

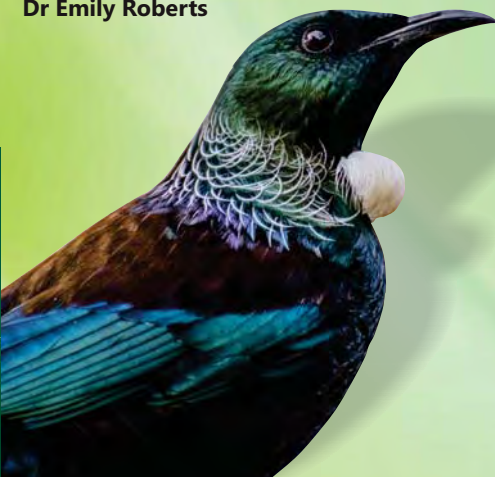
Tēnā koutou katoa

It's been full steam ahead with Towards Predator-Free Taranaki this last term. Education activities with schools have reflected this and so does this SITE newsletter. The project is enabling the whole region to work together to better protect native animals and plants against introduced predators including rats, stoats and possums. Given that so many species in New Zealand are endemic and threatened, this project provides an amazing opportunity for your school to make a real difference safeguarding species and helping Taranaki move towards being predator-free. If you and your school are keen to get on board with Towards Predator-Free Taranaki, please don't hesitate to get in touch (education@trc.govt.nz).

If trapping rats is not your thing, there are plenty of other areas of environmental education that we can provide support for through the TRC education programme. There have been a few tweaks to the programme recently, with district councils taking over delivery of waste minimization and civil defence. An updated summary of the education programme is provided on the back page.

In addition, enjoy the Enviroschools newsletter, which reports on lots of exciting stuff that Enviroschools have been up to.

Nāku noa nā,
Dr Emily Roberts



Towards Predator-Free Taranaki

We've had fantastic support and interest from schools with Towards Predator-Free Taranaki. This last term, we've been working with many schools around the region and we have lots of new schools signed up for Term 4. This SITE newsletter provides the opportunity to say a massive thank you and celebrate results of schools we have worked with during Term 3; your efforts are already making a real difference! For those not yet on board, check out what you're missing out on! If you are interested, get in touch (education@trc.govt.nz) and we can hatch an exciting project plan based at your school or a suitable green space close to your school.



Oakura School



Woodleigh School

Schools supporting

Towards Predator-Free Taranaki



Egmont Village School



Huirangi School

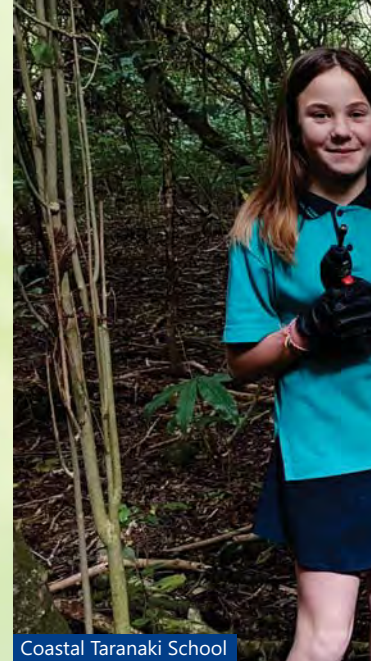
Monitoring predators

It's important to determine what predators are where before placing traps. A number of schools have been tracking and mapping predators around their school grounds and local bush using tracking tunnels, chew cards and wax tags. Some students have even made their own monitoring gear. No shortage of rats, mice and hedgehogs have been detected. Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research have produced some fantastic guides, available online, that we've been using to help identify footprints and chew marks:



Woodleigh School

tinyurl.com/trackingtunnelprints
tinyurl.com/toothimpressions
tinyurl.com/chewtrackcards



Coastal Taranaki School



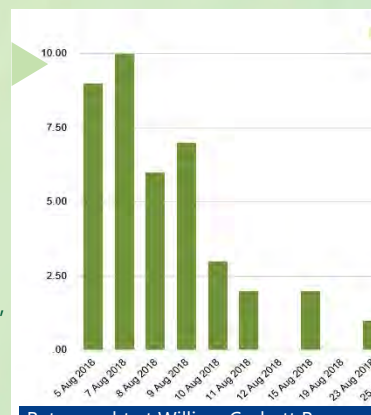
Coastal Taranaki School

Recording catches

Students have been using Trap NZ (www.trap.nz) to keep a careful record of what's been caught when. Most schools have found they start off catching lots of rats and those numbers quickly drop off. It's crucial to keep checking traps to control re-invasion and catch the more canny rats. If you or your school need help getting set up on Trap NZ, or with ongoing use, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We're happy to help!



