

Who am I? Pests



Who am I?



Help Fantail find out who his enemies are!
Can you figure out what animal pest Fantail is looking for from the clues below? Choose from list on the left. This pest:

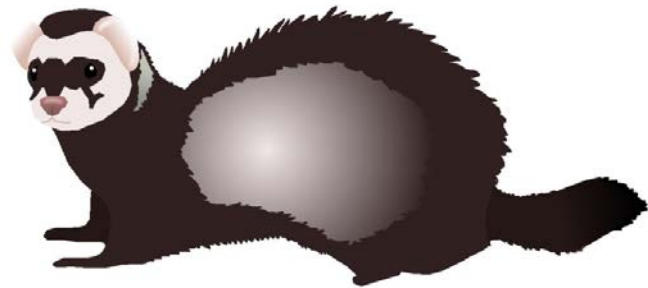
- Was brought to NZ in the 1800's to control rabbits
- By 1900's they were doing well in the wild
- Grows quite large – 32-46 cm long in the body, with a tail of 11-18cm long
- Has a long body, long tail and short legs
- Has fur that varies in colour from pale to very dark
- Is sometimes sold as a pet in NZ
- Has litters of 4-8 pups, sometimes 2 litters in one season
- Kills a wide variety of prey and can devastate bird populations



Answer: Ferret

Species that will benefit from ferret (+ stoat and weasel) control in Otatara:

- **Native bush birds, chicks and eggs** of tui, bellbird, fantail, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit, brown creeper
- **Native wetland and coastal birds** - fernbird, crake, bittern, heron, kingfisher
- **Native insects** - weta, stick insects, huhu grubs and caterpillars
- **Native lizards** - also, freshwater crayfish and fish



Male ferrets are much larger than the females. Males can weigh up to 1.85kg, whereas the females tend to range from 0.4-1.1kg.



Ferrets are not as widespread as stoats, but their large size means their presence can be devastating to native bird populations

What is the Otatara Landcare Group doing about ferrets in Otatara?

At Bushy Point stoats, weasels and ferrets (mustelids) are being controlled with humane kill traps called “**DOC 200’s**” (see right):

- The traps are screwed into boxes placed on the ground with mesh entrance holes
- Box lids can only be opened with screw drivers and entrance holes are small - protecting pets and children
- Mustelids have been trapped at Bushy Point since 2007 - over an area of 90 hectares
- Traps are set out every 200 m along the edges of bush areas
- Traps are checked by volunteers every two weeks or so



Since 2007 the following have been caught at Bushy Point:

60 stoats

6 weasels

1 ferret



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They also work with the Invercargill City Council to manage pest control in many City Council Reserves in Otatara.

Find out more about **Otatara Pestbusters** and how you can get involved:

Contact: Russell and May Evans Ph: 03 213 0530

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Website: <http://otatara-pestbusters.org/>

Did you know?

Ferrets are nocturnal, hunting at night.

Ferrets have been known to prey on royal albatross chicks, yellow-eyed penguin and little penguin, weka, kiwi, and more.

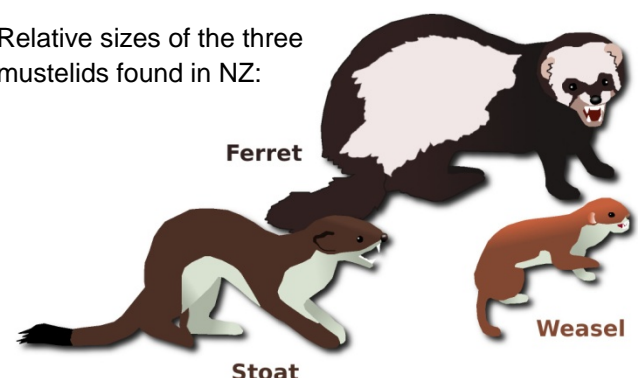
What can you do?

