

## Egg Lifting Adventures at Whirinaki

We thought you might like to hear how we get new chicks. How does it work? Due to an agreement between Ngati Whare, DOC and OKT we are able to collect half of the eggs from the 9 males we have transmitters on in the Whirinaki forest. A trip to harvest eggs means early starts, a 1-2 nights stay in closed DOC huts and (if we hit the jackpot) a \$700 trip to the Murupara DOC office in a helicopter.

We leave home at 6am, getting to the Murupara DOC office at 8am to go through our Health and Safety protocol, including picking up DOC radios. Then we head out to the forest near the township of Minginui. It's a 3-hour tramp to get to the first cluster of four monitored kiwi. This trip is to listen in with the radio tracking gear during daylight so we get an idea of how long the male has been sitting on eggs. There are usually two eggs in the clutch having been laid about 20 days apart. We try to do our egg lifts at around day 60 (they hatch around day 80) to give us the best chance of getting both eggs to hatching.

Once we have the location and days on nest from each kiwi we plan our egg lift operation to minimise the number of trips and cost, and maximise the number of eggs we bring out.

Egg lift trip days are the same early start and tramp into the kiwi. This time though we use the tracking gear to identify exactly where the male is nesting without disturbing him. We head back to the hut marking a track with reflector markers. At the hut we have an early dinner and head back to the burrow site to wait until the male leaves the nest to forage for food (any time between 10pm and 3am). We lift the eggs, candle them and place them in a carry box, being careful to keep them in the same upright position they were in when in the nest. We confirm the helicopter and tramp back to the hut (thank goodness for those reflector markers!) to get a little more sleep. The 7am helicopter gets us back to the DOC Murupara office and we take the eggs by road to the wonderful staff at Kiwi Encounter who hatch them and raise them until they are 1000 grams in weight. Then it is off to the crèche at Warrenheip to grow strong and learn how to find their own food without the worry of predators. Finally, our kiwi have a trip to Otanewainuku to their new home. [Interview with David Brown](#)

Here's an excerpt from Sheryl Petersen's diary: 6 - 7 May — *A walk on the wild side.*

*No pics as we both discarded anything not deemed essential for the job or safety. Dave B and I set out far too early Sat morning for the yearly TX changing on the Minginui ONE kiwi. We allowed three days to get around two huts and four birds. Both of us holding memories of grunt saddles and long steep sided spurs. Weather is perfect and holding for the duration... Sarah handed over the hut keys with a smile and "Hope the hut's still there, no one's been to check since the big rain. Also would appreciate any track info on what needs work" Are we in for a longer harder slog than usual? As it turned out, no. We both suffered on the up hills and chose to unload unnecessary gear on the ridge once a kiwi was within stalking distance.*

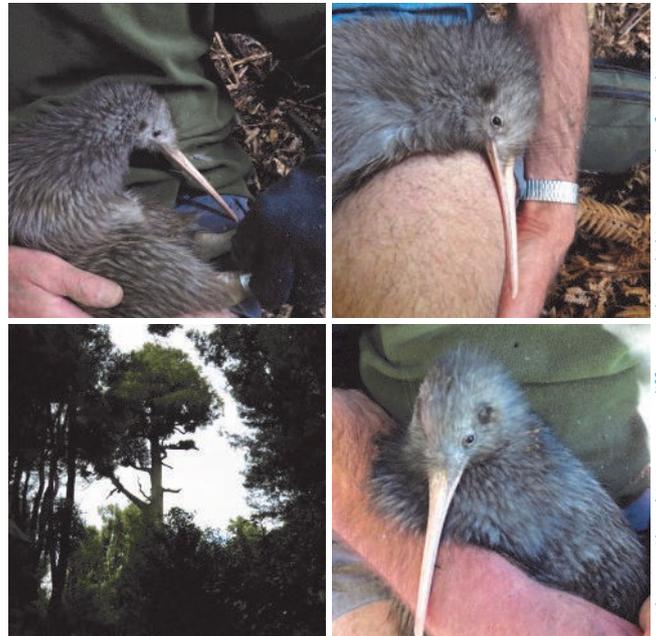
*Nohotoa was in his usual gully head on a not so vertical slope. Easy to track and extract. Band done and back up top ready to move on at 2.20. A great start, well within time frame to bypass Minginui Hut and march on to Mangamate the first night. If the stars are kindly Rocky hangs out on a trap line that follows a long ridge behind Mangamate Hut. If the gods are grumpy he's off the edge in abseiling country. Our luck was in again, our boy was on the ridge top 35 minutes along from the junction. An easy extraction again. Yes, we're on a roll. 2 birds done and back at the junction just on dark. Thank goodness for glow spots and headlamps... [continued over the page.](#)*

## Annual Public Meeting

**When:** 6.30pm Wednesday 28 June **Where:** H110 lecture room (next to the Atrium) Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology (formerly BOP Polytechnic) 70 Windermere Dr

**Who:** Carolyn King, Professor Waikato University & mustelid behaviour expert

Prof. King's researches the ecology of small rodents and mustelids, especially stoats and weasels. Other research areas include: philosophy and management of national parks, and traditional and contemporary relationships between science and theology. She is the Senior Editor of the New Zealand Journal of Zoology.



