

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Predator
Free
Dunedin



**Predator
Free
Dunedin**

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Cover photo by Craig McKenzie

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WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS





Creating a Predator Free Dunedin where wildlife and communities thrive.

Predator Free Dunedin is a conservation collective working collaboratively to protect native biodiversity and strengthen communities.

Together, our members share a long-term vision to get rid of possums, rats, and mustelids from Dunedin's urban and rural landscapes by 2050. We are building on existing projects and linking the areas between with large-scale predator control initiatives.



OUR COMMUNITY

Our community includes 22 member organisations who share the vision for a Predator Free Dunedin. From conservation groups, to local government and businesses – we all want to see nature and communities in Ōtepoti/Dunedin thrive.



DELIVERY PARTNERS

Predator Free Dunedin works with three Delivery Partners who receive funding from the Trust to carry out on-the-ground predator control in line with its immediate goals and wider vision for a Predator Free Dunedin.



Foreword

Sally Peart, Chair

As Predator Free Dunedin completes its fifth year of contributing to the national goal of eradicating possums, stoats and rats by 2050, we have good reason to celebrate the significant biodiversity achievements which have resulted from the collaboration between our community and our three Delivery Partners, the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group, Halo Project and City Sanctuary.

The results being delivered are tangible and audible. We are consistently reminded of how our mahi is benefitting our local environment with reports of increases in numbers of tūi, kererū, pīwakawaka and riroriro in our local communities.

Within the outer three sectors of the Otago Peninsula, operations are focused on mopping up the remaining few possums. The use of thermal drones and scat dogs are being used as tools to provide confidence that the elimination targets are being met.

The City Sanctuary team, amongst other things, have worked to create a 'buffer zone' which will support the elimination efforts on the Peninsula and prevent the re-invasion of possums.

The Halo Project is trialing an AI-based tool (FTP) which integrates with AT220 traps and enables significant transfer of live data and images, helping inform the elimination efforts and substantially reducing the ongoing resourcing

required for surveillance and maintenance.

At the governance level, Predator Free Dunedin has been working with Delivery Partners to ensure that the skills learned by the staff and volunteers are transferable to other Delivery Partners.

The Board is mindful of some of the challenges ahead, with funding for Predator Free 2050 only guaranteed until 2025. While we are hopeful the new Government remains committed to the kaupapa in the predator-free space, we are also focusing on additional funding opportunities.

These will enhance our current activities as well as improving engagement with our community, including the business community.

*Ko te pae Tawhiti whāia
kia tata, ko te pae tata
whakamaua kia tina.*

Seek out distant horizons, and cherish those you attain.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Peart'.

Sally Peart
Trust Chair



Our impact



14,134

devices on the ground



33,000+

volunteer hours



3,500+

different native or
endemic species
observed in Dunedin



57,468

possums removed



25,880

rats removed



1,807

mustelids removed



23

full time staff currently
employed or contracted



67,419

hectares funded to
receive predator
control



5,000+

supporters

Foreword

Rhys Millar, Project Lead

It has now been five years since Predator Free Dunedin launched, with a collective goal of leading our community to eliminate possums, rats and mustelids from Dunedin's urban and rural landscapes by 2050.

Looking back, it is heartening to see how far we've come. Together, with our three Delivery Partners, we have removed nearly 60,000 possums, over 20,000 rats and nearly 2,000 mustelids from Dunedin's landscapes.

New tools and techniques have been essential to our progress towards possum eradication. Possum detection dogs were used for the first time on the Otago Peninsula, alongside thermal drone work to locate and remove remaining possums in Sectors 1 to 3.

City Sanctuary have been working hard on a 'coastal buffer zone' to prevent the re-invasion of possums to the Peninsula. Alongside this, they continue to lead community predator control efforts across the city.

