

# WHAKATANE KIWI PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

4

February 2008

## WHAKATANE KIWI POPULATION STRENGTHENS

It was with great surprise and delight that significant populations of kiwi were identified in the Whakatane area beyond the confines of Ohope Scenic Reserve in 2007. The Whakatane Kiwi Project has worked together with the local communities concerned to enhance the survival of these birds.

These kiwi are living in patches of remnant bush often amidst farmland and forestry plantations. They use the adjacent habitat for feeding, roosting and nesting, often putting themselves at risk from domestic, farm and hunting dogs, as well as heavy machinery during logging operations.

The following reports give a snapshot of what is happening in the Whakatane area.



### Ohope Scenic Reserve

Core area for kiwi protection. Over 50% of the known population (~50 birds) carry radio transmitters and are monitored for breeding, dispersal and survival. The kiwi population is increased through BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ and protected by 4400 ha of targeted predator control.

Kiwi management: Whakatane Kiwi Project

Land Status: Scenic Reserve, under joint management by Department of Conservation and Te Runanga o Ngati Awa.



*Kiwi nest after egg removal*

### Moutohora/Whale Island

Safeguarded gene pool of up to 18 Whakatane kiwi on predator free island. In situ breeding monitored as birds mature and have chicks. Island should be able to carry up to 24 birds. Once population has reached capacity, birds can be removed and released in other protected areas.

Kiwi management: Whakatane Kiwi Project

Land status: Wildlife Refuge, restricted access, jointly managed by Department of Conservation and Te Runanga o Ngati Awa.



*Volunteer Mark Brown holds Koma in Moutohora swamp*

### Wainui (McCoy-Stanley Road)

Small concentration of kiwi in remnant patches of bush. Adult kiwi population in decline due to predation by dogs and road kills. Four kiwi pairs currently under BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ management. Chicks will be returned to this area, once safe locations have been identified. Community is involved in the kiwi protection. Further birds to be managed in the future.

Kiwi Management: Whakatane Kiwi Project

Land Status: Maori Trust Board Private land.



*Community volunteer Dave Howard with Te Kooti during a transmitter change*



## Waiotahi

Outlying kiwi population in pine forest. Four pairs of kiwi (approximately 50% of known population) are monitored for breeding and movements. BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ is carried out. The resulting chicks are released into Ohope Scenic Reserve and Moutohora to strengthen genetic diversity. No chicks are currently returned direct to source as pine forest is being actively logged.

Kiwi Management: Whakatane Kiwi Project  
Land Status: Private ownership, logging managed by **P.F.Olsen**



*Kiwi pair live in native bush gully amongst the pines despite the logging going on around them*

## Omataroa Forest

Significant kiwi population in native bush surrounded by commercial plantation forest. Kiwi monitored for breeding and survival. BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ being carried out. Young kiwi will be returned to site, which has predator control being put in place. Some young kiwi will be exchanged with those from Ohope Scenic Reserve to increase the genetic diversity of both areas.

Kiwi Management: Omataroa Kiwi Trust supervised by Whakatane Kiwi Project  
Land Status: Private: Ngati Awa, Rangataiki Omataroa Trust 2



*Ian Tarei candles Omataroa Kiwi Project's first egg before taking it to Kiwi Encounter, Rotorua*

## FAT IS BEAUTIFUL AND SO ARE PINE FORESTS...

These were the thoughts of Tansy and Michelle, Whakatane Kiwi Project workers after they had spent five hours tracking the two-year-old female kiwi, Himiona. She has been wandering at will for the last 15 months in the forests and scrub east of Ohope Scenic Reserve where she was released in April 2006. She first travelled the high ground of the pine forest above Taneatua Road but when logging started in 2007 she moved south pausing amongst the immature pines on the lower slopes of Razorback Ridge above Stanley Road.

In October, with the battery in her transmitter getting low, Tansy and Michelle set out to catch her. She was amongst heavy forestry machinery, so could only be tracked on weekends when the logging operations had ceased. On three occasions she was in such difficult terrain she could not be reached, but finally on 11 November 2007, she was located in a warm sunny spot of dense bracken amongst the pines.

As soon as Michelle had Himiona in her arms, she was labeled as a "fattie", very upset at being caught and difficult to calm down. Tansy quickly fitted her with a new transmitter, noting her huge strong legs and feet. Over the year, her bill had increased in length by 22mm to 114.3mm, and when weighed, she was off the 2.5kg scales, making her the project's heaviest monitored female kiwi on the mainland!

Tansy and Michele returned Himiona to her bracken patch, extremely thankful that she had avoided death or injury from both machines and predators during her prolonged wanderings. Himiona can now be tracked for another year and it is hoped that she will settle down with a male and establish a home territory.



*Right: Michelle weighs the "fattie" with astonishment.*

The Whakatane Kiwi Trust was created in March 2006 to support the Whakatane Kiwi Project (WKP) in the following ways:

- Raise funds to ensure the long-term sustainability of the WKP.
- Provide advocacy and education material for the public.
- Providing opportunities for community engagement with kiwi recovery.



Above: Don Herdman, Chair, during an information day.

