



Fact sheet

Making Miramar Peninsula predator free

This year we will make Miramar Peninsula free of rats, possums, stoats and weasels. It will be the first stage of our wider plan to make the whole of Wellington city predator free.

Doing this will provide a safe haven for the endangered native birds spilling out of Zealandia. We can't keep them in fenced sanctuaries and offshore islands forever – it's time to provide a safe space for them outside the fence and learn to live with them amongst us.

Why Miramar?

Miramar Peninsula has been chosen for the first stage of our eradication programme on account of its unique geography. Miramar Peninsula is surrounded by a substantial water barrier, and is only connected to the rest of Wellington City by the narrow Rongotai isthmus.

We are working with ZIP (Zero Invasive Predators) to build a virtual barrier by the airport to stop rats, possums and mustelids getting back onto the peninsula.

Miramar was also chosen because the community has already proven what can be achieved when possums were successfully eradicated in 2006. Many of the longer term residents were part of this success. We will be calling on their help again.

Predator Free groups and back yard trappers have already made a tremendous contribution with all the rat trapping to date. This has reduced rat numbers which gives our project a great head start.

Why do we need bait stations?

To achieve the vision of a predator free Miramar Peninsula we are using a mix of methods, including bait stations. This is currently the only proven best practice method for rodent eradications. The great part of this project is that we will also be trialling new technology to see what other methods will help us.

This is not a poison 'drop' - baits will be carefully placed in locked bait stations, minimising any risks.

Are the bait stations safe?

The bait will be carefully placed in rodent specific bait stations around the Peninsula. The bait stations will keep the bait secure and will require a key to get to the bait.

The bait being used is Brodifacoum as it has the best track record of achieving rat eradication. It has been used successfully in many island eradications to date. Compared to other toxins available for rat control, it was also the preferred choice as it has the lowest risk for pets.

The bait stations are designed to prevent pet access. In the very unlikely event that a pet did gain access it would have to consume the contents of several bait stations before becoming ill. For example a 15kg dog would need to eat at least 10 bait stations, and a 3kg cat would need to consume at least 15 bait stations to become ill. Cats are not attracted to the bait.

These bait stations and bait are already in use by many residents and commercial properties in Miramar and across NZ.

Why not just use traps?

Trapping is more important than ever. We need to get the pest numbers down before we start our work. But trapping can only achieve so much – it will suppress rat numbers, but they will keep coming back. The only proven method for full eradication includes the use of bait.

What do I do if I see a dead rat/stoat/weasel?

It is not common to find poisoned dead rats out in the open when we use this bait.

If you do see a dead rat, stoat or weasel, please let us know. It would be great if you could grab it and place in a plastic bag in a cold place until we are able to get it from you. We are keen to get these and examine any of these species found dead to determine their cause of death to assist with the project.

You will see our team out checking bait stations and traps weekly.

Why do you need access to my property?

Our goal is to do this once. If we have access to all habitats, we can end the cycle of ongoing pest control operations and provide a safe place for our native wildlife to live.

To access all rat, stoat and weasel home ranges, we will be aiming to place bait stations on a 50m x 50m grid and traps on 100m x 100m grid across the entire peninsula.

This means bait stations and traps will be on people's property, in bush reserves, parks, coastal and commercial areas. The bait stations and traps will be checked weekly by our team for around 3 to 6 months (depending on the results).

How can I help?

If you are already a backyard or reserve trapper, thank you and please continue your great work. What we have planned is the minimum required. The more traps we have the better, and we are keen to know what you catch once the project starts.

If you see an animal in one of our traps please let us know. We plan to check all traps and bait stations weekly.

In the monitoring and detection phase it will be key to have people keeping an eye on wax tags and chewcards which will be non-toxic.

The wax cards will be used to show any bites marks of rats, stoats or weasels remaining.

Please follow us on Facebook or check out our website for other ways to get involved.

How long will it take and when will we know that we are predator free?

We expect Miramar peninsula to be predator free by the end of 2019. We will be doing intensive monitoring to detect any survivors throughout 2020, and using sniffer dogs to hunt out any last predator.

If you want to know more about the project:

 www.pfw.org.nz

 Predator Free Wellington

 hello@pfw.org.nz

 0800norats (0800667287)

