

Kaharoa Kokako Trust

August 2005, Newsletter

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Welcome to our annual newsletter with a summary of events and highlights for the past twelve months and information about the pest control programme planned for September/October this year.

Adult Census:

The census completed in the Onaia East and West Blocks in September / October 2004 showed there were 25 pair and 2 single territorial kokako (an increase of 5 pair and 1 single territorial bird from 2003) as well as a number of sub-adults throughout the area.

Again no census was undertaken in the Aislabie Block last year but a census of the whole area is planned for August/September 2006.

This is in line with recommendations from the Kokako Recovery Group, a national body, who formulated a recovery plan for kokako from 1999 initially over a 10 year period but then out to 2020. In 1999 there were fewer than 400 pair of kokako and by 2020 it is hoped there will be in excess of 1,000 pair. At the May 2005 meeting it was reported there were 615 known pair nationally and 149 territorial singles, which is very encouraging.

2004 Pest Control Programme:

Last year we "spelled" the Aislabie Block from pest control, as it is believed that continuous pesticide may result in pest aversion or resistance to toxins, and ecological sustainability has to be addressed.

Volunteers assisted us in the Onaia West Block with the placement of Feratox initially followed by Diphacinone into all bait stations in October. Due to the terrain in the Onaia East Block, which makes it difficult to cover with volunteers, a contractor does this.

For the second year running post control pest monitoring showed pest numbers were still high - which was really disappointing. We hope for much better results this year and with stoat trapping now under way believe that will also help with the viability of nests and fledglings.

Kokako Chicks to Puketi Forest Trust:

To update on the two female kokako chicks that went from Kaharoa via rearing at Hamilton Zoo to released onto Mauimua (Lady Alice) Island, which is an offshore predator free area as a gift to the Puketi Forest Trust in March 2004.

A male kokako from Puketi has been captured and released onto the Island during the year and it is planned that other male birds from Puketi Forest will be captured and transferred later this year also.

Recent survey on the Island indicated a pair of kokako but their secretive behaviour did not allow a clear view of them.

"Adopt a Track":

The Trust is quite aware there are interested volunteers who would like to have a more ongoing role in supporting kokako and the general improvement of the whole forest in Kaharoa. For those interested, the plan is to allocate a track in the Onaia West Block of the forest to maintain and upkeep for a twelve-month period. A full briefing will be given along with a map and safety documentation when the track is allocated. After that it will be for the volunteer to follow up in your own time, as you wish.

Maintenance would include trimming with secateurs, and hand pruning saws, maintaining track markers and replacement of ribbons where needed. The location of any work to be done with chainsaws would be recorded and reported back. The Department of Conservation will undertake any chainsaw work required. Anyone interested in finding out more about and/or participating in Project Adopt a Track please phone John Coleman, 07.332-3313 or return the reply at the end of this newsletter.

Five-Year Plan:

With assistance from DOC a "five-year plan" covering the ecosystem revitalization targeting animal plant pest management, education and community involvement and project management is being formulated to benefit the Trust, community, volunteers and most importantly, the environment the Kaharoa Conservation Area.

Annual BOP DOC Environmental Award:

With pride and pleasure we report the Trust was recipient of a framed certificate as winner of the 2nd Annual BOP DOC Environment Awards "for outstanding contribution to conservation by a group" at the recent award presentations. Thanks to all members and volunteers for the Trust who have worked to help us achieve this recognition.

Funding & Thank You:

Again this year the Environment BOP Environment Enhancement Fund and Tenon have been our major funding sources for which the Trust is extremely grateful. Without such solid support it would not have been possible to continue the work as we have done.

Our thanks too, to the Department of Conservation for the ongoing liaison and support to the Trust from its staff in Rotorua.

While the Trust does receive funding from larger organisations the “hands on help” and monetary donations from supporters are very important for the continued wellbeing of the Trust’s programme. Thank you to each and every one who continues to support the Trust in so many ways. It is truly appreciated.

Our grateful thanks also go to the Land-Rover Enthusiasts Club (Rotorua Region) who have generously supported us with the Landrover/Birdmobile which continues to be used for publicity, during pest control operations, track maintenance, survey work, nest finding and for transportation of visitors into the Block.

Stoat Trapping Network: Traps, which are well marked, are now operational along the main vehicle tracks through the blocks with stoats, rats and a ferret have been caught. The traps, which are baited with eggs, need checking, clearing and re-setting fortnightly. If there are volunteers who have the stomach for such a challenge Carmel would be very pleased to hear from you, her contact 07.332-3078.

2005’s Pest Control Programme:

To meet the conditions of the Pesticides Act, neighbouring landowners will be contacted by DOC, however if you have any queries feel free to contact the DOC Area Manager, Phil Alley (07) 348.3610 or Programme Manager Biodiversity, Bruce Mossman (07) 349.8213.

As many volunteers as available will be required on **17 September** and again on **24 September** to “pre-feed” bait stations in the Aislabie and Onaia West Block. If you are available to assist, especially if you have a 4WD vehicle we would really appreciate that support.

The Onaia East Block has difficult contour and will be covered by contractor, Bruce Bancroft, who has worked that area over the past two seasons for us.

On **01 October** the 1080 toxin will follow the two pre-feeds, again into the bait stations. Those assisting that day will be required to wear overalls (which will be laundered afterwards by DOC) and provided if you don’t have your own, masks & gloves (provided) and sturdy tramping/work boots. This will be strictly supervised by DOC personnel due to the nature of the toxin and legal requirements.

An age restriction of 15 years will be enforced for any volunteers during this phase.

If you are able to assist please phone **Peter Davey 348-7359 (w) mob 027 434-445**
Anne Managh 345.9952
John Paterson 332.2093 (evenings)

Or return the attached slip if more convenient:

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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____

Available to help:

1st Pre-feed:	Saturday 17 September	9.00am	Yes / No	Number
2nd Pre-feed:	Saturday 24 September	9.00am	Yes / No	Number
Toxic 1080:	Saturday 01 October	9.00am	Yes / No	Number

If you usually travel out with a companion/or wish to be grouped with friend/s while assisting with this work please include their names here too. Thank you.

Interested to “Adopt a Track”	Yes	No
Interested to “Check Stoat Traps”	Yes	No

Please return this “Return slip” to: Kaharoa Kokako Trust, PO Box 78, Ngongotaha.