

Pomona Island Charitable Trust

Annual Report 2025/2026



Beach debris following high lake levels Spring 2025. Photo: Paul King

Significant Events 2025/2026

Mouse control operation continues on Rona Island using brodifacoum in bait stations

Successful 1080 operation in bait stations on Pomona Island in November 2025 in preparation for predicted beech mast over summer 2025/26

DOC Haast tokoeka kiwi survey to ascertain population on Pomona in May 2025.

Three Haast tokoeka released on Rona but removed due to heightened stoat risk.

RealNZ partnership continues with donations and two trapping days for RealNZ employees.

3 young kiwis placed on Rona in March 2026 currently being tracked by the Trust.

Introduction

This Annual report records the activities of the Pomona Island Charitable Trust over the financial year from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

Organisation

Meetings were held in April, June and December 2025

The AGM was held in June 2025.

At the AGM in June 2025:

John Whitehead was re-elected as Chair.

Paul King was re-elected as Secretary

Fraser Skinner was re-elected as Treasurer

No other change in officers occurred, therefore the make-up of the Trust at 31st March 2026 was:

John Whitehead Chair

Fraser Skinner Treasurer

Paul King Secretary

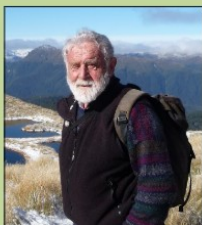
Liz Scott Trustee

Gerard Hill Trustee

Simon Marwick Trustee

Professor Sir Alan Mark remains our Patron

Pomona Island Charitable Trust Trustees 2025/2026



Professor Sir Alan Mark
Patron



John Whitehead
Chair



Simon Marwick
Trustee



Fraser Skinner
Treasurer



Liz Scott
Trustee



Paul King
Secretary



Gerard Hill
Trustee



The Trust is registered as a charitable entity under the Charities Act 2005 (CC22629). The Trust files annual returns which are available for public viewing on the Charities Services website.

We would like to thank staff in the DOC Te Anau office who have assisted the Trust this year: Lydia McLean, Jenny Rickett.

The trust liaises with DOC Haast over kiwi matters and would like to thank Heath Sinclair, Jane Tansell and Andree Hickey-Elliot for their help.

Funding

We are grateful to the following for financial support during 2025/2026 (Figures are rounded and exclude GST and are subject to confirmation when accounts are reviewed.)

Interest	\$5500
Donations	\$29302

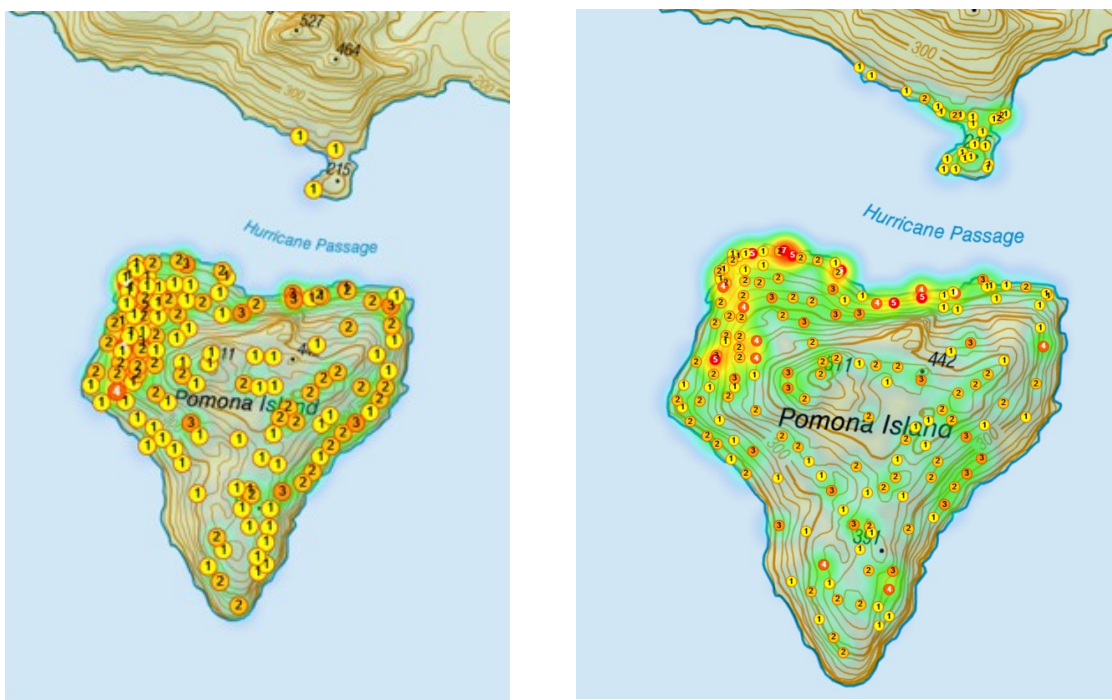
-this includes cash donations through the West Arm donation box, online donations through Giv2 QR portal, several significant donations from AAT Kings NZ tourism, through Fiordland Jet and through the partnership with RealNZ.

