

To promote and facilitate the protection of sustainable populations of kiwi in Taranaki

 **CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENT—JULY 2007**



It has been a very busy time with kiwi activities in Taranaki this year. But first, my apologies for the lack of an April newsletter. I hope you caught up with some of the Trust's news in the papers and national TV news instead.

So what's been happening? We had a wonderful, though fairly hectic, "Kiwi Big Day Out" on 3 April, with a mass release of kiwi chicks into Egmont National Park. Eight chicks in one day! These chicks were some of the 18 raised this year under the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust Operation Nest Egg. We also used this

event as an opportunity to thank our major sponsors, funders and partners whilst celebrating the Trust's first 5 years of work.

We weren't sure how many chicks would arrive back from their kiwi crèche at Bushy Park. We had a big team down there on round-up duties the day before the big release. The chicks were all fitted with radio transmitters, but that didn't mean they were all easy to track down, or easy to catch. Still, Sid Marsh, Dean Caskey of DOC, Kris (TKT's Field Officer) and crew succeeded in bringing all eight chicks to Taranaki, back to a waiting crowd of 70 or more well-wishers.

Kiwi management planning is in full swing these days, with a new national Kiwi Recovery Plan in draft form, and taxa management plan for the Western Race of the North Island Brown Kiwi due for development later this year. Operational planning for the joint DOC-TKT Egmont National Park Kiwi Conservation Programme is also underway. We are moving to a three-year operational plan, and DOC staff are going to do some population modelling so we have a better idea when we have reached our goals for kiwi population recovery on the mountain. As a Trust, we have also been working hard on our own strategic planning. Carolyn Brough and I attended a strategic and funding planning workshop organised by BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust, which was extremely worthwhile. It opened our eyes to some new opportunities and reinforced the benefits of good plans. More paperwork, but I'm sure it will help protect more of Taranaki's kiwi in the end.

The practical work also continues, with school and public talks, kiwi aversion training course for dogs, plus site visits to landowners throughout Taranaki who are interested in protecting kiwi on their properties. The Trust has a trap loan and advice scheme, the TSB Community Trust funded 'Community Kiwi Programme'.

We have Friends of Taranaki Kiwi living in all parts of New Zealand. I hope the wild weather hasn't caused havoc for you in your part of the world. We welcome your attendance at future kiwi releases. If you are keen to come, just let us know and we will contact you as soon as possible before the next planned release. You'll get to see a kiwi at very close range and there is no walking involved. Thanks for your support.

Best wishes

Jenny Steven, TKT Chair

Upcoming releases: There are 3 more chicks in the care of Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs in Rotorua. Two of these chicks will be ready for release into the wild, one in early August, one a little later — please contact Kris, the Trust's Field Officer, if you would like to attend this August release.



The Taranaki Electricity Trust generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust



TKT Fundraiser

Navy blue polo shirts with an embroidered TKT logo are available from **Kiwi Outdoors** on Ariki Street, New Plymouth. In child and adult sizes.

Child	\$35
Adult	\$45



Shay Dean (Taranaki Regional Council)



Firstly a special thanks to those who designated a donation for purchase of NZ Predators books that we give to schools for their library after our request in the last news letter. With your help we were able to purchase a full box at good discount and now have these on hand to give out as we visit.

During Term One 3 schools, St Joseph's Patea, Kaponga and Ramanui used our resources for kiwi studies and invited us in to talk to the students. At St Joseph's the whole school studied kiwi and some other threatened birds while at Kaponga a group of more senior students earned the privilege of studying kiwi and asked some challenging questions. Ramanui School had a Year 2 class studying kiwi who were excited to see "a real kiwi"—the mounted one we borrow from DOC for talks.

We were privileged to have students from Kura Kaupapa Maori o Ngati Ruanui join us along with representatives from St Joseph's Patea and the local Midhirst School at our Big Release day.

Currently we have a static display at the North Egmont Visitor Centre. If anybody can suggest sites, venues or events that would be suitable for us to mount displays at or have manned displays at we'd love to hear from you and of course we're always looking for volunteers who'd like to help in any way with the education side of our work—contact Carolyn at schools@taranakiwiwi.org



Pupils from St Joseph's, Patea, with Kris Grabow

STOP PRESS The youngest chick, Waiti, hatched on 2 July. It is from a very late 4th clutch incubated by Kimball at Aotuhia. It was the last chick to hatch from Kiwi Encounter's 2006/07 season. We will take Waiti to the Bushy Park kiwi crèche when it is about 3 weeks old and is feeding and growing well. Once over 1kg it will come back to Taranaki forests. Claire Travers from Kiwi Encounter commented that it was a first for her to have eggs in the incubation room that come from both the end of one season and the start of the next. Sid Marsh is about to begin breeding checks for the new season, so we also have one season rolling into another. Kiwi work never stops!



TKT FIELD OFFICER'S REPORT



Kris Grabow

The months have raced by and winter is upon us now! The major event since last newsletter was the big release of eight chicks into Egmont National Park in early April. At this event we were also highlighting TKT's 5th anniversary and wanted to say a special thank you to our major sponsors. Releases are always very special as they are the culmination of many people's effort to reach this point. We are planning several smaller releases. There will be opportunities for Friends of Taranaki Kiwi to come to these. Please register your interest.

I was fortunate to assist in the round-up of these eight chicks from the kiwi crèche at Bushy Park, Wanganui. What a fantastic experience. Several chicks were extremely evasive, hunkering-up under thick supplejack masses and fern. It was great to recognise some of St Joseph's School children from Patea at the kiwi release, having given a kiwi talk at their school some days earlier.

I was involved in some kiwi egg lifts last season and these were amazing experiences. Some were all-nighter missions, but they were well worth the effort. I will relay my accounts on the TKT website. Enquiries are rolling in for the TKT Community Kiwi Programme (CKP), where a pest trapping plan and traps are provided to private land owners with kiwi habitat. In March another project came to fruition, with the Trust deploying approx 140 traps at Jensen's property at Matau, with much help from Chris Jensen, with another 90 set out by Chris — great work. It was an inspiring day out. Many thanks to Chris & Ann Jensen, and to East Taranaki Kiwi Trust who are helping with supplies and data analysis for this CKP project.

Coming up are kiwi aversion dog training courses, with the next one over 28-29 July. Please contact me to enlist. This is an informative, short course which helps makes your dogs avoid kiwi in bush areas.

Kiwi call surveys in Egmont National Park were completed in mid to late April. We had an amazing run of calm weather, with only one evening of survey called off because of poor listening conditions—and freezing temperatures. Many thanks to Dean Caskey and others at DOC for leading the survey and TKT volunteers. This monitoring is carried out annually so we can record the change in kiwi call rates over time.

Yes, there's been a lot happening at TKT. Kiwi work in Taranaki is certainly not slowing down! Keep reading and check the website regularly for more info...

Kris Grabow, TKT Field Officer

TSB Community Trust



The TSB Community Trust generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust

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

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

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

Please send to: Taranaki Kiwi Trust, PO Box 867, New Plymouth 4340

KIWI FACTS FROM THE FIELD

Freelance wildlife officer, Sid Marsh, has discovered some interesting facts during the last breeding season that justifies the hands-off approach we (DOC & TKT) use for kiwi monitoring under Operation Nest Egg.

Sid has found direct evidence that monitored birds, both male and female, re-use burrows if they are not disturbed too much. Although he's suspected this might be the case, it is great to have confirmation that patience and minimal disturbance, i.e. not pulling birds from burrows, is paying off. Examples include the following male birds:

Titoko at Purangi—after leaving his burrow for a few weeks, Titoko returned to his second-clutch burrow. Second clutch went full term and was not disturbed or uplifted;

TaKT at Aotuhia—has a permanent rocky tomo that he uses whenever he's not nesting;

Kimball at Aotuhia—incubated his fourth clutch in this year's second-clutch nest. An egg was successfully uplifted in mid-May under ONE, with the egg removed well after Kimball left the nest. Last egg to be incubated at Kiwi Encounter for the 2006/07 season.



Kiwi monitoring at Purangi

We know that several male kiwi were on nests well into April and May, some on third and fourth clutches. This could explain the absence of male kiwi calls during April in a recent night survey in Eastern Taranaki. The extended breeding season meant that some transmitter changes were deferred (at the risk that batteries might run out before the change), but all have now been completed.