Look after native plants, birds, insects and lizards in your own garden by putting out traps

Not sure where to start? Contact Russell or May from the Otatara Pestbusters (see above)

Check out Environment Southland's website:
<http://www.es.govt.nz/environment/pests/animals>

Relative sizes of the three mustelids found in NZ:



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Can you figure out what animal pest Fantail is looking for from the clues below? Choose from list on the left. This pest:

- Was brought to NZ from Australia to establish a fur trade
- Was released into the wild when the fur trade failed - now there are about 70 million of them
- Eats native plants, including leaves, flowers and fruit
- Also eats birds eggs, chicks and native insects like weta
- Has no natural predators in NZ
- Is about the size of a cat
- Gives birth to a single 'joey' each breeding season (usually once a year)

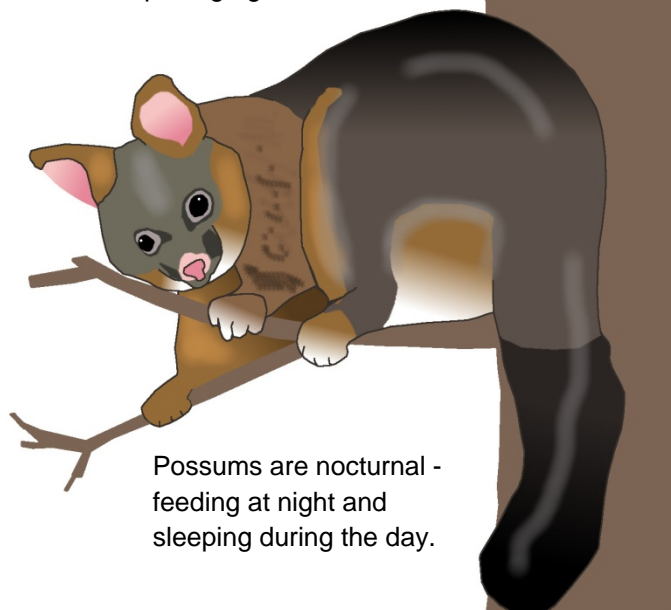


Answer: Possum

Possums may look cute but they can spread diseases like tuberculosis (Tb) to farm animals - putting agriculture at risk.

Species that will benefit from possum control in Otatara:

- **Native trees and plants** - particularly tree fuchsia, broadleaf, five finger - these are "ice cream" plants for possums
- **Native bush birds, chicks and eggs** of tui, bellbird, fantail, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit
- **Native insects** such as weta, stick insects, huhu grubs and caterpillars



Possums are nocturnal - feeding at night and sleeping during the day.

What is the Otatara Landcare Group doing about possums in Otatara?

At Bushy Point possums are being controlled with humane kill traps called "**Possum Masters**" (see right):

- The traps are mounted on trees and baited with non-toxic cereal baits that are not attractive to cats
- Possums have been trapped at Bushy Point since 2007 - over an area of 90 hectares
- Traps are set out every 100 m on trap lines that are 100 m apart
- Traps are checked by volunteers every two weeks or so
- Since 2007 over 200 possums have been caught at Bushy Point
- Numbers trapped are decreasing each year



Year	No. of possums caught
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2007	77
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2008	57
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2009	25
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2010	27
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2011	17
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Did you know?

Possums are marsupials – baby possums ("joeys") grow in their mother's pouch.

They can live for up to 13 years in the wild.

What can you do?

Look after native plants, birds, insects and lizards in your own garden by putting out possum traps

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Who am I?



Help Fantail find out who his enemies are!
Can you figure out what animal pest Fantail is looking for from the clues below? Choose from list on the left. This pest:



- Is native to Europe and Asia but has spread all over the world, usually by sneaking aboard ships
- There are three types of this pest in NZ, two of which are widespread
- Will eat native birds, chicks, eggs, as well as the fruit and seeds of native trees and plants
- Is small with a long tail
- Is a prolific breeder! They have so many babies that one pair can produce up to 15,000 descendents in one year!



Answer: Rat

Species that will benefit from rat control in Otatara:

- **Native bush birds, chicks and eggs** of tui, bellbird, fantail, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit, brown creeper
- **Ground and low nesting birds**- fernbird, crake, harrier and wading birds
- **Native insects and lizards**
- **Native trees** - as rats will eat the fruit and seeds, preventing the next generation of trees from germinating

There are 3 types of rat in NZ:

- Ship rat
- Norway rat
- Kiore



Ship rats cause the most damage in Otatara. They are good climbers and can reach most bird nests - even those high in trees. They rob nests of eggs and chicks.

What is the Otatara Landcare Group doing about rats in Otatara?

At Bushy Point rats are being controlled with toxins (Diphacinane) in bait stations:

- Diphacinane breaks down and doesn't pass from animal to animal
- Bait stations are screwed down and designed so that pets can't get at them
- Baits are also screwed down so rats can't drag them away
- Bait stations have been used at Bushy Point since 2007 - over an area of 90 hectares
- They are set out every 50 m along trap lines that are 100 m apart
- Bait stations are checked by volunteers every two weeks or so



Closed bait station

At Bushy Point, rat and bird numbers are monitored by Environment Southland. They've noticed an increase in fernbird, and juvenile tui and bellbirds. They have also started lizard monitoring.



