



ŌTANEWAINUKU KIWI TRUST

UPDATE FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

Hi Dawn,

We hope that you are all ok at home. During Alert Level 4 we have been unable to do any work at all in the forest. People who care for the kiwi or manage their own lines have also been unable to go into the forest. At Level 3 we can't schedule any workdays yet. Under Level 3 last year we were able to do some specified work with the Department of Conservation's permission. We'll keep you informed once we know more about what's happening for our area.

August's work day had 44 volunteers attend with 10 of them being first time volunteers. It was a very successful day with the commencement of the annual toxin programme for pest control. Teams carried bait along 26 bait lines and placed 175 kilos of bait into 384 bait stations.

Thanks to all of our great volunteers for working so hard to keep Ōtanewainuku safe for our kiwi and all the wonderful birds!.

Ngā manaakitanga

OPERATIONS UPDATE

There is no workday currently scheduled for September in the forest. Please ensure to check our [Facebook](#) page for any changes. We hope we can all get back into the forest as soon as possible.

Thanks to all the trappers who have put in extra hours over the last month in relation to the kiwi predation event. Also, big thanks to Ron Lidgard and his Toi Ohomai team

for lugging a big load of DOC200 traps into the bush. Once we're back in there we will get them fixed in place and up and running.



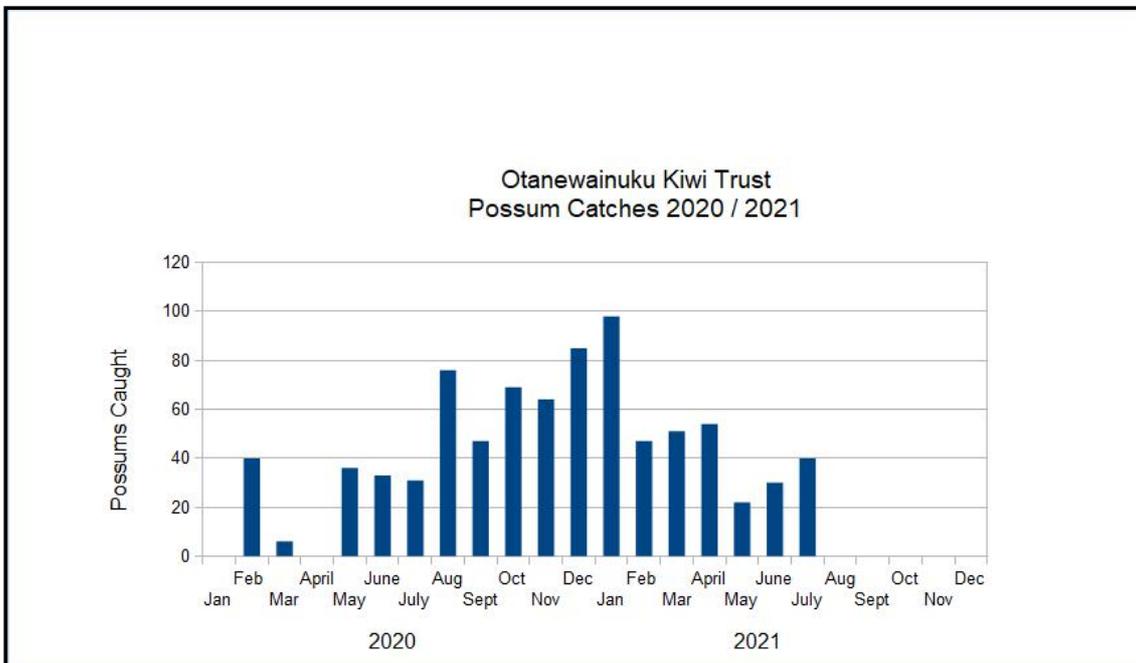
POSSUMS

Possums catches for July totaled 41, taking the total to 830. This is a great volunteer effort!

In 1993, possums were [filmed eating the eggs and chicks of kōkako](#) and this evidence changed many people's views of their threat to wildlife. They eat invertebrates, including weta, and are significant predators of New Zealand land snails such as Powelliphanta. They often occupy holes in tree trunks for their nests which would otherwise be used by nesting birds such as kākāriki and saddlebacks. Trapping possums keeps the numbers low throughout the whole year and gives the forest a real boost. It also allows more resources to go into other pest animal control i.e. ship rats, stoat and ferrets.

