

# TWO YEARS OF RAT CONTROL AND COUNTING

📍 Karori, Wellington

📅 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, 2015



Goodnature A24

## Summary

John lives on a 516 square metre property in Karori with an overgrown section to the rear and a neglected bush reserve across the road. Motivated by a desire to both protect the returning native birds that visit the property and save his puka tree from damage, John set out to control rats.

Two years ago he purchased a Goodnature A24 trap and had success putting a stop to the puka tree rat damage and occasionally would see rats dead beneath the trap. In March this year however, rats re-appeared in greater numbers and after relocating his A24 to find the right spot to trap, John has tallied 21 dead in 29 days. John's now considering establishing a network of traps in the neglected bush reserve across the road to help protect both his property and the native birds.

## John's story

**"We love the native birds that visit our property, and I have always been pretty keen to destroy introduced predators."**

There is a strip of bush between our street and Ian Galloway Park. Because it is not a formal reserve, it is not maintained and is used as a dumping ground by local gardeners and others from further afield. We've seen rats there before. Our property is 516 square metres. We have an overgrown section on our rear boundary, and a bush reserve across the road from our front boundary. We are bordered on both sides by sections with houses and lots of trees. We got our Goodnature A24 around two years ago when our puka tree was being destroyed by rats. I had initially thought the destruction was due to possums, but when I phoned the Wellington Regional Council to find out where I could get a Timms Trap, the guy I talked to told me the damage I was describing was typical of rats, which apparently favour pukas.

## Why John chose Goodnature

We had read about Goodnature self-resetting traps, and really liked the sound of them. The thought of waking up to find a pile of rats dead at the foot of the puka was irresistible. I had no reservations whatsoever about trapping, or about using Goodnature traps. They struck me as a humane and fantastic way of destroying pests.

## What happened?

We set the Goodnature A24 trap on the trunk according to the instructions and killed three ship rats in quick succession. The predation on the puka ceased and it has grown back very well.

After a time we shifted the trap to another point on the property where we thought it was likely there were rodents as there is a walnut tree right there. It had no obvious success so I moved the trap again. It hadn't occurred to me that any rats killed near the walnut may have been scavenged.

I later re-installed it near the walnut tree site where it quickly killed a mouse and two nights later a rat. The rat was half-eaten by morning. That may account for us assuming the trap wasn't killing anything when we had it set there previously - as I had no way of counting strikes... We shifted the trap again to a site near our compost bins where we thought it likely there were rodents. Once again this site didn't seem to be catching anything.

In March, our neighbours noticed rats running along their boundary fence, so I got all enthusiastic to catch rats again. I installed a new CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and lure in the trap.

Then the action started happening. We got a rat, a mouse and hedgehog that night. Over a 6-week period, we killed 16 rats (all ship rats), 5 mice and that one hapless hedgehog. It's been great, but slightly frightening, as it has given us a sense of the density of the local rodent population... We haven't got a digital counter, but if we did, we'd also be adding the scavenged kills to the tally we're seeing each morning.



John in his Karori garden.



Refreshing the lure for his Goodnature A24.





## The plan for the future

Since we are across the road from a neglected bush reserve, we're considering buying another A24 and placing it over there. I'm also keen to use the Rodent Detector Cards over there to see which pests are in the area, and to find a good spot to set the trap.

## John's final comments

While we had our doubts about the A24's efficacy when we first got it, those doubts have vanished (probably because we have got the location and situation right). It's terrific technology, and Goodnature deserves congratulations on it.



## About using Goodnature A24 Traps

John got to see 21 dead pests, but you don't often get to see everything that gets killed. Because the trap automatically clears the killed pests, they are easily scavenged by other predators in the neighbourhood. In a recent study of Goodnature A24's, researcher Dr Rachael Abbott found that more than half of the kills were scavenged by other predators within 3 days.

### Tips for success:

- Use Goodnature Rodent Detectors to target the best place to put your traps
- Refresh the lure at least once a month to keep your traps attractive
- Replace the gas and lure every 6 months so that your traps always have the ability to strike



**Robbie van Dam**

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