
One step closer to a Predator Free Rakiura

The long-held vision of restoring Rakiura as a haven for thriving native taonga is one step closer. Removing introduced predators will further enhance the mauri ora of Rakiura, supporting healthier people and the local economy.



Rakiura, Stewart Island - Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu

WE'RE NOW PLANNING THE FIRST STAGE OF OPERATIONAL WORK

Predator Free Rakiura is a challenging project. Predator elimination on an island this big will need to be tackled in stages, with each step informing the design of the next.

The first stage is expected to begin with a ~10,000ha block (10km x 10km) at the southern end of Rakiura. This stage will trial tools and techniques to learn what will be required to scale up the removal of rats, possums, feral cats and hedgehogs across the island. We're looking to begin removing predators from autumn 2025.

ZIP ENGAGED TO LEAD OPERATIONS

Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) has been engaged to lead the planning and delivery of the Predator Free Rakiura project.

The design of operational work to remove predators will be developed alongside iwi, with input from the Rakiura community and other interested parties.

ZIP is a non-profit organisation with a proven track record of developing and delivering predator elimination at the scale required for this project. Te Puka Rakiura Trust (TPRT) and DOC will continue working closely with ZIP as the project transitions to this new operating model.

FINDING THE BEST WAY

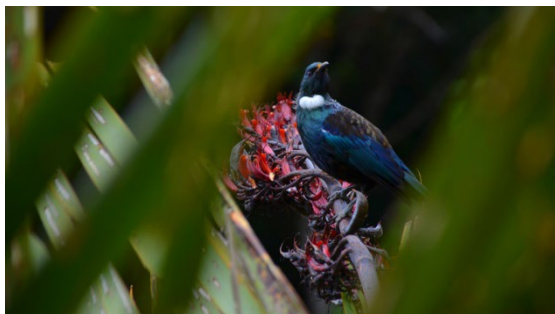
Achieving a predator-free Rakiura will require finding the combination of tools and techniques that gets the work done while protecting the special qualities of Rakiura.



Harlequin Gecko, Tin Range - Ty Conner & Mike Douglass

In a landscape of this size and ruggedness, aerial 1080 will be a necessary tool. ZIP and DOC are working with Rakiura Hunter Camps Charitable Trust, NZ Deerstalkers Association, and Game Animal Council to understand and minimise disruption to deer hunting opportunities during predator elimination work. Deer are not a target species for Predator Free Rakiura.

Ground-based tools, like traps and bait stations, will be used in and around places where people live, including around Oban.



Tui, Stewart Island - Nir Ketraru

COMMUNITY INPUT REMAINS CRUCIAL

We will need advice and guidance, including from iwi, the Predator Free Rakiura Engagement and Advisory Group (EAG), hunting and aquaculture interests, and the local community, around the approach. This input will be critical to designing the elimination work programme.

Discussions have begun with some of these parties, seeking input in the early stages of planning. The community can expect to keep hearing from ZIP as they develop and refine their thinking.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

There's a lot of planning, design, and preparation required before operational work can begin next year. ZIP's mission for the next six months is to connect with communities to build a knowledge base of local context that will inform the initial elimination approach.

Head to www.predatorfreerakiura.org.nz for more information and regular updates.

Contact Predator Free Rakiura with any questions: info@predatorfreerakiura.org.nz