Over in the Halo Project, the team continues to make good progress towards the goal of 'zero-density'. Self-resetting AT220 traps are being fitted with an AI tool which will improve the efficiency of predator control by connecting the traps in a network, as well as having the potential to be used as a monitoring tool in the near future.

All of this work could not be done without the involvement of the

community and volunteers who this year contributed over 33,000 hours of their time. Community is at the heart of the project, and in addition to our own volunteers, there are now many conservation groups across Dunedin which the project is proud to support.

More and more, we are hearing reports from our local community of increasing native wildlife. Improving native biodiversity should inform all that we do, and we are now implementing outcome monitoring techniques that can be applied across the entire project area.

Collaboration, both between our three Delivery Partners, and outside of our organisation, is key to achieving the predator free vision. This year has seen the start of staff sharing across the three Delivery Partners, allowing us to allocate specific skills, or more time, where it is needed most in the landscape.

Collaboration with other organisations, and our community is the project's greatest strength. Thank you to all of our funders, members, partners, volunteers and supporters for increasing Dunedin's birdsong.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhys Millar'.

Rhys Millar
Project Lead



Who are we?

About the Predator Free Dunedin Trust

The primary goal of the Trust is to eradicate predators from Dunedin's urban and rural landscapes by administering grants from core funders, providing strategic project management to the wider community, and enabling effective community engagement and communications efforts that will further public support and build the social license for the Predator Free Dunedin vision.

Purpose

"The Predator Free Dunedin Trust promotes the conservation, preservation and protection of New Zealand's native species to enrich our environment and communities through the long-term goal of eradicating introduced predators, such as possums, mustelids and rodents from Aotearoa."

Governance structure

The Predator Free Dunedin Trust is governed by a Trust Deed (20 Sep 2018) as per section 10(2) of the Charitable Trusts Act 1057. This states Trustees will be appointed to the Predator Free Dunedin Trust for a term of three years by appointer groups representing its Settlor or member organisations. Trustees appoint an Independent Chair for a term of three years, enabling Settlers and key stakeholders to coordinate efforts and resources, collectively secure and administer funding, and oversee operations.

Legal name of Entity:

Predator Free Dunedin Charitable Trust

Type of Entity and Legal Basis:

Charitable Trust and Registered Charity

Charity number:

CC56089

Business location:

Dunedin, New Zealand

Auditors:

Crowe's

Bankers:

SBS Bank

IRD number:

127 004 960

Date of establishment:

20 September 2018

Trustees:

Sally Peart (Independent Chair)
Hoani Langsbury (Trustee, First Appointers)
Kent Chalmers (Trustee, Third Appointers)
Mark Hanger (Trustee, Third Appointers)
Matt Harcombe (Trustee, Third Appointers)



What have we achieved?

Progress against performance measures

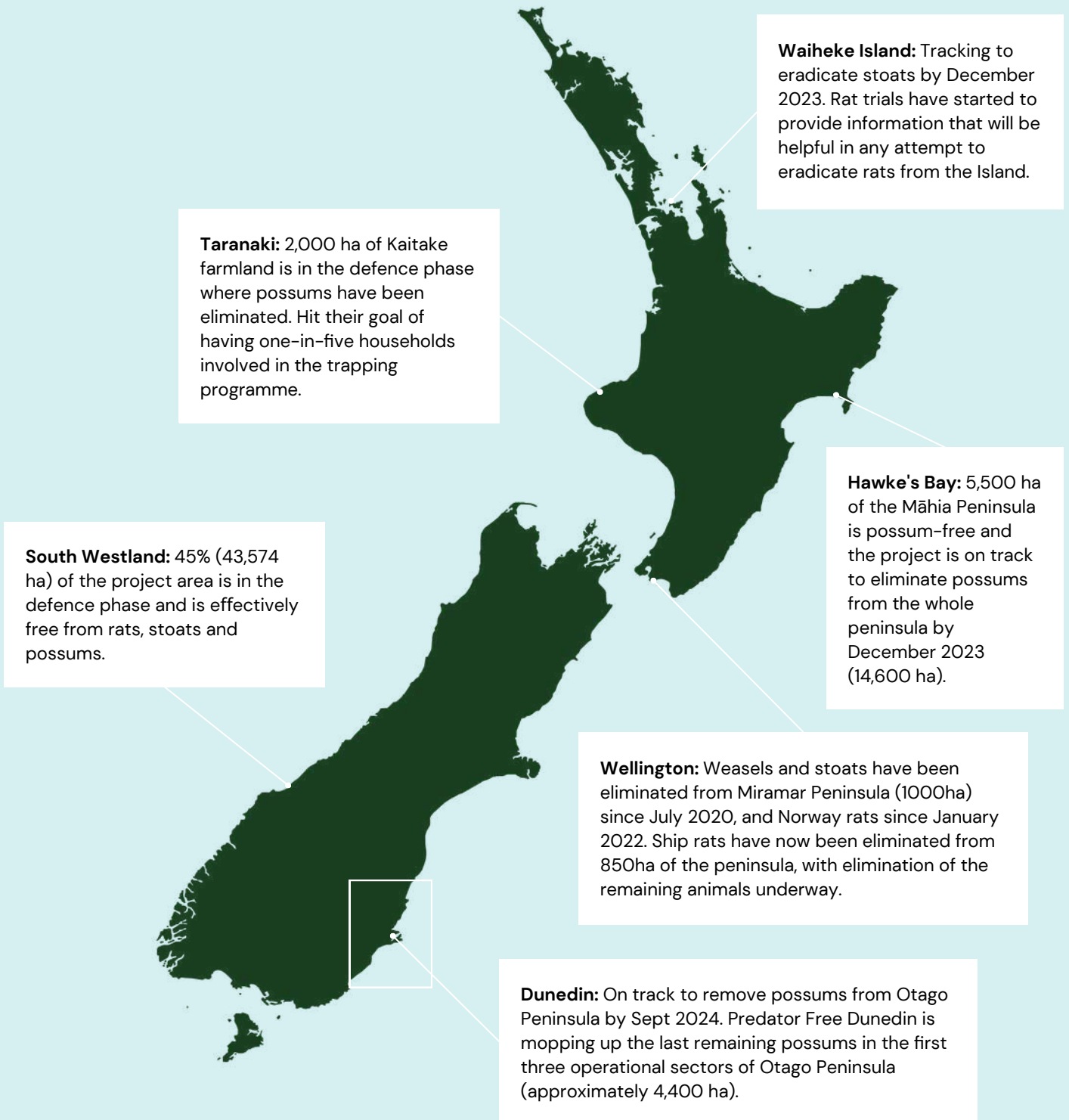
Performance measure	Progress
Administering funding to enable landscape-scale predator control in line with the Expected Outcomes defined by our key funder, Predator Free 2050 Ltd to enable landscape-scale predator control.	Grants were distributed to the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group (\$543,943), the Landscape Connections Trust (\$894,480), and Dunedin City Council (\$527,969) enabling our Delivery Partners to carry out strategic and coordinated predator control contributing towards our wider vision for a Predator Free Dunedin by 2050.
Provision of strategic advice and project management, financial advice, communications, and engagement support, and technical to support delivery of predator control operations.	Overheads and operational costs supported governance, financial management, project management and stakeholder engagement to enable strategic predator control operations, public engagement, and the alignment of research and innovation with operations. Regular newsletters, media stories, and social media content helped to further engage with stakeholders and the public.
Facilitation of research to inform and improve predator control efforts.	Research was put into practice with operations incorporating new tools and techniques to further the overall goals of achieving a Predator Free Dunedin, as outlined on page x.
Engagement with the community through communications, events, and stakeholder management.	Communications and engagement activities helped to engage and activate the public whilst building the social license and support for Predator Free Dunedin's vision and goals. This resulted in 34,947 people reached through social media posts, 3 newsletters, 8 local and national media stories, and successful events such as the annual Spotlight on Possums.

A full Statement of Service Performance for the Predator Free Trust for the year ended 30 June 2023 can be downloaded at our website (predatorfreedunedin.org)



Achievements to date

Progress towards a Predator Free Aotearoa New Zealand



Large-scale national predator eradication projects

Predator Free Dunedin

Halo: Maintaining a network of traps targeting mustelids like stoats, ferrets, and weasels to help protect native wildlife moving beyond the fence at Orokonui.

Buffer: Extending possum control across an additional 35,000 hectares to create another layer of defence for the zero-density possum area, operations in the city, and possum eradication efforts on the Otago Peninsula.

Zero-density: Continued progress towards the goal of 'zero-density' possums with self-resetting AT220 traps maintaining the gains made by OSPRI across the entire network.

Otago Peninsula: On track to eradicate possums by September 2024 with final mop up currently in Sectors 1 to 3 (from Portobello onwards).

City Sanctuary: Activating urban communities to target possums in the coastal buffer and in key reserves to prevent possums re-invading the Otago Peninsula.



Community collaboration



Community science for possum reports

The second year of our 'Spotlight on Possums' event was very successful, even gaining live coverage on TV One Breakfast!

The community science project is aimed at getting people involved in conservation and promotes the use of our 'Report a Possum' tool. It allows members of the public to report any possum sightings from anywhere across Dunedin. These reports feed directly to our operational teams on the ground.

Despite the cold, hundreds of people across Dunedin went out to look for possums in the trees and bushes of backyards and reserves during the week long Spotlight on Possums in June. Over 160 reports were made with 73 people seeing a possum.

Thanks to the efforts of the community, we now have a better understanding of how many possums are in Dunedin, which helps us figure out the best places to focus predator control efforts.



Kākā working group

In May last year, representatives from the Halo Project, Predator Free Dunedin, Department of Conservation, Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki, and Orokonui Ecosanctuary gathered for a kākā working group.

The main purpose of the event was to build trust and confidence in current and emerging predator control tools and processes and, through this, build stronger partnerships together.

Overall, the meeting was a great success. The shared values of all organisations were acknowledged, and a plan for future get-togethers and further relationship building between organisations was established.

Parties came away happy with the tools being used to remove invasive predators and protect taonga species.

Predator Free Peninsula

Being delivered by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group



On the Otago Peninsula, we are using a combination of tools and expertise to remove possums, getting us closer to the goal of complete eradication by the end of 2024.

The outer areas of the Peninsula beyond Portobello are now down to very low possum numbers. Removing the last few individuals is the focus and is a challenging part of eradication. Strategic placement of trail cameras, different traps, drones, trained dogs, and skilled hunters are some of the tools being used. Limiting re-invasion to this area is also key.

Most remaining possums are in our largest management area, known as Sector 4, which runs from The Cove out to Portobello.

To crack down on this area, we have pulled together all our resources; staff, contractors, possum detection dogs, and a range of different trap devices.

Together with landowners, we have selected the most effective tools for

each property and worked our way systematically across all of Sector 4, finishing at Sandymount. During this knockdown, the team and contractors removed 1,024 possums. Community trappers caught another 93 catches, bringing the total to 1,117 possums.

The number of possums being caught in the community has been on the decrease since the operation started. Early in the year, community catches across the whole Peninsula were around 48 per month. In August, that had dropped down to just three. This is a great indicator of decreased possum numbers.

Possum detection dogs have proved to be an extremely useful tool for finding and removing possums on the Peninsula. Hoegh Hunting and their dogs visited the Peninsula twice this year, focusing on searching for possum sign on the outer Peninsula to support our final mop up operations.



These searches proved successful at locating and removing remaining possums that had avoided traps.

