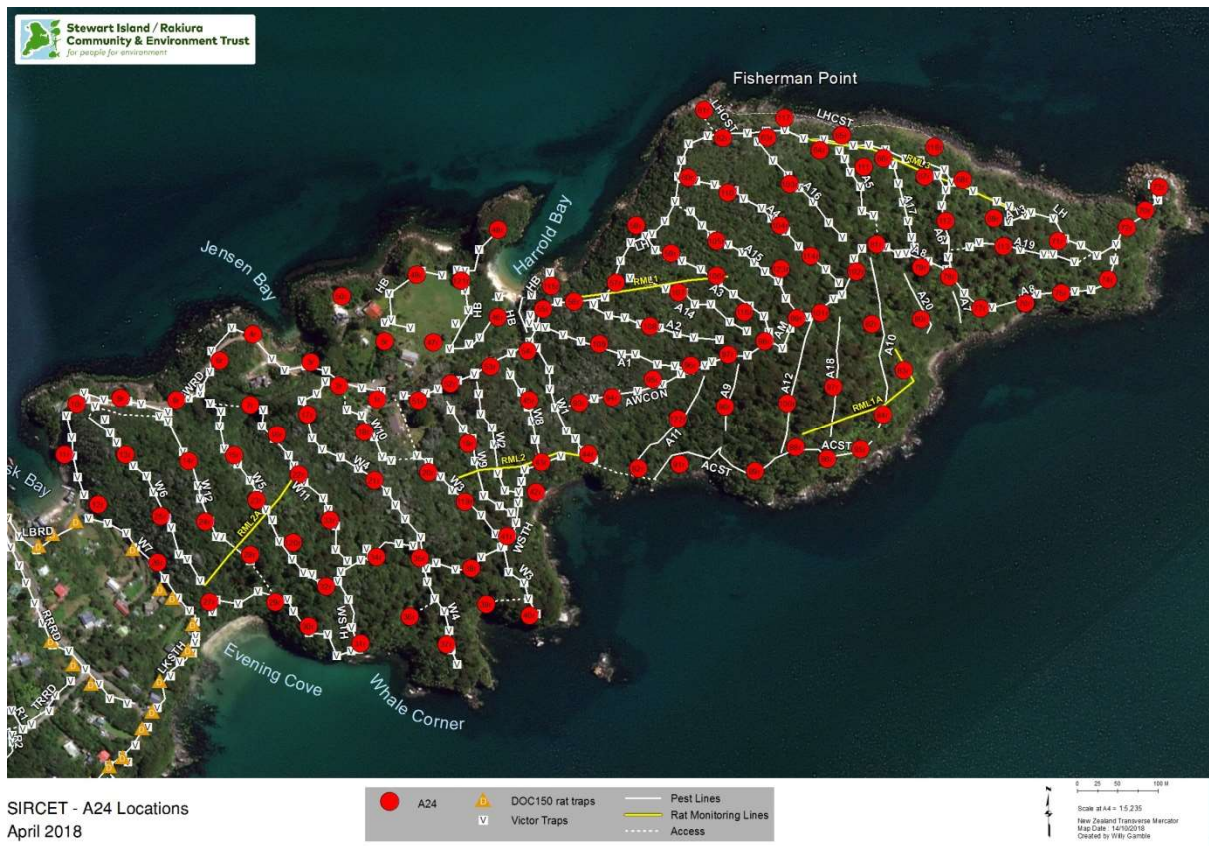
The project's goals are:

- To increase the native bird population within the Halfmoon Bay project area;
- To provide a safe habitat for re-introduction and survival for Stewart Island species (both plants and animals); and
- To educate and involve the community in conservation activities

Animal Pest Control

The grid of Goodnature A24 traps are planned to be re-gassed and rebaited on a six-monthly cycle, which occurred in December 2017 and again in April 2018. It was decided to service the traps two months early following advice from Environment Southland due to an increase in rat numbers in the summer. The amount of A24 traps was increased from 113 to 123

The A24 is a self-resetting multi-species kill trap. It resets itself after each humane kill up to 24 times per CO₂ canister. A24 traps kill instantly and have been tested to meet the highest humane standards. They can now also be baited with 'auto' lure; this lure uses a technology that releases the lure slowly for six months which keeps it fresh. A huge benefit of these traps is saving time, they can be left for six months before servicing is required.

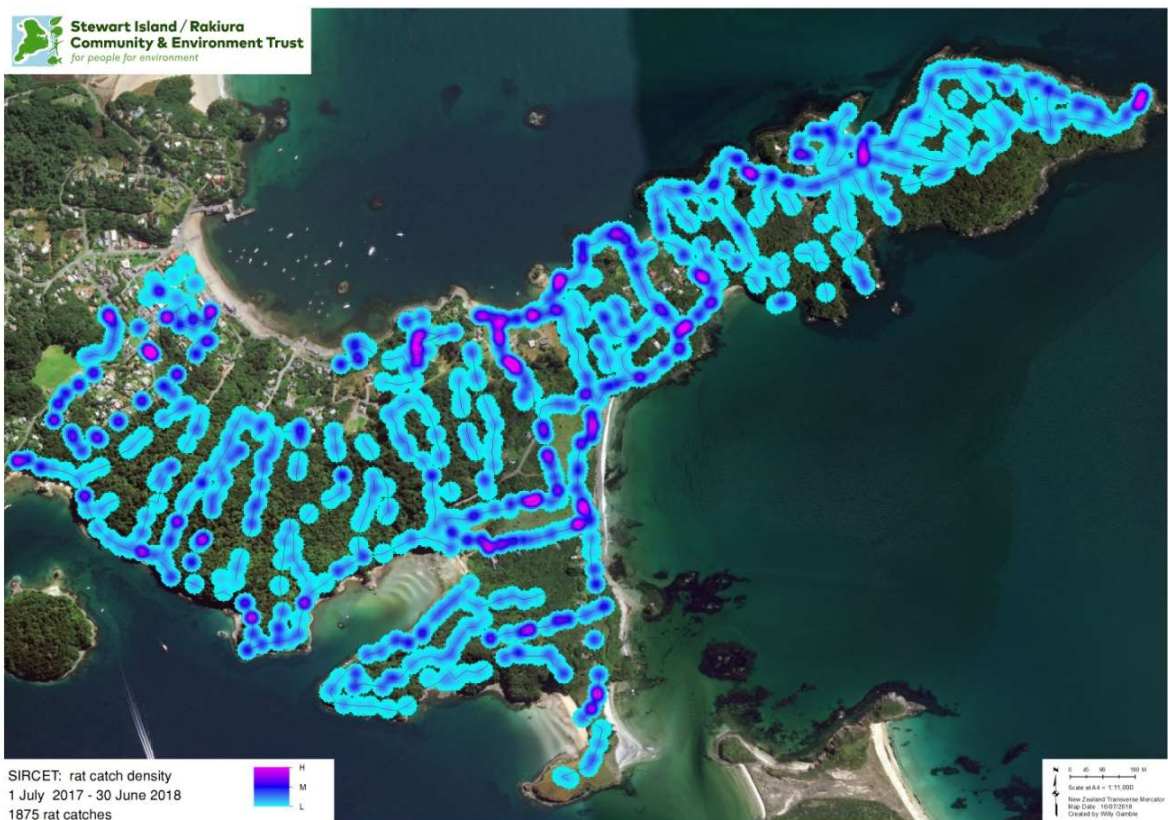
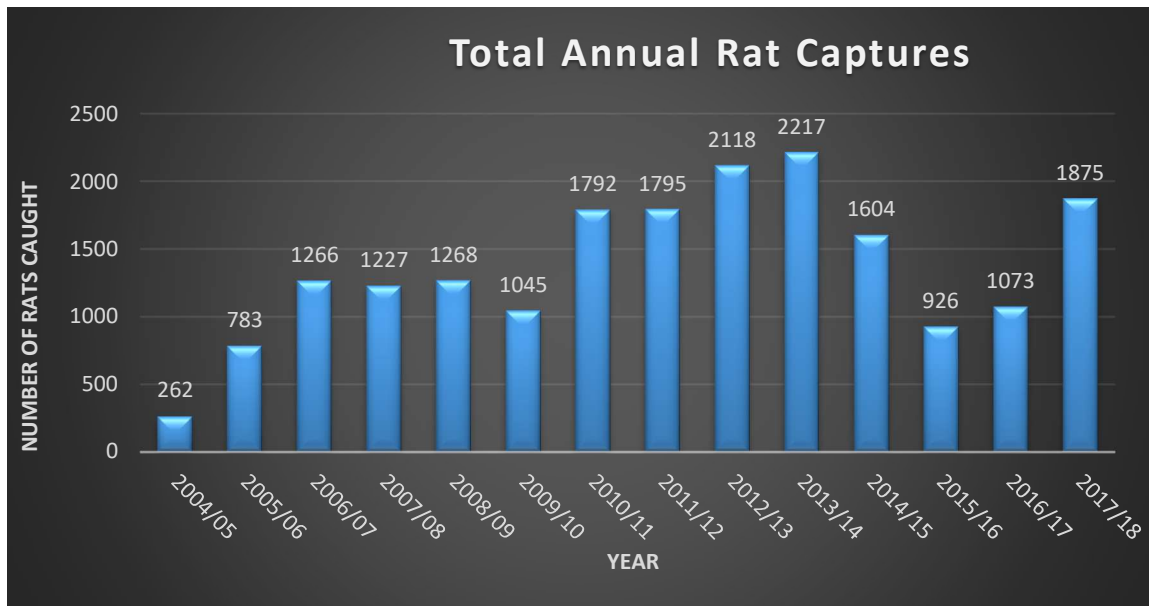


Map of A24 rat trap placements in the Core Project Zone

Trapping Results

Rats

A total of **1875** trapped rats were recorded during this financial year which is an increase from last year's result of **1073**. We closed down over 400 Victor rat traps in our core project area and opened up 123 A24 Goodnature traps. These traps automatically re-set so each kill the A24 trap makes is unrecorded and not included in our data. These results suggest more rats were around over the season, however our monitoring results showed a decrease of rats being present in the project area. It is possible that seasonal variation accounts for these incongruous results.





