



THE OWAHANGA OBSERVER

June 2026

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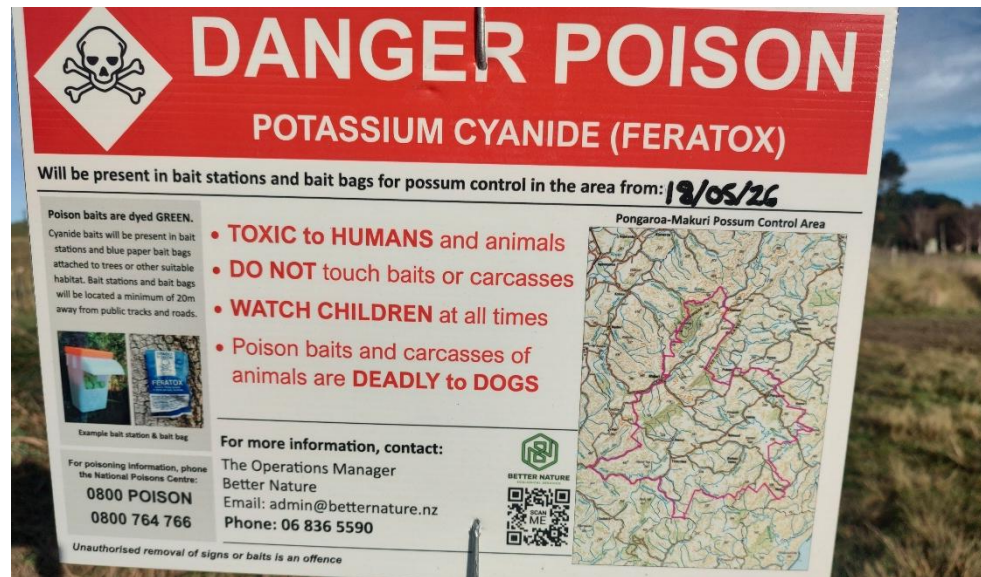
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Possums

Regional council Possum control has commenced in the Makuri Pongaroa block.

We have chew card data from some farms before this began so it will be interesting to see what change occurs when we repeat this exercise.

Also of interest, the poison of choice appears to be cyanide (Feratox) which may be due to pressure being applied on the use of Brodifacoum especially regarding the increase in wild game harvesting for community food banks that is occurring.



The Pongaroa Domain board reserves (Bushwalk and 4 mile bush) are excluded from baiting, so we have put out traps in the Bushwalk in conjunction with Nicholes EnviroSchool program after chew cards said it had high possum numbers and in less than 24 hours we had a customer.



The traps initially used were manual set Trapinators which are available to members through the catchment group, for anyone who feels the need to do a little trapping around home.

They have now been replaced by six NZ Auto traps AT220s, provided to the Domain board by the Tararua District Council which we are deploying on their behalf.

The traps represent a significant investment by council in helping look after these reserves and already have justified their purchase as in the first 10 days of being set 8 possums and 5 rats had fallen victim to the technology.



These can be left unattended as they automatically reset and rebait after each catch and only need checking every month or so to replace batteries and top up the lure.



World Famous Pongaroa

Not out of the spotlight for long, Pongaroa has yet again been the focus of farming stories in the national press.

Previously there have been articles on the Buicks, the Pongaroar hunt, Akitio, and farming in the Tiruamea district to name a few.

Most recently Country Calendar featured Fiona Ramsden and the WareWare partnership



the program highlighted some of the challenges and opportunities facing farming not only here but nationally. So well done to everyone involved who as Digby said “hasn’t been driven mad by the wind”,

On top of that two weeks later a film crew from Kea Kids was here filming the typical weekend activities of some local children.

That should also be a must watch given what I’ve heard went on.

Pest Monitor

The last cameras and cards are out at the moment and will be retrieved in early July. After that the data will be plotted onto a map that along with other information will be presented to each of the four catchments.

Then there will be another presentation with all the individual areas' results combined, and the overall picture put together to see if there is indeed a problem and what sort of scale it is.

Then we can decide how to tackle it.

If a pest management program is found desirable, there are several considerations such as negotiating access, indemnity, frequency of operation, who does the work etc to be weighed up.

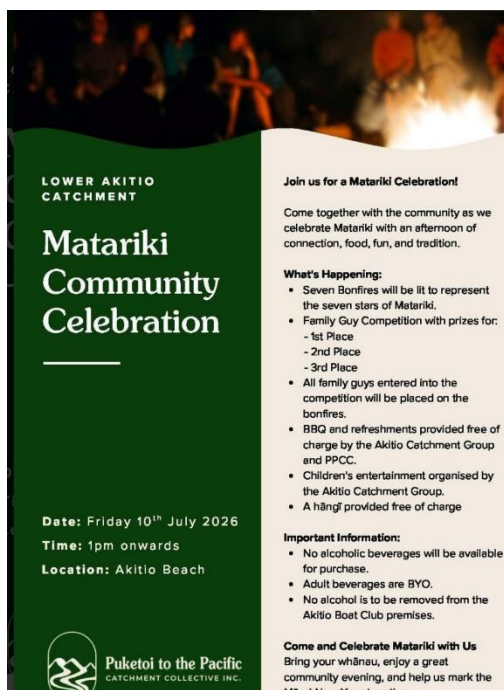
Therefore, it may be time to start thinking about a few things

- Who would you be prepared to give access to your property to: eg locals, outsiders like organized NZDA hunts groups, forestry cullers etc
- What are your expectations
- What restrictions on any activities need to be applied
- What arrangement for yourself and operators re insurance and indemnity would you like to see

Remember management does not mean eradication, that's simply not possible, it means attempting to reduce the level of animals to a point where their financial impact on farming operations is manageable, the environmental damage they do is minimized and the health of the population remaining for recreational hunting is improved.

Canada geese are being treated as a separate issue to the terrestrial pests and plans for them are pretty much sorted at this stage.

Who doesn't like a good fire?



A mid winter warmer at the beach.

Theres no need to have a swim unless you want to, but if you do at least you can warm up afterwards.