

# Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi at Rotokare



Issue 1

August 2012

## Stakeholder Newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter for Taranaki's newest kiwi project. "Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi at Rotokare", a joint project between Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust and Taranaki Kiwi Trust.

## Kiwi project underway!

We have all been very busy getting this project underway, but wanted to take a pause to get an update out to you all.

After almost a year of solid planning and many meetings, we have formal approval from the Department of Conservation to undertake our joint kohanga kiwi project. The project has been planned so it will be a cost effective and ecologically viable way of boosting kiwi numbers throughout Taranaki and beyond by having a permanent breeding population within Rotokare. A kohanga is a nursery and breeding site – in essence a protected area where kiwi can breed in abundance.

Sites throughout Taranaki have been surveyed over summer, autumn and winter, so we have a good idea where kiwi are to be found in accessible places. Approval of a translocation plan means we have been able to begin catching and transmitting small numbers of kiwi from a large number of sites. The plan is to catch some adult birds (depending on current population numbers at those sites). At other sites, only eggs and chicks will be uplifted.

We aim to catch or rear 30 unrelated kiwi over the next two years. These birds will become the

founder population for the kohanga kiwi.

Professional kiwi catchers are helping for the catching phase. Most of the teams use specially trained and approved kiwi catching dogs.

So, it's an exciting time for both trusts as we start a new era in kiwi conservation.



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Kiwi contractor Diane Prince measures a kiwi bill length while Jack Francis (5) helps to do the holding.



Male kiwi about to be released again after having his transmitter (orange) attached to his leg, on Lovell's property, Hutawai. August 2012.



## Progress Report

So far 4 adult kiwi have been released to Rotokare:

Date Released	Source Location	Sex	Bill Length (mm)	Weight (grams)	Health Score
29/06/2012	Tarere Forest	Female	129.7	2200	Medium
		Male	93.5	2125	Medium - Good
1/07/2012	Eltham Forest	Female	128.5	2950	Very Good
		Male	95.3	2150	Good

While it is the breeding season (July-February), we don't want to handle gravid (pregnant) kiwi otherwise we risk harming the female and her egg. So we are focusing this time to only catch male kiwi, attach a transmitter, and then re-release them so we can monitor their breeding to later lift eggs from their nest (it is the male that incubates the eggs).



LEFT: Aroha Houston, of Ngati Tupaia, welcomes one of the kiwi to their safe new home at Rotokare Sanctuary.

Four males have been caught to date - from Omoana, Glen Nui Station & Hutawai. Over the next few months our focus will be on surveying & catching kiwi in several areas including Tarere, Moki, Makino, and Matau.

Thank you to generous help and support from several private landowners Eltham Forest, Hutawai forestry, and the Thomas, Lovell and Francis families. Thanks also to support from the Department of Conservation staff, Iwi, and volunteers.

### Interested in getting involved?

Volunteers to assist with kiwi listening surveys are very welcome. Join the team and enjoy evenings under the stars. Full training provided for call identification, and compass and GPS use. Call or email us to register your interest.

### Release Event Invitation

Keep an eye on your mailbox for an invitation to an official kohanga kiwi release event later in the year. Four kiwi will be 'flying' up from Orana Park in Christchurch to make a permanent home at Rotokare. Planning is underway but dates are yet to be confirmed.

Thank you to our funding supporters:

