



# Crofton Downs Predator Free Community



What's it all about?



Theo Dawson

Who am I?

I'm a guy who was out the front gate of his house and saw a stoat cross the road in front of him and decided to start Crofton Downs Predator Free Community as a means to alleviate my inner guilt and rage

<http://predatorfreenz.org/dont-get-mad-get-trapping/>

‘The mustelid that launched 200 traps’

What makes our Project different to everybody else's?

We tried to engage our community into becoming New Zealand's first predator free community

Free of Rats

Stoats – Weasels

Possums

But people have tried this before it can't be done!!

No one had ever tried it in a built up residential community surrounded by iconic NZ landscape.

So we bonded the community together in a common goal.



Did you ask the experts on how this could be done?

Not really.....

Why?

Because we wanted to try and rewrite the rules without knowing what the rules were.

We did not want to be bound by convention.

We wanted to understand what the true barriers were, why are we still going backwards

How did you attempt to do this from a technical point of view?

As we only have 10 minutes I am going to skip that part.....and anyway, is it even important....?

Nope.



## The Problem

Easy right!!! It's in the papers, we read about it everyday, we get told our world is failing, global warming, mass extinctions. Our kids read this on their IPADS, TV, they hear it on radio, iphones!! There is no hope!!!

How do we react when there is no hope? Most of us just give up.

So what the hell is important?

The outcome of trapping is more birds, lizards,  
invertebrates.....obvious right?

Nuh ut....!!

We gave 500 hundred people a sense of PLACE and ownership in our small community

Community building and partnerships

A sense of purpose

Exercise and wellbeing

Connection to the environment

We gave our community ownership and they wrote the script

So what was the problem again??

The problem is.....

..... stop focusing on the outcome it's not always evident  
but it's quite often the biggest problem.

So what actually happened?

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2015 Crofton Downs was crowned  
NZ's first Predator Free Community free of rats, stoats,  
weasels and possums after monitoring zero

some experts say to me this is not a true measure it takes  
three years to declare an area predator free...stand down  
man

and I say okay



And while that has been going on we have expanded to four neighboring suburbs that will now encompass 900 hectares under residential control

and another 1500 hectares under best practice linked reserve control with 1000 DOC 200's (traps) from outside the Zealandia café (Rata) to Mt Kaukau in the North and our birds are flourishing

We have also partnered with other organisations like Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) who are on the cutting edge of predator control in this country

What happens when the Predators are gone!?

Our community is finding new and wonderful ways to fill  
the gaps

Responsible pet owners (dogs and cats)

Planting

Watching over our Kaka fledglings on the ground

Building new tracks and lining them with traps

They are moving further into the landscape- walking,  
running, biking further, widening their aspirations and  
linking with their neighboring communities and looking at  
what else they can achieve.

If we adopt this way of thinking in our communities?

We will see

Durability

Resilience

Woven Aspiration

and

Enduring Regard

So while the battle for the birds continues across the wider  
landscape

We can all do our bit and every little bit no matter how  
small makes a big difference, it is no less important than  
the big bits