

Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi at Rotokare



Issue 2

February 2013

Stakeholder Newsletter

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

December 7th 2012 was a significant day for the Kohanga Kiwi programme, with the release of four adult kiwi into Rotokare. The two males and two females were captive birds from Orana Wildlife Park in Christchurch, though from North Island Brown Kiwi stock originally.

The event was supported by a sponsorship of \$ 2,500 per bird. Sponsor representatives from DFE Pharma, Taranaki Feats, OMV and Harris Taylor Ltd went out with the kiwi handlers to release the birds.

After placing the birds in burrows in their new home in our predator-free environment, everyone came back smiling. It is a special thing to be part of releasing kiwi into a place where they will be safe to live and breed for many years to come.

November and December have been busy with kiwi call recording around the district, covering the Hutiwai Valley, Waitaanga Forest, Makino Forest, Moki Forest, Mt Messenger Forest, Tangarakau Gorge and Mt Damper in North Taranaki, and Waitiri and Glen Nui closer to home. Catching contractors were here for a week in November and ten



7 December 2012 release of "Tu" (top), "Arna" (middle) and "Riri" (bottom)

days in December and were able to catch and put transmitters on several males located by the surveying.



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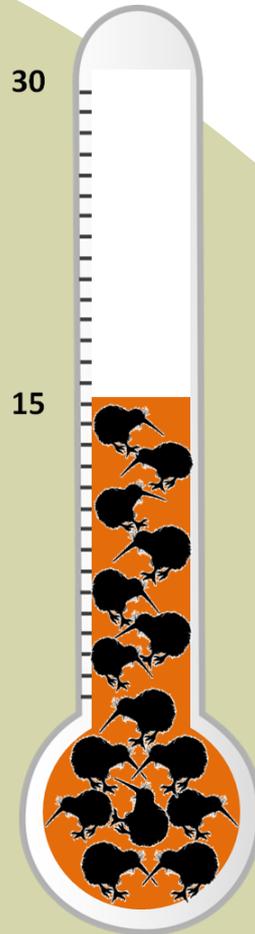
As a result, egg lifts have taken place (taking eggs from the male at night when it hops off the nest – it is the male who incubates the eggs for 80 days) from two Hutiwai birds, the Moki bird and the Waitiri bird. For example, the Waitiri bird, on Brian and Audrey Thomas's property, had two eggs lifted on the night of 13th December, one of them 60-70 days old, the other one younger. Carried carefully out of the bush, they were driven to Kiwi Encounter at Rotorua and incubated until hatching. The oldest chick "Waitiri Squeak" then came to Rotokare on January 11th. The "spare" chick is destined to go to a DOC protected site elsewhere.

Progress Report

So far 8 adult kiwi and 5 chicks have been released into Rotokare to join the 2 birds that were retained from the previous "Operation Nest Egg" project.

Our catching contractors will return in the non-breeding season (April-June), aiming to capture adult kiwi from unprotected South Taranaki sites including Meremere track, Patea Dam and near Waverley.

So we are well on our way to achieving our target of 30 founder birds for Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi at Rotokare. Already we are enjoying hearing the adult birds call at night around the lake, a sound not heard here for a long time.



Thank you to our first chick supporters:

Jack and Karen Christian who supported the release of "Smith" and Daryl and Teneka Uhlenberg and family who supported the release of "Makino-iti".

Thank you to generous help and support from several private land owners, Eltham Forest, Hutiwai Afforestation Block and the Thomas, Francis, Masters, Irwin, Lovell and Stewart families. Thanks also to support from the Department of Conservation staff, Iwi, and volunteers.

15 Kiwi at Rotokare as of 5 March 2013:

- 2 Remaining from original "Operation Nest Egg": Bruce Lee (male) and Nutter (female)
- 4 Adult males released: Rotorangi, Waitiri, Riri and Tu
- 4 Adult females released: Pukekino, Whenuakura, Dearheart, Arna
- 5 Chicks released: Lovell, Smith, Squeak, Moki, Makino-iti

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.

We are seeking further support

for the rearing and release of additional chicks.

We are providing the opportunity for families to support by donation of \$500, and businesses to sponsor for \$1500 + GST.

Contact us for further discussion if you are interested.

Thank you to our funding supporters:



Thank you to our December 7th release sponsors:

**DFE Pharma, Taranaki Feats
Harris Taylor Ltd, OMV**