We are also grateful for the numerous donations received from many individuals who have decided to contribute to our project – your contributions are appreciated!

Gary Chisholm continues to fund the trap trigger detection system through generous donations.

Predator control on Pomona Island

8 trips to Pomona Island have been completed since March 2025, principally to carry out pest control and monitoring.



Rats

Between April 2025 and March 2026, 207 rats were removed from stoat traps on Pomona Island. The maps show rat catches on Pomona Island and the Pomona Mainland from April 2025 to March 2026 (left) and April 2024 to March 2025 (right) for comparison.

Both years show that rat catches are concentrated along Hurricane Passage and in the NW corner of the island. This is partly due to a higher concentration of traps in these areas.

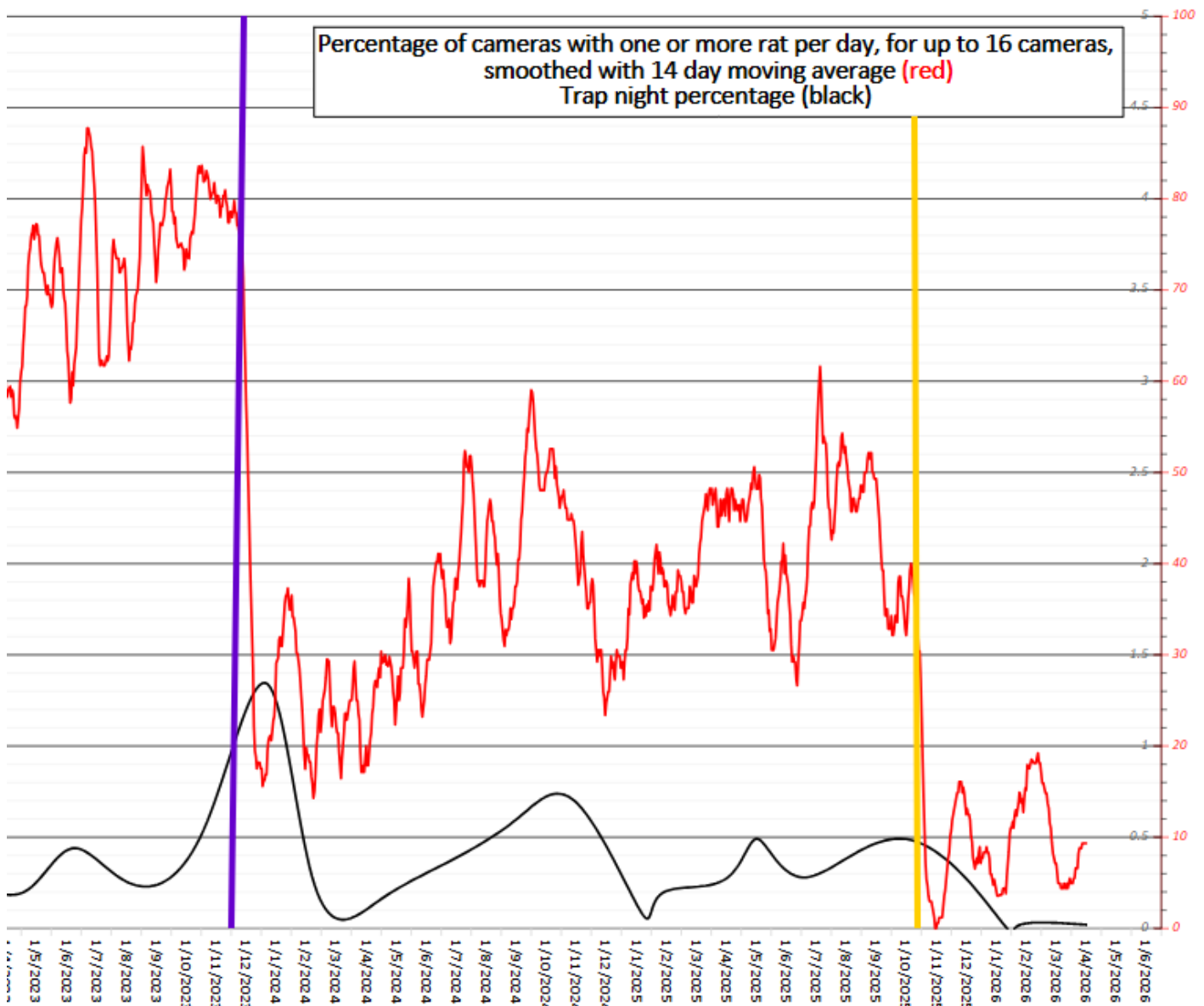
Vegetation in these areas is also more favourable to rats. On the mainland, rat catches were very low compared with the year before. See stoat data.

