



Taranaki Kiwi Trust

Patron: Sir Paul Reeves

Annual Report for 2003-2004

This is the third Annual Report for the Taranaki Kiwi Trust and covers the period from the **1st of July 2003 to 30th of June 2004**. This report was tabled at the 2004 Annual General Meeting, Monday 4th of October, 2004, at North Egmont Visitors Centre, Egmont National Park.

Taranaki Kiwi Trust Board

During the course of the year there have been some changes to the board of the Taranaki Kiwi Trust. At the Trusts second AGM in October 2003, Barry Hartley was re-elected as Chairman and Jan Fogg accepted the responsibilities as Treasurer. George Mason joined the Trust in July 2003. Kevin Phillips resigned due to new work commitments.

Education and Advocacy

Seven schools, and another two school-aged groups, were visited as part of the "Kiwi in Taranaki" education programme. There has been plenty of positive feedback from schools and groups that have been visited. There have been a handful of talks and presentations to interest groups such as Rotary around the region.

The Trust has had extensive local media coverage in newspapers and on radio, largely as a result of the ENP kiwi conservation programme. The Trust's website (www.taranakikiwi.org.nz) has been drafted by WITT student Brendon Mills.

Egmont National Park kiwi conservation programme

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust and the Department of Conservation was signed in early October 2003. This agreement set the foundations of a partnership to help save the 30 to 40 pair of kiwi in Egmont National Park. The ENP kiwi conservation plan (2003-2008) sets out the details of the predator control programme. The programme was planned in two stages; Stage 1 covering 4,000ha of the North Western slopes of Mt Taranaki, and Stage 2 encompassing 7,700ha of the Pouakai Range.

The Taranaki Kiwi Trust was successful in obtaining a Community Partnership Fund Grant of \$17,000 from the New Plymouth District Council for the trapping programme of the ENP Kiwi Conservation Programme.

Over January and February of 2003, 345 traps were put out on trap-lines in Stage 1, building on a network of approximately 200 already in place. The total current trapped area is 4,400ha.

This is planned to be followed up as soon as possible in July 2003, with further traps being put out along the boundary of the park below Stage1, and up the Waiwhakaiho Track. This work has been delayed due to poor weather. Putting out these remaining traps will bring the total number of traps to 773, covering a larger area of 6,000ha, which is bigger than initially planned for Stage 1. The ability to do this is because of initial budget savings in materials, and the sponsorship of 56 traps by members of the public through the Taranaki Kiwi Trust.

To date (June 2003), since August 2002, when DOC began small scale trapping, the following tally of pests have been caught in the trapping grid; 222 stoats, 10 ferrets, 76 weasels, 558 rats, and 25 hedgehogs. This is a total of 891 pests.

There were two national One Network News articles coverage for the trapping programme and release of “Sunny” the rehabilitated kiwi into ENP. Sunny, an adult female, was released January 2003 in the middle of the trapping grid. Unfortunately she was later killed by a dog.

An Operation Nest Egg project proposal was submitted to the BNZ Kiwi Recovery Trust in May 2004. This work has been recommended by the Kiwi Recovery Group (KRG), and the bid is for releasing a target of 10 kiwi chicks back into ENP in it's first year. The KRG advises that the ONE programme should run for a minimum of two years in order to quickly boost the population of ENP kiwi. These ONE chicks would come from a batch of 12 to 14 eggs, sourced from eight radio transmitted male kiwi either in ENP or elsewhere in Taranaki. The result of the bid should be known in Late July/early August 2004.

Kiwi Conservation Self-help Programme

The proposed Pukeiti pest-proof fence sanctuary idea has been re-prioritised by the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust. This proposal is now on that Trust's 10 year plan, and they are focusing on their gardens in terms of development, in conjunction with the Taranaki Regional Council's Garden's Project.

This year the interest in controlling pests at Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve, near Eltham, by neighbouring farmers and local people got off the ground. Detailed advice on pest control options was provided to the fledgling “Friends of Rotokare Scenic Reserve” group by DOC, TRC and the TKT. Kiwis do visit the reserve, and are present year-round in a neighbouring private block, within 1 km.

An extensive stoat control proposal is being implemented, and possum control ramped up. Plans exist for controlling rats to low levels as well. The group is also forming a charitable trust: the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust.

Another proposal has also been taken up by this group; to pest-proof fence the 230ha reserve. The Taranaki Kiwi Trust supports the plan in terms of providing a potential site to rear kiwi chicks for release into suitable areas around Taranaki. Such a “kiwi crèche” could supplement remnant kiwi populations with chicks reared from wild sourced eggs, after they had grown out of their vulnerable stage, when under 1.2kg in weight.

Future Activities

The Trust has decided that work will be completed in the following areas for the next year (1st July 2004 – 30th June 2005):

- a. Putting out 56 sponsored traps in Egmont National Park over 5.6 km of trap-line in July 2004.
- b. Undertaking a BNZ Operation Nest Egg project in Egmont National Park, if successful in its recent funding bid.
- c. Launch of website: **www.taranakikiwi.org.nz**
- d. Support the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust in its efforts to protect kiwi; whether by predator trapping or as a kiwi crèche.
- e. Visit 10 school's as part of its education programme.
- f. Increase the "Self-help" programme, and try to foster more pest-control projects around Taranaki to protect kiwi.
- g. Secure funding for the Trust's core activities for a minimum of three years.
- h. Continue to increase awareness of kiwi in Taranaki through the media, brochures, and public talks.

Barry Hartley
Chairman

Cees Bevers
Technical Advisor