Alongside detection dogs, we have made use of drone technology to find any remaining possums with the help of High Country Contracting. The drone has thermal imaging capability and a heavy-duty spotlight.



A scan of the terrain is monitored in real time by staff, with a motorbike and shotgun at the ready to deal with any possums. The team were delighted not to find a single possum in Sector 3.

These specialised tools will become increasingly important as we clear more areas of possums and get closer to eradication.



Regular monitoring shows that there has been a notable increase in tūī, korimako (bellbird), and kererū populations.



Increased reports from the community of more fruit produced on fruit trees.



Reports from residents of over 10 different tūī visiting their bird-feeders!



Kererū are moving into new territories further down the Peninsula. The increasing numbers and spread of tūī and korimako has been described as 'remarkable'.

City Sanctuary

Being delivered by Dunedin City Council



In Dunedin's urban area, we are building on incredible community trapping efforts to bring possum numbers down to zero in key areas of the city. The focus is creating safe habitat for native wildlife within the city, and preventing possums re-invading the Otago Peninsula and Halo Project.

This year, we are shifting to a 'detect and remove' approach at the crucial northern and coastal boundaries. Monitoring efforts are amplified to locate individual animals using cameras, auto-lure pumps, sticky fur seeker devices and physical searching for scat and markings.

In the northern boundary suburbs of Leith Valley, Pine Hill and North East Valley, where the aim is to reduce possums to 'zero detectability', we have intensified trapping efforts by deploying more traps on council reserves and recruiting residential trappers. Thanks to the efforts of staff, volunteers and backyard trappers, more than 1,900 possums have been removed since

traps opened three years ago. This area is home to Dunedin's only known urban population of tītipounamu (rifleman) at Ross Creek Reserve. It also features the well-loved Botanic Garden which this year saw one of the best spring displays of flowering magnolia trees due to less damage by possums.

On the other side of town, a web of 145 possum traps now covers the hills surrounding Kew and St Clair. This is a priority as a likely corridor for possums to reach the coastal buffer bordering the Peninsula. Almost 450 possums have been removed from key habitat, including some of the GPS-collared possums from Manaaki Whenua's study last year!

Preventing possums entering the soon-to-be possum free Peninsula is top priority. While the vast urban and industrial areas of South Dunedin stop possum movement, a corridor of vegetation along the coast creates another pathway.





No possums have been detected here by trapping and monitoring lines, indicating possum numbers are very low. Despite this, we are intensifying surveillance for detection, as density estimates suggest this urban coastal habitat could host around 45 possums.

To prove there is no threat of re-invasion from the city, the team will expand monitoring efforts and implement a 'detect and remove' approach targeting reclusive possums. Night-vision cameras will provide panoramic insight into any possums moving in the area, while staff scour the landscape with thermal imaging.

This work is carefully phased to align with the Peninsula's possum elimination



plan and mop up remaining possums at the entrance to the Peninsula. Inspiring communities is core to our project. This year, we have been supporting local trapping groups and sharing knowledge with other projects around the country.

A highlight of the year was celebrating the official launch of Aroha Kaikorai Valley and expansion of Brighton Trapping Group's area.

To date, more than 11,000 predators have been removed from Dunedin City.

It's exciting to see volunteers, backyard trappers, and community groups increase across the city as more people feel inspired to work toward a predator free Dunedin.



Tomtit and South Island Robin spotted in the Signal Hill area.



Kākā sightings in Leith Valley, Woodhaugh, and North East Valley. Residents are encouraged to report sightings to the Kākā Database (kakadatabase.orokonui.nz)



"Big improvement" in tree health at Dunedin's Botanic Garden where flower buds and new growth were left untouched by possums.

Halo Project

Being delivered by the Landscape Connections Trust



The Halo Project continues to broaden its scope, and with this, large scale benefits are now being seen across the landscape and community.

Since 2018, we have been working to achieve 'zero density' possums across 10,000 hectares surrounding Orokonui Ecosanctuary. This means possum numbers are so low they can't reproduce. We are proudly tracking well towards achieving this goal.