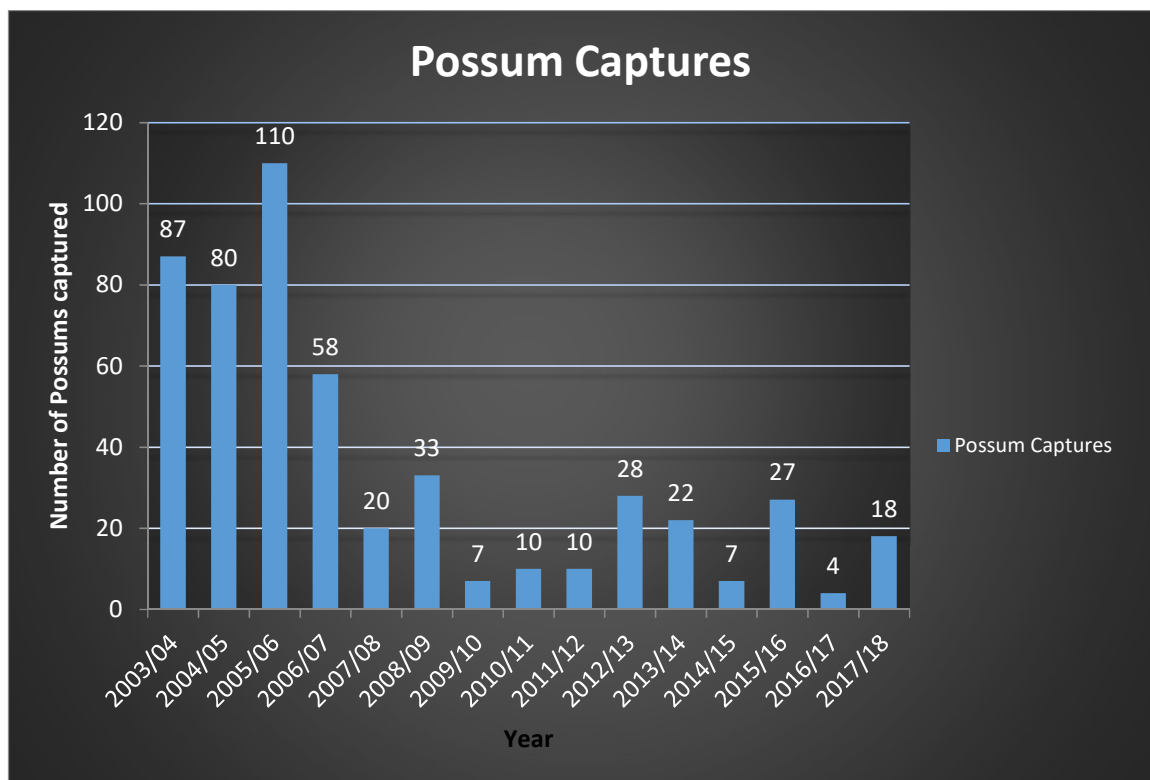
Possums

18 possums were caught in the 2017-2018 season. We now have approximately 68 trapinators installed. Due to health and safety concerns we have made the decision to stop using the Warrior kill traps for possums. It was decided that the potential to cause harm to someone is too high. All Warrior traps are now closed and gradually they are being removed from the project area.

Thirty-nine A12 Goodnature self-resetting traps are present in the core zone, five in the buffer zone and six in the community zone. We are unable to record how many possums have been killed by the A12 self resetting traps, but two dead possums were observed by volunteers in the community zone. In November 2017 the A12 Possum traps were re-distributed more evenly within the project area.



