

Inanga habitat

How to monitor pest activity

Small mammal pests can compromise native habitats and dramatically reduce native species populations. This is true for inanga – pests such as mice, rats and hedgehogs consider inanga eggs a tasty treat, especially when found in their thousands on riverbanks.

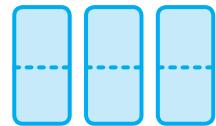
Before pest management/trapping can take place, it is important to understand which pests you have present, and what areas pests are visiting more frequently. This way you'll be able to use the best management/trapping method for the pests you actually have, and use them in the most effective locations – saving time and money. Even if you aren't planning on implementing a pest control programme in the near future, it's a great idea to know what is going on in your local inanga spawning area.

Implementing a pest monitoring programme allows the collection of data and generates awareness of the presence of pests in your local environment. (You should continue to monitor for pests during your management/trapping programme to assess its effectiveness.)

There are a number of methods for monitoring small mammal pest activity, but we recommend the use of pest detector chew cards as a non-invasive way to start the process. The good thing about this method is that it is simple, inexpensive and can be done by school groups, kindy kids, community groups or families. The detector cards work by using a non-toxic edible lure inside the card that the pests nibble on, leaving behind identifiable chew marks.*



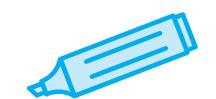
Installation equipment needed:



pest detector cards



1x wooden stake per detector card site



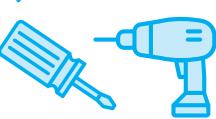
permanent marker



mallet (for hammering in wooden stakes)



screws



screwdriver/drill

To install... Choose where to put your detector cards in/around the inanga spawning habitat. Make sure you check for hazards. (Depending on funds/time, you are better off choosing fewer sites, then monitoring these over time to get a good representative sample of what's foraging in the area.)

Follow the instructions provided with your detector cards. Generally this involves folding the card in half so the lure bait inside starts to squeeze out. Screw it to the wooden stake, then hammer the stake firmly into the ground in your chosen spot. (Note the final distance of the card above the ground. It's usually suggested to be about 8 cm so pests can reach.)

If you are doing a few locations, use the permanent marker to write a site number on the stake.

We suggest you leave each card out for 3–7 days, then check it and replace with a fresh one. (See full monitoring instructions over page.)

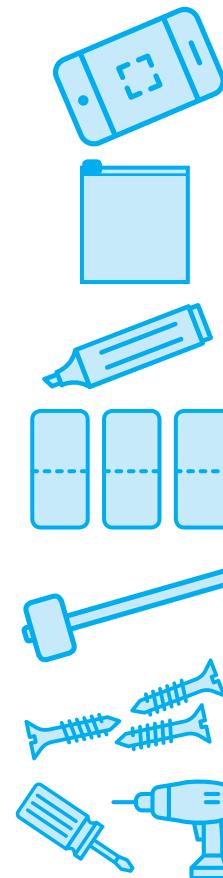
* Other small mammal pest monitoring methods include: tracking tunnels, identifying poo pellets, spotlighting and motion detector cameras. See the 'Further Reading & Resources' over the page for supplier suggestions.

If you are interested in getting a good representation of the pests around your local inanga habitat we suggest you monitor throughout the spawning season.

MONITORING METHOD

- Step 1.** On arriving at the site, check your surroundings for any hazards.
- Step 2.** Take a photo of the detector card insitu on the stake. Be sure to note the photo number/time photo taken down so that you can link it back to the site when you get back. Make sure the photo is close up, but ensure that the writing on the wooden stake is in the photo as well as this tells you what site number it is.
- Step 3.** Have a close look at the detector card before removing it from the stake. Has it been chewed/eaten? If there were no markings, was there still lure mix hanging out the bottom?
- Step 4.** Remove the pest detector card from the stake using your screwdriver/drill. If the card has been chewed then also look for the bitten off bits and collect those as well.
- Step 5.** Place your card and any chewed pieces into the plastic bag. Use your permanent marker to write the site/date on the bag.
- Step 6.** Replace the pest detector card with a fresh one. Screw it back into the same hole if able.
- Step 7.** Identify your local pests by comparing your chew-marked detector cards with the identification chart supplied by your card manufacturer.
- Step 8.** Record your observations if you are monitoring a number of sites for a few rounds of detector cards then. Keep your pest card/s in their plastic bag for future reference and comparison.
- Step 9.** Repeat for each round of monitoring.

Monitoring equipment needed:



camera (to photograph used detector card on stake, with site number in photo, if doing more than one round of monitoring)

ziplock/snaplock plastic bag (to store used pest detector cards in)

permanent marker

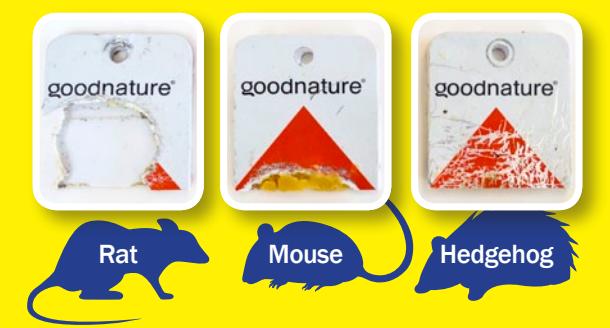
replacement pest detector cards (if doing more than one round of monitoring)

mallet (for hammering stakes back in if required)

replacement screws incase needed

screwdriver/drill

Example of pest nibble identifications



FURTHER READING & RESOURCES:

- www.goodnature.co.nz/products/accessories
- www.traps.co.nz/chew-card-unloaded
- www.connovation.co.nz/pest-monitoring
- www.eosecology.co.nz/files/2016_Whakalnaka_PestMonitoring_ReportCard.pdf

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