

DNA Sampling with Possum Ears

Thank you for helping the possum elimination project for Predator Free Whangārei! Below is some information on why we are collecting possum ears and how to correctly gather the DNA sample.

Why are we doing this?

The DNA from possum ears will be used to provide a genetic database that will help us in the future to determine movement patterns of possums. Understanding these factors will help us respond appropriately when and if incursions happen in the future.

Possums do not have a large home range, meaning that with the DNA samples, we will be able to determine if we have truly eradicated possums from a certain area, or, if there was a leaky barrier where a new possum has moved in from.

Once we receive enough possum ears we will send it to the lab to collect the genetic database. At this stage, we have been advised that we only require around ten samples from each working block area, but this is subject to change depending on the area.

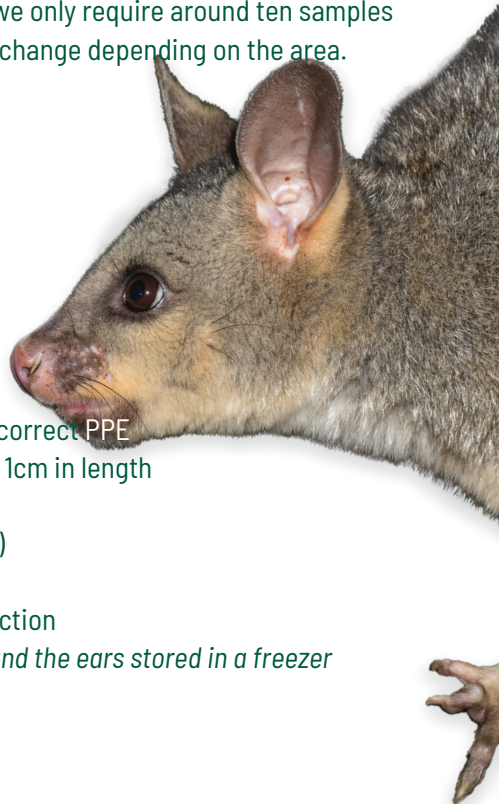
We have provided you with a kit that contains:

- Small plastic storage bags
- Pair of scissors
- DNA labels
- Gloves
- Pencil/pen

Instructions:

1. Put gloves on. It is important that you have the correct PPE
2. Grab the scissors and cut off an ear tip, at least 1cm in length
3. Place in storage bag
4. Fill out the label (see other side for instructions)
5. Keep stored in a freezer with the label
6. Contact a Predator Free team member for collection

Please ensure the possums are as fresh as possible and the ears stored in a freezer immediately after collection.



How to fill in the form

Example and explanation below

Location as accurate as possible. You can go to Report a Possum or use Google Maps to find an exact co-ordinate

Date when ear was collected

Your name

Possum DNA Label			
Collector:	Joe Bloggs		
Location/Trap #:	Lat: 035 Lon: 174 (Near Robinson Road, on open paddock near bush)		
Date:	06/06/23	Male/Female:	M
Working Block or area:	WB 2 or Taurikura	Lifestage (Juv/Adult)	Juvenile
Species:	Brushtail possum	Colour:	Black

Sex

Age

Working blocks shown below

Answer will always be possums :)

Fur colour



Physical differences explained

You can tell the sex by referencing its genitalia/reproductive organs. As marsupials, you can also find a pouch if it's an adult female.

Adult possums are generally cat-sized. Smaller sized possums can be considered a juvenile.

Fur colours in Northland are typically grey but black can sometimes be found.