

**EFFICIENCY IN PREDATOR CONTROL SYSTEMS FOR PROTECTING
NEW ZEALAND'S NATIVE AND ENDEMIC WILDLIFE - WITH GRAPHIC
ILLUSTRATIONS – TOGETHER WITH NOTES COVERING THE CURRENT
DISASTROUS STATE OF THE NEW ZEALAND ENVIRONMENT**

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As a result of the 1999 Animal Welfare Act – an Act that put some very questionable political correctness into the control of predators (it was written by civil servants who knew nothing about predator control!) - the past decade has seen large numbers of new predator control traps designed and manufactured in New Zealand; at the cost of close to \$30,000,000 of public funding. The PC in this was because the Department of Conservation "ETHICS COMMITTEE" believed that the English FENN trap was inefficient – but our experiences have shown that nothing could be further from the truth.

So, with predator control being the essential ingredient to the survival New Zealand's rare wildlife and endemic bird species present here, and after six years of witnessing the introduction and use of these new million dollar traps – and their dismal performances, I thought it appropriate to document my experiences with predator control at Taumata Lagoon in the Wairarapa and to outline what I believe are the best traps for eliminating some of the main predators of New Zealand native & endemic wildlife.



TAUMATA LAGOON (14 HECTARES OF WATER & 15 HECTARES OF NATIVE FOREST)

TAUMATA LAGOON IS NEW ZEALAND'S MOST OUTSTANDING OXBOW LAGOON – AND IS A WETLAND OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE. THE LAGOON, WITH ITS LARGE REMNANT BLOCK OF TOTARA, KAHIKATEA AND OVER ONE HUNDRED OTHER NATIVE TREES AND PLANTS IS SOME 30 HECTARES IN SIZE. THIS IS WHERE OVER 6,000 PREDATORS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED SINCE 1990 & WHERE OVER 50 DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BIRDS INHABIT THE ENVIRONMENT

The main predators of New Zealand's endemic and introduced wildlife are:
Feral cats, Ferret, Stoat, Weasel (Mustelids), **Rats, Harrier Hawk, Hedgehog, Opossum & Pukeko + Plus millions of tonnes of 1080, and other MAJOR PREDATORS IN THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS – AND THE NZ FISH & GAME COUNCIL!**

Alien predator species were imported into New Zealand and, in association with massive deforestation, wetland drainage and mismanagement, have impacted heavily on the country's native & endemic wildlife; but there are still a small number of protected habitats available to help save some species from premature extinction. But instant action is vital!



TAUMATA LAGOON
Surrounded by dairy & cropping farms

Remembering also that Feral cats (domestic gone wild or cats reared in the wild), Ferrets, Stoats, Weasels, Rats, Possums & Hedgehogs are totally alien to the New Zealand landscape, and that both the Harrier & Pukeko are Australian species, one would have thought that political correctness would never have raised its ugly head and that everyone would have been encouraged to use whatever trapping methods are available to control predators.

BUT THAT IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE CASE!

Prior to the widespread use of 1080 poison the predators I've listed were the main reason for the decline of all New Zealand's endemic wildlife and for many years **New Zealand has held the world record for the highest number of endangered wildlife for many years!** This is an absolute disgrace for a country that once had unique wildlife & a unique environment. Yet, apart from the insane aerial bombardment of 1080, until relatively recently, little priority was given to predator control (apart from possum control destroying a billion dollar industry) on the New Zealand mainland, but historically the NZ Acclimatisation Society movement was well aware of the impact of harriers hawks on birdlife and eliminated close to 500,000 harriers between 1940 & 1960, when societies were establishing mallards and pheasants. For many years there was a 'bounty' on harriers.

Then in 1980 the harrier was given totally unwarranted partial protection; protection that resulted in a harrier population explosion.



THIS IS THE LARGEST FERRET EVER ELIMINATED IN NEW ZEALAND
1.6kg & ELIMINATED BY A TIMMS TRAP AT TAUMATA LAGOON IN 2007
(It's not hard to imagine the damage that this monster was doing to our wildlife!)