Photos: Sheryl Petersen — different Whirinaki kiwi a couple of weeks



Photo: Facebook

## Stewardship in action

As always it is a challenge to distil all that has happened over the last six months and then decide what to include in this newsletter. I know the stories and articles here only reflect some of what we do. They are inspiring and informative.

As a Trust, we are deeply indebted to all our volunteers. I would like to acknowledge the kiwi team for all the hard work and long hours they put in. As you can see, their work at Whirinaki is a great example of our Trust value of Stewardship in action.

This Whirinaki project is also an excellent example of a wider conservation stewardship. Some of the males we have transmitters on are from areas where there is minimal predator control. The eggs and the chicks have little to no chance of surviving in the wild. By partnering with Ngati Whare, our kiwi team can collect those eggs, hatch them at Kiwi Encounter O.N.E. and eventually bring them into the relative protection of Otanewainuku. It is conservation stewardship of national significance for the eastern brown kiwi recovery. Not only are we building our own population of kiwi, we are also playing a significant conservation stewardship role in protecting the Whirinaki population.

Next time you meet with one of the kiwi team, I encourage all of you to join me in saying, "Thank you. Keep up the good work."

Hans Pendergrast | Chair

## Myrtle Rust

Pohutukawa, rata, ramarama, manuka and kanuka are all members of the myrtle family. Feijoas bottle brush and eucalypts are also affected.

If you see this fungus **DON'T TOUCH!** Take a photo and contact MPI on 0800 809 966.



Myrtle rust — *Uredo rangelii*

## Kōkako update

In August 2016 the Trust translocated a further 11 kōkako from Kaharoa to Otanewainuku to boost genetic diversity within the resident population. Overall the translocation went well but, unfortunately, we did lose one of the new birds early on to stoat predation. (Can you see the transmitter aerial in this pic?)

All of the kōkako (except one) were fitted with transmitters. They were monitored weekly and more often than not they went AWOL. The transmitters performed well and gave plenty of useful information which will aid further work. The birds independently took a tiki-tour around the forest checking out the resident established kōkako and sorting out a piece of the forest where they could establish a territory, and call it home. Not every bird played by the rule book; two male birds decided that the water catchment bordering the mountain had more appeal. They have established territories about one kilometre apart.

Sheryl and I spent a few days in the water catchment checking those two birds and we didn't come across any other kōkako, so I'm hopeful that come breeding season they might return to Otanewainuku. Most of the new birds have established territories close to other established kōkako pairs where they can hear each other sing during the morning chorus.

The most interesting of the new birds is #22. She can't decide where she wants to live and splits her time between Otanewainuku and the water catchment. Every couple of weeks she leaves her residence in Otanewainuku and heads seven km down to a spot in the water catchment which is only about half a km from Oropi Rd. She stays there about a week then heads back to the same spot in Otanewainuku. I don't know what she is looking for, but I hope she finds it! She has now made the trip about 12 times. I followed her back a couple of times and she covers the seven kms in a single day, which for a bird that can't fly is amazing. Great to watch her cross the road, she heads up the tallest tree then sizes up the gap and glides across to another tree and heads off.

One kōkako dropped its transmitter, which I recovered from up a tree. The transmitter harness has a weak link built in so that if it gets caught on (say) a branch, then it breaks and allows the bird to go free. Activity around the new kōkako is being kept to a minimum; their behaviour shows that they are still quite shy and wary after the catching and relocation process so they are mostly just being left to settle into their new home.

Thanks to the support of Legacy Trust [Dave Edwards](#)

## Meet Freckle!

Thanks to everyone who entered our Facebook Competition to name a kiwi. Our winner is Jennifer Stormy.

## Trappers update

Welcome to our new 'Stoaties!' Trapping is going well, though we would love some more stoat trappers to either take on a line and relieve some of long-time volunteers, or act as back-up when people go away on holiday. Big thanks to [Damien](#) for all the rabbits and to Stretch for prepping them for us. We continue to alternate our traps with egg and salted rabbit meat and hope that an effective synthetic stoat lure will be discovered soon.