## WHAKATANE KIWI TRUST CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE TO SAVE KIWI FROM DOGS

It has long been recognised that all kiwi are vulnerable to dog attacks which often result in death. However, with the correct information, training and management both dogs and kiwi can co-exist in the Whakatane area.

The Whakatane Kiwi Trust will be providing an information flyer and holding open days to alert people to the following:

- Location of Kiwi Zones in the Whakatane area and their associated bylaws.
- How to report infringements correctly
- Where to go to get their dogs kiwi aversion trained
- Simple rules to keep dogs under control in kiwi habitat

This information will be available freely available from the Whakatane District Council, Department of Conservation, other conservation organisations and outdoor equipment retailers.

## HELP PROTECT KIWI IN WHAKATANE

The Whakatane Kiwi Trust in association with the Whakatane Kiwi Project will be holding the following events for interested parties over the coming months. Each activity contributes to the overall management of kiwi in the Whakatane area, by increasing our knowledge of where kiwi live, removing predators from our environment, and keeping dogs and kiwi apart. Different skills, commitment and levels of fitness are required, but there should be something to suit everyone.



### Kiwi call recognition and survey work

What is involved?

One evening training to learn how to recognise kiwi calls including a field trip into the bush after dark to listen to actual kiwi calling.

**Date of training:** Wednesday 12 March or Saturday 15 March. 6pm - 10pm both evenings, starting at DOC Whakatane Field Centre and finishing at Omataroa forest.

Two independent evenings listening for kiwi after dark (March to May).

One afternoon/evening for presentation of results (late May).

Register your interest with Tansy Bliss, Kiwi Project Manager on 07 3070611 or 021 1157376.

### Predator control on your doorstep

What is involved?

One morning/afternoon trap setting and trap line orientation with Environment Bay of Plenty/Whakatane Kiwi Project Predator Control Contractor. (Arrange your own day as appropriate).

Once a fortnight trap checks in your own time (3-4hrs).

Reporting results monthly by email, phone or post.

Quarterly meetings or as appropriate with other volunteers and supervisor to update on techniques and methods and exchanges trap lines as appropriate

Register your interest with Alister Coulter on 07 3228020 or 02735067766.

### Contribute to the Whakatane Kiwi Trust dog awareness campaign

What is involved?

Briefing and training morning/afternoon about the campaign and related activities.

Activities will include: Assisting at Kiwi Aversion training days, distributing information sheets to the public at strategic locations around Whakatane, assisting with open days. (Throughout the year).

Register your interest with Margaret Maynard on 021 02399480 or in writing to P.O.Box 3153, Ohope.



## IN THE PIPE LINE...

### Possums and rats to go from Kohi Point, Ohope Scenic Reserve and Ngati Awa Bush Reserve.

The Whakatane Kiwi Project predator control work around Kohi Point is underway thanks to an unexpected but very welcome donation that came from an anonymous source via Eastern BOP Forest and Bird.

David Paine, Pest Animal Officer at Environment Bay of Plenty will use these funds to establish the first part of a comprehensive bait station network starting around Otarawairere. Any additional funding will be used to expand and hopefully complete the layout over the whole reserve by next winter.

The bait station network is designed to control possums and rats to low levels and will be activated during the autumn or winter of 2008 when temperatures begin to drop and the holiday season is well and truly over.



A pellet bait inside the bait station will contain an anti-coagulant for killing the rats and cyanide capsules for the possums. The public will be duly notified of the operation by appropriate signs, notification published in newspapers and flyers delivered to local mailboxes.

Please be prepared for baits to be in stations for up to eight weeks. No bait stations will be established within 20 metres of tracks or close to dwellings. Should you have any particular concerns these can be raised directly with David Paine at Environment Bay of Plenty.

Approximately 90ha of bush on Ngati Awa station has been covenanted, fenced and prepared for intense possum and rat control. This work, funded by a grant from the Biodiversity condition fund will start in late autumn or early winter and continue over three years.

The southern block of Ohope Scenic Reserve is also being prepared for treatment, funded by the Department of Conservation. As these two areas are contiguous, they will operate as one treatment area.

Further resources are required to complete the lay out of the northern section of Ohope Scenic Reserve. The Whakatane Kiwi Trust will be seeking funding for this work.

### Predator Trap replacement program

The original 250 Mk 6 Fenn traps established in Ohope Scenic Reserve are reaching the end of their working lives and need replacing with the more modern, powerful and humane DOC series.

The Whakatane Kiwi Trust will be seeking funds to cover this in the near future.



### Mokoroa Scenic Reserve

Mokoroa Scenic Reserve received its fourth annual possum and rat treatment before Christmas. Results will be collected later in 2008.

As the kiwi move out of the core area of Ohope Scenic Reserve and potentially into Mokoroa Scenic Reserve, there is a need to extend the stoat trapping program into this area. Adjacent landowners who wish to participate in this can contact David Paine at Environment Bay of Plenty for more details.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**Tansy Bliss, Kiwi Project Manager or Michelle Howard, Project Field Assistant,**  
Department of Conservation,  
Whakatane Field Centre.  
Phone: 07 3070611

**Dave Paine, Pest animal officer**  
Environment Bay of Plenty  
Phone: 0800 ENV BOP (368 267)



A joint project supported by:

