

# Key facts about feral cat control in the Abel Tasman National Park



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## The Department of Conservation and Project Janszoon plan to reduce feral cat numbers in and around Hadfield Clearing to help protect Abel Tasman's new pāteke (brown teal) population

### Why we are controlling feral cats

Over the past 15 months, pāteke (brown teal) have been successfully reintroduced to Abel Tasman National Park (ATNP) at Hadfield Clearing. In the past pāteke were the most widespread and abundant water bird found in New Zealand. However, introduced predators and loss of habitat means there are now only 2,500 pāteke remaining in the world. Due to their size and ground-nesting behaviour, pāteke are extremely vulnerable to predation. Introduced predators, such as stoats and feral cats, predate on nesting adults and chicks and have been the major cause of pāteke decline.

DOC and Project Janszoon have an extensive stoat trap network in place, which covers Awaroa. However, feral cats are much harder to control. Feral cat trapping has been ongoing since 2015 in and around Hadfield Clearing with very limited success, as scat and feral cats are continually seen throughout the area. PAPP (registered trade name: PredaSTOP for Feral Cats®) is seen as an efficient and humane toxin which will provide more effective control. It is easier to deploy at landscape scale, particularly as pāteke disperse throughout the national park.

Our pest control will help protect pāteke from feral cat predation during their critical spring nesting period, increasing adult and chick survival.

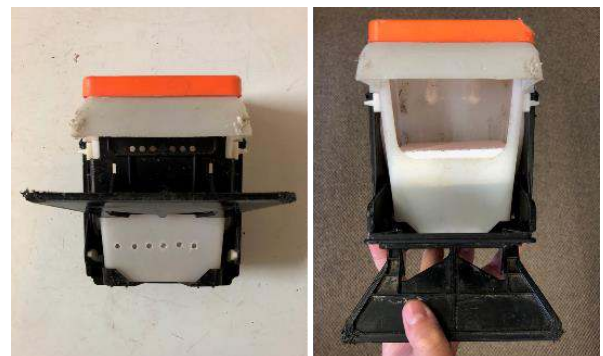
### How it is happening

A network of sixty bait stations will deliver PAPP to feral cats within ATNP between 13<sup>rd</sup> August to 29<sup>th</sup>

October 2018. Warning signs will be placed at key locations prior to the operation starting (see map).

### What is happening

Sixty bait stations will be present throughout two treatment blocks. Block one includes Hadfield Clearing and Block two surrounds Awaroa (see map). In Block two, bait stations will be set back 200m from the ATNP boundary and 100m from water intakes to keep toxic baiting away from private land and water sources. As the bait will be in bait stations it is highly unlikely to enter waterways. The bait stations feature a treadle that must be pushed down to access the bait, which is able to be used by cats and possums but cannot be accessed by weka and rats.



*Sentry Bait Station. Photo: Sian Reynolds*

The operation will run for one month. It will consist of a pre-feeding round using two non-toxic baits in each bait station for two weeks. This will be followed by two toxic baits in each bait station for two weeks. All unused toxin will be removed from the bait stations at the end of the operation.

## What is PAPP?

The toxin PAPP is a vertebrate pesticide developed in New Zealand to specifically target stoats and feral cats. For feral cat control the registered trade name for the toxin is PredaSTOP for Feral Cats®. It has a rapid and humane mode of action. The toxic compound in PAPP is metabolised quickly in the environment, thus residues are unlikely to persist.

## Operational planning

Where vertebrate pesticides, such as PAPP are used, DOC assesses operations on public conservation land on behalf of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). DOC managers follow procedures approved by the EPA and apply conditions to ensure that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed. To apply for these consents, a detailed assessment of the risks involved in the work has to be completed. This is called an Assessment of Environmental Effects and a copy for this operation can be obtained from your local DOC office. Permission approvers will impose conditions on the operation to further safeguard the public and the environment.

## Important information

The pesticides we use are poisonous to humans and domestic animals. Poisoning can occur through eating baits or poisoned animals.

Pesticide will only be present in purposefully designed bait stations.

Domestic cats and dogs are highly susceptible to PAPP. For any domestic animals suspected to have eaten PAPP bait an effective antidote (methylene blue) exists and can be obtained from local veterinarians.

These risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

- **DO NOT touch bait**
- **WATCH CHILDREN** at all times
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area
- Remember, **poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS**

Unauthorised dogs are not allowed in Abel Tasman National Park

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in bait stations or animals. When signs are removed, this means that you can resume normal activities in the area. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs. If in doubt, check with DOC.

## If you suspect poisoning

Always contact:

- Your local doctor or
- Local hospital or
- **National Poisons Centre:** 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 (non-urgent and general enquiries), or dial 111

## For more information

Department of Conservation

Motueka Office,

PO Box 97,

Motueka, 7143

03 528 1810

