

Carlyle Valley Trapping Report June 2019

On Saturday 22 June three volunteers, Brent, Tim and myself visited the valley for a three day trip.

The DOC200 traps had the calibration checked to a trip weight of 80grams. They were rebaited with jerky and relocated within 2 metres of their original position.

The sentinel possum traps were checked, cleared and had the bite block replaced with ones which had fresh aniseed lure applied. Did not expect so many possums to be caught (29) hence it took longer than planned and finished with a 5pm hut arrival.

Next morning Tim and Brent travelled up the valley checking and rebaiting all of the traps as they went. They carried two Sentinel possum traps with them and set them up at the end of the trap line. More of the DOC200 traps had two wooden feet nailed to their bottoms as a way of keeping the inside drier. Again this day took longer than we thought as the boys had to manually trigger and reset correctly all of the possum traps.

Of the entire DOC200 traps in the valley twelve had to have a slight calibration adjustment and three need to have further attention.

At the hut two of the three posters were put up. Chicken wire was fastened to the step. Grit from the river was spread over the dugout steps and the grass slope to prevent slips when iced over.

A new possum line running from behind the hut to the end of the swamp clearing was set up. The west bunk room had the holes in the wall and ceiling filled with Polyfilla and No More gaps. The wrecked remains of what looked like a gun rack was removed from the wall.

Options for the loop track were explored for above the hut. At this stage the plan is to keep the line that Daniel and Will put in pretty much the same but extending it another 800 metres then cross over the river and return to the hut down that side. A stand of Totara was found when exploring.

On Monday the traps were checked on the way out of the forest. Thirteen possums were caught overnight. Most of the dead possums had been chewed on while hanging in the traps. Going to be researching what was doing this. To help with this a trail camera was set up on one of the possum traps.

There was an issue this trip with the data collection method for this time of year. The paper method got soggy very quickly and using the cell phone to record proved very difficult with wet gloves. The new boys came up with brilliant new method for collecting data which was to use waterproof paper.

Possums killed came to forty two and the rat kill came to nine. Didn't kill any stoats or hedgehogs on this trip. As a comparison this time last year there were two stoats, two rats and two hedgehogs killed. The possums killed this trip equals the amount killed in the last eight months!!!

The next visit to the Valley is Friday 19th to Monday 22nd of July 2019.

