



October 2025



Kawau multi-species eradication project

Working towards a pest free Kawau Island

This is the 15th newsletter to the Kawau Island community, providing the latest updates on the project to restore Kawau Island's unique environment, beginning with the removal of wallabies and possums.

Operational update

Putting lessons learnt into practice and testing assumptions

The primary methods for the ground-based operation to eradicate possums and wallabies continue to be hunting – supported by the use of thermal devices and dogs, and the targeted application of toxins (1080 and Feratox) in areas where the monitoring network has revealed higher numbers of wallabies and possums are still present.

Progress snapshot

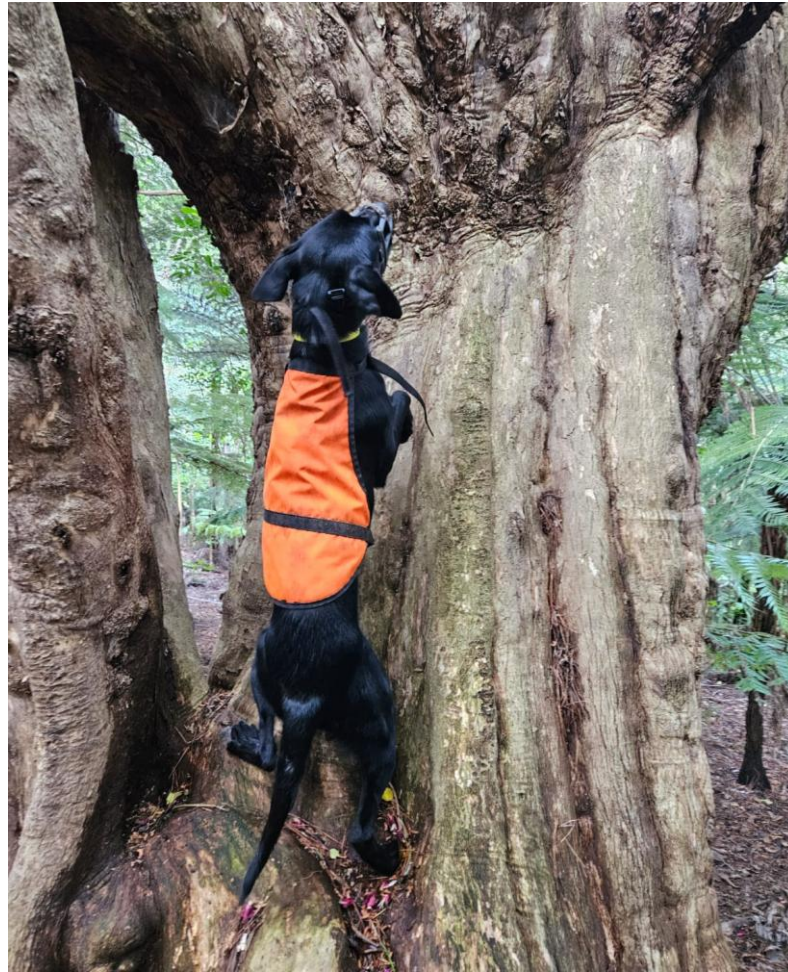
- 327,011 images captured and analysed
- 167 possum traps set (in Block 1)
- 285ha covered by possum dogs
- Over 1,230 wallabies removed by thermal assisted hunting
- 172 possums removed

Our first targeted ground-based treatment of 1080 and Feratox took place between 19 - 23 July this year in the southern half of the island, excluding residential areas and block one (largely Mansion House Reserve and adjoining DOC land).

What have we learnt?

- Wildlife cameras have detected possums in all blocks (1–10), confirming their presence across all of Kawau. Block 1 has the highest possum population, but good progress is being made with the assistance of the possum indicator dogs.
- The field cameras and drone surveys have revealed that wallaby numbers are higher than originally anticipated across the island as a whole. Hunting block one has transitioned to a mop up phase with a focus on last remaining individuals.
- Resting of hunting blocks between rotations becomes important when focusing on removing the last surviving animals.

Update on hunting and trapping progress across the island



Qualmons Possum dog Beck (handler – Kiri Stack), in action, indicating on a possum up a pūriri tree. A trap is then set based on the positive detection

Block 1: DOC Historic & Stoney Hill Recreational Reserves – Night Hunting

Night hunting with thermal drone support in the DOC-managed Historic and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserves is tentatively scheduled to occur during the following periods (if necessary and subject to wildlife camera data):

- 28 October to 7 November 2025
- 24 November to 5 December 2025

These hunting operations in the DOC reserves will focus on targeting individual wallabies and hot spots of activity. Final confirmation of these dates will be communicated to neighbouring residents and landowners.

Block 2: Possum Team Coming Through South Cove Next Week

To date, **no possums have been detected** in South Cove through wildlife cameras, thermal imagery, or drone surveys. To confirm this, Cam Gray and Kiri Stack with possum indicator dogs Cossie and Beck will be conducting a daytime ground survey through South Cove residential areas and the coastal cliffs on **October 23rd and 24th**. Cam & Kiri will need three sweeps to fully confirm the absence of possums – one of these checks will be when the Pōhutukawa Trees are in full flower.

Wallaby & Possum Control – Rest of Kawau Island

Outside of the DOC reserves, night hunting periods will also take place and will be scheduled separately, communicated to the community. All hunting activities will cease by mid-December to avoid disruption during the busy summer holiday period. Hunting will not resume until after **Waitangi weekend** (Friday, 6 February, until Sunday, 8 February) in 2026.

Possum trapping will continue through to **19 December 2025** and is anticipated to resume late January/early February 2026.

How you can help:

If you have seen any recent possum or wallaby activity on your property, please let us know by email: Kawau@islandconservation.org

Sharing date/time/location details helps us direct the field team to exactly where they're needed most.

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