The graph (below) shows rat numbers since the 1080 operation in December 2023 (vertical purple line). It can be seen that rat activity (broadly related to rat numbers, red line) increased

gradually until October 2024, when numbers dropped to a low-point in December 2024. Subsequently, numbers again increased to a maximum of around around 60% (cameras indicating one or more rats per day). A successful 1080 in bait stations operation was carried out by CWAC NZ limited under contract to the Pomona Trust in October 2025 (vertical yellow line).

Rat numbers continue to be low as of May 2026.

Camera data is broadly matched by the trap-night percentages (black line).



Stoats

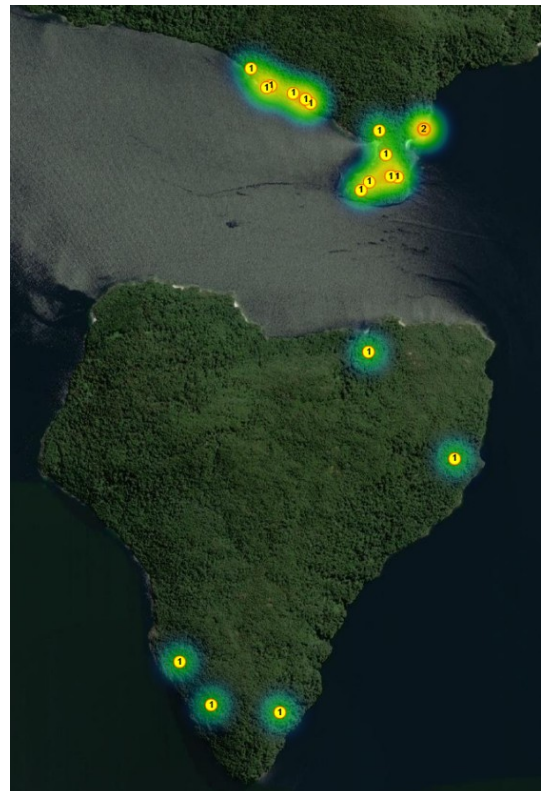
No stoats were caught in traps between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026 on Pomona Island. No stoats have been caught on Pomona Island since January 2025.

Note the contrast with the mainland, where 10 stoats were caught in the same interval.

There were 24 individual stoat sightings made across around 14 cameras in the same time interval.

There have been no further camera stoat sightings following the 1080 operation in October 2025. This is significant, as it is thought that the stoat which was present in 2025 may have succumbed to secondary poisoning after the 1080 operation.

Stoat catches on Pomona Island and the Pomona Mainland
April 2025 to March 2026 (left) and April 2024 to March 2025 (right)



Deer

No further sightings of the deer, which was present on the island during February 2025, have been made. It is thought that the deer has swum back to the mainland, as no further deer sign has been recorded since February 2025.



Photo: Paul King

Camera monitoring

Our camera network across Pomona has continued to operate well, giving a reliable measure of the rat population, together with detecting stoats. Cameras which are now in security boxes have been protected well from both kea damage and water ingress.

Trap Trigger Detection System

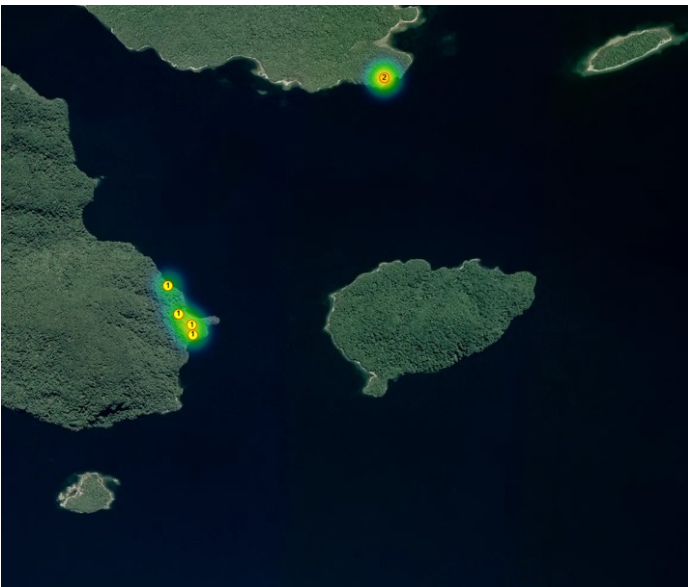
The trap trigger detection system on Pomona Island continued to be modified this year by Gary Chisholm, with help from volunteers. The 14 stoat traps with trigger systems installed now use a repeater on the mainland, together with island-based repeaters. The base station has been upgraded to work through the cell-phone network which is more reliable than the satellite system. Gary has continued to experiment with optimal placement of transmission and relay devices in the NW corner of the island. The system is also integrated with trap.nz to show current status of traps.

Pomona Mainland Traps

The Southland Trailer Yacht Squadron, led by Ross Forrester, serviced the traps to the north of Pomona Island approximately every 2-3 months. They sailed out to Hurricane Passage 4 times during the year, and caught 10 stoats and only 3 rats in the 72 traps. The very low number of rats caught is interesting and is possibly due to the number of stoats in the area. They also service the traps at Stockyard Cove, to the south of Pomona Island.



Left: Rona mainland rat catches April 2025 to March 2026. Total 15 rats.



Left: Rona mainland stoat catches April 2025 to March 2026. Total 6 stoats.

Rona Mainland traps

Rodents and mustelids are an ongoing threat to Rona.

We are fortunate therefore to have two dedicated volunteers from Manapouri (Kevin and Leslie Schwamm) who have emptied the traps on the Rona mainland around every 1-2 months.

They have removed 15 rats and 6 stoats during 6 trips to the area.

Predator control Rona

12 trips have been completed to Rona since April 2025, to undertake pest control and monitoring.

Rats

No rats have been seen on camera or caught on the island since April 2024

Mice

By April 2025, mice were again beginning to appear on gecko monitoring cards, and to be caught in traps. By June, mice were tracking at 100% across 120 tracking tunnels. Another brodifacoum operation was therefore necessary. Bait stations were again filled with two tethered blocks of Brodifacoum in October 2025. They were topped up in November and the operation was completed by December. Tracking cards collected in January 2026 confirmed that there were no mice detected and the success of the operation. At the time of writing (May 2026), mouse numbers remain very low.

The maximum possible bait take for this operation is estimated to be around 1680g. A total of around 27kg of bait was deployed over the operation, but only a small percentage (about 6%) of this entered the environment, mostly inside dead mice.

Stoats on Rona

No stoats have been seen on camera, or caught in traps, over the interval April 2025 to March 2026. However, we remain vigilant, as three Haast tokoeka chicks were released on the island in March 2026

Haast Tokoeka

Pomona

Haast Tokoeka are regularly seen on most of the camera network across Pomona Island. Various estimates of the population give up to 30 individuals. To further verify this estimate, DOC Haast sent a team to catch and record as many kiwis as possible on the island in May 2025. The DOC team caught 9 birds, banding them and putting on transmitters. Current population estimates are “low 20’s”.



Volunteer David Cary has continued to run audio monitoring of Haast Tokoeka across Pomona Island. He is using up to 18 audio moths at different locations at a time, although he has used numerous different sites over the course of the project.

There are further details and statistical analysis of his project at <https://skraak.kiwi/>



Young kiwi (left) and adult kiwi (right) at the same location on Pomona Island.

Rona

Three young Haast tokoeka were brought from the Orokonui Ecosanctuary in Dunedin and released onto Rona Island by DOC Haast staff and volunteers in March 2026. They have been periodically monitored by trust members using radio transmitters attached to the birds.



Bird Monitoring

Estimates of the health of bird populations have been made using casual observations by volunteers on both islands, bird hearings and sightings being recorded on trip reports.

