



Outside captivity, red-eared slider turtles and rose-ringed parakeets (pictured below) are eradication pests in the Nelson Tasman region. Escapes and sightings must be reported to Council.

## Preventing pets becoming pests

Biosecurity is about protecting the environment from unwanted organisms. Part of this is being aware of where new pests can come from and doing our bit to prevent problems from starting.

Border security keeps many new pests from entering the country, but a major source of potentially troublesome exotics is our own homes and gardens.

As a nation, we love to keep pet plants and animals to add interest and beauty to our living spaces, but many of these can cause problems when they spill out into the wild.

The 'liberation' of household pets when they are no longer wanted is inhumane and usually unsuccessful, but when the pets survive they can put our ecosystem at risk.

- Avian birds such as cockatoos, rosellas, and ring-necked parakeets regularly form wild populations.
- Goldfish, koi carp, and red-eared slider turtles can spread through our waterways, and reptiles like bearded dragons are successfully colonising in warmer areas around Auckland.
- Dumped kittens that survive add to the stray or feral cat population and prey on other wildlife.
- Most of the worst weeds threatening our forests had origins as ornamental garden plants and many are being spread still further by dumping of garden waste.

- The emptying of aquarium contents into drains and waterways has introduced aquatic weeds and pest fish to our natural waterways.

These examples act as a good reminder to act thoughtfully and choose wisely when rehoming plants and animals that you no longer want. Introducing them into the local environment is not the answer.

If you see an unusual or exotic animal that looks like it has escaped captivity and is living wild, please report it ASAP to Council's biosecurity team on **03 546 0200**.



## Coastal predator control programme underway

Whakatū Nelson has an abundance of important coastal biodiversity areas and Council's Nelson Nature programme is stepping up its efforts to restore a number of these important environments.

Coastal predator control is one important tool that Council employs to support native species and ecosystems in our coastal zones. The Wakapuaka Sandflats Reserve predator control programme is now underway after an induction of volunteer trappers took place on 11 June 2022. A big thank you to all who have made this project possible. We couldn't do it without the help of generous volunteers from our community, as well as staff from Nelson City Council, Kūmānu and the Department of Conservation.

Volunteers were inducted by Council contractor Kūmānu and shown best-practice techniques for setting and checking traps. In the short time the traps have been live at the Sandflats they have already caught stoats, a weasel, rats and mice. The Wakapuaka trapping project is one of many projects where Council and the community are working together to protect our coastal ecosystems. Forest and Bird group members are trapping at Paremata Flats to protect the precious banded rail/moho pererū and fernbird/mātātā colonies that live there, Friends of Haulashore are hard at work with predator control on Haulashore Island looking out for the variable oystercatchers/tōrea pango, pied shags/kāruhiruhi and penguins that frequent the island,

and Battle for the Banded Rail are trapping at the Waimea Inlet edge.

Reducing predators in these areas will help these precious manu/bird populations become more resilient in the face of continued loss of coastal habitat and changing climatic conditions.

Nelson Nature will continue to support a range of restoration initiatives in the coastal zone over the coming year, including the development of Ecological Restoration Plans (ERPs) to guide restoration activities and further coastal restoration planting across a number of Council reserves. Watch this space!



Nick from Kūmānu calibrating traps before they are set to ensure they are the correct sensitivity to trigger when heavier predator like ferret walks in the trap



Cid and Nick from Kūmānu talk to Wakapuaka sandflats trapping volunteers on inaugural Wakapuaka sandflats trap check on 11 June 2022