

[Not so] Fabulous facts about... Auckland's animal pests

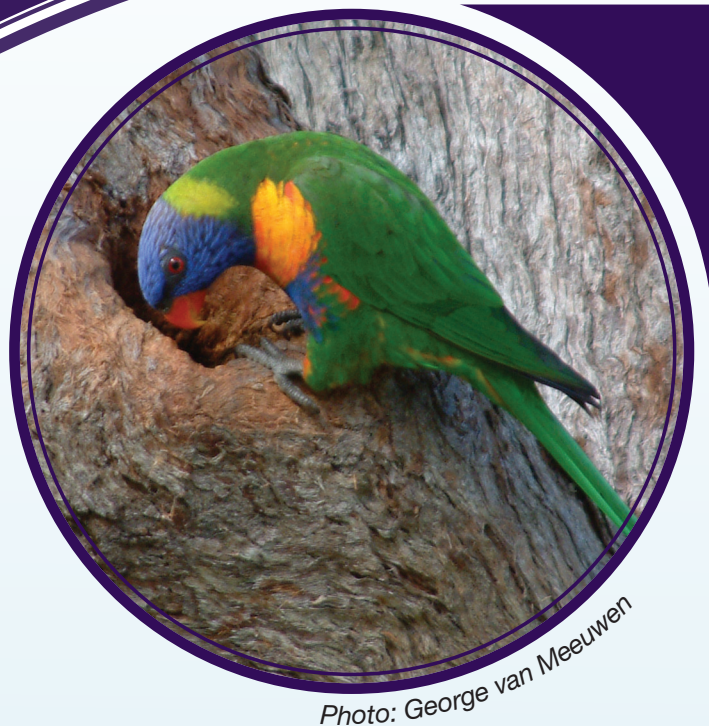


Photo: George van Meeuwen

Australian rainbow lorikeets were deliberately and illegally released into the wild in the 1990s. They are natural bullies, and will swoop down in a flock to drive out native birds.

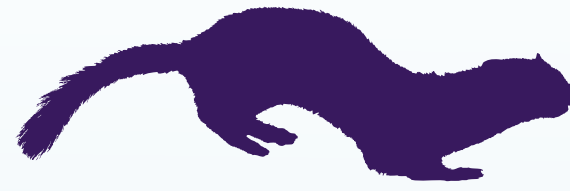


Photo: andrewwalmisleyphotography.com



Hungry hedgehogs are a serious threat to native wētā, skinks, and eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds. One hedgehog was found with 283 wētā legs in its stomach!

Stoats are 'public enemy number one' for native birds, such as kiwi, kākā, takahē and kākāpō. They have contributed to the decline and extinction of many native species.



Photo: ©David Hallett

A female rat can have 10 babies every eight weeks. Ship (brown) rats cause the most damage because they can easily climb up to bird nests.



Photo: Dick Veitch

Destructive pest wasps upset the forest's natural food chain. They eat huge numbers of native insects, compete for nectar, and even kill newly hatched birds.



Photo: A H Whitaker

Unfortunately Australian rainbow skinks are widespread in Auckland. They are expert stowaways so watch out for them in your boat, camping gear or bag.

Argentine ants are very aggressive, and even bite people. What's worse, the colonies cooperate with each other and can combine into super colonies – with super appetites.



Possums have no natural predators in New Zealand. They mainly eat leaves (destroying the forest as they go) but also devour buds, fruit, flowers, fungi, insects, birds, and eggs.



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