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Open bait station showing secured bait

Did you know?
Rat bait is deadly to dogs.

Look for the warning signs about poison baits.

Keep your dog on a lead - keep them safe.

What can you do?

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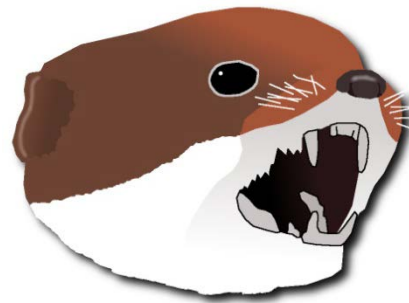
- Was brought to NZ in the 1800's to control rabbits
- Was released into the wild soon after
- Is New Zealand's number one predator of native birds
- Grows to 34-40 cm long (including tail)
- Has no natural predators in NZ
- Is a prolific breeder - with up to 12 young in a litter
- Can travel large distances
- Has a long body, long tail with black tip and short legs
- Is good at climbing trees



Answer: Stoat

Species that will benefit from stoat (+ weasel and ferret) control in Otatara:

- **Native bush birds, chicks and eggs** of tui, bellbird, fantail, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit, brown creeper
- **Native wetland and coastal birds** - fernbird, crake, bittern, heron, kingfisher
- **Native insects** - weta, stick insects, huhu grubs and caterpillars
- **Native lizards** - also, freshwater crayfish and fish



Stoats can travel long distances - juveniles have been known to travel over 70 km in two weeks.

Stoats are born killers and will hunt anytime of the day or night.



What is the Otatara Landcare Group doing about stoats in Otatara?

At Bushy Point stoats, weasels and ferrets (mustelids) are being controlled with humane kill traps called "**DOC 200's**" (see right):

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- Box lids can only be opened with screw drivers and entrance holes are small - protecting pets and children
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Did you know?

Stoats are most common mustelid in NZ.

They can kill prey much bigger than themselves.

Stoats become adults at only two months old.

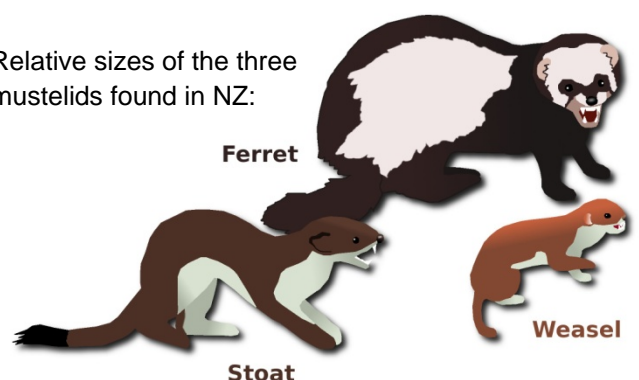
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Relative sizes of the three mustelids found in NZ:



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Can you figure out what animal pest Fantail is looking for from the clues below? Choose from list on the left. This pest:



- Was brought to NZ in the 1800's to control rabbits
- Was released into the wild soon after
- Grows to 20–25 cm long (including tail)
- Has a long body, longish tail and short legs
- Has not adapted as well to the NZ environment as it's 'cousins', which were also introduced to control rabbits
- Tends to kill smaller prey, particularly insects and skinks, but can kill prey much larger than itself
- Can have up to seven young in a litter



Answer: Weasel



Species that will benefit from weasel (+ stoat and ferret) control in Otatara:

- **Native bush birds, chicks and eggs** of tui, bellbird, fantail, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit, brown creeper
- **Native wetland and coastal birds** - fernbird, crake, bittern, heron, kingfisher
- **Native insects** - weta, stick insects, huhu grubs and caterpillars
- **Native lizards** - also, freshwater crayfish and fish

Weasels are similar in colour and general appearance to stoats. However, they are smaller and don't have a black tip on their tail.

What is the Otatara Landcare Group doing about weasels in Otatara?

At Bushy Point stoats, weasels and ferrets (mustelids) are being controlled with humane kill traps called "**DOC 200's**" (see right):

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Did you know?

Weasels will hunt anytime of the day or night.

They hunt mostly on the ground.

They can also hunt underground and beneath deep snow.

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