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Newsletter of the Taranaki Kiwi Trust

Volume 4, Number 3

August 2005

Chairperson's Report

Barry Hartley

The winter season has seen the continuation and in some cases the extension of the trapping programmes both on the mountain and in other Kiwi areas. We are now entering the new nesting season and already there is the promise of several eggs which will be uplifted and transported to Rainbow Springs for hatching. The resulting chicks are destined for Egmont National Park within the predator control area where the two released last April are doing well.

In this newsletter you also will find additional projects that the Trust is proceeding with. We are fortunate in having on-going base funding for the Trust's work from the Taranaki Electricity Trust without which we not be able to initiate these programmes.

We have also been fortunate in securing other substantial funding to support particular projects as you will see later in this newsletter.

You can still contribute on a personal basis however, and every contribution counts towards our goal of not just saving Kiwi in Taranaki but ensuring sustainable populations.



Technical Advisor's Report

Cees Bevers

Since the last newsletter we've kept busy in the background working away on a few projects.

The Trust's operation Nest Egg project, in partnership with DOC, and funded by the BNZ Kiwi Recovery Trust has been in the news with the transmitter removals form "Tara" and "Naki". The programme has 11 male kiwi at two eastern Taranaki sites – possible donors for eggs to be lifted from their nests. Sid Marsh, our kiwi monitoring expert, is keeping a close (not too close...) an eye on these guys. Already Sid is already preparing for imminent egg lifts from two of them as this newsletter goes to print.

On the mountain, the ENP kiwi predator control project in partnership with DOC, and with public donations, is still breaking all trap-catch records in Taranaki. Since August 2002 we have caught a total of 553 stoats, 25 ferrets, 95 weasels, 7 feral cats, 2,195 rats, 3 rabbits and 56 hedgehogs. A total of 2,934 pests!

Soon the Trust will launch a programme to help people wanting to help kiwi in Taranaki. The TSB community Trust has generously donated \$50,000 allowing us to buy traps to help kiwi.

Our thanks to TET for supporting the work of Taranaki Kiwi Trust

AGM

You are invited to attend the fourth AGM of the Taranaki Kiwi Trust, which will be held on Saturday 15th Oct, at 2.30pm, at Puke Ariki.

Our guest speaker will be Clare Travers from Rainbow Springs "Kiwi Encounter", who will discuss the work that the team does there, and the difficulties which have been overcome to raise chicks from incubated eggs.

The Trust and the Operation Nest Egg team anticipate that within the next few weeks some kiwi eggs from Taranaki will be travelling to Rotorua, to the incubators and kiwi chick nursery run by Rainbow Springs.

We look forward to seeing you and all the family at the meeting.

Education Programme

This year, the Trust has been invited on 16 occasions to speak to groups. At the schools, nearly 900 children and 80 accompanying adults have seen the kiwi show with Kiwi, egg, and snarling, wicked predators (stuffed). The demonstration traps allow for an appreciation of the designs, and some up-close observations.

Do call the Trust if you would like to arrange a talk, or use our resource pack.

The Kiwi Community Project

A new Project in conjunction with the **TSB Community Trust** 

The TSB Community Trust is supporting a new initiative by the Kiwi Trust to work with private landowners to trap pests in kiwi areas. The Trust will assist landowners with technical advice on where to site traps, and how to maximise kill-rates. The traps have been sponsored by TSB Community Trust, for permanent loan to project participants. It is anticipated that each trapping area will be large enough to keep a population of kiwi safe. The landowners' role will be to maintain the traps; and with the Taranaki Kiwi Trust, keep records of the increasing kiwi and decreasing pest numbers.

These trapping projects will run over many years, and the Kiwi Trust is interested to hear from landowners who are interested in participating. Ideally, we see the protected areas being part of a larger Taranaki effort, where pest control by farmers, DOC, TRC and the possum Self-Help all contribute to the well being of our native wildlife.