The majority of possums caught continue to be closer to the boundaries of the forest as possums wander into Ōtanewainuku from outlying forest areas where there is NO pest control. A positive sign was that the trail cameras which were recently installed in Ōtanewainuku for other work only detected a couple of possums. Both of these possums were seen a few times walking down one of the main access tracks. Once we are allowed back into the forest a few strategic traps will be installed in these spots.

The graph below shows the number of catches over the past year, and volunteers are fine tuning the placement and installation of some traps to try and get a better result.



CATS/FERRETS/STOATS



Image courtesy of Predator Free NZ

Last month four large male cats were caught in the Live Capture traps. Cats are highly efficient predators and are known to kill all kinds of native wildlife, including birds, lizards and insects.

A young male ferret was also caught on the eastern side of the forest. Ferrets are bigger than stoats and weasels and are about the same size as a small cat. The ferrets in New Zealand are ferret-polecat hybrids. Tame ferrets were bred with polecats during the voyage to New Zealand so that they would be better at surviving in the wild. Unfortunately it worked! New Zealand now has the world’s largest population of wild ferret-polecat hybrids!

RABBIT PROCESSING



The rabbit processing team meet up every 3 months to do the necessary job of chopping up 50-60 rabbits to meet the demand for salted rabbit bait for the bait stations. The team met on August 3rd and chopped up all of the rabbit carcasses stored in the large freezer at Seales Road. The team have been fortunate to have about 40 hare and rabbits supplied by Tauranga Deerstalkers. Another couple of shooters also supply the team with rabbit carcasses.

The large freezer and small freezer (for the stoat team) at the lockup on Oropi Road are now empty and need to be restocked. The team are keen to hear from anyone who is able to supply rabbits to service the demand for rabbit bait for nearly 500 stoat and ferret traps. Please contact John Oldridge on [021_0564048](tel:021_0564048) if you can help.

The team are also keen for new volunteers to join them. The rabbit processing task would be suitable for volunteers who may not be fit enough to work in the bush, but probably not for the faint hearted. Someone who has been on a farm should have no problems dealing with this work.

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering with the rabbit processing team please contact Barbara-Ann Overwater at oktvolunteers@volbop.org.nz

KIWI NEWS



Image courtesy of The National Kiwi Hatchery

Kiwi land was looking good when we were last able to visit. Our forest is fabulous with the cooler temperatures. Our flying birdies must also be very busy as it's been quiet.

DNA testing confirmed ferret were responsible for killing our two precious kiwi last month, but the testing was unable to determine if it was the same ferret.

Our cameras also caught an unidentified kiwi playing in one of the live trap cages without getting itself caught. Myfie the kiwi was securely on his nest and the new releases hadn't started wandering. No other kiwi was missing at the time. The mystery kiwi leg's are fluffy and it was difficult to see if it has a transmitter on. Unfortunately the cameras also recorded dogs on several occasions. The forest is a dog exclusion zone because it's a kiwi breeding area. We would likely never know if this little kiwi became dog kill. Their existence is fragile enough without this preventable threat.

There was big excitement on the 15th August with our first egg lift of the new season. Our wonderful volunteers, Anna and Sheryl went into the forest overnight to monitor the kiwi. They both used the TX technology and managed to get some sleep. They arrived just at nightfall, set up a fly camp in the drizzle and set the alarm for the early hours. The TX was saying 2am wake up, which from experience meant 3am, but they went on the side of caution and listened from 1.30am. At 3.15am the kiwi started on his housework and at 3.27am let rip with a great 24 repeat call. It's so sad that Toka is not there to answer. She's left two beautiful well advanced eggs. About 48 & 70 days at collection.

The Hatchery has put a photo of the first chick of the 2021-2022 breeding season on

its [facebook page](#). Pebbles and Gravel (grandfather Rocky) are only the second clutch to be delivered so far this season. TV One News covered the story after the first egg hatched. The video can be viewed here https://bit.ly/1NEWS_Baby_Kiwi

Smokey, Chunukbair, Tahī and Nino are all incubating. All have dropped into very low night activity. Nino was running around 12 hours or more a night. Nino and Koura are our energizer kiwis. Nino spent two weeks yoyo-ing around 6 hours, that will be waiting for the second egg, then settled into four hours. Anything under 6 hours is good for incubation. We love the smart transmitters. Tahī spent 3 weeks fluffy around 6 to 7 hours then dropped to 2 to 3 hours. He's an incubating legend. The remaining flock, except for Kaiarahi who was AWOL again at lockdown, were all mooching around behaving themselves.

KŌKAKO NEWS



It's great to receive reports of kōkako song being heard by volunteers and the contractors doing the bait layout. It's a common occurrence now if you're in the right place at the right time. One of the great benefits of being an Ōtanewainuku volunteer is that it allows us to see parts of the forest and hear bird song that is not given to everyone.

Thanks to everyone who filled the bait stations. Contractors didn't quite finish by the lockdown. It'll get finished as soon as they can. Hopefully before the kōkako start nesting in October/November.

Last year's kōkako census recommended that we seek permission to translocate more birds into Ōtanewainuku to build the genetic diversity of our population. To grow a genetically sustainable population the census showed that we need a wider genetic base to build upon.

This month, the Trust came one step closer to having the opportunity to translocate more birds into Ōtanewainuku. We achieved the first 'hurdle' and we can now move onto the next stage of seeking permission. There's a huge amount of work to do to prepare a translocation proposal, including engaging and consulting with

Manu Whenua and the wider community, and finding the funding required. During the lockdown, our kōkako team has started working on the paperwork.

The kōkako team were disappointed that the national kōkako hui was postponed because of lockdown. Our team had worked hard to prepare three Ōtanewainuku Kiwi Trust presentations for the conference. We cut our kōkako history to 5 minutes and squeezed in a [45-sec video clip](#) from Paul Jansen's visit.

EVENTS AND EDUCATION NEWS



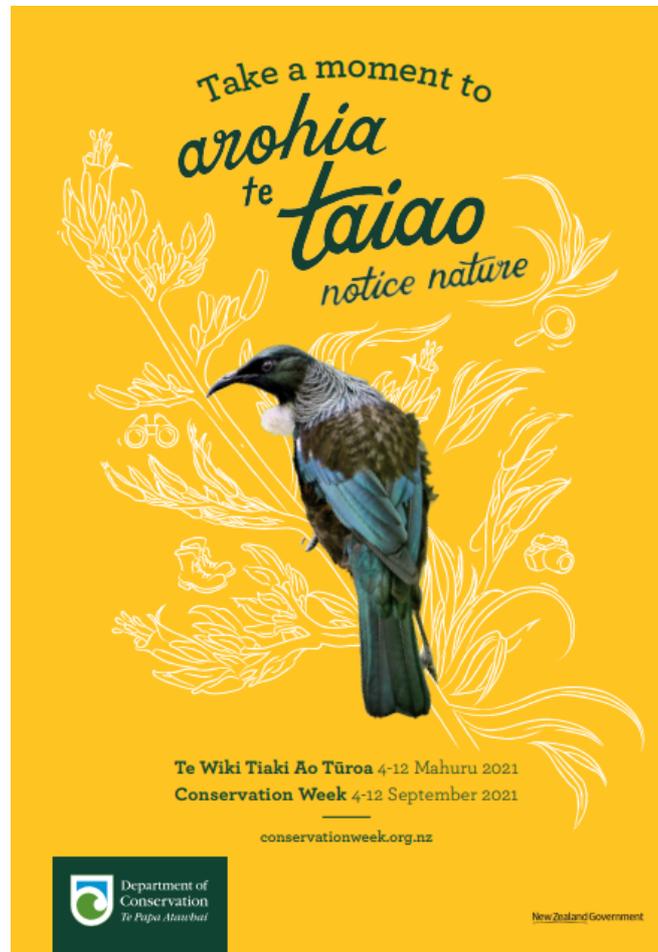
A core team of volunteers coordinate the Education programme and give an enormous amount of time in educating different groups about the forest and its inhabitants. Interest in the Trust's education programme comes from kindergartens, schools, community groups and clubs, and senior citizens.

The Trust's kiwi and kereru specimens are treasures and are a great bonus for talks with community groups and schools. Having specimens of pests (rat, stoat, weasel) is also an added bonus and it is interesting to get the reaction from adults especially about pest control.

During July, the team visited Omanu School, and also guided several groups on field trips into the forest over a number of days. Volunteers also presented at the Papamoa Lions Club and at the Papamoa library. In mid August, Carole Long presented to members of the Zoological Society of Auckland, at Auckland Zoo.

If you would like further information about the Trust's education programme please email info@kiwitrust.org

CONSERVATION WEEK



Take a moment to celebrate and enjoy nature this Conservation Week 4-12 September 2021.

When Papatūānuku thrives, we all thrive. This can be felt when we take time for ourselves in the outdoors - we give our minds a break and feel connected to nature. It can be as simple as stopping to listen to birdsong or taking a walk with the whānau.

Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata – when the land is well, the people are well

Find a range of activities, competitions and information about events happening in your area on the Department of Conservation [website](https://www.doc.govt.nz/). (If we are in COVID-19 Alert Level 2 for Conservation Week (4–12 September), local events will only be run if they can meet all of the government requirements).

ACTIVITY FOR THE KIDS (and maybe the big kids too!)

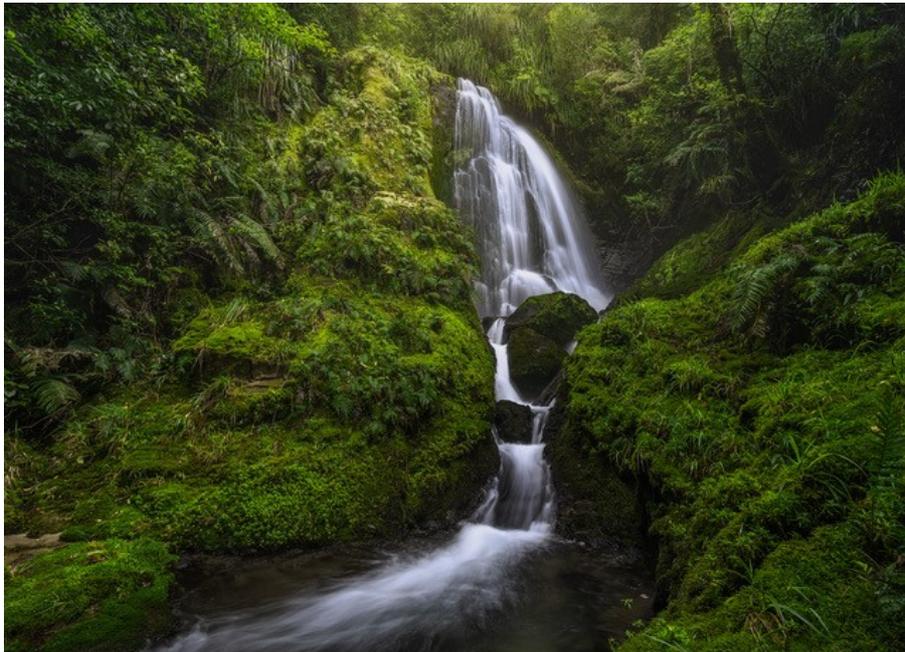


Image: Tuấn Kiệt Jr ©

Enjoy nature up close with this [storytelling photo activity](#) for children and get creative outdoors with your phone or camera.

A range of other activities and downloadable resources are also available [here](#)

THE AFTER LOCKDOWN TO-DO LIST



We hope everyone is doing well and staying healthy during the lockdown.

Now, to most of us, not being able to go out and enjoy the sun, the peaceful sounds of birds and the Zen of being surrounded by green nature can be overwhelming. So

that's why it's good to take a breather every now and then and start listing things that we want to do after the lockdown.

One of the things that we recommend is taking a walk in the Ōtanewainuku forest area. Did you know that there are three accessible pathways in the Ōtanewainuku forest?

Let's start with the easy path: Rimu Loop Bush Walk. It takes around 45 minutes to go into a magical forest setting surrounded by giant Rimu trees.

If you're up to a nice challenge, Summit Track is the one you should go for. The summit, which is an extinct volcano, can be quite steep. However, the panoramic views from East Cape to Mount Tarawera and Rotorua and across the Mamaku Plateau to Mount Ruapehu is worth every sweat and energy spent on the walk.

