



# Kaharoa Kokako Trust

## March 2009, Newsletter

PO Box 78 NGONGOTAHA 3041 - [www.kokako.org.nz](http://www.kokako.org.nz)

*This newsletter summarises the Trust's activities aimed at ensuring the long-term protection and survival of kokako at Kaharoa.*

### **We need your help!**

**Volunteers needed to assist with traffic control and sausage sizzling  
at the Scion Open Day (Science in the Park)**

**Saturday 21 March between 8am and 3pm  
– Sala Street, Rotorua**

**\*\*We'll be rostering shifts so you can stay for as long (or short) as you wish\*\***

Scion is making a donation to the Trust for providing parking wardens for the event.  
The Trust will also be selling sausages,  
with all the proceeds going into our **Kokako Nest Egg**.

**If you are available to help out, phone Anne Managh 345 9952  
or email [Margaret.Richardson@scionresearch.com](mailto:Margaret.Richardson@scionresearch.com)**

**This is a great fundraising opportunity for the Kaharoa Kokako Trust so please  
Help us make the most of it**

The last Scion Open Day attracted thousands of people from the Rotorua community.  
Do your bit for the Nest Egg and have some fun at the same time!

### **1080 warning lifted at Kaharoa**

The 1080 warning signs from our last pest control operation are now being removed, marking the end of the caution period. While dogs are no longer at risk from secondary poisoning, we would remind the public that dogs are not allowed in the conservation area without a DOC permit.

The removal of signs also marks the official end of a successful operation for the Trust, which achieved a high possum kill and satisfactory rat control. Once again, we wish to thank the many volunteers who played a vital role in this success. We also acknowledge our neighbours for accepting our need to use toxic baits. We could not have achieved our kokako breeding success rate over the years without this support and understanding from the Kaharoa community.

### **Pest control planned for 2009**

Pest control will be carried out this year using pindone to target rats, and Feratox® to deal with the residual possum numbers from last year. Bait application is planned for October and November 2009 so we'll be calling for volunteers to help with track clearing over the next few months.

Meanwhile, we invite you to take a break from bush work and help out with fundraising instead (see above). There's nothing like a bit of variety – and it all helps to protect the kokako!

### **Getting a makeover for our maps**

Those of you who have helped us with volunteer work in the bush will know that our maps are not always easy to follow. Funding from First Sovereign Trust has enabled us to update our maps using GPS to accurately define the track lines. This work is being carried out by GIS specialist, Daimen Jones. We look forward to using our new maps for our next pest control operation.



## **Pines on the move**

A logging operation to remove the pine trees in parts of Kaharoa Forest is now under way. Road closures may be possible at the far end of Kapukapu Road and visitors to the forest must take care to avoid the logging operations. The Kokako Track will remain open to the public during this time.

The removal of mature pines will make way for the regeneration of native bush within the Conservation Area. Although kokako are known to use the pines as singing trees to mark territory, and as a pathway to other stands of native bush, they do not nest in the trees.

We applaud PF Olsen Ltd for their excellent communication with the Trust concerning this operation. The forestry company has taken every care to minimise damage to the native bush and to protect potential kokako habitat. As an extra bonus for the Trust, our access track is now in better shape than it has been for years – **good on you PF Olsen Ltd !**

## **Kokako on the move**

The Department of Conservation is planning to move several kokako pairs from Kaharoa to Secretary Island in Fiordland this winter. Translocations of this kind are important to the Trust because they enable us to play a part in the national kokako recovery effort. By moving birds from healthy population centres (like Kaharoa) to other protected areas, we can expand kokako territory nationally and increase the genetic diversity of individual populations. This translocation is part of a major push by DOC to restore kokako to the South Island, where they have been extinct for many years.

In preparation for this large and complex operation, the Kaharoa Kokako Trust is building a number of translocation boxes. These boxes are designed to protect the birds while being transported to their new home. We wish to thank the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust for funding the construction of these translocation boxes by Unicorn Joinery in Rotorua.



## **Weta Motels open for business**

Providing accommodation for wetas might not be everyone's cup of tea, but students at Kaharoa School are happy to oblige. As part of a special project supervised by teacher Rick Merrington, the students are building specially designed boxes that provide shelter for the wetas. By installing these weta motels in the bush and monitoring their occupancy, students can gather valuable data about weta numbers in the area. Weta numbers can provide a good indicator of how healthy the forest is and how well the ecosystem is functioning.

The Trust will use this information as part of our ongoing monitoring of the forest. We know that kokako and other bird numbers have increased as a result of pest control. We also know that vegetation has increased enormously. Weta numbers will provide us with another piece in the biological picture.

We are delighted to see children being involved in conservation projects of this kind.

## **Changes to the Trust**

We were disappointed to lose Stephen Hall from the Trust at the end of last year. Stephen and his family moved to Christchurch in January where he has taken up a job at Environment Canterbury.

Although Stephen served on the Trust for a relatively short time, he proved himself to be an enthusiastic and helpful committee member. Every Trust member brings unique and necessary skills to the group, and Stephen's experience in conservation management was invaluable. We extend a big Thank You to Stephen for his contribution and wish him all the best for the future.

The remaining committee consists of Anne Managh as Chair, Margaret Richardson as secretary, and committee members John Paterson, Carmel Richardson, John Coleman, Graeme Young and Guy Irwin.

## **Kokako Nest Egg growing steadily**

Our Kokako Nest Egg fund has now passed the \$18,000 mark and remains the focus of our funding-raising activities. Volunteer assistance at events like Science in the Park (see over) will help us to remain on target for raising \$150,000 within 10 years. Every dollar donated to the Trust is saved in the Nest Egg and will provide protection for kokako chicks well into the future. We are grateful to all the contributors who are helping us build towards this goal.

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