Whio/blue duck © Ruth Bollongino/Fern Photos

Key facts about pest control in the Abel Tasman National Park

As part of the work to restore and preserve the Abel Tasman National Park's rich wildlife, Project Janszoon and the Department of Conservation are planning aerial pest control this winter/ spring to protect native species from high rat and possum numbers.

This pest control operation will help the recovery of native species and ecosystem restoration. It is part of a Parkwide pest management programme that includes an extensive trapping network.

Why are we controlling pests in the Abel Tasman?

Project Janszoon and DOC have been controlling rats and other predators in the Abel Tasman since 2012, with the goal of protecting existing native species and reintroducing taonga species that have been lost. This work has achieved exciting results for our native species, with populations of re-introduced kākā, whio/blue duck and pāteke/brown teal now breeding in the Park and significant increases in the number and distribution of ratsensitive forest birds recorded. You can find out more about these gains here.

Alongside an extensive trapping network that covers over 90% of the park, aerial predator control is occasionally used when rat numbers reach levels that threaten our native wildlife. Aerial predator control was last used in 2023 in the Park. While rat numbers across most of this area have generally remained low, recent monitoring of predator numbers shows rat numbers increasing in some areas of the Park, particularly at lower elevations. This data indicates the need for a targeted winter 2025 aerial control operation to protect the gains that have been achieved.

Aerial pest control is highly effective and this operation will focus on areas where rat numbers are highest and most likely to have a significant negative impact on the gains that have been made to date, especially in the lowland areas where establishing populations of toutouwai/robin and kākā are most vulnerable.

Toutouwai/robin © Ruth Bollongino/Fern Photos

The operation proposed for July/August 2025 also includes the use of Aerial 1080 in the northern part of the park (area shown in the map at the end of this fact sheet). This is targeted at brushtail possum control. Monitoring has shown that the possum numbers are growing in the northern part of the park and Project Janszoon proposes including this area so possum

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawbai

numbers are kept to a minimum to enhance the park's recovery, specifically to protect the coastal rainforest where species such as Ratā (Metrosideros *robusta*) are present


Kākā ©Ruth Bollongino/Fern Photo

What is happening?

We propose to aerially apply cereal baits containing biodegradable sodium fluoroacetate (1080) pesticide over approximately 16,000 ha in the Abel Tasman National Park, where we know predator numbers are increasing to a level where they will threaten our native species.

Helicopters will use Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology to achieve even coverage of bait. It also enables pilots to be sure of boundaries.

Proposed timeframe - Winter 2025

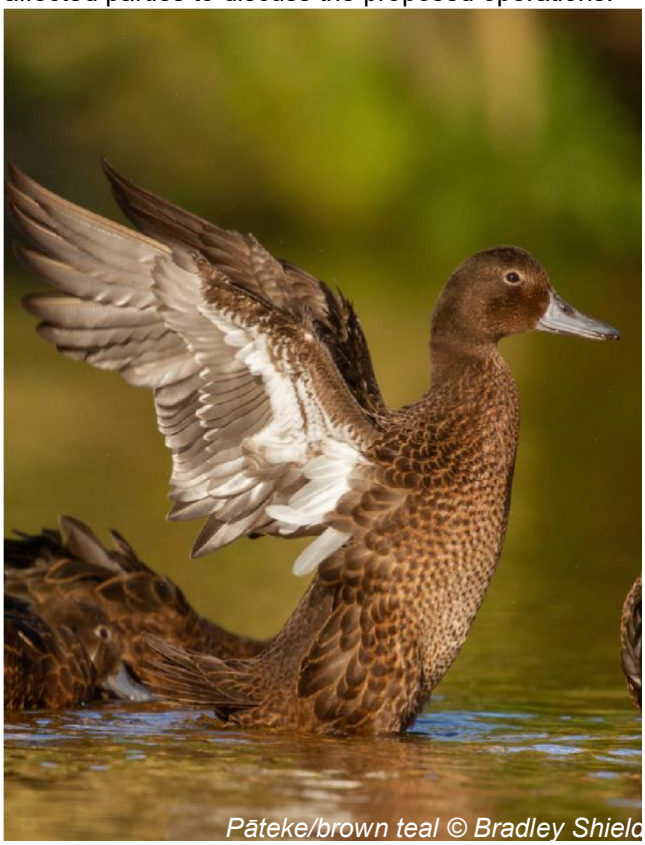
We are planning for the aerial application of toxic bait to commence around mid-July, 2025, preceded by the aerial application of non-toxic prefeed bait. The precise timing of each stage of the operation will be determined by periods of favourable weather, and it may well run in to mid-August.

Have your say

Vector Free Marlborough (VFM) has been engaged by Project Janszoon to help manage its proposed 2025 Abel Tasman predator control operation.

VFM will consult with key stakeholders including adjacent landowners for predator control operations where 1080 is the proposed method. We aim to understand people's views and answer any questions they may have.

VFML staff will contact adjacent landowners and other affected parties to discuss the proposed operations.


Pāteke/brown teal © Bradley Shield

As part of this consultation process, we will consider what we can do to mitigate any effects.

Ahead of landowner and wider community consultation taking place, representatives from Project Janszoon will consult with tāngata whenua for the area to provide information about the proposed operation and to ensure that affected iwi and hapū have the opportunity to communicate their views. We want to understand how this operation impacts you as iwi/hapu and your relationships with Te Taiao, wai Maori and wahi tapu

Key facts about 1080

Sodium fluoroacetate (1080) is a biodegradable toxin that is used to control rats, stoats and possums on public conservation land.

Its active ingredient, fluoroacetate, is found in poisonous plants in Australia, Africa and Brazil. It is also found at lower levels in our native plants.