The last one is Whataroa Waterfall, a hidden gem with a swimming hole and a picnic spot with an ethereal stream and cascades of pools. This walk is easily one of the most Instagram-worthy locations for some photo sessions. Explore beyond the waterfall to Ottawa Scenic Reserve which gives you medieval-fantasy vibes as you walk (without the monsters and dragons!).

Curious? Find out more about the Ōtanewainuku forest walks on our website <https://kiwitrust.org/experiences/walks/> along with the videos so you can decide where your next adventure would be!

ŌTANEWAINUKU: THE NUMBERS

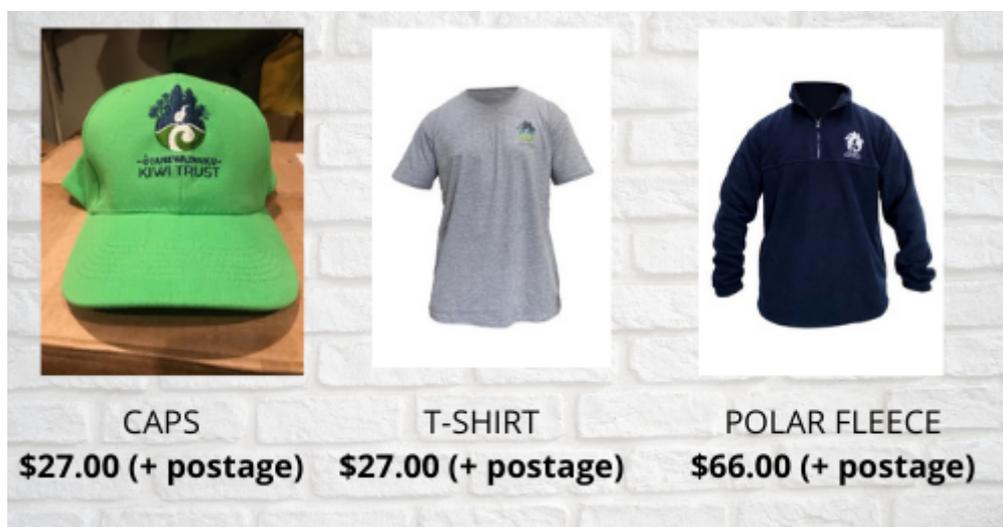
- The Trust has over 180 km of trap and bait station lines
- 330 stoat trap tunnels
- 2142 bait stations within 1200ha of the Ōtanewainuku Conservation Area
- Monthly work days with an average of 25 volunteers attending
- Over 10,000 hours each year of volunteer time
- Originally estimated to be around 30 million Kiwi in NZ. Now around 70,000
- North Island Brown Eastern Taxon kiwi estimated to be about 7,000
- Kiwi eggs and chicks get eaten by predators where there is no protection. Out of every 100 kiwi eggs laid only five kiwi chicks will make it to adulthood
- An average of 27 kiwi are killed by predators EVERY WEEK. That's a population decline of around 1,400 kiwi every year (or 2%)
- Kiwi may disappear from the mainland in our lifetime. Just one hundred years ago, kiwi numbered in the millions

- In areas where predators are controlled, 50-60% of chicks survive. When areas are not under management 95% of kiwi die before reaching breeding age
- Over 5000 predators trapped since the start of the Trust's work
- Over 800 possums removed from the bush in the past year

ORDER YOUR ŌTANEWAINUKU KIWI TRUST GEAR!

Our T-shirts, Polar Fleece and Caps are now on sale with purchasing via our website. The Polar Fleece would be great in the cooler weather!

For more information go to <https://kiwitrust.org/store/>



ŌTANEWAINUKU & SOCIAL MEDIA

Check us out on Facebook and Instagram and, if you take any photos at Ōtanewainuku that you're happy to share, please tag us in.

We love seeing people enjoying the great walks there.

<https://www.facebook.com/otanewainuku/>

<https://www.instagram.com/otanewainukukiwitrust/>

ŌTANEWAINUKI KIWI TRUST HANDBOOK

This handbook gives an insight into the background of the Trust, its purpose and vision, and how you as a volunteer can help achieve that vision. This is not only for those working actively in the forest but also for those helping behind the scenes.

The handbook is sent to all new volunteer registrations but if you have not received a copy please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Barbara-Ann Overwater at oktvolunteers@volbop.org.nz or on 07 571 3714

When the Forest Flourishes, the People Flourish.



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