Jenny Meehan M. 027 710 0517

## ... continued from page 1

*At 6.05 pm a female called, the bearing pointing to our hut. She was very close. In the wee small hours Dave heard a male below and close. Don't think either are ours. We hit the hut at 6.30, ate, prepared for the next day and crashed by 7.45pm.*

*Sunday another perfect day in paradise. Titoko was our first quarry and the most challenging. Up log jam creek, bouncy signals had us up both sides before the true course was found. Because of bluffs we had to go up then drop down again. The catch and banding went smoothly.*

*Raapare was well cornered, thank goodness, in a rock burrow on a rock face at the very end of his spur. I'm getting real good at considering every foot and gear move before doing it. There wasn't any room for error at this point. Got done without incident and tucked him securely back into the dark. We chose the quick slide down the spur side to Mangamate camp rather than backtrack. Mangamate Stream has had the big blow out, making walking out easy.*

*Back at Murupara Vol house at 6pm. An entire trip with everything going in our favour (well except for an extra 40 min drive each direction because the Main Rd is washed out) 4 birds, 2 days, cleaned up, fed and in bed by 8. Nite all. [Sheryl Petersen](#)*



Photo: Suzanne Williams



Photo: Sheryl Petersen

# Volunteer Family: Martin Slimin, Kiri Diamond and whanau

**How and when did you first get involved with the Trust?** At the release of Maui and Whetu and in 2007, Martin and I and our children Jodeci and Waimirangi were invited up by Des Heke-Kaiawha since Martin was helping Des with a report for the Ottawa block. *(This was the first time we had released kiwi into Otago—Ed)*

**Why did you want to get involved?** Martin was doing his Bachelor in Environmental Science and has a love for the bush, especially birds. Waimirangi shares her father's passion and connection to the bush and birds. Mine was to get to know the plants and bush for Rongoā Māori (Māori medicine).

**What role do you now have within the Trust?** Martin is a part of the Ops team and as a family we help with kiwi monitoring and relocations.

**What have been the highlights of your involvement so far?** Waimirangi got to go behind the scenes at Kiwi Encounter. She found what she wants to do when she grows up. Mine and Martin is this being the family activity that we do together. We don't like the same sports or music so this is the common interest that we share.

**What is one thing the public could do to aid conservation efforts in NZ?**

Well I guess this year it would be to vote and have a say to give more resources to conservation. Not just to maintain it as a tourist attraction but to rebuild it so that it can sustain generations to come. Otherwise I guess don't assume that someone else will look after our environment. Get out and get to know your environment and how it sustains you and your family's wellbeing.

**Did you know....?**

Martin did the research and wrote the report that gave us the rubber stamp to reintroduce kōkako to Otago. [Otago Canopy Response to Possum Control](#)

## Talks to Groups

There is a strong level of interest in the work of the Trust and the education and advocacy team is in high demand. School groups, service clubs, and students from tertiary institutions are keen to have guided field trips or talks at meetings. A recent field trip from Bayswater retirement village was a rare treat for residents, including two 92 year old ladies who were delighted to stroll along the rimu track and enjoy the company of those friendly bush robins.

This month four volunteers guided two groups totalling almost 100 six years olds from Omanu school on the rimu track. They were supported by a great turnout of parents and with a mild sunny day the forest was looking at its best and everyone had a close encounter with bush robins, also sighting tui and bellbirds. Overseas students have also enjoyed guided walks at Otago, expressing their appreciation of the richness and variety of the tree and fern species and, most of all, the fact that it is so safe to walk in our forests.

[Carole Long](#) | Education and Advocacy

## Pistachio's story – Video Parts 1 & 2

Pistachio was the first fertile kiwi egg collected at Otago since the Trust began.

Aaron Smart has completed part 2 of this story and it's a lovely one which includes footage taken at Warrenheip crèche. Check it out on our website under the about tab or go to this link: <https://vimeo.com/196691819>

## Kiwi Update

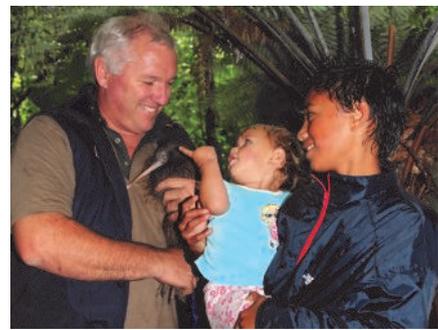
The known kiwi at Otago now number 20, and yes, five pairs have bonded and created territory of their own. We have great hopes for a big increase in egg production this breeding season as our bonded pairs from last year settle down to business. Kaha's eggs in January hatched successfully giving us another two females, now part of the crèche group.

