

It's great to know people in our community are passionate about predator control! We had an awesome turnout to our first Predator Management for Biodiversity workshop held at Waiwhare Community Centre last Thursday.

The workshop started with an educational presentation from Clare Ryan (Vet Services Hawke's Bay) about the devastating disease of Toxoplasmosis, which causes abortions in sheep and can infect humans also!

Key messages from Clare's presentation:

- Cats are a definite host and are essential to the lifecycle
- Cats become infected from eating rats and birds
- The source of infection for sheep is cat faeces on grazing pasture
- Domestic cats cannot be protected from transmitting the disease
- Keep on top of rat trapping to reduce risk of cats eating them and becoming infected

Next we had predator control and trapping guru's Dan Baker from Tuna Nui and Tipene Cottrell from Te Ngahere talk to us about their years of experience in the predator control space. They talked about:

- cat, possum, stoat and ferret behaviours
- what smells different species are attracted to
- where to position traps for best success depending on the target species

Predator control doesn't have to be expensive! It doesn't matter how many traps you have set around the place, the most important thing is positioning, scenting, patience, and right trap – right place.

We wrapped up the session with different trap demonstrations and were able to give away 10 free traps!

Cage traps are recommended for people worried about accidentally trapping the neighbour's cat or untargeted species – just remember to check them every day! These can be purchased from Gun City - <https://www.guncity.com/outdoor-outfitters-possum-trap-cage-316535>

For cost effective kill traps, the Steve Allen SA2 or DOC250 are highly recommended. These need to be reset in order to continue trapping more predators. These and many other traps can be purchased from Good Wood - <https://goodwood.nz/collections/products-for-the-wild>

Then we have the top of the range AT220 which self-resets and last 4 – 6 months before the battery needs recharging or lure needs refilling! Check them out at NZ Auto Traps - <https://nzautotraps.com/products/at220-autotrap>

If you missed this workshop but are keen to learn more, then keep an eye out for communications around our next predator control workshop to be scheduled soon!