



ISSUE 2 • 2021

THE MEG-A-PHONE

A Newsletter from Moehau Environment Group

FREE
PLEASE TAKE
ONE

MEGa RAT ATTACK complete!

Over a thousand new traps have been installed in our Port Charles MEGa Rat Attack area. We're now ready to start trapping the new area which will mean a total 430 ha under rodent control.



PORT CHARLES MEGA
RAT ATTACK
Map of the rat
trapping network in
Port Charles. Each dot
signifies a rat trap.
The Existing Rat Attack
area has been trapped
for 20 years and rat
trapping in the
extension will begin in
late 2021

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Complete 2021
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Port Charles MEGa Rat Attack



A huge thanks to our field team members past and present for the massive effort lugging rat traps in to their locations on narrow tracks through the bush in a grid formation, with a trap placed every 25m and lines 75m apart. Thanks to our trap building volunteers Terry Whitehouse and Mike George for all their hard work, and to Lotteries for their funding. We have maintained Small Mammal Indexing at 5% or less within our existing Rat Attack area (212 ha) and the field team have been excited to see vulnerable animals like Hochstetter's frog and the invertebrate peripatus while out in the bush.

Photo: Field team member Anna Davis with some of the new rat traps ready for placement

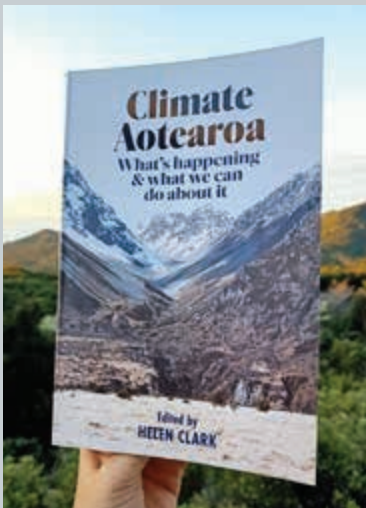
Tree Planting with Colville School



For over fifteen years, MEG has been planting trees with Colville School in the Waikawau Bay Children's Forest. Thanks to funding from Trees That Count we have continued the tradition in 2021 and look forward to planting many more trees in the future.