From what we have experienced during 27-years of predator control at the 30-hectare Taumata Lagoon environment, together with what we have learnt from professional trappers, is that the most efficient predator elimination traps are – the TIMMS and the English FENN trap and in association with cage traps they are devastating on all alien predators!

Yet the Dept of Conservation 'gave away' many thousands of Fenn Traps: because they preferred (or were instructed to prefer!) the new **\$30 million** DOC150, DOC200 & DOC250 traps; traps that we now know to be unsatisfactory in the control of predators and that the Fenn, Timms and Cage traps are far more successful!



ANOTHER LARGE FERRET ELIMINATED BY A TIMMS TRAP



THE TIMMS TRAP IN ACTION AGAIN



RATS WERE INTRODUCED TO NEW ZEALAND BY OUR EARLY IMMIGRANTS - FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, THE ORIENT AND FROM EUROPE - AND RATS HAVE HAD A DEVASTATING IMPACT OF ALL NEW ZEALAND WILDLIFE. WHILST 1080 HAS HAD AN IMPACT ON RATS – IF THERE HAD BEEN A MAJOR IMPACT THEY WOULD NOW BE EXTINCT!



A MK4 FENN TRAP IN ACTION



A MASSIVE MALE STOAT ELIMINATED BY A MK4 FENN, WHICH WAS CORRECTLY SET CROSS-WISE IN A PHILPROOF TUNNEL

Professional trappers are therefore somewhat bemused that with the successes of the Fenn, Timms & Cage traps the Dept of Conservation decided to spend over \$30-million of tax-payers money in an effort to 'invent' better predator traps – and failed!

FENN TRAPS are made in two 2 sizes, the MK4 & MK6 and at around \$50/trap, plus \$50 for a Philproof tunnel they are relatively very inexpensive! The FENN Trap **must** be set cross-wise in a tunnel and this results in the predator trapped front and rear. However, one of our photographs shows a ferret trapped by the head – but we didn't complain!

Some 'self-styled experts' claimed that the Fenn does not kill efficiently; this is nonsense and is simply not true; the Fenn is devastating – and is the only trap seriously used by gamekeepers in the UK for the control of mustelids and Grey Squirrel.

Ideally both the Timms and Fenn should be used in association with a cage trap, with the feral cat and hedgehogs being the most common animals caught in cage traps, but ferrets are also susceptible to entering the cage - when they cannot resist the bait that is used – and the harrier hawk is quite often captured in cage traps and they are also regularly eliminated in Timms traps.



CAGE TRAPS ARE VERY SUCCESSFUL IN THE CONTROL OF FERAL CATS
Cage traps need to be checked every two days and the predator eliminated



CAGE TRAPS ARE ALSO VERY SUCCESSFUL IN CAPTURING, FERRETS, HARRIERS & HEDGEHOGS



THE FENN ALSO MEANS INSTANT DEATH FOR HEDGEHOGS – WHICH DESTROY & EAT THE EGGS OF ALL GROUND NESTING BIRDS. MANY HEDGEHOGS ARE ALSO ELIMINATED IN THE TIMMS TRAPS AT TAUMATA LAGOON. TO DATE NOTHING HAS EVER BEEN DOCUMENTED ABOUT WHY OUR EUROPEAN ANCESTORS INTRODUCED HEDGEHOGS INTO NEW ZEALAND

As already mentioned millions of dollars of public funds have been spent designing and manufacturing new kill traps that are superior to the Fenn Trap, but our contacts in the professional predator arena (**this arena does not include any DOC staff!**) have informed me that the new traps have failed to achieve this – as clearly exemplified by the deaths of 117 captive reared Kiwi at the Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre, north of Masterton, with all being eliminated by either ferrets or a dose of 1080!!!!!!



THIS FERAL CAT WAS DOOMED – HIT BY A TIMMS TRAP IT LEFT STRAIGHT INTO A CAGE TRAP AND THE DOOR CLOSED!