Map showing Trapinator Possum Trap locations

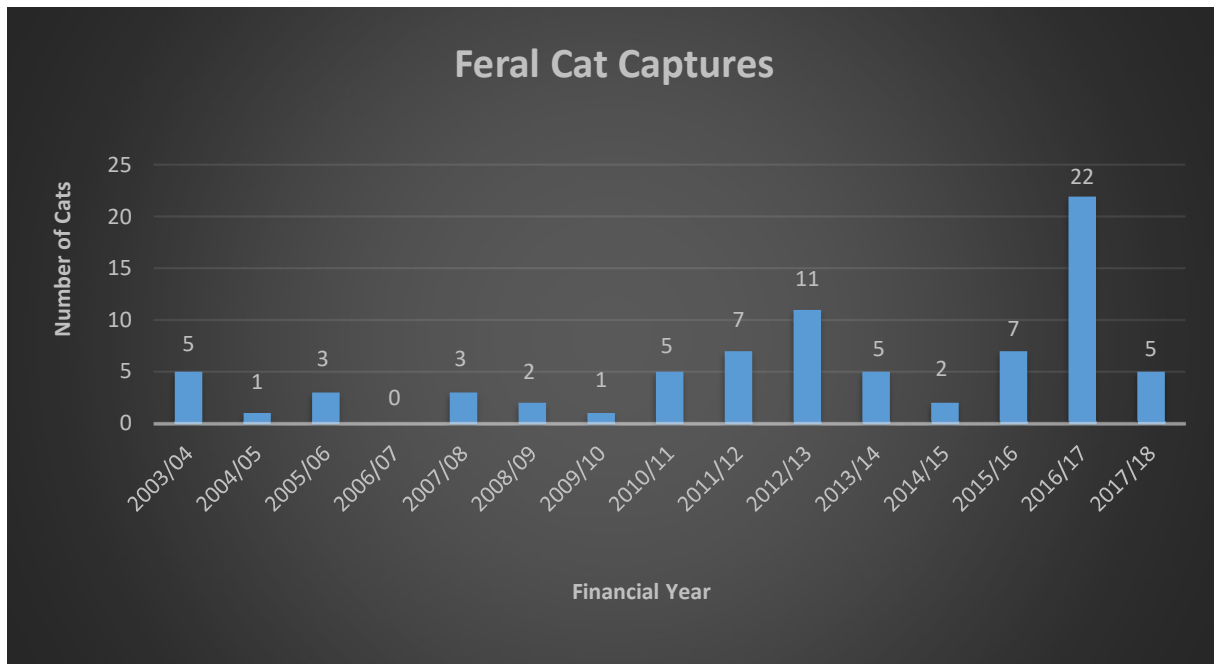




Feral Cats

A Total of 5 feral cats were captured in the 2017/2018 season. This is a decrease from the previous season when 22 cats were caught. Locally sourced fish scraps were mostly used as bait as well as concentrated salmon spray lure from Connovation Ltd. In the 2017 / 2018 season there was a continued focus on encouraging residents to keep and check cat cages. Of the 5 cats caught 3 were from cages looked after by the community. Cat cages are now available to the local community outside the project area as part of our trap library.





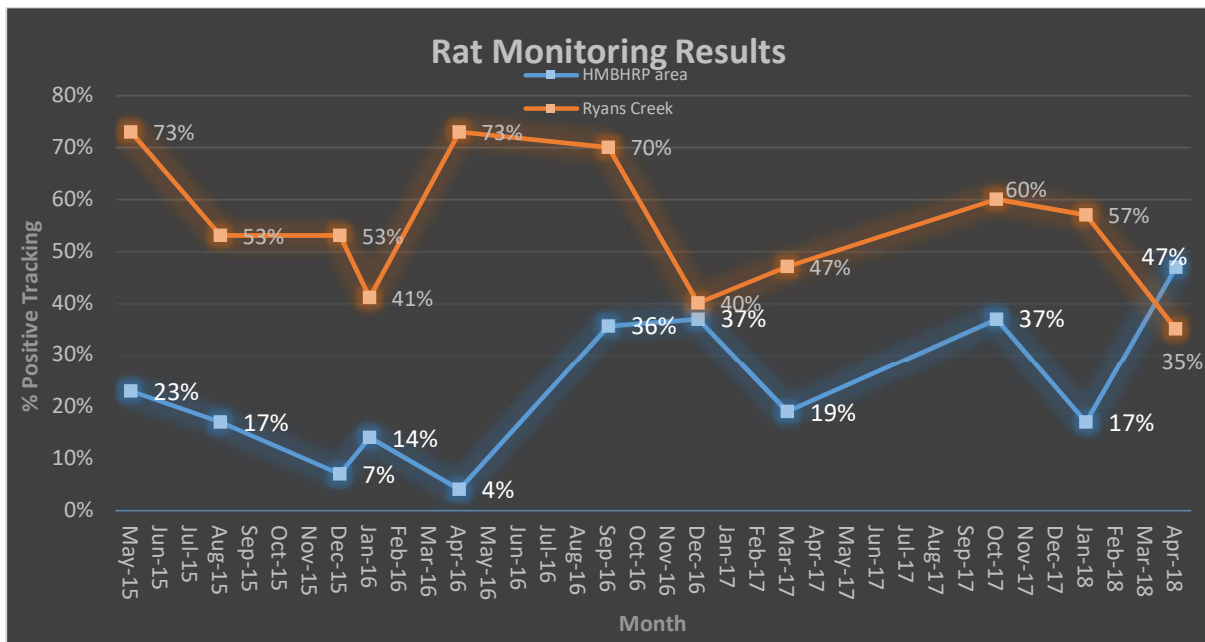
Pest Monitoring

Rats

Rat monitoring across the HMBHRP area and the un-trapped Ryan's Creek control area was undertaken in October and January 2017 and April 2018. Overall, the results were consistently higher in the Ryan's Creek area, but for the first time in April 2018 rat tracking was lower in Ryans creek than within the HMBHRP area. High possum disturbance in the un-trapped area may have been a factor in this discrepancy as disturbed tracks are unable to be included in the results.

In April 2018 rats numbers peaked at 47%. This was during the notable surge in rat numbers we experienced in traps in the late summer months. The A24 auto traps had lure refreshed 2 months early in late April as we were experiencing high catches in our snap traps.