Birds seen or heard - Rona	Birds seen or heard - Pomona
Bell bird	Bell bird
brown creeper	brown creeper
grey warbler	grey warbler
kakariki	
grebe	kaka
kea	kea
kereru	kereru
morepork	
rifleman	
robin	robin
shag	
tomtit	tomtit
tui	tui
falcon	
Piwakawaka	Piwakawaka
Haast tokoeka	Haast tokoeka
Long tailed cuckoo	
Canadian geese	
Paradise duck	



Health and safety

The Trust has continued with their Safety Toolbox briefings at the start of every trip to the islands. All volunteers are briefed on Emergency Procedures, and have several methods of summoning assistance including PLBs.

Data collection and analysis

All trapping data is stored on the national database trap.nz. <https://www.trap.nz/>
Camera data and bait station information is held separately by the Trust. Trap.nz has also proved to be a useful navigation tool in the field.

Volunteers

This year, volunteers have contributed a total of 760 hours on Pomona and Rona since April 2025, representing 19 trips to the islands. In addition, Kevin and Leslie Schwamm have continued to service the traps on the mainland North and West of Rona. The Trust also thanks the Invercargill Trailer Yacht Squadron for servicing the trap network on the mainland to the north of Pomona Island. See earlier for catches from these two areas.

Boat Transport

Nick Key of Southern Frontiers Ltd Water Taxi Service is thanked for providing reliable and friendly transport to Pomona and Rona islands.

Communication

Lynley King has produced two issues of the popular "Pomona Post" newsletter this year. These are available on the Trust website <https://pomona-island.org.nz/news>.

Meeting with David Swann

In March 2026, David Swann from the Bluff Hill Motupohue Environment Trust visited the islands and shared his knowledge of trapping techniques, particularly AT200 and AT550 self-setting traps, as well as modern data collection and processing techniques.



Boat pick-up on Rona Island. Photo: Paul King



*Korero with David Swann (Bluff Motupohue Environment Trust) off Rona Island.
Photo: Lynley King*

Partnership with RealNZ



During Spring of 2024, Pomona Trust and RealNZ formed a partnership to promote their shared conservation values. RealNZ agreed to donate a proportion of coffee sales, to promote awareness of the aims and activities of the Trust, encourage their staff to volunteer on Pomona Island conservation work, and to promote the Trust through its networks. In return, the Trust has agreed to provide marketing materials to RealNZ and to provide opportunities for RealNZ staff to join volunteer activities.



RealNZ employees after a day's trapping on Pomona Island. Photo: Lynley King



Happy trappers from RealNZ on Pomona Island. Photo: Paul King

For the past two years, the partnership has flourished and we have been able to take a total of 22 RealNZ employees out to the islands to experience trapping and gain an appreciation of the environment on the islands.

Giv2 online donations

The trust also operates an online donation system called Giv2, to attract donations. This compliments the West Arm donation box and other methods to donate to the Trust.



POMONA ISLAND

The Pomona Island Charitable Trust is an environmental organisation run by volunteers. We look after Pomona and Rona Islands on Lake Manapouri, attempting to keep the islands pest free. The islands are home to native birds including endangered kiwi.

Painting by Liz Scott

The Trust depends on donations from our major sponsors and the public. Please donate so we can continue to protect these islands.

HOW TO DONATE

Scan the QR code which will take you to a secure payment portal
or
Visit our website <https://pomona-island.org.nz/> and go to "Donate"
or
place cash in our donation box at West Arm.

Major Sponsors **Realnz**

FIORDLANDJET

Giv2

Scan to Donate

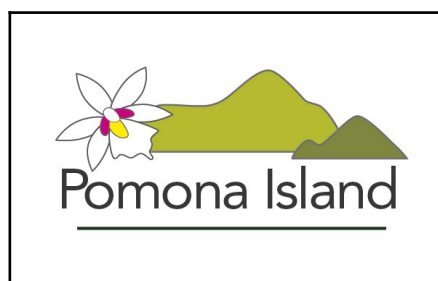
www.giv2.net

short code: IsoRFgsT

Conclusion

The close of the 2025/26 financial year sees Rona and Pomona Islands in a positive position. Rat numbers on Pomona are very low, bird life is recovering on both islands and mice numbers are under control on Rona Island. We are able to host Haast tokoeka on both islands and the gecko population is stable on Rona.

Trustees of the Pomona Island Charitable Trust May 2026





Rata in flower. Photo: Lynley King