RECENT “INOVATIONS” IN TRAP DESIGN

In my opinion the DOC series of traps have two distinguishing features in comparison to the Fenn & Timms traps:

1. They are easier to set than the FENN & TIMMS
2. They rarely catch anything!

Several new designs of self-setting kill traps are currently being trialled – at a cost of another \$4,000,000 - and promise to be far superior to all DOC traps. But two recent innovations were the Henry & the Nooski trap, with both proven to be almost totally useless. We trialled both of these at Taumata Lagoon for well over 18-months and they caught anything!

To date self-setting traps, such as the Henry have proved to be inadequate and we believe that the well proven and very inexpensive FENN & TIMMS traps, without millions of dollars of public money being spent, will win the day.

In the UK the most favoured traps used in the elimination of grey squirrel are the FENN & Cage traps!

On top of the inferior series of DOC traps - and in an effort to pacify the politically correct ‘arm-chair experts’ a multitude of predator control kill traps have been introduced over the past 15-years, with all of then being inferior to the Timms and Fenn traps.

However, the only Timms trap that can be use in areas where Kiwi exist is the one with a tunnel. I’ve shown the MK4 Fenn in a Philproof tunnel, together with a cage trap, is all that is needed in such areas.



TIMMS TRAP COMPETE WITH TUNNEL



LARGE RATS, TOGETHER WITH CATS, POSSUMS, FERRETS, HARRIER HAWKS, HEDGEHOGS & MAGPIES OFTEN GET ELIMINATED IN THE BRILLIANT NEW ZEALAND DESIGN & MANUFACTURED TIMMS TRAP AT TAUMATA LAGOON

BAIT

The essential ingredient to attracting predators into a kill trap or a cage trap is to have suitable bait in the trap. A variety of bait types have been trialled by the GWRC predator control officials and by numerous other predator control experts – farm eggs, frozen game bird meat, fish, fresh chicken, fresh rabbit, beef scraps, eel (eel apparently works well, but it is apparently non-pc to catch eel for this purpose!).

Freezer dried rabbit has been tried, but is expensive and has not shown to be much better catch wise than the very favoured beef scraps – cheap, readily available and easy to apply.



A FERAL CAT KILLED IN A DOC250 TRAP

These traps arrive from the factory with a totally useless 25mm square entrance hole! This has to be enlarged to 100mm sq – these traps also lack the all important tunnel that mustelids cannot resist entering!

USE OF POISON BAIT STATIONS (These are not used at TAUMATA ISLAND)

Another successful method of controlling rats (and mice) is by using poison bait stations – bait stations where the rodent has to eat the bait in situ. Philproof also manufacture an excellent poison bait station – but it does need a board over the top to keep moisture out and the bait dry.

For obvious reasons exemplary care is needed in their management!



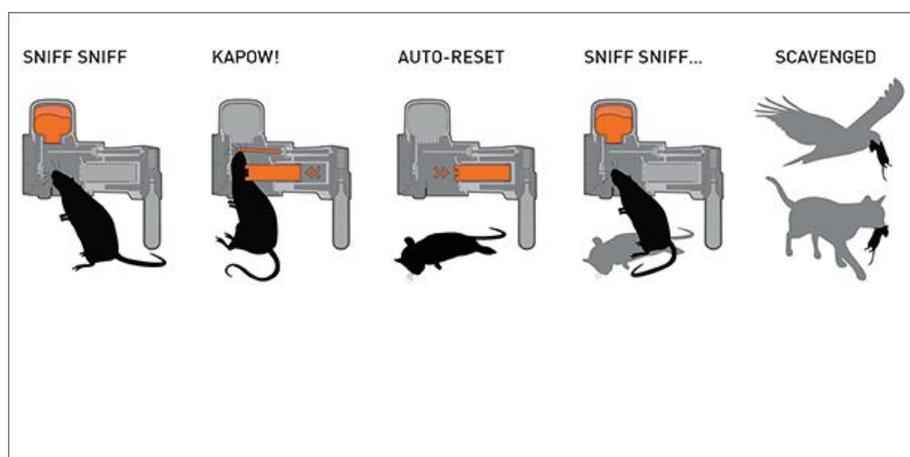
THE PHILPROOF POISON BAIT STATION

A RECENT INNOVATION – THE GOODNATURE A24

This is an extract from the A24 brochure:

Here's how the Goodnature A24 Rodent Trap works:

- (1) The rodent is attracted into the A24 trap by the potent long-life rodent lure which remains fresh for one month.
- (2) As the rodent brushes past the very sensitive leaf-trigger, the trap is set into action.
- (3) A CO₂ pressurised piston strikes the rodent's head killing it instantly and then retracts on a light spring.
- (4) The dead rodent falls to the ground and the trap automatically resets itself ready for the next pest to arrive.



Here's what one of New Zealand's most experienced trappers had to say:

"They are a well engineered and innovative idea, but it does not kill anything - unless the predators are in plague proportions and then they just get a few rats!

Hugely disappointing to me! I trialled a \$3 mouse trap and the \$180 A24 – the Goodnature trap didn't catch a thing, but the \$2 trap did!

I've caught a few rats with the A24 at home but the bait stations have had to be brought back into service! The A24 traps are yet another DOC con job!"



The "Goodnature A24"

A VERY EXPENSIVE & INNEFICIENT RAT TRAP!

One of the best New Zealand elimination traps that I heard about is one where the pest/predator puts its head in a baited trap - similar design to the A24 - triggers a photo electric cell that gives the predator a whiff of cyanide and the animal walks away and dies – thus eliminating the inevitable pile of dead animals under the trap!

But thanks to the Dept of Conservation's "ETHICS COMMITTEE" it has never seen the light of day.

This "committee" is the same one that decided (without any knowledge of the traps) that FENN traps were inadequate – simply because those that 'tested' the FENN traps had been instructed to find them inadequate!

OBSERVATIONS

After over 27-years of involvement in predator control at Taumata Lagoon, in the Wairarapa, where over 6,000 predators have so far been eliminated, we have now reached a level where very few predators are being caught; but there is no room for complacency and predator control must be ongoing – indefinitely.

The Hayes family are very fortunate to have major predator control input from the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Masterton Office.

Throughout New Zealand similar predator control operations are being well supported by large numbers of private conservation groups, private individuals and regional councils', and whilst we can never eliminate all alien predators of our endemic wildlife major inroads can quickly be made towards substantially reducing the impact of predation.

The 2016 suggestion by the Dept of Conservation and the National Government that New Zealand will be 'PREDATOR FREE' in 50-years by using in insidious poison 1080 (Sodium fluoracetate) is by far the most ludicrous environmental proposal to ever see the light of day; because 1080 has little effect on – Mustelids, Possums or Feral cats, but very effectively eliminates most of our endangered or threatened wildlife that DOC is mandated to protect!

In fact many believe that the 1080 DOC propaganda makes the work of Dr Joseph Goebbels look rank amateurish; because the DOC 1080 program has absolutely nothing whatever to do with the elimination of predators and is simply a billion dollar business; for these reasons:

- The Government owns the 1080 factories
- There are now very few possums & only 0.004% carry Bovine TB
- 1080 has little effect on feral cats, ferret, stoat or weasel numbers – all of which carry Bovine TB
- 1080 has little effect on rat numbers. DOC's mythical annual 'explosion' of rat numbers would be impossible if 1080 was effective!
- The fact is that 1080 has had little effect on rat numbers clearly confirms that the DOC 1080 program is all about money!
- The movement of domestic cattle is also responsible for the spread of Bovine TB!
- The use of 1080 is totally out of control, with many of our endangered species heading rapidly towards extinction because of its use!!

- In addition, what DOC and its predator control people fail to understand is that Mustelids are tunnel dwellers and cannot resist entering a tunnel! This is precisely the reason why DOC series of traps don't kill anything!

During 2016 we had a rabbit explosion at Taumata and I've always had two Fenn traps, in Philproof tunnels alongside our brown teal aviaries and one of them eliminated our first ever "garden' ferret! So I instantly dug a tunnel and placed a single MK4 Fenn in it.



In just one week I extracted 5 Stoats and 1 weasel from the Fenn trap – all very dead!

But such Governmental Ludicracy is typical of New Zealand's shocking record of support for the country's unique environment and its endemic wildlife – here's a short list of our counter productive environmental efforts over the last 70-years:

- 70% of our native trees have been logged
- 60% of our historic wetlands have been destroyed
- All our rivers and wetlands are so polluted and unlikely to ever recover
- All our endemic wildlife is racing towards extinction
- The Govt support for 1080 has so far eliminated over 15,000 domestic animals, has eliminated all invertebrates in our rivers and native bush; destroying our lucrative trout fishing industry, eliminated our million-year old frogs, most of our endemic birds and destroyed the essential diet of the already endangered Whio

- They have extracted, and wasted, large sums of public money to keep themselves employed in mundane and counter-productive activities
- Have successfully destroyed game bird hunting and its lucrative tourist industry - through its anti-lead shot obsession: 'inspired' by the United Nations as a means of restricting the private ownership of firearms – and in spite of the DEFRA research in the UK that determined that lead is a major natural element in the ground and that over 30 commonly eaten vegetables contained elements of lead! It is also well known that no species of waterfowl has ever died from ingesting lead shot! Yet, the NZ Minister of Conservation, the NZ Minister for the Environment and the NZ Fish & Game Council were still claiming that the 200 dairy cows that died on Dec 2015 after grazing on the Nightcaps Clay Target range in Southland died of lead shot poisoning – whereas, within four days it was determined by veterinary specialists that they died of Toxic Swede Poisoning! Little wonder that these two lost the election for the National Party at the Sept 2017 General Election! Or that the NZ Fish & Game Council has destroyed everything that it was mandated to do in 1993 - and that their once high profile is at such a low level it will never recover!
- In 2016, on instruction from the United Nations, the NZ Minister for the Environment 'instructed' all Regional, City & District Councils' to ban lead shot and lead projectiles from all shooting ranges!
- WHAT PLANET THESE PEOPLE ARE ON ONLY THEY WOULD KNOW!

Two books & an article that should be compulsory reading for everyone – particularly those employed in any area of the environment and its welfare are:

MIKE JOY'S "POLLUTED INHERITANCE – New Zealand's Fresh Water Crisis."
Available from BWB TEXTS

BILL BENFIELD'S "AT WAR WITH NATURE - Corporate Conservation & the Industry of Extinction." Available from TROSS PUBLISHING

"ANTI-LEAD SHOT MYTHODOLOGY & ANTI-ENVIRONMENTAL METHODOLOGY" by Neil Hayes. This article provides detailed information that shows where all anti- shooting sports nonsense is generated, together with compelling research evidence that shows that neither lead shot nor lead projectiles are an environmental problem! Available from Neil Hayes QSM, P O Box 188, CARTERTON 5743 – haltd@actrix.co.nz

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

In essence only the land and fresh water that is protected by a QEII OPEN SPACE COVENANT that will preserve some of the historically unique environmental features of New Zealand for future generations: because it is now too late to reverse the outrageous environmental damage that has been done and continues to be done, by the Dept of Conservation, the Ministry for the Environment and all their associated organisations.

The whole New Zealand bureaucratic structure – where upwards over 50% of employed people work at one of New Zealand's ever increasing number of bureaucratic organisation!

What needs to be carried out is a total restructuring of all Government and Quasi Government organisations (Including the NZ Fish & Game Council), together with all others employed in 'the system' and only those that have an intrinsic interest, enthusiasm and dedication (just like those in the NZ Wildlife Service) to make a very real contribution towards the future of New Zealand's endemic wildlife and their habitats and it's democracy!

