



OPBG Newsletter

December 2018

Working Towards a Predator Free Peninsula since 2008

Reflections on 2018

Reflection upon the activities throughout 2018 is a great reminder of the enormous effort from volunteers and the community. Much has been achieved this year thanks to the increase in community engagement and volunteer participation. Here's a summary of some of the things we have done this year...

In April, the Guardians of the Otago Peninsula group was established. Permanent traplines were formed in Sector 5 which are monitored and managed by the Guardians.



This group is pivotal in ensuring that possum activity is controlled to prevent reinvasion onto the broader peninsula. They have achieved much in a very short period.

This year we found the need to ensure that our volunteers and wider community are safe in handling pest traps so that they can undertake their work confidently and safely.



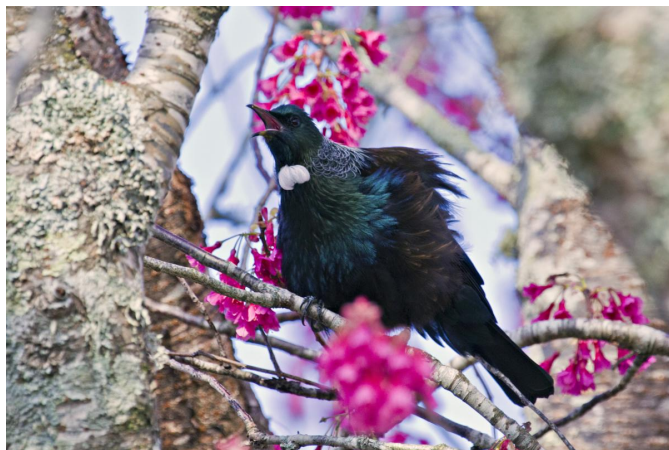
A trap training session was held for the Guardians plus two well-attended trapping workshops.



Our tracks are vital in our operations so this year we undertook a series of volunteer days cutting and maintaining tracks. We had a variety of organisations participate; crews from the University, local businesses and of course, regular outings with our reliable and hardworking OPBG track cutting volunteers. Without these tracks, we would not be able to achieve our goals. By spring our possum monitoring was in force. Using chew cards, we managed to identify some hotspot areas and, supported by our operations team, removed several more possums.



At the beginning of spring our second **Bird Call Workshop** was hosted by former OPBG Chair, Rod Morris. His engaging workshop sought to prepare us for the Bird Monitoring season by helping us to identify a variety of birds through listening to their unique calls. Thanks to Rod and the Portobello Marine Centre for hosting another great event.



OPBG Activities & Events 2019

2019 diaries fill up quickly, so we thought we'd put together a few dates over the summer months for volunteer activities.

Date	Time	Location	Activity
Tues 15 Jan	9am – 4pm	Te Rauone	Track Cutting
Thurs 17 Jan	9am – 4pm	Sandymount	Track Cutting
Tues 22 Jan	9am – 4pm	Allan's Beach / Okia Reserve	Possum Monitoring
Thurs 24Jan	9am – 4pm	Te Rauone	Track Clearing
Thurs 31Jan	9am – 4pm	Sandymount	Track Clearing
Tues 5 Feb	9am – 4pm	Allan's Beach / Okia	Possum Trapping (if required)
Thurs 21Feb	10am – 2pm	University	Orientation Week – OPBG expo stand volunteers required!

We also have many other volunteer activities on the go, so if you are keen on lending a hand, contact us at volunteers@opbg.nz

Predator Free Dunedin Launch

Predator Free Dunedin's official launch took place in early October with an event held at the Otago Museum, where Conservation Minister Hon. Eugenie Sage announced the Predator Free 2050 funding for this ambitious project. The first project in the South Island to receive funding it will be used to achieve predator-free status over an area 31,000 hectares. The funding will contribute to the five-year, \$15 million Predator Free Dunedin project. OPBG, as one of the delivery partners, has laid a solid foundation with a total of over 17,000 possums removed from the Peninsula. Please check out the new Predator Free Dunedin and Predator Free 2050 websites at:

<https://predatorfreedunedin.org.nz> and <https://pf2050.co.nz>

and also take a look at the introductory video clip that was produced for the launch:

<https://youtu.be/kTQGMxyAhms>



Conservation Week – OPBG Trapping Workshop



As part of Conservation week in September OPBG held another trapping workshop aimed at our Sector 5 residents and run by OPBG's Guardians group. It was held at the Grants Braes Football Club in Tomahawk and turned out to be a well-attended event.