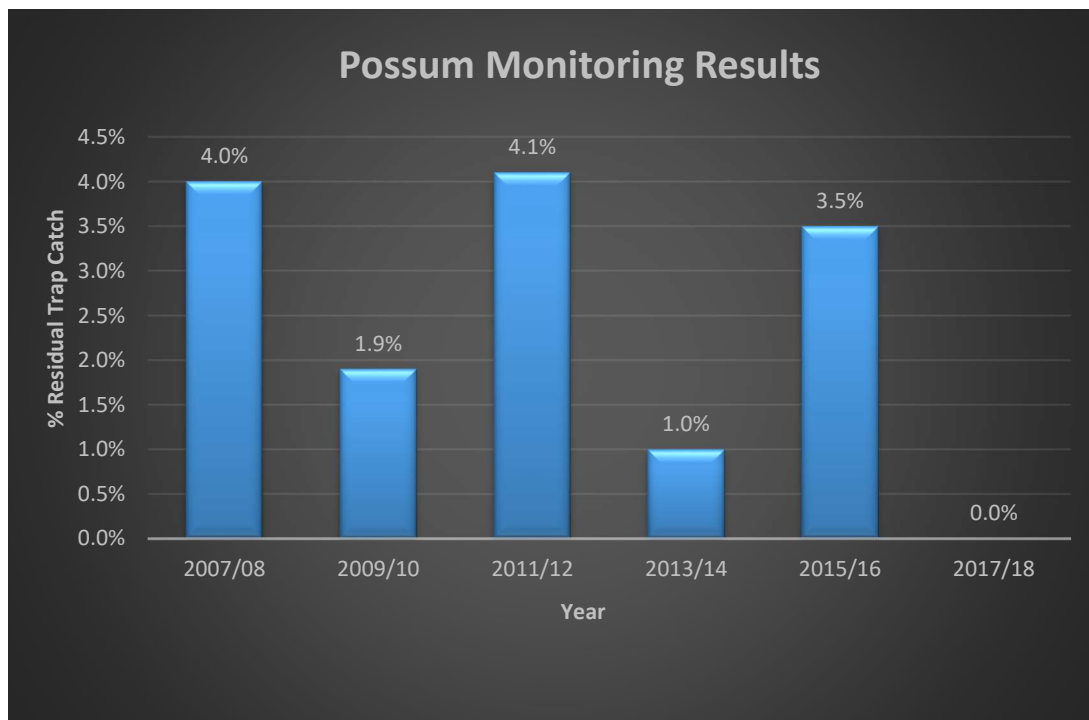
These results are a fantastic reflection of the success and effect the Project's trapping efforts are having within the HMBHRP area.



Graph showing rat monitoring results to April 2018

Possums

The Department of Conservation (with assistance from SIRCET'S Pest Manager) run possum monitoring within the HMBHRP area biennially. Monitoring was undertaken according to the National Pest Control Agencies (NPCA) protocol which sets out the standard trap-catch method used across New Zealand. Possum monitoring is carried out every two years and was last monitored in July 2017/18. The results were low at 0% RTC, (residual trap catch) an outstanding result. SIRCET's RTC target is of 5% or less.





