

Kawau Island project updates

The following information provides a record of previous Kawau Island pest eradication project updates prior to the current update that appears on this webpage:

<https://www.tiakitamakimakaurau.nz/get-involved/working-towards-a-pest-free-kawau-island/kawau-project-updates/>

They are listed with the most recent first.

Kawau Island Operations Update: 20 - 24 October 2025

Note: There will be no hunting operations on Kawau Island over Labour Weekend.

Night hunting: 20 - 24 October

What:

- Targeted night hunting, using firearms fitted with suppressors.
- With thermal drone support.
- Shots will only be taken if it is completely safe to do so, following strict safety protocols.

Where:

- Schoolhouse, Sunny and Harris Bay residential areas, where landowner permission has already been granted.

When:

- The night of Monday 20 October through to the morning of Friday 24 October.
- After 9pm.

Possum ground survey: 22 - 23 October

To date, no possums have been detected in South Cove using 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. The canine detection work will confirm if South Cove is possum-free or if we need to get to work with trapping.

Cam & Kiri will need three sweeps to fully confirm the absence of possums – one of these checks will be when the coastal pohutukawa trees are in full flower.

If you would like to meet the possum team or show them anything on your property or where you may suspect a possum is residing, please contact kawau@islandconservation.org

What:

- Possum daytime ground survey using detector dogs.

Where:

- Through South Cove residential areas and the coastal cliffs.

When:

- The first sweep is planned for next week on Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 October.

Kawau Island Operations Update - 6-16 October 2025

The next night hunting period in the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Kawau Island Historic and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserves runs from Monday 6 October to Thursday 16 October 2025, between the hours of 7pm and 8am.

What:

- Targeted night hunting using firearms with suppressors - strict safety protocols in place.
- Thermal drone support.
- Shots only taken if completely safe to do so.

Where:

- Block 1 - DOC Kawau Island Historic and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserves

When:

- Monday 6 October – Thursday 16 October 2025
- Time: 7pm - 8am

For your own safety, please do not enter the DOC reserves between the hours of 7pm and 8am during this time. If you have seen any recent possum or wallaby activity, please let us know by email: kawau@islandconservation.org

Let us know date/time/location details to help us direct the field team to exactly where they're needed most.

Kawau Island Operations Update - 22 September to 5 October

Night hunting will take place in Block 8 from 23 - 28 September and in Block 7 and the Starboard Arm section of Block 9 from 29 September - 5 October, between 8pm and 7am. This will only occur on properties where access has been granted.

We recognise this work falls during the school holidays. Email kawau@islandconservation.org if you've granted access but prefer the field team do not enter your property during this time.

What:

- Targeted night hunting using firearms with suppressors - strict safety protocols in place.
- Thermal drone support.
- Shots only taken if completely safe to do so.

Where:

Only on properties where access has been granted in:

- Block 8
- Block 7
- Block 9 - Starboard Arm section only

When:

- Block 8: Tuesday 23 - Sunday 28 September
- Block 7 and 9: Monday 29 September – Sunday 5 October
- Time: 8pm - 7am
- Weather dependent

Kawau Island Operations Update - 15- 21 September

Follow-up night hunting operations will take place in the **South Cove residential area and buffer zones** from Monday 15 to Sunday 21 September after 8pm. We're mindful this overlaps with the first weekend of the school holidays - the team will carefully assess progress during the week and adjust plans accordingly if needed.

How you can help:

If you have seen any recent possum or wallaby activity on your property, please let us know.

Email: kawau@islandconservation.org - include date/time/location details so we can direct the field team to exactly where they're needed most.

What:

- Targeted night hunting using firearms fitted with suppressors - with strict safety protocols in place.
- Thermal drone support to help identify animals.
- Shots only taken if completely safe to do so.

Where:

- South Cove residential area - only on properties where landowner permission has been granted.