Rats caught by Okato Learning Group and Coastal Taranaki School



Rats caught at William Corbett Reserve



Restoring habitats

Some schools have set about restoring/improving their local environment, planting native trees and removing pest plants in addition to trapping predators.

Huirangi School

Monitoring biodiversity

One of the main purposes of Towards Predator-Free Taranaki is to better protect native species. A fun way to measure the effects of predator control on native biodiversity values is with a BioBlitz, where all species within a chosen area are identified, photographed and uploaded to iNaturalist NZ. A number of schools have been blitzing their local area and the results of their awesome efforts can be seen here: tinyurl.com/PFBioblitz



Trapping predators

We've been working with schools to safely get them up and running with trapping. Students have been regularly checking traps, with help from an adult, and some schools have been catching lots of rats!



Okato Learning Group



Woodleigh School with Ed Chignell, Predator Free 2050



y Coastal Taranaki School



Raising funds

Schools have been selling trap packs for \$10 each to raise funds for school trips, local reserves and national predator control initiatives. Thank you so much to all of those schools who have done an amazing job getting the community on board with predator trapping. If your school is based in the New Plymouth area and is interested in selling traps to raise funds for the school, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We will broaden out the offer to schools in other areas as the project rolls around the region.

Taranaki Regional Council Education Programme

Here is a general overview of the educational programme that we currently offer at the Council. We can also provide advice and support with developing your teaching programme or environment-based action projects.

All of our study units are available on the TRC website: www.trc.govt.nz/study-units/



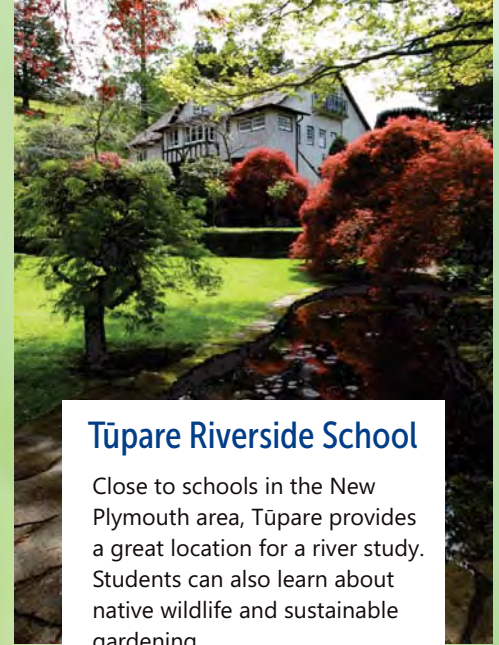
Pukeiti Rainforest School

Pukeiti is a flourishing New Zealand rainforest ecosystem that provides an outstanding venue for environmental education. Field trips to Pukeiti typically run between 10am and 2pm and incorporate a rainforest walk, focusing on native biodiversity and one other activity of the school's choosing. Check the Pukeiti Rainforest School Study Unit to see the broad range of activities on offer.



Hollard Gardens Woodland School

Students can learn about beneficial birds and bugs, in addition to how to compost and make their own worm farms. Check the Hollard Gardens Woodlands School Study Unit for more details.



Tūpare Riverside School

Close to schools in the New Plymouth area, Tūpare provides a great location for a river study. Students can also learn about native wildlife and sustainable gardening.



Stream studies

At primary level this involves finding and identifying stream bugs and measuring other water quality parameters. High school students can use the Stream Health Measurement Assessment Kit (SHMAK) that enables collection of scientifically robust data that can be used to make assessments of stream health.



Wetland studies

There are a number of wetland areas suitable for school visits. We have a wetlands study unit available online and we also recommend booking a visit to the Taranaki Wetlands exhibition at Puke Ariki.



Towards Predator-Free Taranaki and protecting native biodiversity

Native wildlife in Taranaki is under constant attack from pest animals and plants, posing a serious threat to regional biodiversity values. Linking in with the Towards Predator-Free Taranaki project, students can learn how to monitor and trap introduced predators, protecting native biodiversity around their school and local bush. We can help schools to run a BioBlitz, providing a great way to record native and introduced species in a chosen area.



Rocky shore studies

Rocky reefs dominate the Taranaki coastline and provide a wonderful habitat to explore. At primary and intermediate levels rocky shore investigation focuses on species identification and adaptations. More advanced quantitative surveys can be undertaken at intermediate and high school level on request.

Need support with anything else?

For assistance or information on environmental education contact:

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