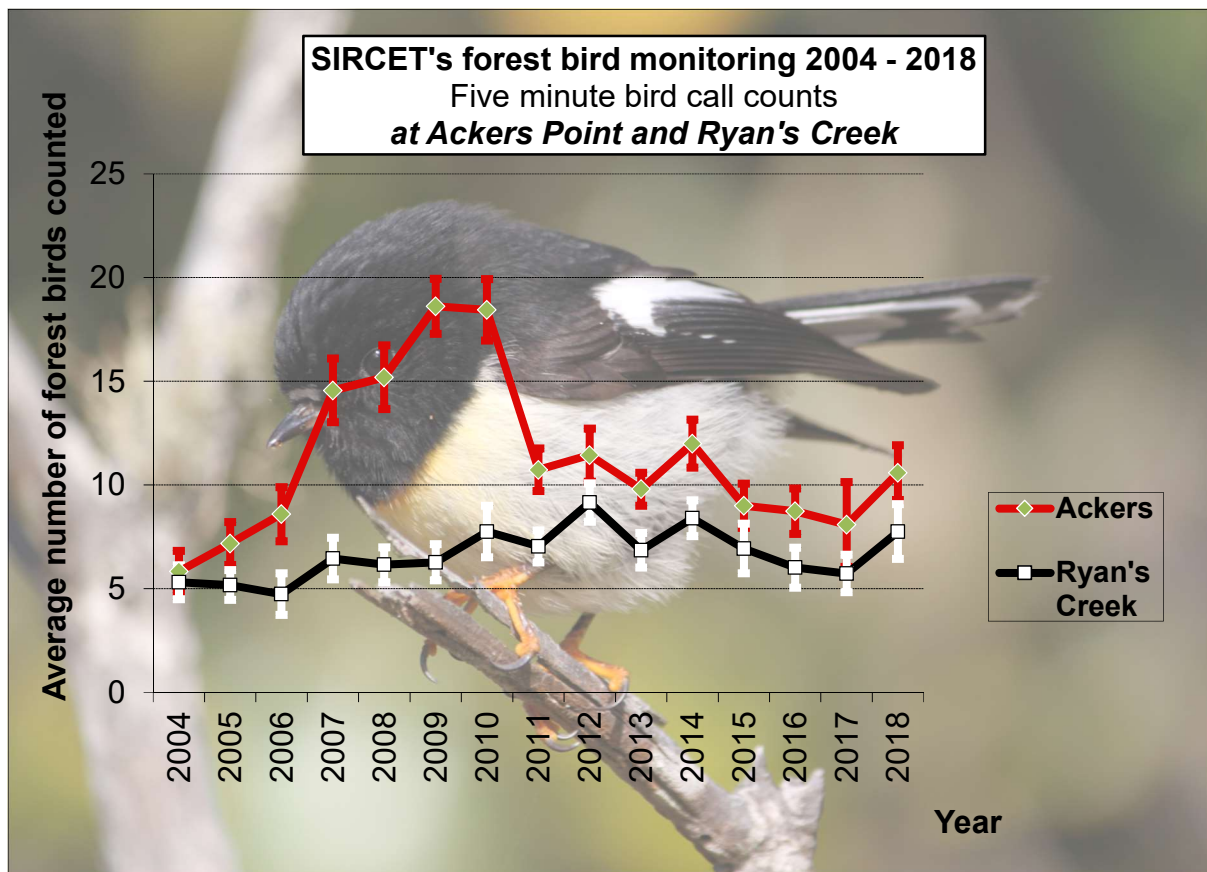
RTC leg hold trap locations July 2018

Species Monitoring

SIRCET's long-term monitoring data was sent to Landcare Research in May 2018 as part of a national study on biodiversity outcomes following pest control. We look forward to hearing about the trends nationally and hearing feedback for our Project.

Forest Bird Monitoring

The annual forest bird monitoring (using a five-minute bird call count) was conducted in April 2018 in the Project area (at Ackers Point) and also in Ryans Creek area, where there is less intensive pest control in a fairly similar Stewart Island forest environment. The results indicate an increase in bird numbers from 2017 in both the Project and Ryan's Creek areas. Tui, bellbird and silvereye remain the birds most encountered.



Forest Bird monitoring: 2004 – 2018 Five-minute bird call counts at Ackers Point and Ryan's Creek. (Note the decrease in bird numbers at Acker's in 2010/2011 could be due to observer bias. We have used the same observer since 2011).

Little Blue Penguins

SIRCET did not carry out monitoring of the Acker's Point Little Blue Penguins this year.

Sooty Shearwater/Tītī Monitoring

SIRCET has been undertaking monitoring of Sooty Shearwater/ tītī colony on Ackers Point since 2004. The purpose of the monitoring is to gauge the response of this colony to the community pest control operation in the area, by analysing its population dynamics over time. Nesting success is our main measure of the survival of this colony, and this has been monitored using mark-recapture (banding) and burrow scoping.

This year we trialled a different monitoring method. Three trail cameras were deployed in the colony over five nights during the season (kindly donated by Real Journeys), to try and get an idea of what tītī and/or predators were found in the colony at those sites. A high number of rats were observed in the colony during this time which is considered important and might be a contributing factor for the poor egg or chick survival seen in past years.

The Trust continues to believe that monitoring tītī at Acker's Point is important and worthwhile. It appears that eggs are laid within the colony, but these are not reaching fledging in most years. A review of the Project Outline for this monitoring work would be very helpful and funding for future work is being sought.

Photo: Sooty
tītī in a
Acker's Point.



shearwater /
burrow at

Lonnekers

Beach

Revegetation

The Lonnekers Beach Revegetation Project has continued, with weeding undertaken by volunteers. Conditions for survival of the plantings remain challenging but slowly and steadily natives are filling in the spaces along the beach front. Volunteer / Education groups: Sustainable Coastlines, Little Brown Kiwi and Ornithological Society New Zealand Southland Youth Camp and put considerable work in here.

Kiwi Advocacy Project

For the last few years Sandy King and Di Morris have been running a training session for local and visiting dogs to avoid kiwi– the aim is to create negative association for the dog toward kiwi.

This is a regular bi annual calendar event for SIRCET undertaken at Easter and Labour weekend each year since 2014. The training continues to go from strength to strength, as Sandy and Di talk with pet owners about responsible pet ownership, how to keep our wildlife safe and minimize the opportunity for a dog to act out a doggish behaviour on kiwi or penguin. We encourage all those with dogs in the community or who visit the island to take part. This is a free activity that is endorsed by Kiwi for Kiwi and SIRCET have been very fortunate to have received generous funding for the purchase of the 'E Kiwi' as well as the electric collars which are still used on some dogs. We are currently using an E kiwi which is a electronic device that has been developed by some clever technical folk at DOC in Wellington. Sandy has had training specifically in the use of this tool and we are very grateful for her voluntary and continued support of SIRCET. The dog, if interested in the very distinctive smell of the e kiwi, from bedding and /or kiwi poo carefully placed around the device, receives an electric shock through the nose as they go to investigate and touch the fine wires that are surrounding the lump of fluff and smell. This shock reinforces a negative connotations of kiwi smell – as something to avoid!! The shock for some dogs creates a strong reaction, for other dogs they seem to shrug it off.

In October 2017, 30 dogs were seen over the day at Traill Park – it's an all-day affair, with each dog receiving a certificate and a treat! In April 2018 at the Heliport on Main Road, we trained or refreshed and tested 23 dogs.

Community Native Plant Nursery

The nursery continued to be used to grow a selection of native plants. These are available for a small donation and have been used for town garden plantings, restoration planting at Lonnekers Beach and to add native plants to local gardens. A selection of plants has been made available at the Rakiura Environment Centre and these have proven very popular. SIRCET intends to relocate the nursery to Traill Park in order to be more central to volunteers / education groups. We wish to thank Mamaku Point Trust, the new owners of the site at Horseshoe Bay for allowing SIRCET to operate until we can move to Traill Park.



Volunteers Wayne and Di at the community Nursery

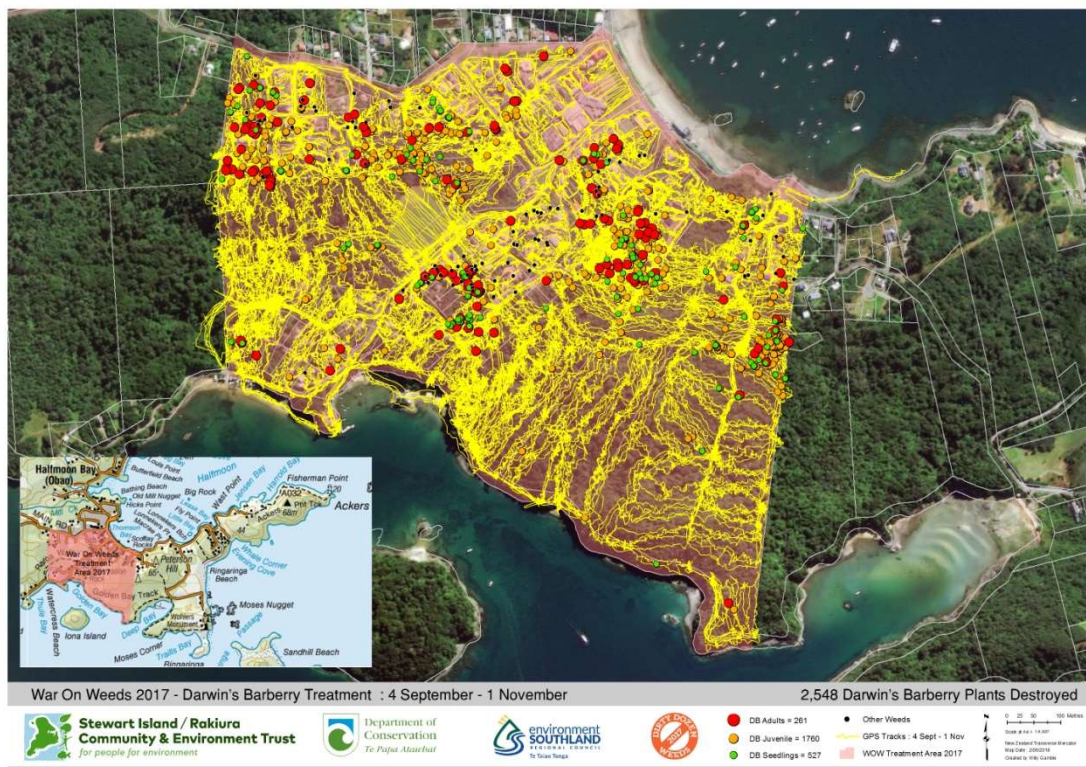
Rakiura Environment Centre

The Environment Centre continues to be an important resource which enables SIRCET to be 'visible' to the local community and the thousands of visitors who come to Stewart Island each year. Glowing Sky Ltd generously provides this space for the trust to display and inform these visitors of our activities and plans. Information is continually updated and new ideas put forward in this visually stimulating space.

War on Weeds Project

Environment Southland received funding from the Department of Conservation to distribute to community groups to undertake weed control. We were fortunate to receive funding to undertake 2 months of Barberry Control. A team of 3 staff were hired, with Willy leading the field team and providing GIS support and Letitia project managing.

The team did an excellent job of covering the ground and we achieved our 80ha target, an excellent result. Further funding was applied for and we were successful in receiving another 3 years of funding from the DOC Community Fund.



Community Trap Library

The Trap Library – In November 2017 we were very fortunate to receive funding from the Predator 2050 DOC Community funding for a Community Trap library. This was a fantastic way to spread the project across a wider geographical area at the same time having the ability of supplying a range of traps that people could be interested in trying a particular trap without having to outlay financially. There is a range of traps available for hire and whilst our initial uptake has been slower than hoped it is anticipated that as the word is spread more people will take up this great offer.

Website and Social Media

SIRCET's website (www.sircet.org.nz) has been maintained with project and event updates created. The Sponsor a Hectare map is up to date with sponsor information.

SIRCET's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/SIRCET/>) is regularly updated with news and events each week and has 826 page likes (an increase of 120 compared to last year) and posts which reach up to 4,000 people. This has proved a great way to share notification of events and videos, especially those created by other groups about SIRCET.

Trustees and Employees

Pest Manager Willy Gamble

Willy has continued to grow and develop in the role of Pest Manager. He has a real passion

for making every project he works on a success, including developing a robust network of volunteers. We admire his dedication and enthusiasm for SIRCET and for the Island.

Project Administrator Shona Sangster

Shona resigned from her position as Project Administrator. Shona's ongoing commitment to the trust as a volunteer and paid employee was greatly appreciated and she will be missed. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Project Administrator Bridget Carter

Bridget joined us as Project Administrator after Shona's departure. She brings with her a high level of skill and experience within the conservation industry. Her enthusiasm and attention to detail has proven to be a real asset.