Trapping projects need to be of quite a large size, even in the beginning, to make a difference for kiwi. Kiwi predators, stoats and cats, have large home ranges 100-1000ha; and therefore trapping projects need to work on that scale. A minimum size is 200ha. Depending on the landscape and access routes, this minimum core area may need up to 100 stoat traps. Controlling pests in the wider area is better, with a "buffer zone" surrounding a block, and quickly increasing the number of traps. Each project will employ single-set stoat traps, with a proportional number of SA Cat Traps. Using single-set traps is cheaper than using the larger double sets, and spreads resources further in terms of land under protection. The traps provided by TSB Community Trust will allow for up to four 1,000ha kiwi predator control projects in the Taranaki hill-country, with up to 250 stoat traps and 62 cat traps each; or a number of smaller protection blocks of more than 200ha.

If you have a bush area where you know there are kiwi, and are keen to lay trap lines, please contact Cees Bevers, the Technical Advisor to the Kiwi Trust, and discuss your interests, and locality.

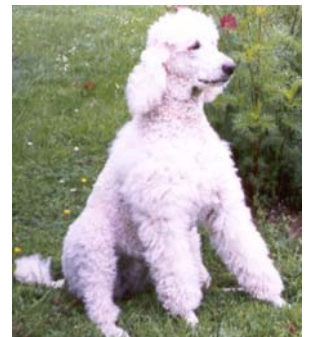
Dog controlled areas

Dog owners who are residents of the New Plymouth District will have seen a pamphlet "Dog Owners Be a Careful Kiwi" arriving with this year's dog registration papers. Egmont National Park is totally out of bounds to dogs. All other conservation areas are open to hunting dogs (not pets) *with a permit*, but subject to exclusions with regard to the *pesticide summary*. Only the western Ruahines are open to companion dogs

The Pesticide Summary is produced quarterly by each Conservancy. This tells hunters, and other people, where pesticides are being used in the Conservancy. A current version of the summary is available on the DOC website under 'Animal Pests' → NZ Pesticide Summary page → Wanganui Conservancy → District maps. The Department of Conservation offices provide hunting permits for people wanting to hunt on public conservation land. In this way hunters are informed of any pest control operations happening in the area they are hunting

It is interesting to read the web information from the East Coast Hawke's Bay on Hunting Dog requirements. "Following a spate of kiwi deaths caused by dogs in the 2003-4 hunting season, the Department of Conservation (DOC) introduced a range of requirements to manage dogs taken into public conservation areas. Kiwi produce an odour which is highly attractive to dogs. The ground dwelling habits of kiwi add to their vulnerability. Even "good dogs" love the smell of kiwi and will attack them. Dogs are known to be a significant predator of kiwi, and this threat must be managed if kiwi are to survive and flourish in the future. In northern Te Urewera, between January 03 and July 04, of 17 monitored kiwi, 13 were found killed. Evidence indicated that all 13 were killed by dogs. DOC recognises that dogs are a vital tool in controlling pests such as pigs and deer in conservation areas.

The Wanganui Conservancy does not have any restrictions regarding compulsory avian aversion training yet. Nationally the issue of dogs on conservation land is being addressed, so there may well be some changes coming soon that put tighter controls on where and what type of dogs are allowed on public conservation land.



This dog has killed 26 chickens and ducks.

Dog Aversion Training Day

The Taranaki Kiwi Trust is planning to hold a dog aversion training day within the next few months, for any hunters who are interested. The dogs will be trained, and certified to be "averse to kiwi". The dogs will avoid kiwi, but can still be rewarded for hunting other birds.

The Trust intends to subsidise the training (normal fee is \$25 per dog).

Please contact the Trust if you would like to attend, and we will set a date.

Trap counts in Egmont National Park

A big thank you to the sponsors of the Community Line trap boxes, and to those who have generously made donations towards clearing the pests from the traps. The Trust also thanks the NPDC for their support during the past year.