When:

- Between Monday 15 and Sunday 21 September, after 8pm
- Weather dependent

Kawau Island Operations Update – 1-14 September

As we adapt to the complex nature of the pest free Kawau Island programme, targeted night hunting will continue in Block 1, covering the Department of Conservation's (DOC's) Kawau Island Historic Reserve and Stoney Hill Recreation Reserve and nearby residential areas. Hunting operations will follow a two-weeks-on / two-weeks-off cycle to maintain pressure on wallaby 'hot spots'.

The next hunting period in the DOC reserves runs from Monday 1 September to Sunday 14 September, between 5pm and 8am. Future hunting hours will adjust as the days get longer.

Night hunting in Schoolhouse, Sunny, Harris, and Karaka bays will occur after 8pm, only on properties with prior landowner permission, from Monday 8 September to Thursday 11 September 2025.

What:

- Night hunting using firearms with suppressors - with strict safety protocols in place.

- Thermal drone surveys across all areas of Block 1.
- Possum removal by Cam Grey and his indicator dog 'Cossie' through daytime trapping and detection.

Where:

- DOC's Kawau Island Historic Reserve and Stoney Hill Recreation Reserve.
- Residential areas: Schoolhouse, Sunny, Harris, and Karaka bays - only on properties with prior landowner permission.

When:

- DOC Reserves Night Hunting: Monday 1 September – Sunday 14 September. Between 5pm and 8am. Note that future hunting hours will be adjusted as the days get longer.
- Residential Area Night Hunting: Monday 8 September - Thursday 11 September. Hunting will occur after 8pm and only on properties with prior permission and during a suitable weather window.

For your own safety, please do not enter these **DOC reserves** between the hours of **5pm and 8am** during this time.

Kawau Island Operations Update - 20-27 August

We've started targeted hunting in the northern blocks to maintain pressure on populations across the island. This is to help suppress wallaby and possum numbers while eradication efforts continue in the south.

From Wednesday 20 August to Wednesday 27 August, we'll move into Block 7 (refer to map), with hunting only on properties where access has been granted to team members Paul Prip, Laurie Mathews and Jezz Scott, along with indicator dog Hoi. They will be walking Block 7 to familiarise themselves with the area ahead of night hunting.

What:

- Field team site familiarisation.
- Targeted night hunting (firearms with suppressors, strict safety protocols in place).

Where:

- Block 7, Moana Creek, Starboard Arm (west side), Beaumont Point, Pemples, Vivian & Little Vivian Bay (see map) - ONLY on properties where access has been granted.

When:

- Wednesday 20 through to Thursday 21 August - daytime site familiarisation walkthrough,
- From 6pm each evening, from Wednesday 20 August through to Wednesday 27 August (weather permitting), night hunting only on properties where access has been granted.

Kawau Island Operations Update – 13-17 August

Night hunting operations will take place from Wednesday 13 August to Sunday 17 August, where landowner permission has already been granted.

What:

- Targeted night hunting (firearms with suppressors, strict safety protocols in place).
- Further site familiarisation – if you would like to meet the team or point out anything specific on your property, please contact your community liaisons to arrange a time.

Where:

- Block 8 (refer to map above) - ONLY on properties where access has been granted.

When:

- Wednesday 13 August – Sunday 17 August.
- After 6pm.

Kawau Island Operations Update – 22 July to 10 August

Hunting in Department of Conservation reserves and surrounding residential areas.

Over the next three weeks, the field team will be making a concentrated push in Block 1 - Department of Conservation Kawau Island Historic Reserve and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve and surrounding residential areas.

This is an important stage of the operation to target hot spots of activity as much as possible before a daytime grid search is scheduled and the specialist possum team come through the residential areas in August.

How you can help:

If you have seen any recent possum or wallaby activity on your property, please email: kawau@islandconservation.org. Sharing date/time/location details helps us direct the field team to exactly where they're needed most. A reminder this work is only on properties where we already have permission granted.

What:

- Drone survey and hunting, firearms are fitted with suppressors to reduce noise
- Shots will only be taken if completely safe to do so, following strict safety protocols.