War on Weeds Team

Thank you to the staff that undertook the hard work of barberry control, in some trying conditions! Laire Purik, Pauline Joy, Rebecca, Kristy Owens, Sarah Kilduff.

Letitia McRitchie

Letitia took over as Chairperson this year. In addition to these duties, she has continued to support the treasurer and heads the War on Weeds project.

Di Morris

This year Di moved into the role of Staff Liaison. She also organises the Kiwi Avoidance Training, which is held twice yearly with Sandy King and the community trap library which opened on 23rd June.

Anita Herbert

Anita took on the role as Treasurer and looks after some of our volunteer traplines. She is always happy to help out where ever needed, for which we are grateful.

Alasdair Burns

Al has revived the Titi monitoring project and is investigating options for hedgehog monitoring. He has willingly supported secretarial duties and looks after the payroll.

Jim Barrett

As in past years, Jim's attention to detail when reading documentation, his accurate recollection of the historical milestones, achievements etc are an invaluable resource and contribution to this organisation.

Financial

Approval of Financial Report

Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environmental Trust
For the year ended 30 June 2018

The Trustees are pleased to present the approved financial report including the historical financial statements of Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environmental Trust for year ended 30 June 2018.

approved:

 Trustee  Trustee
Letitia M. Ritchie. Dana Morris
Dated: 31 Oct 2018

Statement of Profit or Loss

Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environmental Trust
For the year ended 30 June 2018

	NOTES	2018	2017
Operating Income			
Trading revenue			
Trap Sales Income		665	1,558
Weka Card Income		57	122
Total Trading revenue		722	1,680
Grants & Donations	3	104,185	42,240
Total Operating Income		104,907	43,921
Less Direct Expenses			
Bait		4,513	1,589
Employment Expenses		146	50
Field Supplies		5,097	1,751
Field Work - Contract		6,298	2,943
Freight/Courier		87	-
Freight		-	30
Motor Vehicle Expenses		1,848	1,685
Traps		1,977	4,427
Wages		67,717	47,870
Total Less Direct Expenses		87,682	60,345
Operating Surplus (Deficit)		17,225	(16,424)
Other Income			
Interest Received		1,177	320
Total Other Income		1,177	320
Total Income		18,403	(16,104)
Administration Expenses			
Acc Levies		91	88
Accounting Fees		2,129	2,213
Administration Expenses		122	-
Advertising Expenses		272	-
Audit Expenses		40	40
Bank Charges		38	-
Computer Expenses		522	749
Depreciation		3,103	9,704
Office Expenses		-	429
Phone Expenses		-	483
Stationery/Printing/Postage		447	849
Subscriptions		94	44
Sundry Expenses		459	72
Statement of Profit or Loss			
	NOTES	2018	2017
Website Expenses		134	2,370
Total Administration Expenses		7,451	17,042
Surplus (Loss) For The Year		10,952	(33,146)

Balance Sheet

Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environmental Trust
As at 30 June 2018

	NOTES	30 JUN 2018	30 JUN 2017
Assets			
Current Assets			
ASB Cheque Account		27,323	7,918
ASB Business Saver		30,443	65,908
Trade and Other Receivables	5	2,954	-
GST Receivable		-	500
Total Current Assets		60,720	74,327
Non-Current Assets			
ASB - Term Deposit		30,000	-
Property, Plant and Equipment		2,676	5,779
Total Non-Current Assets		32,676	5,779
Total Assets		93,396	80,105
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables		783	430
GST Payable		2,038	-
Employee Entitlements		3,681	3,734
Grants in advance		13,976	13,976
Total Current Liabilities		20,479	18,140
Total Liabilities		20,479	18,140
Net Assets		72,918	61,965
Equity			
Retained Earnings		72,918	61,965
Total Equity		72,918	61,965

Sign Off

 Trustee:
  Trustee

dated: 3/9/2018

Major Donors, Supporters and Business Sponsors



Volunteers

Thanks to all our supporters!

Adrian Parkinson Alasdair Burns Andrew King Angelina Hurst Anita Herbert Ann Pullen Annamieka Longmuir Ben Hopkins Ben Lindsay Carolina Salazar Chelsea Broom Chris Dawson Chris Mcarthy Claire Townson Denise Marchland Di Morris Emily Barnett Emma Jenkinson Frida Tengvar Henry Bayne Ian Gamble Ina Schmidt Jade Pettinger James Carter Jamie Hareb Jeff Bergman Jennifer Ross Jess Kany Jim Barrett John Foley Laire Purik Letitia McRitchie Lisa Benson Lisa de Vries Maggie Feringa Margaret Hopkins Mel Miller Nathalie Althaus Neroli Aymes Nicola Nicoll	Olivia Bayne Pania Jarden Patrick Murphy Pauline Joy Penelope Trevathan Peter Goomes Phred Dobbins PJ Kim Serena Dawson Shane Mcarthy Sharon Pasco Shona Sangster Simon Taylor Steve Black Tash Lundin Tim Dawson Vanessa Gibson Wendy Hallet
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