Tahi (number 1) has just been released into Otago. Tahi is a gift to us from the wonderful folk at Kiwi Encounter. He had been part of their captive breeding programme and has sired many dozens of chicks. He was hatched at Kiwi Encounter, Rainbow Springs on 12 January 1987. His father was Te Matai (h. 1977) from Te Puke and his mother Tamahine (h. 1979) from Whakatane. We have lined up a couple of blind dates for him with Pistachio and Maui, two of our female kiwi who are keen to meet an out of town male. Sheryl tracked our own Pistachio down for a check up and popped her into Tahi's release burrow, so she could 'get acquainted' with his scent. Watch this space!

We now have ten kiwi juveniles at the Waikato crèche who will be building up their strength and ability to find food over the 2017 Winter and Spring. Releases into the forest will begin around December, when the Kiwi Encounter chicks hatched from this year's egg lifts are ready to move into the crèche in the Waikato.

The Trust has approved the concept of the proposed kiwi fence. Note this is **not** a predator-proof fence, but it will reduce the chances of kiwi wandering out of the protected area. Next step is the consultation process.

[David Brown](#) | Kiwi Manager



Dave Wills, Waimirangi and Jodeci Slimin at the release of Maui and Whetu in 2007

Photo: Maana Bianchin



Martin, Kiri and Waimirangi up Tongariro about to release whio (blue ducks).

Photo: Supplied



Carole Long and her grandson CJ J show a school group from the Philippines our forest.

Videos



Operation nest egg part 2 from what an production on Vimeo



**KIWI ENCOUNTER**  
at Rainbow Springs



One last moment before Tahi is released into Otago — many thanks Kiwi Encounter!

Photo: Dave Edwards

# Thank you!

The Trust would like to thank all our sponsors, large and small, for your part in helping us to ensure Otago becomes a flourishing forest. Ongoing thanks to the **Te Puke Veterinary Centre Ltd** who donate \$1000 annually towards kiwi health as well as other occasional costs such as the Baycox (medication for coccidiosis) or new microchip scanners when needed. Your support and kiwi expertise is hugely appreciated. Current funding from the **DOC Community Fund** is for animal pest control and also for the 2016 Kokako Translocations. Thanks to **WWF** and **Kiwis for Kiwi** for your donations which support kiwi work.

**Western BOP District Council** continue their three-year support for monitoring and are funding our new volunteer co-ordinator Anna Bailey from Volunteering Bay of Plenty. Thanks to Oropi locals **Mark & Esme Dean** who continue to donate all the electricity charges for our volunteer lock-up. Thanks also to Comvita for continuing to sponsor this newsletter for all 32 issues! But wait there's more! **Carole Long** and her team have continued to spread the word about the OKT to school and groups. We appreciate all the time, care and knowledge you share. Thanks also to **Denise Hansen** who sourced an Epson Multimedia Projector for the Trust's use. Brilliant for our presentations. Carole is in charge if any OKT folk want to borrow this.

Here are some of the donations raised for talks to groups: **Kiwi Tourz** \$150, **Probus Papamoa** \$40, **Lions Te Puke Kiwi Coast** \$140, **Night walks** \$125. **Matua School** \$120. **Te Akau Ki Papamoa Primary School** \$50. Businesses including: **Bay Radiology** \$500, **WBOPDC** staff fundraising \$320.90.

**Wild Kiwi** Multiscarves are selling like hotcakes. You can get yours here: [www.wildkiwiclothing.co.nz](http://www.wildkiwiclothing.co.nz) We have banked another \$3870 plus received a \$2000 annual donation for kiwi. Wow!! Check out their multiscarf label (right). We receive 50c for every one sold.

Private or Business sponsorship is always welcome! Give **Gavin Cherrie** a call on 07 572 5907 or email [chair@kiwitrust.org](mailto:chair@kiwitrust.org)



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## Kiwi or kiwis — when to use an s?

There is no 's' in te reo Māori . So if you are referring to our national bird it is one kiwi or 10 kiwi. One tui or 11 tui.

If you are referring to New Zealanders then that is different. One Kiwi or 50 Kiwis, and use a capital K.

Overseas folk call the Chinese Gooseberry the kiwi (rather than kiwifruit, as we Kiwis know it). If you are referring to the fruit (and living overseas) then it is one kiwi and 12 kiwis.

**Kiwis for kiwi** plays on this by meaning Kiwis (us) for kiwi (birds).

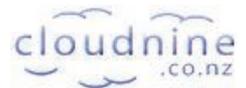


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