Where:

- Block 1 - Department of Conservation Reserves Historic Reserve and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve
- Residential areas where landowner permission has been granted in Schoolhouse, Sunny, Harris, and Karaka Bay.

When:

- Night-time drone survey and hunting in DOC reserves: From Tuesday, 22 July to Sunday 10 August between 5pm and 9am.
- Night-time drone survey and hunting in residential areas - Exact dates/times to be confirmed directly to residents of Schoolhouse, Sunny, Harris and Karaka Bay.

Questions or concerns:

Contact the project team at: kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone 09 301 0101.

Kawau Island Operations Update – 18 or 19 July

1080 & Feratox ground-based bait deployment, weather dependent

Restoring Kawau Island's unique native biodiversity continues to progress. With the hunting operation well underway in the southern blocks, we are now preparing for the next stage of targeted wallaby and possum removal.

What:

Targeted use of toxins 1080 and Feratox to control wallabies and possums.

- Ground-based at monitored stations, not aerially applied.
- Bait will be out for a few days before removal from treatment area.
- Application of toxins will be in accordance with strict permit conditions.

Where:

- Blocks 2 through to 6 - only properties where landowner permission has been granted.
- In accordance with exclusion and buffer zones prescribed by National Public Health Service – Northern Region Auckland.
- Where wallaby and possum numbers are high. Where practicable, carcasses will be retrieved.

When:

- Bait will be deployed from either Friday 18 or Saturday 19 July (weather dependent).
- Uneaten bait will be removed next week.

Safety information:

Pets

- Please always keep dogs on-lead and away from baited areas. Dogs are highly vulnerable to 1080 and Feratox poisoning if baits are ingested directly.
- A carcass containing 1080 can remain toxic for up to four months. A six-month caution period will be observed, during which signage will remain. It is important that people follow safety precautions and instructions during this time.
- Carcass breakdown time will be monitored.
- Free canine muzzles and emetic medication is available from **Warkworth Vets**, 23 Hudson Road, Warkworth. Phone 09 425 8244.

People and children

- Obey all posted warning signs. Do not touch bait that is dyed green.
- Supervise children and keep them away from treatment areas while bait is deployed.
- If you think someone has been poisoned, call the New Zealand National Poisons Centre immediately - 0800 764 766.

Refer to the [news and key safety information webpage](#) for more details including landowner and pet safety information sheets.

Hunting notifications:

- Further hunting notifications will be sent directly to residents and landowners in Block 1 where more hunting and possum trapping is planned from 22 July.

- More hunting notifications will be sent directly to residents and landowners in Block 1 and Block 2 where follow-up hunting and possum trapping are planned.

Questions or concerns:

Contact the project team at: kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone 09 301 0101.

Kawau Island Operations Update – 12-15 July

Pest Free Kawau: Block 8 site familiarisation and night hunting notification

This weekend, the hunting team will be out on foot in the peninsula area between Bon Accord Harbour and North Cove (Block 8). Team members Lennard Sparks, Paul Prip, and Laurie Mathews will be accompanied by their indicator dogs, Marly and Tibby, as they walk through the area to get familiar with the terrain ahead of planned night-time hunting. They will only be on properties where landowner access has already been granted.

Where:

- [Block 8 between Bon Accord Harbour & North Cove](#) (PDF 1.8MB) — **ONLY on properties where access has been granted.**

What:

- Field team site familiarisation
- Targeted night hunting (firearms with suppressors, strict safety protocols in place)

When:

- Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 July - site familiarisation walk through
- From the evening of Sunday 13 July - Tuesday 15 July (weather permitting) - Night hunting only on properties where access has been granted

For any questions or concerns, please contact the project team at: kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone 09 301 0101

Kawau Island Operations Update – 16 June onward

Where:

- Block 1 DOC Kawau Island Historic Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve
- Schoolhouse, Sunny and Harris Bays (by permission only)

What:

- Thermal-assisted hunting
- Drone surveys
- Continuation of wildlife camera monitoring

When:

- Monday 16 June - Friday 27 June 2025
- No hunting during Matariki Weekend (20-22 June)
- Hunting hours in DOC reserves: 4pm – 9am

- The operational team will contact residents and landowners of Schoolhouse, Sunny and Harris Bays directly to confirm dates for targeted follow-up work.