Volunteer Coordinator Kate Tanner and OPBG Trustees Brendon Cross and Marita Eisenlohr all set up for our residents

Public Information Meeting

Coming to the end of an eventful year OPBG held a Public Information Meeting at the Macandrew Bay Hall at the end of October, which gave our residents the opportunity to catch up with Trustees and staff and get the latest first-hand information on progress and further plans. It also happened to be the



10-year anniversary of the first members of the Trust coming together to embark on the ambitious project of bringing back the birds and enhancing the biodiversity of our beautiful Peninsula. We felt that warranted a birthday cake, which was expertly decorated by one of our Guardians, and a big Thank You to Kay for an expert job.

Former and current Trustees: (from left) Rod Morris, Ally Campbell, Brendon Cross, Moira Parker, Hoani Langsbury, Laurie White, Marita Eisenlohr, Bev Dickson, Dave Chalmers



Left: Guardians talking about their possum experiences
Right: Project Manager Ursula and Operations Manager Bruce discussing traps

A small get-together

Recently we got together with some of the Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust Staff and Trustees at their nursery. As OPBG bases its operations from the nursery we thought we would share some food as a thank you to the YEPT for supporting us over the years! The weather was on our side and together we celebrated an early birthday for Louise with some divine deserts. We also congratulated Sol (OPBG Operations Assistant) and Emma Wogan on the safe arrival of their daughter Frankie Lou Raynbird Wogan, who we all got to meet for the first time.





Left: Emma and Sol with Kate holding the baby!!

Operations Update

The OPBG Operations team is still in full swing trying to get to those elusive possums in hard to get to places. Habitat hotspots are being targeted at Boulder Beach and surrounding cliffs, Okia Flats, many of the Peninsula tracks, including the steep and slippery gullies and bush corridors and the Sector 5 buffer line.

The Cumulative Grand Total as of 31st October 2018 comes to 17,075 possums.

We continue to call on all of you to report any possums that you have trapped, seen or heard and we now have a dedicated new email – still going to Brenda as usual though – so please start using this from now on to report your catches and sightings:

NEED TO REPORT A POSSUM DEAD OR ALIVE?

**Contact Brenda Cameron at:
possums@opbg.nz**

This comes as part of our new website development, which we will present to you in the New Year.

WATCH THIS SPACE

Snippets!

A couple of interesting things you can come across...(left) often you can identify animal presence by the droppings that they leave. Although these had the right shape, but we had never seen them in these colours before. It was at the height of the pine pollen season and that was the main food source for the possums in that area...and (right) possums do come in a wide range of colours as well, but you don't come across an albino very often.



Thank You to our sponsors during the year

A big Thank you for the donations and grants that we have received during the year, many of which are vital for us to be able to cover costs and overheads that are so often excluded from the funding available to us.

Lotteries Environment & Heritage	\$55,000
City Forest	\$ 5,000
Firewood sales	\$ 7,000
Elm Wildlife	\$ 1,000
Ace Tutor	\$ 750
Hilton Ratz	\$ 200

OPBG History Project

Moira Parker, former OPBG Trustee and still very engaged and looking after the birds and chewcards and traps, has been working on a History Project of the OPBG, collating all the information from the early years and also has an extensive collection of newspaper articles in the form of a scrapbook. We are looking for a person with access to a scanner, who could scan these articles into an electronic version for us to incorporate into our archives.

Please let us know if you are interested to take this on and contact Marita on secretary@opbg.nz

2019 OPBG Calendar

Our 2019 OPBG Calendar is for sale at the usual Peninsula and City outlets and we would like to thank our generous sponsors for the support to again being able to showcase our beautiful Otago Peninsula. They make great presents to send to family and friends and the sale is an important part of our ongoing fundraising efforts.



We would like to wish everybody a very Happy Christmas and a good start to the New Year