

North & South Hokianga

Report prepared by Mae Lewis, July 2025

2025



Rat box making workshop at Ngāi Tupoto Marae, April 2025



Pest Control in the Hokianga

Northland Regional Council (NRC) and Kiwi Coast Trust worked together to establish a new 'Hokianga Kiwi Coast Coordinator' role in August 2024. Mae Lewis dedicated one day a week, providing support to community led pest control initiatives from Waimamaku in South Hokianga, through to Herekino on the northern edge of North Hokianga. Key activities included offering on the ground support to hapū and community led pest control initiatives, running workshops in schools and the community, and supporting communities to carry out ecological outcome monitoring.

On the ground support

All enquiries for support with trapping or monitoring were responded to, with many enquiries leading to a site visit and ongoing follow-up support for properties in Omanaia, Koutu, Waimamaku, Motukaraka, Panguru, Mangamuka, Broadwood, Pawarenga, and Herekino. Some of these enquiries have led to groups and projects being established, with additional support from Kiwi Coast to connect with neighbors, map projects and collect pest control data and volunteer hours.

Top: Rat trap box making workshop with Broadwood Area School, December 2024

Skill building workshops

In October 2024 a bittern workshop was held with Love Bittern Trust, attended by 25 people. The workshop helped raise the awareness of bittern in the area, and sparked strong interest in the Kohukohu community where the critically threatened birds were later confirmed by acoustic recording devices and human listening at multiple sites along the harbour, wetlands and dams in the area. This interest led to the community starting a pest control group (*Kohukohu Landcare*), and submitting a biofund application for traps. A pest control workshop was then held with NRC in June 2025 to provide support and build skills in the group. Lindsey Davidson from Kohukohu Landcare said, "We'd like to say a massive 'thank you' to both Kiwi Coast and NRC - we're extremely grateful for the support and advice in helping us to lower pest numbers, and protect our local ecosystem".

Rat trap box making workshops were also held at Ngāi Tupoto marae, and with a community group in Kohukohu. Participants made a wooden box to house a rat trap, and learnt about the different pests and the damage they do. These workshops were aimed at the 'entry level' trapper and were a positive way of building trust in the community. In addition, Broadwood School and Herekino School were visited, with traps and a workshop being provided to both schools to enable students to carry out trapping around the school grounds.



Community events

A big focus of the Hokianga Coordinator has been meeting the community where they are and investing time into building authentic, trusting relationships through careful community engagement. Community engagement events attended include the Kaikohe A&P Show (January 2025), North Hokianga A&P Show in Broadwood (February 2025), the Pawarenga Whānau Fair (March 2025) and the Pawarenga Pig Hunt (June 2025). These events were valuable opportunities to connect with the community and build trust and respect while learning more about the issues and concerns in the community. Feral cats colonies and uncontrolled dogs stood out as particular community concerns.

Ecological monitoring

At the invitation of different landowners and hapū led projects, monitoring was carried out to investigate the presence of bittern and kiwi. Bittern were confirmed as present at 8 of the 12 sites across Hokianga, with kiwi being confirmed at 4 of the 6 sites surveyed. These kiwi data will be included in the Kiwi Listening Blitz that Kiwi Coast is carrying out in 2025. Two of the sites where kiwi were confirmed have now been established as kiwi call count sites as part of the Northland Annual Kiwi Call Count Survey. This will help track long-term kiwi population trends in the Hokianga as well as contribute to the wider understanding of Northland brown kiwi across Te Tai Tokerau.

Top: Joint Kiwi Coast and NRC Pest Control Workshop for Kohukohu Landcare, June 2025



2090 volunteer hours reported



Bittern monitoring at 12 sites across Hokianga



4 community engagement events



2 school workshops



4 community workshops



Kiwi detected at 4 new sites across Hokianga



94 traps into the community



7 loan traps

Trap library

A trap library has been initiated that currently consists of three AT220 autotraps (supplied by Kiwi Coast) and four wooden live capture traps for the community to loan. In some circumstances, farmers with high possum numbers and constant reinvasion have felt overwhelmed at the time commitment involved in trapping. After trialling an auto trap and learning how to use the app to capture catch results, seven landowners went on to purchase their own to boost results and complement the mustelid and feral cat trapping taking place on their properties. The auto traps have been useful in attracting feral cats for farmers to target.

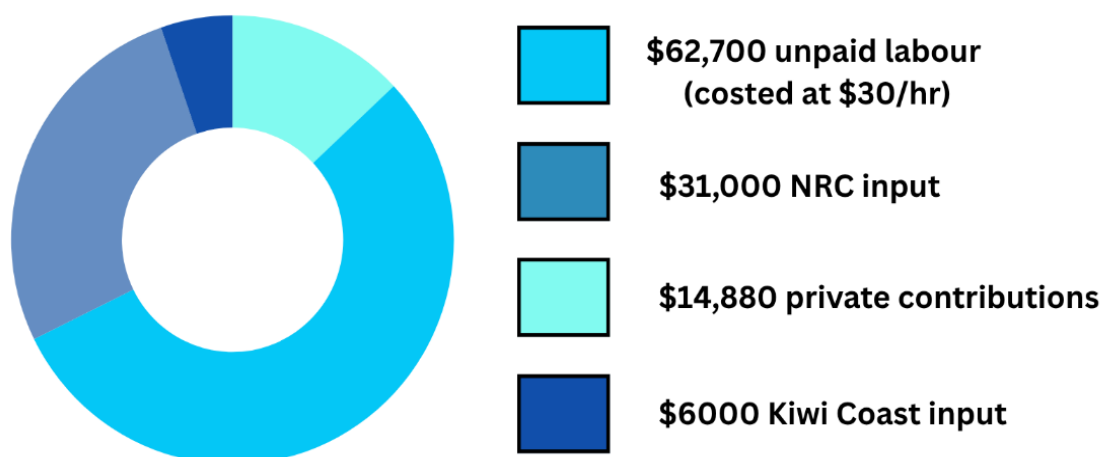
Resources into the community

Resources were provided to those who requested support throughout the year. These resources include:

35 SA2 traps, 12 DOC traps, and 47 rat traps.

Financial Summary

A financial summary of the project shows NRC input to the project, as well as significant unpaid labour, and private contributions which are made up of trap purchases and privately funded contractors.



Above: Waikiwi Trappers (Motukaraka) setting up traps from a biofund.

Hokianga Map

This map on the next page shows existing and newly established groups and projects across North and South Hokianga, as well as bittern and kiwi presence as confirmed by ARD.