Last year, our operational area was expanded to include a 33,000 hectare 'buffer zone' west of State Highway 1. Within one section of this buffer zone, a comprehensive network of 421 automatic, self-resetting AT220 traps has been established to act as a defense against re-invasion into the zero-density area.

The AT220 traps are game-changers for the project, as they reset and re-lure automatically up to 100 times and last up to 6 months before the batteries need recharging or the lure refilling.

This technology has proved to be incredibly useful at targeting possums in hard-to-reach places year-round.

We are now the largest user of this trap in the country with more than 800 AT220 devices installed and plans for a further 1,000 across the buffer zone. These have removed over half as many predators (9,834) than all other devices in this period combined (17,946).

While these numbers deserve celebration, it's the outcomes that make the work all worthwhile – healthier forests, less predation on taoka species, cleaner waterways, connection and shared purpose for local communities.



As well as possums, we are also targeting mustelids. A network of over 1,000 DOC150/DOC200/DOC250 devices have been installed in the 'zero-density' zone. This network also targets hedgehogs and rats which all helps to reduce the threat of introduced predator incursion at Orokonui Ecosanctuary. Dedicated volunteers take care of these devices, checking and re-setting them around 16 times a year.

Halo's 'host a possum trap' scheme continues to gain popularity within the community. To date, the current total number of backyard possum traps is at 340!

As introduced predator numbers continue to drop, the team expects to see more trees flowering and fruiting, as well as lush canopy growth. This lush canopy will support increasing native wildlife such as birds and lizards.



Study finds a significant increase in native foliage cover at study locations on Mihiwaka from a mean of 62.4% cover in 2016 to 74.8% cover in 2020



South island robin/kakaruwai increasingly seen in the Halo Project area. A combination of existing wildlife populations and birds moving beyond the fence at Orokonui Ecosanctuary.



Increasing reports of kākā in the area and loud birdsong.

Research & Innovation

Exploring new AI assisted predator control and monitoring



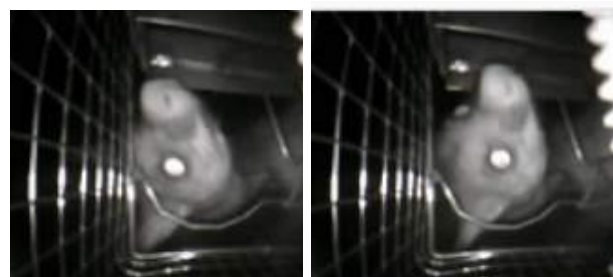
FTP Solutions is a global technology company developing an exciting new tool which aims to improve our ability to monitor both native and pest species, as well as improve introduced predator removal efforts.

The FTP devices are being connected to AT220 automatic, self-resetting traps in the Halo Project area. This creates a joint network of traps that communicate with each other. These devices detect when a predator approaches a trap, take a series of images of that predator, and then automatically classify the introduced predator using AI and machine learning techniques to decide whether it is a target, or non-target species. This addition to the AT220 traps will be extremely useful as it ensures that the traps will deactivate if any animal other than the targeted introduced predator interacts with it.

This tool will be particularly useful in areas with low numbers of predators. It will instantly let the Halo team know when an introduced predator has

approached a trap so the team can then target their resources to where they are most useful and beneficial, ultimately improving the efficiency of the project.

In addition to improving introduced predator control efforts, this device has the potential to be used for native biodiversity monitoring. Essentially a smart AI camera, these devices could communicate the presence of specific native species with team members instantly. This would be far more efficient and cost effective than standard trail cameras.



Financials

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements and ensuring that they comply with generally accepted accounting practice and fairly reflect the financial position of the Predator Free Dunedin Trust as at 30 June 2023 and the results of their operations for the year ended on that date.


