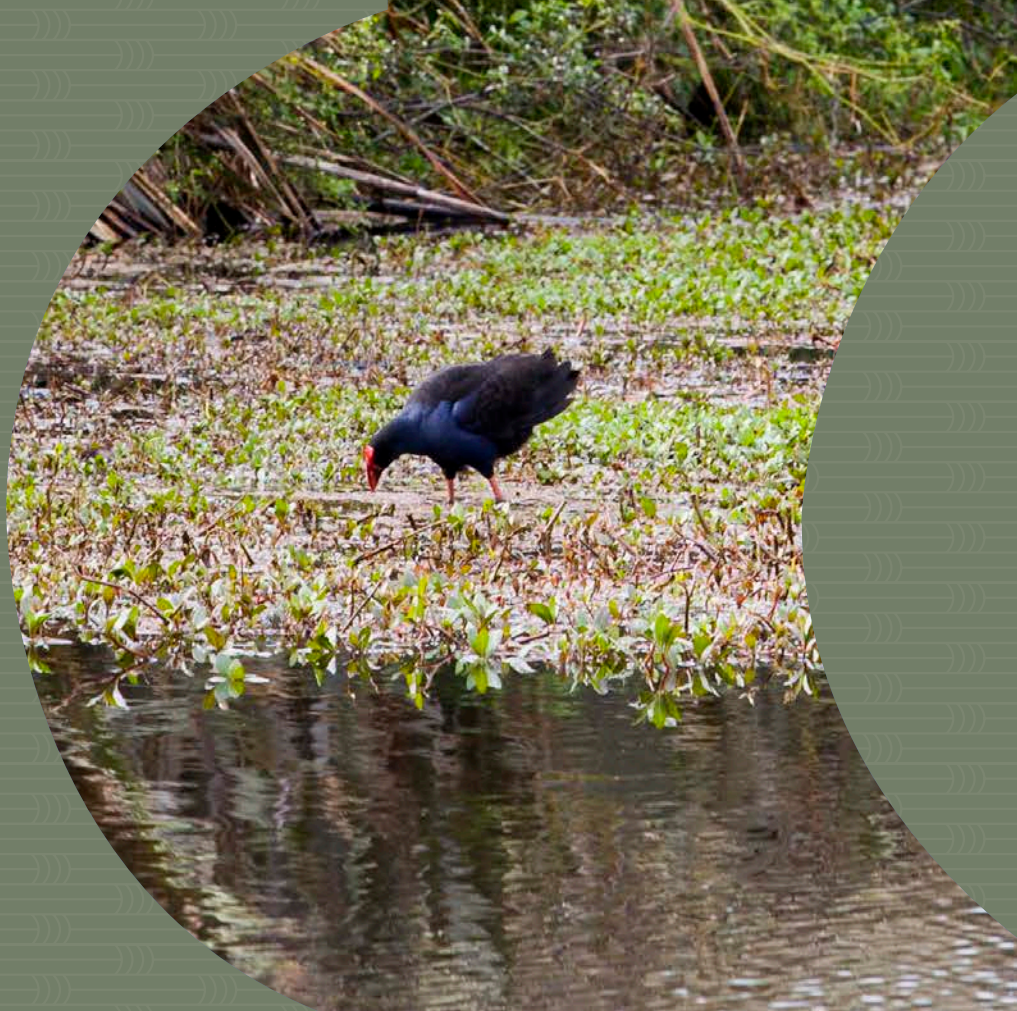


KMR Pest Control Guidelines

June 2023



Pest animals such as rabbits, hares and pūkeko can be a real issue for new plantings.

All KMR funded projects require the landowner by contract to undertake appropriate browsing pest control in areas of planting for a minimum period of two years following sign-off of the KMR project.

Pest control costs over the duration of a Whenua Whānui project can be treated as a co-funding contribution in this specific circumstance but are not part of the standard activities funded by KMR.

Rabbits and hares

- If rabbit numbers are high, they can decimate new plantings especially around spring when rabbit numbers spike. New plantings may have been in the ground for only a few months and remain susceptible to browsing damage.
- Hares are solitary animals; however, their home range is 50ha (compared to rabbit's home range of 1ha). They are a browser and can reach higher than rabbits so will still impact new plantings.
- KMR Field Advisors should advise landowners that pest control is important as poor pest browsing control could result in poor plant survival rates. KMR Field Advisors should remind landowners/community groups that there is an expectation that 80% of plants will survive.
- Appropriate options for rabbit and hare control are outlined in the links below. Pest management approaches will be subject to the preferences and affordability of the landowner.

Examples of browsing damage from rabbits and hares:



Pūkeko

- Pūkeko are native birds and in very high numbers around the country. If landowners deem pūkeko to be a pest (e.g. damaging crops) they can be legally shot by landowners.
- KMR Field Advisors should advise landowners that pūkeko are also a problem for new plantings as they pull plants out and eat their roots. This is especially an issue where plantings are in wet low-lying areas as plants can be pulled out more easily by pūkeko.

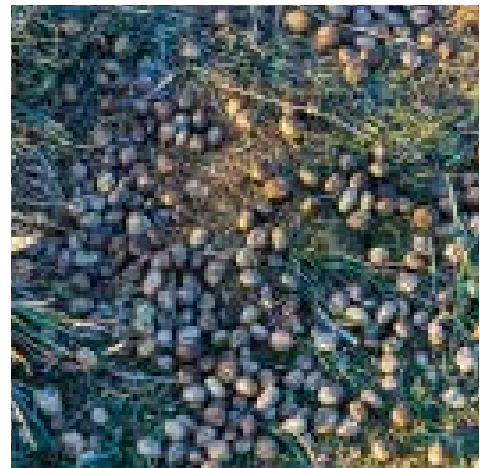
Recommendations for Field Advisors

When plans for planting are being discussed with landowners/community groups, KMR Field Advisors should ask them if they have any pest browsing animal problems and take photos and notes of any sign of rabbits and hares (faecal pellet droppings –see photos below) and pūkeko which can be seen visually and are usually around waterways and wetlands.



Rabbit and hare droppings are left in clusters of little, round, hard balls. They are usually yellowy-brown or green in colour, and full of grass.

Hare droppings (on the right) tend to be slightly bigger and flatter than rabbit droppings (left hand side).



Rabbit droppings which are in a pile.

Rabbits tend to leave droppings in the same place so when numbers are high these piles are obvious.

In most cases rabbits will be the most likely pest to cause problems and therefore you will need to advise the landowner/community group that some pest control needs to be done prior to planting and for up to 6 months post planting (specially around spring and early summer months).

Bait and bait stations can be purchased from farming supply companies and some councils. The method (e.g. baiting or traps) of pest control is at the discretion of the landowner.



More information and guidance

Northland Regional Council's guidance



Pest Control - Rabbits

<https://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/weed-and-pest-control/pest-control-hub/?pwsystem=true&pwid=45&sort=alpha>



Rabbit and hare behaviours and a guide for times to deploy bait stations

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/what-to-hunt/rabbits-and-hares/>

Auckland Council's guidance



Pest Plants and Animals

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment/plants-animals/pests-weeds/Pages/default.aspx>



How we control pests

Outlines the projects undertaken by Auckland Council across the Auckland region. There is also a link to the Auckland Council Pest Management Plan

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment/plants-animals/pests-weeds/Pages/how-we-control-pests.aspx>