The country's current governmental political structure needs an urgent overhaul – shown by the farcical results of the 2017 National Election; where minority parties that polled very poorly are now part of the Government! When the country changed from the UK's 'first past the post' format in 1992 to MMP – Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP), in an almost 100% majority vote! But all that really happened was we NZ went from 90 members of Parliament to 120! And the majority now believe that this has been a disaster for the country!

All Government & Quasi Governmental departments – REGIONAL, DISTRICT & CITY COUNCILS' (77 of these!) and the 3,000+ government Quango's also need to be restructured - or eliminated, because none of them make any meaningful contribution to the welfare of our environment, or to our rare and endemic wildlife; or to our economy; nor do any of our growing numbers of so-called 'environmental' groups! A guesstimated number of bureaucrats is our workforce is 1 million, with very few (if any) making any contribution to the welfare of the country – or to our rapidly degenerating environment or to our endemic wildlife! Professional analysis shows that less than 200,000 people in New Zealand are in productive employment! With a population of less than 5-million this is a ludicrous situation!

Immediately after the 2017 September election I emailed the Leader of the Green Party - they have 6 seats - listing the NZ environmental disasters that have taken place over the last 70-years. Naturally, no reply was received but two weeks later I received a letter inviting me to join GREENPEACE! Both Greenpeace and the Green Party have never made any contribution to the NZ environment and both are dedicated supporters of the use of the insidious poison 1080!

A BRIEF BIO

I was born in the middle of Sherwood Forest many moons ago and evolved into a very keen shooting sports individual.

I married Sylvia in 1961 and we emigrated from the UK to NZ in 1962 – settling first in Wellington and then the Wairarapa.

Hunting opportunities were wonderful in those days and I soon became an avid waterfowl hunter – chasing mallards all over the North Island & Canada's at Lake Ellesmere! This 'encouraged' me to attempt to emulate Sir Peter Scott's enthusiasm for saving rare waterfowl from extinction and when Ducks Unlimited (NZ) was established in 1974 I was allocated the job of saving the NZ Brown Teal from extinction!

In a short space of time the recovery programme had 34 people, spread from Northland to Southland breeding brown teal in captivity; with many of them being waterfowl hunters and we were soon breeding over 100 Pateke per year and releasing them in selected areas of the North Island.

In the early stages of the captive breeding programme I developed a 'flock-mating' technique – where male & female teal were allowed to select their mate. Once a pair pond was established they were caught and sent to a carefully selected recovery programme participant – where they invariably produced a brood in their first season

In the 2005 New Year Honours I was honoured to be awarded a Queen's Service Medal (QSM) - for my 30-years of continuous involvement in attempting to save the NZ Brown Teal (Pateke) from extinction.



PATEKE IN CAPTIVITY

Heavily laden with individual identification leg bands

Here's a major paper about Pateke & the Recovery Programme

<https://www.hayes-associates.co.nz/news/article/2/status-amp-survival-of-nz-brown-teal/>

During this period I had numerous papers published, wrote a 50,000-word Pateke Management Manual and with these and my authorship of the "NZ WETLANDS" distance learning course, my total number of published words was over 500,000! In 2004 I was awarded a PhD for published works and in 2004 became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and in 2011 became a Royal Chartered Environmentalist, under the umbrella of the UK's Institution of Engineering Designers – which I had joined in 1961.

Prior to all this, in 1990 my wife & I purchased 10-hectares of Taumata Lagoon in the Wairarapa and since then we've planted over 7,000 Totara, Kahikatea & NZ Swamp flax – eliminated thousands of predators – and created "BROADLANDS LAGOON", which was financed by an incredibly generous donation from the Broadlands Wildfowl Trust at Reporoa, NZ.



PART OF "BROADLANDS LAGOON"

BROADLANDS CAN BE SEEN ON THE FAR RIGHT OF THE TAUMATA LAGOON AERIAL PHOTO



SYLVIA & BAZ ON A MORNING STROLL IN THE HAYES' CREATED FOREST