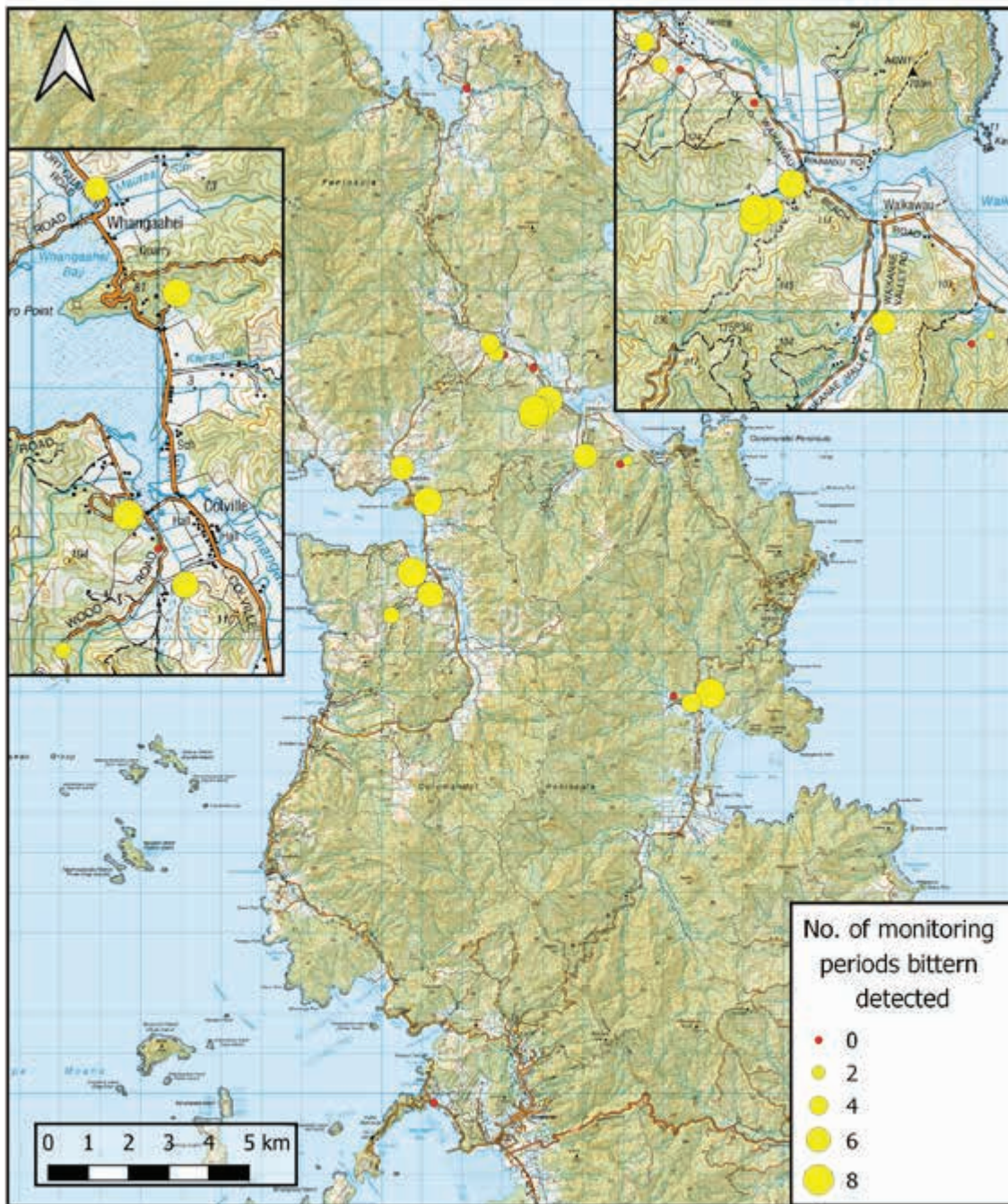
Winter Lecture Series



Every winter MEG brings some fascinating speakers to Coromandel town. So far this year we have heard from Fin Buchanan about the fabulous work of conservation dogs for DOC in finding rare species or tracking predators. We have Ian Preece showing us images from his wildlife photography and travels, Dr Rob Bell speaking about climate impacts on our coasts, sea level rise and what we can do to prepare. In September, we look forward to Prof. Bruce Clarkson speaking about bringing indigenous nature back to our cities and urban areas. Follow us on Facebook to keep in the loop with our events!



Bittern Acoustic Monitoring



November 2020
Northern Coromandel
Bittern Survey.
MEG acoustic
monitoring results for
Australasian
bittern/matuku. Map
sourced from LINZ,
created by Paul
Johnson, May 2021

Did you know that Australasian bittern or matuku are rarer than kiwi? Estimates have their population at around 900 left in the whole of Aotearoa. We are fortunate to have some of these remarkable birds present in our operational area. The males make a distinctive booming call at breeding times that can be recorded. In 2019, we began acoustic monitoring for bittern booming at 25 wetlands in our region. We have narrowed down our sites for 2020 but once again recorded in both October and November and the results are here (November shown above). We have bittern booming regularly in Harataunga/Kennedy Bay, Waikawau Bay and many sites around Colville. This means these wetlands are likely to be breeding sites, which is very exciting and helps us to plan some predator control to protect these critically endangered birds.

What's That Bird - Fernbird/Mātātā



One of our trappers was lucky to spot a fernbird in the Waikawau bay wetland this month. These cryptic coloured birds sing in duet with their partner so that two bird calls can sound like one call 'u-tick'. They have a distinctive tattered fork-like tail and fernbird or mātātā were once one of Aotearoa's most common birds, but are now rare because of habitat loss and predators. Fortunately, a weasel and rats and mice were caught in the traps this month and our trapper reported that the fernbirds were singing all over the wetland.

Catch Data For Target Species



Stoat
2021 FY Total - 237
Project Total - 2778



Weasel
2021 FY Total - 50
Project Total - 1008



Rat
2021 FY Total - 2185
Project Total - 20894



Ferret
2021 FY Total - 3
Project Total - 8

Sponsor a Stoat Trap

Would you like to sponsor a stoat trap within our kiwi sanctuary? Well you can! For just \$65 per year you can help provide protection for kiwi chicks in the wild. You'll receive a certificate, a map showing the location of your trap and the catch data for the sponsorship year. Not to mention lots of warm fuzzies!

Thanks to our Volunteers, Members, Sponsors & Funding Partners...



Tangiaro Kiwi Retreat
Pepper Tree Restaurant & Bar
Richardsons Real Estate Coromandel
Coromandel Adventures
Coromandel Four Square
Coromandel E Bikes
Long Bay Camp Ground
Star & Garter
Driving Creek Railway & Pottery
Driving Creek Conservation Park
Four Square Coromandel
Mitre 10 Thames
Fairview Thames

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