



# Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust Newsletter October 2017

## Braided River Project:

RDWT is delighted to announce that we have raised enough money to begin predator control in the braided sections of the Dart and Rees rivers. The braided river birds are just as vulnerable as the forest birds and we are lucky to still have black fronted terns, black billed gulls, wrybills and banded dotterels breeding on our riverbeds. Protection from stoats and rats will improve their breeding success. The red lines on the map give you an idea of where the traps will be located

RDWT is very grateful to all the local landowners who have agreed to have traps located on their property.

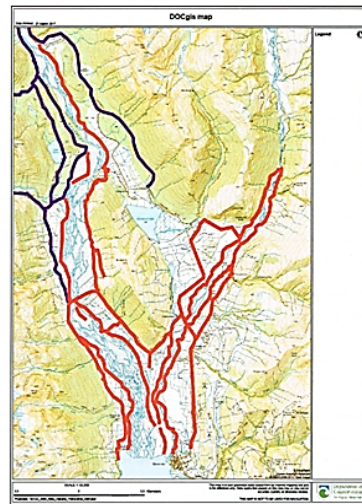


Figure 1 Overview of the existing nearby DOC trap network (purple) and the proposed new kill trap network (red).

## Contractor:

We are very pleased to have employed Russell Varcoe as the contractor to make and install 601 traps for the Braided River Project. The traps are targeting stoats and rats which have a serious impact on the nesting success of the riverbed birds.

Rusty will be working with local landowners to find the best location for the traplines and traps will be placed along the road verges.

## Bats:



Long Tail Bat

November is bat monitoring month. We do this on a clear and warm night walking road transects with a bat detector box which picks up the bats' echo location signals.

It's a great way to spend the evening as you get a new appreciation of the landscape as dusk falls and every now and then, as a bat flies overhead, the detector box sounds like a helicopter is landing!

## Population Survey:



Black Fronted Tern

We are looking forward to the summer with our initial river bird survey happening in early November. This will be a baseline population survey for the Braided River Project and as it is repeated each year, we will hopefully see an increase in bird numbers.

The river birds arrived back from coastal locations in August and will be busy establishing colonies and feeding up in preparation to breed during the next few months. Most of these birds nest on the river stones and are very hard to distinguish as they disguise themselves in their surroundings. You soon know if you are on the riverbed and disturb them as they will take flight and attempt to scare you from their territory.

**Please take care on the rivers at this time and keep dogs and vehicles away from the birds.**

## Funding:

RDWT is very grateful to Central Lakes Trust, Real Journeys, Otago Regional Council, Otago Community Trust and Greenwood Environmental Trust for significant financial contributions towards this project.

## Sylvan Trapline:

RDWT trustees are undertaking monthly checks of the Sylvan trapline for DOC. This line goes from the Lake Sylvan carpark to the mouth of the Rockburn and is a good indication of what is happening elsewhere in the forest. Rat numbers were high during winter but have dropped back now with DOC's Battle for the Birds project completed.



Trap checking at Sylvan

## Eiji:

Eiji Kitai has been hut warden on the Greenstone for many years and has decided to raise money for RDWT whilst walking the length of New Zealand on the Te Araroa Trail. There is a great article on his huge undertaking in the ODT. [www.odt.co.nz/regions/queenstown/hut-warden-heard-about-te-araroa-trail-so-doing-it](http://www.odt.co.nz/regions/queenstown/hut-warden-heard-about-te-araroa-trail-so-doing-it)



Eiji on 90 Mile Beach

## Jack Macbeth:

Jack is making a great contribution to local predator control even though he is still at Glenorchy Primary School. He has got 20 traps and has spent the winter catching possums and rats around Glenorchy and the head of the lake. Thanks Jack.

## Volunteer Opportunities:

If you would like to help out with either the bat monitoring (some warm evenings in November) or the braided river bird survey (6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> November, identification skills required) please get in touch with Amanda (442 9942) or Helen (4412221).