The Trust is pleased with the success of the community sponsored trap-boxes along the Ngatoro, Maketawa, Puffer and the Around the Mountain Circuit track trap-lines. The 98 sponsored boxes make up a significant proportion of the total 860 trap-boxes in the programme. To date 7% of all pests caught have been caught on the TKT community line. The fewer we catch the better we are doing in protecting the area.

Pests trapped January 2004 – June 2005

| PEST | TKT Community Line | Entire Trap grid |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Stoats | 35 | 553 |
| Ferrets | 0 | 25 |
| Weasels | 12 | 95 |
| Feral cats | 0 | 7 |
| Rats | 145 | 2195 |
| Hedgehogs | 0 | 56 |
| Rabbits | 1 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 193 | 2934 |

BNZ Operation Nest Egg (ONE) project update

Sue Caldwell, DOC Ranger, 15/8/05



Sid Marsh, the kiwi tracking expert, has been back with us for almost a month now, tracking the wild transmitterd kiwi at Purangi and Aotuhia.

It was a case of are-they or aren't-they at Purangi - initially we thought that perhaps Titoko and Maru may have been holding (they were in the same position a few days in a row), but subsequent checks shattered that illusion!

Turned out they were giving us the run around - so it was back to square one, but with a twice weekly checking cycle on all of the kiwi we will have a clear idea of any nesting activity as time progresses. From our two- to three-weekly checks on the birds, the Purangi kiwi named Aitken, Maru, Titoko (all males), and Nahe (female) are all moving around their territories freely, with only Schumacher appearing in the same location on several occasions over the last few weeks, indicating that she may be hanging around her nesting mate.

From the six Aotuhia kiwi (all males), it appears that Kimball, Billdozer, Caskey, Kingi, and TAKT are all nesting, with Hendry the only one moving around! TAKT reappeared last week after going AWOL for quite some time (we had been unable to track him at all since we started on 4th July); and it appears he has made up for lost time by settling down on a nest pretty much straight away.

So things look very promising for first clutch eggs from the Aotuhia birds. The staff at Rainbow Springs are primed and ready to go - the first eggs of the season

started arriving there at the end of June from other areas, so they are gearing up for another busy year.

Friends of Taranaki Kiwi Trust

The Trust is keen to build up an email list of friends and associates, as we see the email as being a fast, paper-free way of contacting those who are interested in the ongoing projects.

If you have an email, please will you visit the Trust website, www.taranakikiwi.org.nz and go to the "contact us" page, fill in your name and email address and press "send". If you would prefer to receive the newsletters by email, please indicate this in the message space, or just email the Trust, info@taranakikiwi.org.nz

Website News: www.taranakikiwi.org.nz

The Taranaki Kiwi Trust regularly updates the website with colour photos – click on the "latest news" button to see them, or go to the page with News and Newsletters.

If you have heard or sighted kiwi, please email, or phone Cees on 06 759 8005.





The Newsletter of the Taranaki Kiwi Trust

Would you like more information ?

- ◆ For assistance to protect kiwi on private land?
- ◆ Planning pest trapping in kiwi territory?
- ◆ Finding out facts for school projects?

Would you like to contribute?

The Trust appreciates financial assistance to get traps checked in Egmont National Park. On average, it costs about \$3 each time a trap-box is checked by trappers. Traps are checked 18 times a year; every 2 weeks from October to April, and every four weeks for the rest of the year. You can help check traps with a tax-deductible donation of \$55, or by donating a new trap-box for predator control protecting Taranaki kiwi, at \$65 each.

Please send your donation with your contact details so we can keep you informed about the projects.

Would you like to be involved?

The Trust would like to hear from you. We will have projects this year which range from deploying traps and locating kiwi, to folding newsletters, entering data or assisting with our education programme.

Please contact us, and give us your details if you wish to be on the mailing list, or visit our website.

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'Tara' and 'Naki' are now transmitter-free, and wild in Egmont National Park.

Here, DOC staff remove the transmitter and weigh Tara. Not very dignified, but it was a very happy day for the Operation Nest Egg chicks, and the release team.



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