Condensed from email sent by Sid Marsh 23 March 2007

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT: We are thrilled to announce that the Bank of New Zealand Save the Kiwi Trust has granted us \$47,500 (up from \$30,000 last year) for continuation of our joint DOC-TKT Operation Nest Egg programme in Taranaki over the coming year. With the extra input from New Plymouth District Council, we have now achieved full funding for this work for 2007/08.

DOG AVERSION TRAINING

Kiwi aversion training aims to train dogs to avoid chasing and attacking kiwi. Dogs can kill kiwi of all ages and can devastate whole populations. Taranaki Kiwi Trust is running courses for dog owners and their dogs—hunting dogs, farm dogs and domestic dogs—to help prevent the loss of more kiwi in back country.

Date: Saturday 28 July and Sunday 29 July 2007

Venue: Lake Mangamahoe (we can run the course at a venue in your area if we have sufficient numbers)

Cost: \$15 per dog (additional discount for 3 or more dogs)

Trainer: Jim Pottinger, from National Park

Dog types: **Hunting** dogs (especially pig and goat dogs), **farm** dogs or **domestic pet** dogs that live near bush. In particular, those that go wandering and those you take on bush walks.

To book – contact Kris Grabow, Field Officer, info@taranakikiwi.org.nz Ph 027 460 1047 or (06)758-0003



NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL
newplymouthnz.com

The NPDC generously supports the Taranaki Kiwi Trust





*Middle: Maioha on release day 18 April 2007 Right: CKP Team. Jensen's Farm, March 2007
Left: A surprise at a January 2007 egg lift—Kingi's chick, named Brockie*

BNZ OPERATION NEST EGG UPDATE



The latest kiwi to be released into Egmont National Park was Aotuhia, a female North Island brown kiwi chick. She is named for her home area out in eastern Taranaki.

This chick was released as part of the Bank of New Zealand Save the Kiwi Trust funded Operation Nest Egg. In Taranaki, the Operation Nest Egg programme is run by Taranaki Kiwi Trust and the Department of Conservation in a very effective partnership.

Aotuhia began life as an egg in the wilds of Aotuhia in a nest incubated by TaKT, an adult male kiwi. The egg was carefully uplifted and taken

to Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs, in Rotorua, where it was incubated, hatched and cared for until Aotuhia was over 1kg in weight. At this weight, a kiwi chick has a much higher chance of defending itself from a stoat attack. If hatched in the wild, this chick would have had less than a 5% chance of survival to adulthood.

Mr Sandy Parata of Ngati Ruanui led karakia blessing this new kiwi before it was released into Egmont National Park past the end of York Rd, Midhirst. At the release ceremony were some of the Friends of Taranaki Kiwi, including Inglewood Pippins, South Taranaki Forest & Bird, and the Wood family, several landowners interested in protecting kiwi on their own land, Bank of New Zealand staff from Stratford, plus

Trust and DOC people. It was a cold winter's day but spirits were high. Sid Marsh, Wendy Bailey and Jack Mace carried Aotuhia into the forest then released her into a cosy pre-made burrow.

Aotuhia is the 31st young kiwi to be released into the National Park since Operation Nest Egg began 3 years ago. The kiwi are released into an intensively trapped area covering 7500ha in the north and eastern slopes of the National Park.

Check out our website
www.taranakikiwi.org.nz
for more information

SUCCESS IN 2007—AND THANK YOU

We are well on the way to releasing 18 kiwi chicks for the 2006/07 season. It's another great effort that adds to the 18 kiwi raised though ONE in 2005/06. The ENP population is now well on the way to recovery.

Thank you to our ONE sponsors and those who have cared for these kiwi. Special thanks go to:

BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust who are the primary ONE sponsors

New Plymouth District Council Community Funding Partnership for its boost to ONE programme

Kiwi Encounter at Rainbow Springs and **Bushy Park** for their kiwi care and facilities

Taranaki Electricity Trust who support the TKT, including our field officer

Sid Marsh, our careful and skilled kiwi wildlife officer

Landowners at Purangi & Aotuhia, including Ngati Tama iwi

Mr Sandy Parata of Ngati Ruanui who has led our kiwi releases

Friends of Taranaki Kiwi, including volunteer drivers and field helpers

and to the **Department of Conservation**, especially Stratford Area Office staff, our partners in this programme.

Donations are always welcome!

Sponsor an existing trap in ENP (annual donation \$55)—or make a donation for a new trap box (\$65 each)