Important safety note:

Do not enter the Kawau Island Historic Reserve or Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve between **4pm-9am**.

There will be **no hunting in DOC reserves** over the Matariki long weekend.

Possum detection work:

The possum team and indicator dogs are currently surveying and trapping the DOC reserves. They are expected to visit Schoolhouse Bay in July or early August — exact dates to be confirmed.

For any questions or concerns, please contact the project team at:

kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone 09 301 0101

Kawau Island Operations Update – 9 June onward

Where:

- Blocks 2 and 3 including South Cove — only on properties where access has been granted.

What:

- Field team site familiarisation in South Cove residential area
- Evening drone surveys
- Targeted night hunting (firearms with suppressors, strict safety protocols)
- Daytime possum survey with possum indicator dog.

When:

- Wednesday, 11 June from 10 AM - Residential walkthrough
- From 11 June (weather permitting) - Evening drone surveys
- 11-12 June - Hunting in block 3 where access has been granted
- 13-20 June (weather permitting) - Night hunting in South Cove (after 8:00 PM) only on properties where access has been granted
- Daytime possum survey work - Date to be confirmed.

Another update will be scheduled shortly with details on follow up hunting in hotspots in Block 1.

If you have any questions, please email: kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone: 09 301 0101

Kawau Island Operations Update – 23 May onward

The field team will soon begin work in Blocks 2 and 3. This does not yet include the South Cove residential area.

However, as South Cove borders properties where operations are underway, they may hear

some night-time activity such as firearms or drone surveys. Field work also continues in the DOC Kawau Island Historic and Stoney Hill Reserves through to the end of May.

Where:

- Blocks 2 and 3 (excluding South Cove residential area)
- Block 1 – DOC Kawau Island Historic and Stoney Hill Reserve

What:

- Night hunting with suppressor-equipped firearms (only when safe, under strict protocols)
- Evening drone surveys
- Possum trapping
- Ongoing wildlife camera monitoring

When:

- Block 2 & 3 operations begin 23 May
- DOC Reserve operations continue through to end of May

Later in June, the field team will walk through South Cove to familiarise themselves with the layout, introduce themselves and the indicator dogs prior to any operational activity. The operational team will be in contact with residents and landowners of South Cove about when this will be.

If you have any questions, please email: kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone: 09 301 0101

Kawau Island Operations Update – Starting 1 May

The weather window is looking good for pest eradication operations on Kawau Island to begin the evening of Thursday, 1 May, 2025.

The hunting team will begin in the Department of Conservation [Kawau Island Historic Reserve and neighbouring Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve \(Block 1\)](#).

Where:

- DOC Kawau Island Historic Reserve
- Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve

What:

- Thermal-assisted hunting and drone surveys
- Indicator dog surveys
- Wildlife camera monitoring

When:

- 1 – 30 May

Hunting hours:

- 5pm to 8am daily

For your safety:

Do not enter the Kawau Island Historic Reserve and Stoney Hill Recreational Reserve between the hours of **5:00 PM to 8:00 AM** during this period.

You might see the field team during the day, with indicator dogs Tibby, Lizzy or Rex. This will be for surveying purposes or traversing to another area on Kawau. Feel free to stop and have a chat with the team.

Next steps:

The field team will walk through the **Schoolhouse, Sunny and Harris Bay** areas to familiarise themselves with the layout, introduce themselves and the indicator dogs prior to any operational activity. The operational team will be in contact with residents and landowners of **Schoolhouse, Sunny and Harris Bay** about when this will be.

We are committed to keeping disruption to a minimum and working respectfully with all landowners in accordance with property access agreements.

If you have any questions,

please **email:** kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or **phone:** 09 301 0101