

## KIWI HUI 2009

This year's kiwi hui was sponsored and run by BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust and the Kiwi Recovery Group.

The hui's focus was our "local" kiwi species, the North Island brown kiwi, so all the presentations were very relevant to Taranaki issues. A good contingent from Taranaki's conservation organisations attended, including representatives from TKT.

Dog and ferret attacks on kiwi were highlighted, having caused serious loss of adult kiwi at Tongariro forest and in Northland. The dog issue in Northland seems to be a bit different from what we experience – up there the concern is mainly roaming dogs from subdivisions and settlements especially when visitors arrive on holiday. In Taranaki our key problem lies with dogs that work in or near the bush - predominantly farm dogs and hunting dogs. This is where Taranaki kiwi require assistance, and we have to take a different approach to other areas, including targeting owners of hunting and farm dogs with our kiwi aversion training. Work is beginning nationally to standardize dog aversion training. Kris Grabow, our Field Officer, is leading the way with revising our approach to minimising dog attacks on kiwi in Taranaki.

We were reminded not to forget about the damage ferrets can do and we may have to increase the number of larger traps we use, especially in farmland areas where rabbits, a food source for ferrets, are common. Another approach is to manage kiwi in a such a way that the population can withstand periodic attack. That's easy to say but hard to achieve.

Several presenters demonstrated new trap designs and we learnt that there are some promising new toxins under development, including one specific to stoats.

We learnt more about modeling of kiwi populations to better understand where we should concentrate our efforts and for how long. We heard of a very effective sponsorship arrangement at Waikaremoana, and it was inspiring to hear a fresh view from the sponsor. The best aspect of the hui was connecting with many of the 160 kiwi enthusiasts from all around New Zealand. There is tremendous momentum to protect kiwi and it's great to be part of it. Kiwi hui proceedings will be available soon on from BNZ's web site [www.savethekiwi.org.nz](http://www.savethekiwi.org.nz).



### Field Officer's Report

I have been fortunate to work with three schools over the last two terms. Pupils of Ngamatapouri, Marco and Uruti schools are proving to be very keen caretakers of wildlife in their communities, studying kiwi and wider themes such as maintaining and sustaining our environment – excellent work. Pupils are led by extremely enthusiastic teachers who enable this wonderful work to happen.

Demand for predator trapping plans continues. Some of this work is being delayed, as we are currently limited by funding availability - this is something we are working hard on. We continue to progress, although slower than we would like. In May another trapping plan was set up extending over two properties in Puniwhakau. Ultimately, we hope to be able to expand on the trap lines we have set up on these two properties, which is great news for kiwi in the area.

In April I attended the annual kiwi hui with our Chairperson, Jenny Steven. A hot topic was dog attacks on kiwi, providing good motivation to keep up the kiwi aversion dog training.

The kiwi breeding season for the ONE kiwi has all but drawn to a close as winter descends upon us. I say 'all but' since the transmitter of one male (called Hopkirk) began giving the signal that he had started incubating another clutch of eggs – turns out it was a false alarm!

Kris Grabow



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## Taranaki's Kiwi and Biodiversity Forums

Working together is becoming a theme in Taranaki. With Taranaki Regional Council's (TRC) help, there is now a Taranaki Kiwi Forum in place. This is where all the groups working for kiwi protection can get share ideas, resolve issues and better understand how we differ and where we have things in common. There is so much to do across such a large area - it's not surprising we need action on many fronts. The forum has led to skilled kiwi-call surveyors being involved in other groups' surveys and TRC has produced a map of all projects which are in-place or planned in the future.

Looking beyond kiwi, there is now also a Taranaki Biodiversity Forum. This is a way that all charitable groups and agencies such as councils and DOC can share ideas and make progress in a coordinated way. The most recent Biodiversity Forum meeting was held in early June. It focused on advances in pest control and threats to biodiversity from fragmentation and habitat loss. It was shocking to hear that over 17,000 ha of native forest is lost each year in NZ. This means kiwi habitat continues to be lost. On the positive side, it was reassuring to hear that stoat trapping does not tend to cause significant increases in rats. Rats aren't a direct threat to kiwi, but are sure to have an impact on invertebrate food supply and food chains. The forum discussions reminded us all that we need to take a big-picture approach, clarify goals, and accept that pest interactions and responses across the landscape are complex. It also highlighted that we don't know all the answers yet, but we are heading in the right direction. Thank you to Landcare Research scientists for coming to our region and to Rob Phillips at TRC.

### RECENT KIWI RELEASES

On the 7th of April two kiwi chicks were released on the same day, one in Aotuhia and a second in the Egmont National Park. The two chicks travelled together from Bushy Park in Wangai, where they were 'creched' at the pest-free sanctuary, to Stratford, then went their separate ways.

While Rapa was released in Aotuhia, a well protected burrow was found for Herangi by TKT Trustee Cees Bevers and his son Stefan in the Egmont National Park, near Egmont Road.

Herangi was very lively in the box, and was very keen to get out into the bush, but seemed satisfied with his new home, a temporary release burrow, snuggling down and hiding in behind the fern fronds covering its entrance. Meanwhile Rapa was sent off by Aotuhia locals and pupils from both the Makahu and Marco Schools.



'Shhhhhh, got to be quiet, kiwi's asleep in there!' - Stefan Bevers (2) knows to keep quiet when the kiwi are asleep in their transport boxes. Egmont National Park kiwi chick release in April.

**YES! I'D LOVE TO HELP! BY...** VOLUNTEERING SOME TIME  DONATING SOME MONEY

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Please call me about volunteer work

**Yes!** I/we would like to help pay for checking traps in Egmont National Park (one year \$55, two years \$110, or other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes!** I/we would like to donate a trap-box for predator control to protect kiwi in Taranaki (trap-box/es at \$65 each) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

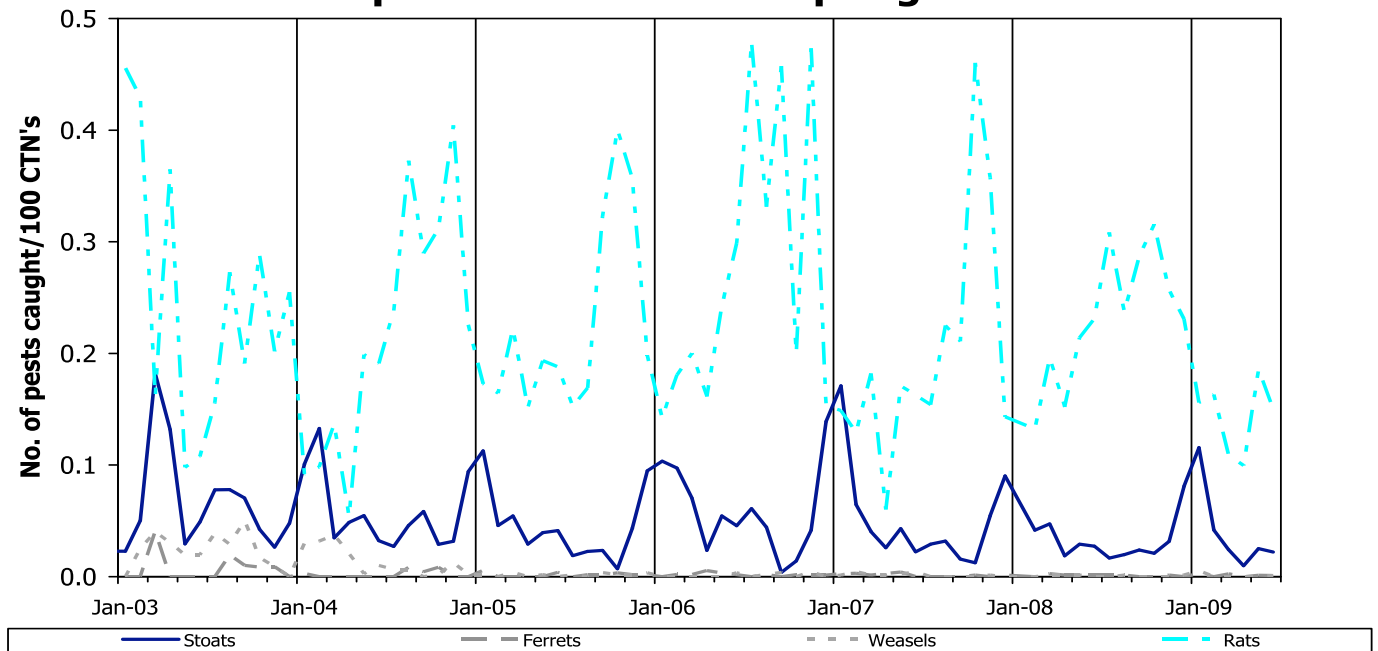
**Yes!** I/we would like to donate money to be used where it's most needed to save kiwi in Taranaki \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donations over \$5 are tax-deductible (we will send you a receipt).

All donors become members of '**Friends of Taranaki Kiwi**' and will receive our regular newsletters

**Please send to:** Taranaki Kiwi Trust, P.O Box 867, New Plymouth 4340

## ENP Kiwi & Blue Duck predator trapping catches per 100 corrected trap-nights



**Trapping results in Egmont National Park** are showing a reasonably consistent trend in catch numbers from year to year now. The data above are up until June 2009. The most recent summer season peak for stoats seems to be closer to the long-term average for the last 6 years. Interestingly, rat numbers seem to be well down based on previous years, which saw some large peaks. Catch rates after the planned park-wide aerial 1080 drop for possum control will be interesting, as rats are effectively controlled this way too. Stoats can also be affected through eating poisoned rats.



### News from the Mountain

We are aiming to protect an iconic species on our iconic mountain. The joint DOC-TKT Egmont National Park (ENP) Kiwi Conservation Programme is continuing in a big effort to restore a sustainable population of kiwi on the Mountain – Mt Taranaki /Egmont. The predator trapping project covering 7500ha is helping protect the small but growing population of kiwi on the mountain. 38 kiwi have been released into the trapped area through the second strand of our Kiwi Conservation Programme, the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust's Operation Nest Egg. With protection from predators, existing birds may also be breeding successfully.

We expanded the trapping network onto the Pouakai Range and to east along Pembroke Rd after several great years of funding from the community trapline sponsorships, DOC, and grants from Lotteries Environment and Heritage and Pacific Development and Conservation Trust. A number of volunteers did trap checks during summer on the existing network which meant the trapping intensity could continue, even though we have spent our large grants. Because of the rugged conditions on Mt Taranaki/Egmont we aim to pay a contractor to do all 18 trap checks per year. Taranaki Kiwi Trust is very pleased that DOC has recognised the importance of continuing trapping and has put more funding into this project.

We are keen to extend the trapline up Mangorei Track and have had a generous donation to get this underway (with volunteers doing the checks). We don't want to jeopardize the existing network by spreading funding too thinly, but maybe one day the traplines and

kiwi will extend as far as Oakura residents' back yards and right around the mountain. A dream perhaps...

The Trust is enjoying working with Emily King, biodiversity ranger from DOC, in our partnership programme. Emily is a strong advocate for kiwi conservation and given us great support, pushing hard through DOC's business planning processes to ensure biodiversity on the Mountain gets adequate support. She's also spent long cold hours out listening for kiwi. Jack Mace and Emily organised this years kiwi call count survey. Bad weather interrupted the survey for a while but we now have a good baseline dataset covering several years. Unfortunately, there weren't many calls, but this was as expected. The newly-released kiwi probably aren't calling yet. We will have to wait a couple more years to hear whether our conservation programme is a success. Thanks to all the DOC staff and volunteers who helped with the survey.

The traps on the Mountain target stoats, the main threat to kiwi chick survival. We are also very aware that roaming dogs and ferrets can devastate kiwi populations, killing adults and young. The DOC200 brand traps catch the occasional ferret, like the one caught at the top of Henry Peak. Ferrets instinctively go into burrows at night searching for rabbits but they might find an adult kiwi on a nest or a vulnerable chick instead. Dogs might go roaming in the National Park from farms, lifestyle blocks and visitors' cars, but because our kiwi aren't monitored with transmitters we can't see these impacts. Dogs are not permitted in the park.

Please help protect the Mountain's kiwi by controlling your dogs and informing visitors about the risks to kiwi.

## CHICK STATISTICS - O.N.E

Below is a summary of adult male productivity from the last 4 breeding seasons

Name of Male	Number of chicks
TaKT	10
Billdozer	10
Kingi	11
Kimball	7
Hendry	0

New adults recruited in 2009, results from 1st season

Name of Male	Number of chicks
Uncle Sandy	3
Hartley	3
Hopkirk	0
Bailey	0
Clarkson/Hendry	0

## BIRD AVERSION TRAINING

TKT continues to subsidise and organise dog aversion training in Taranaki, something we have been doing for 3 years now.

We are looking to expand this - in particular to rural hill country areas of our region where kiwi live literally on farmers doorsteps. Kiwi forage on pastureland, putting themselves into the range of working farm dogs. This training is intended to be offered free to farmers, be mobile, and not be limited to only kiwi aversion, but general bird aversion training (e.g.chooks, ducks, pukekos).

The Taranaki Regional Council is in support of this extended training, but the next big step is to secure funding for this to become possible.

In the mean time, please email Kris if you have dogs to be trained and she will add you to the contact list and call you before the next weekend course.

[info@taranakikiwi.org.nz](mailto:info@taranakikiwi.org.nz).



TSB Community Trust



P. O Box 867

NEW PLYMOUTH 4340