

# Found signs of stowaways onboard your kayak? (in your hull, lifejacket or bag) Here are the steps to take:



- DO NOT LAND ON A SEABIRD ISLAND**
- NEVER PUSH STOWAWAYS OVERBOARD DEAD OR ALIVE!**
- DO NOT ASSUME ONLY ONE INDIVIDUAL STOWAWAY IS ABOARD**
- DO RETURN TO A MAINLAND HARBOUR**



## Step 1: Return to the mainland

- Rearrange your island visit.
- Your quick decision-making is vital.
- One single pregnant rodent means a population will establish quickly and eradications are very expensive.



If your leading a kayaking trip manage expectations to your kayak group.

"There is a stowaway and we need to return to the mainland to try and catch it. If this rodent reaches the island it will have huge consequences for seabirds and people."

Kayakers visiting islands for the natural beauty and seabirds are likely to understand and respect your decision.

## Step 2: Set up snap (kill) traps or rodenticide bait (poison wax blocks in bait stations)

When you reach the mainland, choose a method to kill the rodent. Consider that it is likely the rodent boarded the kayak where it is stored, and rodent control may be required to prevent future stowaways.



A Trapper T-Rex with peanut butter lure

### Snap traps (kill traps)

Setting traps inside properly fitting bait stations (e.g. Trapper T-Rex traps inside Protecta stations) increase the chances of a clean kill.

- Ideally these should be set in the evening and disarmed each morning. This will keep non-target species which are active in the daytime safe, while targeting nocturnal rats. Regular checks also mean that any rodents that haven't been killed outright can be humanely killed.
- Your evidence of success will be a rodent carcass in the trap (but never assume there is only one rodent).
- Requires a lure such as peanut butter and rolled oats.
- Can kill the rodent quickly (if traps are in locations suitable for rodents, have good bait and the more traps set, the better probability of success). **Find out more in the resource 'Use of kill traps'.**



Protecta station with wax bait blocks.

### Rodenticide bait (wax blocks in bait stations)

- The rodent is unlikely to die in the Protecta station. It will take bait, feel lethargic and likely die elsewhere several days later, possibly off the boat, so your evidence of success will not be a carcass but 'bait take' and then 'no bait take'.
- Can take longer to confirm rodent dispatch compared to the kill traps. **Find out more in the resource 'Use of rodenticide bait'.**

### Use surveillance tools alongside traps and bait

Checking chocolate wax block. Note: wax block is on a wire to avoid being dragged away by a rodent



[Footprint tunnel pack](#)  
[Gotcha tracking tunnel](#)

If you detect rodent sign on these surveillance tools but rodents are not entering trap or bait stations, changes need to be made to your trap, baits or location of stations to make them more attractive to rodents. Use flavoured wax blocks (image above, left) as when rodents gnaw the wax they will leave detectable teeth marks. Use ink tracking tunnels (image above, right) with a lure such as peanut butter; when rodents walk through to eat the lure, they leave footprints. **Find out more in the resource 'Rodent surveillance tools - why, what, how, when'.**



## Step 3: Visit [biosecurityforlife.org.uk/boats](https://biosecurityforlife.org.uk/boats)

If you would like a kayak sticker send us an email in the 'contact us' section of the website.

If you have questions or want further advice head to the 'Need expert guidance?' section of the website.

We thank you for continuing to protect special islands.