



Gill Adshead from the Forest Bridge Trust demonstrates a Timms possum trap.

THE FOREST BRIDGE TRUST

Residents pitch in to stop pests

MATTHEW CATTIN

Free pest control workshops will give north Rodney communities the know how to handle the nasty critters in their backyards.

Initiated by the Forest Bridge Trust, CatchIT Communities pest control workshops are scheduled for the Matakana, Leigh and Ahuroa communities this September and October.

Professional trappers will be on hand to advise on trapping and baiting at home and limited free traps will be available for attendees.

Forest Bridge Trust trustee Liz Maire says the community can make a big difference to pest numbers.

“It is possible to get much reduced pests across a wide landscape. It’s happening all over New Zealand right now and we’re at a tipping point where pest control is becoming normal, not just for greenies.”

The workshops are open to all, and will particularly benefit “any landowner big or small who wishes to enhance their property, bring the birds back and get rid of pests”.

Rats, mustelids, and possums will be the main pests targeted in the initiative.

This year has seen the trust work-

ing with seven north Rodney schools, with pupils taking traps home and recording their catches.

Maire hopes the community will take to trapping with as much enthusiasm as the competitive children.

A DOC initiated app called Walk The Line will allow trappers to record their catches by location and number.

Maire says the aim is to have all registered traps recorded by GPS so anybody in the region can access the data on a map and see how traps are performing.

It will also allow people to check out what their neighbours are catching.

“I’m hopeful the potential competition will spur people on,” Maire says.

The Forest Bridge Trust is a farmer-initiated charitable trust seeking to create a connected landscape of forest between the Kaipara Harbour and the east coast.

The vision involves connecting bush remnants, fencing, planting, weed and pest control in the area to allow indigenous wildlife to flourish.

Visit theforestbridgetrust.org.nz for more information, or see upcoming What’s on columns for workshop updates.