1080 has been extensively researched and it is proven to effectively protect native wildlife populations. 1080 bait is broken down naturally in the environment by microorganisms, fungi and plants into harmless compounds and does not leave permanent residues in soil, water, plants or animals.

Operations begin with the distribution of pre-feed nontoxic bait to prepare possums/rodents to eat the toxic bait that will be applied afterwards.

Managing risk

1080 is poisonous to humans, domestic and game animals. In areas where the toxin has been applied, dogs are highly at risk until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated. This takes four to eight months or longer. Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals.

Risks can be eliminated by following the guidelines below: **DO NOT** touch bait

WATCH children at all times

DO NOT EAT animals from this area or within the buffer zone outside the treatment boundary. Poison baits or carcasses are **DEADLY to DOGS.**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. These signs indicate pesticide residues may be still present in baits and poisoned carcasses. When signs are removed this means you can resume normal activities in the area. Always report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

If you suspect poisoning, please contact:

- Your local doctor or hospital
- The National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 or dial 111
- Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals.

Whio/blue duck ©Ruth Bollongino/Fern Photo

For more information

Please contact: **Vector Free Marlborough Limited**

Ph: 0508 548 008

Email: vfm.communication-nz@rentokil-initial.com

Website: www.vectorfree.co.nz

More information about DOC's National Predator Control Programme is available on our website: doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-controlprogramme

Why we use 1080 to control introduced predators: doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/methodsofcontrol/1080

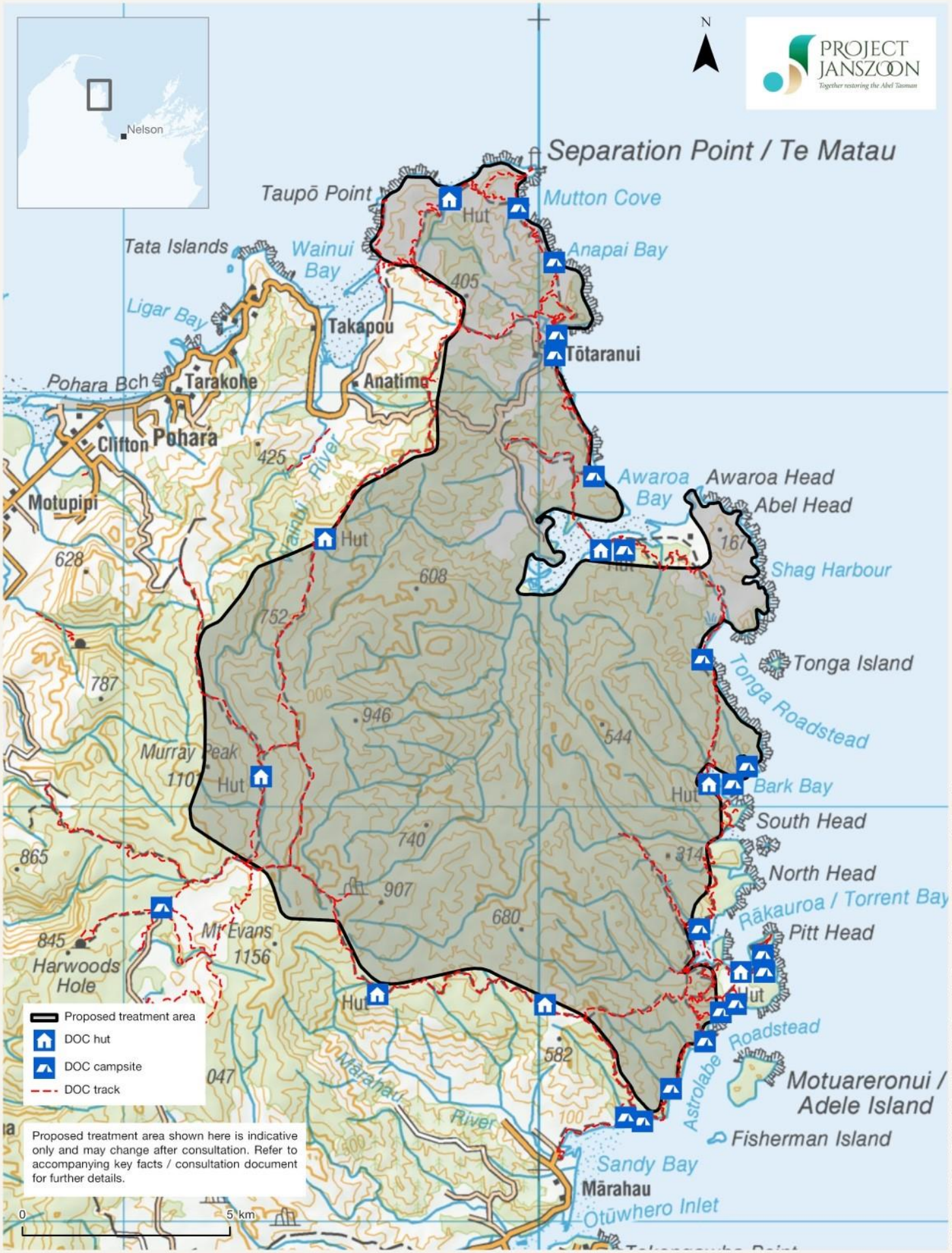
Learn more about Predator Free 2050 doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predatorfree-2050

Map of proposed treatment area within the Abel Tasman National Park

The map on the next page shows the proposed predator control area covering approx. 16,000 hectares in the Abel Tasman National Park.

PROJECT JANSZOON

Together restoring the Abel Tasman



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Abel Tasman

Aerial Predator Control 2025

Proposed treatment area: *16,089 ha*

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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