

Can gene drives make wasps extinct in New Zealand?

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Development of gene editing technology has led to the implementation of gene drive ideas, first suggested in the early 2000's. Gene drives are a transgenic strategy to 'drive' a transgene through a population of organisms, in effect cheating genetics. By linking the gene drive mechanism to something that upsets the biology of the organism it is possible to cause local extinction of a population. Gene drives have been described in the popular press as being a great solution for New Zealand's Predator Free aspirations, but are they? In this talk I will discuss the possibilities of using gene drives to target that pernicious New Zealand pest; the common wasp.