The Trustees consider that the financial statements of the Predator Free Dunedin Trust have been prepared using appropriate accounting policies, consistently applied and supported by reasonable judgments and estimates and that all relevant financial reporting and accounting standards have been followed.

The Trustees believe that proper accounting records have been kept which enable, with reasonable accuracy, the determination of the financial position of the Predator Free Dunedin Trust and facilitate compliance of the financial statements with generally accepted accounting practice.

The Trustees consider that they have taken adequate steps to safeguard the assets of the Predator Free Dunedin Trust, and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. Internal control procedures are also considered to be sufficient to provide a reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of the financial statements.

The Trustees are pleased to present the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The Financial Statements are approved and authorised for issue.

Trustee: 
SALLY FAY PEART, CHAIRPERSON

Date: 8th February 2024

These Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes and the Compilation Report, which can be downloaded at our website (www.predatorfreedunedin.org)

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE AND EXPENSE

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	NOTES	2023	2022
Revenue from Non-Exchange Transactions			
Donations and Grants Received		2,296,235	2,251,585
Cost Recovery Income		6,957	11,327
Total Revenue from Non-Exchange Transactions		2,303,191	2,262,912
Revenue from Exchange Transactions			
Interest Income		19	-
Total Revenue from Exchange Transactions		19	
TOTAL REVENUE		2,303,210	2,262,912
Less Expenses			
Costs to Provide Services	5	329,841	290,903
Grants and Donations Made	5	1,966,392	1,645,818
Other Expenses	5	2,441	104,348
Communications		705	
Total		2,299,379	2,041,069
TOTAL EXPENSES		2,299,379	2,041,069
OPERATING SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		3,831	221,843
Other Comprehensive Revenue and Expenses			
Other Comprehensive Revenue and Expenses		-	-
Total Comprehensive Revenue and Expenses		-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR		3,831	221,843



STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN TRUST FUNDS

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
ACCUMULATED TRUST FUNDS		
Trust Capital		
Trust Capital	10	10
Total Trust Capital	10	10
Accumulated Comprehensive Revenue and Expense		
Opening Balance	274,267	52,424
Current year earnings	3,831	221,843
Total Revenue from Exchange Transactions	278,099	274,267
TRUST FUNDS AT END OF PERIOD	278,109	274,277

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Bank Accounts and Cash	6	2,161,970	1,697,945
Debtors	8	324,417	13,346
Inventory		-	607
Total Current Assets		2,486,387	1,711,897
TOTAL ASSETS		2,486,387	1,711,897
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	8	107,359	20,374
GST Payable	8	41,963	57,936
Rounding		-	1
Total Current Liabilities		149,322	78,311
Non-Current Liabilities			
Grant Funds Not Yet Allocated	13	2,058,956	1,359,309
Total Non-Current Liabilities		2,058,956	1,359,309
TOTAL LIABILITIES		2,208,278	1,437,620
Excess Assets Over Liabilities		278,109	274,277

REPRESENTED BY:

Total Trust Fund

278,109

274,277

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES;


SALLY FAY PEARCE
CHAIRPERSON
8 February 2024



STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash was received from:			
Donations, fundraising and other similar receipts		2,940,725	3,508,701
Net GST		(48,353)	75,536
Cash was applied to:			
Donations or grants paid		(1,954,355)	(1,645,557)
Cash flows from other operating activities		-	(214,862)
Payments in relation to providing services		(266,387)	(188,698)
TOTAL CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		671,630	1,535,119
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash flows from other investing and financing activities		(207,531)	-
Total Cash Flows from Investing and Financing Activities		(207,531)	-
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH		464,099	1,535,119
Bank Accounts and Cash			
Opening cash		1,697,871	162,751
Net change in cash for period			
Predator Free Dunedin Trust		464,099	1,535,119
Total Net change in cash for period		464,099	1,535,119
CLOSING CASH		2,161,970	1,697,871



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Dunedin**

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