



MUSTELID/CAT BAITS (@ July 2012)

The Friends of Rotoiti are now using a preserved meat 'polymer' bait in all stoat traps, as a change from hens eggs. These solid block baits are available from Trappers Cyanide Ltd www.traps.co.nz.

This change follows a 27 month trial carried out by FOR members on behalf of the Department of Conservation along the Lakeside Track (known locally as the Whisky Falls line). This trap line consists of 81 boxes containing DOC 200 traps spaced at 100m intervals.

Interested readers should refer to the DOC publication: Steffens K. 2011. A comparison of long-life stoat baits at Lake Rotoiti, Nelson Lakes National Park. A Friends of Rotoiti (FOR) Project.

The polymer bait was found to be as effective as fresh white hens eggs (now no longer locally available in bulk) at attracting stoats but more effective at attracting rats.

Advantages :

- Comparable cost to eggs but can be cut in half without reducing effectiveness.
- Easier to handle in the field (not fragile and are compact to carry).
- Long storage life (6 months in a freezer).
- Non-toxic.
- Not fly blown.
- Last 4 – 6 weeks in the field (FOR members have recorded personal captures up to 16 weeks).
- Does not soften in wet conditions.
- Doesn't break when the trap goes off (as the eggs do).
- Not affected by temperature extremes (eggs freeze and break here in the winter).
- Can be attached by a single nail or screw.

Disadvantages :

- Goes mouldy in damp conditions (does not detract from effectiveness).
- Attractive to mice (can be mitigated by securing to screw in the box top).
- Is very attractive to rats which may be an issue where stoats are the primary target species.
- Introduced wasps may nibble the edges, but haven't been a major problem.

Change of recipe :

Following the original trial the manufacturer has changed the bait composition to fish and the name to Mustelid and Cat Bait. This appears to have made the bait more attractive to rats and hedgehogs and unfortunately, wasps (safety issue). The new bait also appears to be an effective cat lure when used in live capture cages.

For further information, contact:

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Marg Hunter demonstrates the position of the screw in the top of the hinged DOC200 box to attach the polymer bait. This keeps the bait out of reach for mice.

