

Stoat Bait Report - Summary

Salted Rabbit vs. Eggs August 2005

Salted Rabbit vs Hen eggs as a Stoat lure

This report is a summary of our findings and should be read together with the report on initial findings which also covers the background to our trial, best field practice and how to prepare rabbit bait. Copies are available on our website or write to the address above.

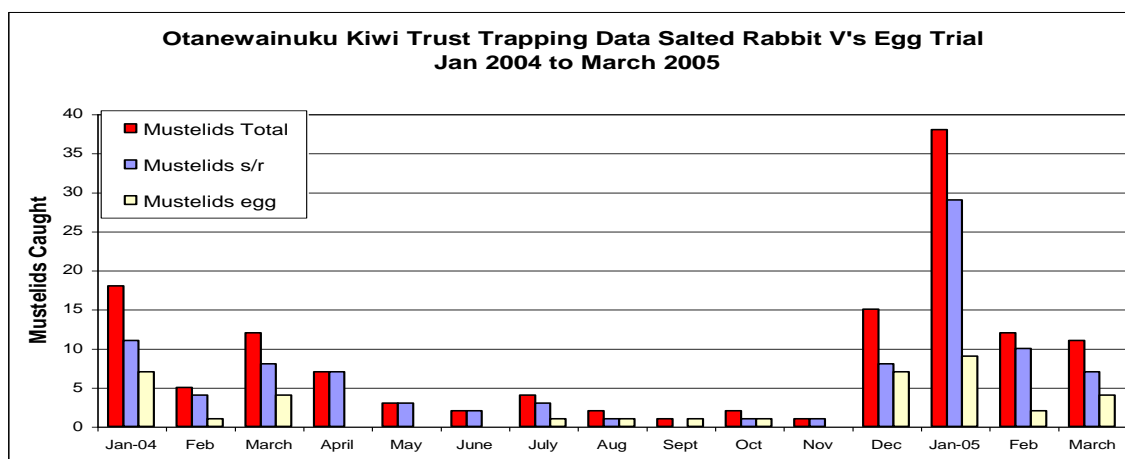
The trial lasted for 15 months from January '04 to March '05. Total catch over this period: 111 stoats, 22 ferrets, 13 feral cats, and 171 rats.

Salted rabbit proved to be equally effective bait for both stoats and ferrets, with almost identical catch rate ratios when compared to hen eggs. The catch rate of salted rabbit is 2.25 times that of eggs.

The feral cats caught were a by-catch of mustelid trapping and not specifically targeted. Most were caught on salted rabbit; however a couple were caught in traps baited with eggs.

Rats were not overly attracted to salted rabbit, with a catch rate of only 1.1 times that of hen eggs. This is probably a good thing as it means that stoat traps are not being clogged up with rats, on the other hand one could argue that a rat in one trap might attract a stoat to the other trap.

The question of seasonal preference of different bait types is obviously an important one. There appears to be a clear preference for salted rabbit during the warmer months, but we don't have enough data to draw any conclusions on for the cooler months. Given the low catch rate during winter it is easy for the results to get distorted. For example the 3 stoats caught with eggs in July, August and September were caught in the same tunnel. The initial catch in July had a rat on one side and a stoat on the other side, making it likely that the dead rat attracted the stoat, not the egg.



Conclusions

Salted rabbit is at least twice as effective a stoat lure as hens eggs in our Bay of Plenty trapping environment (see previous report for more info). I would consider it to be a good long term lure as it is performing as well now as at the beginning of the trial, so does not appear to have been just a short term novelty item to the mustelid.

For questions or feedback please contact

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