Kaua'i Mongoose Monitor

KISC
KAUA'I INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE
www.kauaiisc.org/mongoose

September 2013

Partnership collaboration deals with "bi-catch"

The unfortunate mass wedgetail shearwater kill on the south side of Kaua'i at the end of August 2013 resulted in an intensive collaborative trapping partnership between DLNR DOFAW and KISC during the month of September.

During the course of the year, KISC has recorded several credible mongoose reports from Maha'ulepu to Pō'ipu, but because of trap-loss-risk there had been a reluctance to place traps in this area. Informational signs were installed instead to solicit more reports of sightings.

Although the recent shearwater attacks were deemed the result of mostly cat predation (with a few dog attacks as well), KISC took the opportunity to collaborate with DOFAW and focus mongoose trapping efforts throughout this area working with partners including Makauwahi Cave Reserve, CJM Stables, Pō'ipu Bay Golf Club, and Grove Farms, LLC.

Feral cats have long been a problem on this part of Kaua'i; a nuisance species at the golf course, stables and cave, as well as a threat to the declining shearwater population along the cliff habitat. Throughout the island, mongoose-reporting "hot-spots" have often intersected with known cat colonies. Skeptics may think that observers are just mistaking cats for mongooses, but it could also be the result of an abundant food source available for both cats and mongooses.

After four weeks of intensive trapping efforts, 38 cats (and kittens) have been removed from this coastal area with no mongooses captured. All cats have been treated humanely and taken to the Kaua'i Humane Society to verify ownership.

Trap-loss has still occurred with thieves even going so far as to cut ironwood trees down with chainsaws to circumvent the chains and locks. Caution is taken by the field technicians with careful trap placement, and quick removal of compromised traps.

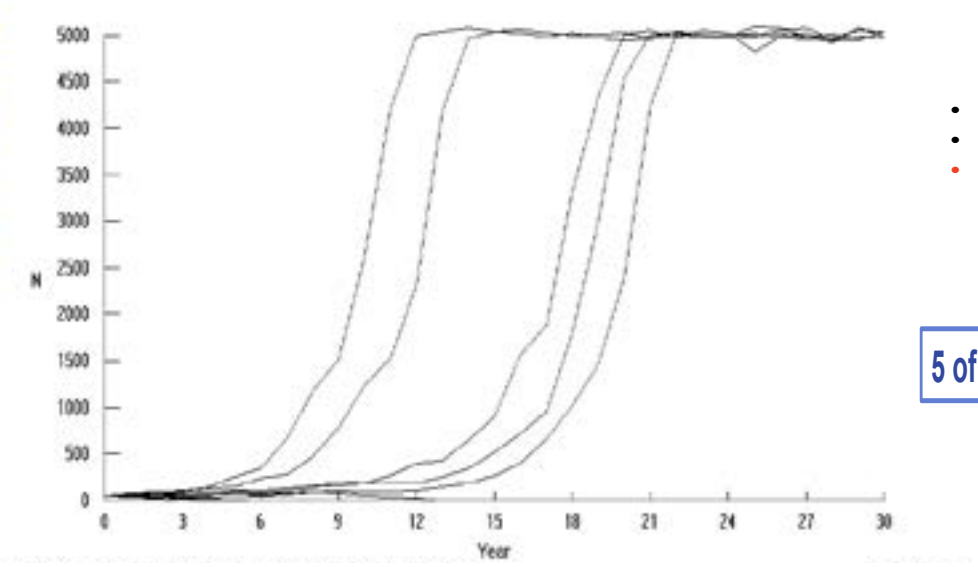
All food sources have now been removed (except for the trap-bait), and we can assume that the cat population has somewhat declined. Mongoose trapping will continue for several more weeks in an attempt to catch this elusive and extremely cryptic animal.

Photo: Jamie Harris

September 2013 Mongoose Sightings

- **August 31** - Kōkeʻe. Spotted animal running in front of his car on Halemanu Road (this one was reported in September). (*Questionable*)
- **September 13** - Kīlauea. Both husband and wife spotted animal as it ran across the road near mile marker 27. (*Husband's interview pending*)
- **September 23** - Kōkeʻe. Just before mile marker 10, he spotted it running in front of his car. Wife also observed animal. (*Credible*) *Wife's interview pending*
- **September 28** - Wailua Homesteads. Observer spotted animal running across her yard. (*Interview pending*)
- **September 29** - Mānā. Observer spotted animal running in front of car when driving back from Polihale. (*Credible*)

Vortex© Modeling used as a mongoose eradication predictor?



- **Initial Population = 54**
- **95% of adult females breed**
- **Harvested: 29 per year**

5 of 10 simulations go extinct by year 13!

For those of you who might have missed this year's Hawaiʻi Conservation Conference, Theresa Menard, Geographic Information Systems Specialist, The Nature Conservancy of Hawaiʻi, gave a presentation utilizing Vortex© Modeling to answer the question, "Can mongooses be eradicated from Kauaʻi?"

The spoiler alert was that we still do not know the answer to this question due to the fact that we do not what the existing population might presently be. But, the model does give us an idea that with consistent harvesting, it might be possible. How that harvesting is achieved is still a big question, as current efforts have yielded little results. Currently, explorations are being made into legal toxicants and possible mongoose-detecting dogs. Thinking "outside the box" will be necessary to find solutions to this complex problem. See http://vortex10.org/Vortex10.aspx for more information.