



MOUSE UPDATE

July 2004 – Darling Downs

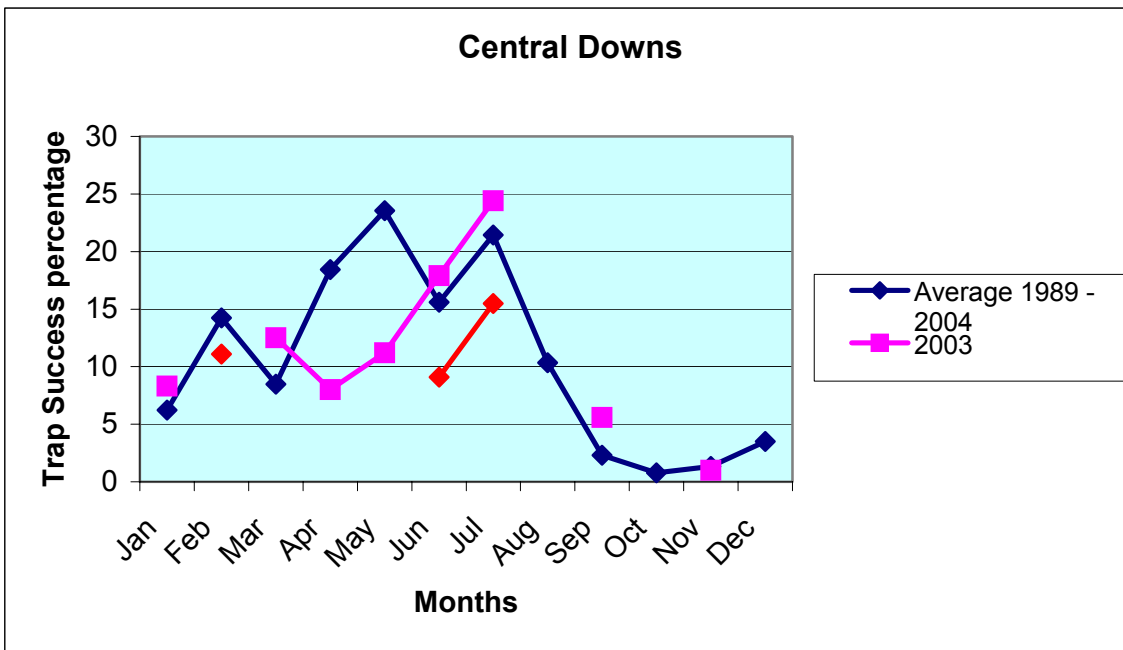
Central Downs

The Central Downs transect was trapped on 15.07.2004 in cool, clear conditions. I was assisted by Hugh Foley, a work experience student from Concordia College.

35 mice were caught resulting in a trap success rate of 15.5%, which is below the long-term average for July. All mice appeared to be in good condition, although 4 (11%) were carrying lumpy tail lesions. The trap catch consisted of 19 (54%) juveniles (probably bred April/May), 7 (20%) adult males and 9 (26%) adult, non-breeding females.

Almost 75% of the mice caught were in ploughed or fallow paddocks where there were no obvious food sources and very few burrows evident. The rest were from mown and unmown roadside verges. The most common stomach contents appeared to be seed and insect material.

Prolonged dry conditions on the Downs have resulted in a much reduced area sown to winter crops and thus reduced food resources for mice.



Percent trap success (number of mice caught per 100 traps).

Northern Downs

The Northern Downs transect was trapped on 12.07.2004 in cool, clear conditions.

The trap success rate was 5.9%.

Eleven mice were caught – 5 adult males and 6 juveniles. Seven were trapped in unmown road verges and densely grassed areas and the others in fallow/stubble. Three (27%) had lumpy tail lesions. The high percentage of affected animals may indicate that the population is under stress due to reduced food availability.

Julianne Farrell, Robert Wicks Pest Animal Research Centre, Toowoomba. 20 July 2004.