



# Kaharoa Kokako Trust

## May 2010, 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.*

Thanks to our volunteers who helped with wilding pine control in April. More volunteer work days will be scheduled for Spring, when we will be doing track maintenance, new track marking and weed control. Dates to be advised.

### No pest control planned for this year

The Kokako Recovery Group is a national body that oversees kokako management in New Zealand. On their advice, we have moved to a "pulse management" regime for pest control. This means we will be doing pest control on a two-years-on and two-years-off basis.

The purpose of pulse management is that it gives the environment a break from toxins and helps to avoid "bait shyness" developing in the pest animals. The kokako population at Kaharoa is now believed to be close to full capacity, so it is not necessary for us to do pest control every year.

After two years of pest control in 2008 and 09, we will now have two years off. This gives us a chance to focus on other activities, such as track maintenance, weed control, fundraising and translocations. So there is still plenty for our wonderful volunteers to do!

### Helping out the neighbours

Two years ago we identified that kokako are spreading onto private land adjacent to the Kaharoa Conservation Area. With funding from the Biodiversity Condition Fund, and contributions from QEII Trust and Environment Bay of Plenty, we are now helping our neighbours to protect these birds.

Two properties on Te Matai Road (on the other side of the Mangorewa Gorge from Kaharoa) now have bait station networks, thanks to Greg Corbett from Environment Bay of Plenty, Wildlife Contractors Ltd and voluntary efforts by Trust members. In October last year pindone and Feratox were applied to coincide with the pest control operation being carried out in the Kaharoa Conservation Area. High numbers of pest animal bodies were counted on these properties after the operation, so we are hoping that the kokako will thrive in their new territories.

Further work is being undertaken to protect regenerating forest on Winston Fleming's property (Kaharoa Road). Winston is a long time supporter of the Trust and was one of the first locals to actively protect kokako in the area. We are delighted that extra funding is now available to help Winston in his conservation efforts.

A primary objective of the Trust is to provide information and support for neighbouring landowners to facilitate spread of kokako population. It is a real credit to our neighbours that they are willing to step up their pest control and protect the kokako on their land. Our ultimate aim is to help the formation of "wildlife corridors" that enable the natural spread of kokako in the Bay of Plenty.

**Right:** Winston Fleming has been a keen supporter of kokako protection at Kaharoa for many years.



## Caution period ended in the Kaharoa Conservation Area

All bait stations were emptied of remaining toxins on 15 November, 2009. The warning signs associated with this operation have now been removed meaning that pest animal carcasses potentially containing toxin residues have fully degraded.

For more information about our last pest control operation, see our website [www.kokako.org.nz](http://www.kokako.org.nz)

## Pest control

The Trust is pleased with the results of our pest control operation last year. Monitoring results show that possum and rat numbers were comparable with the previous year. This result suggests that the mixture of pindone and Feratox (encapsulated cyanide) that we used as a trial is a satisfactory substitute for 1080.

We wish to thank, once again, the hard-working volunteers who helped with our pest control last spring. A final report of the operation is available on the "What's New" page of our website - [www.kokako.org.nz](http://www.kokako.org.nz)

## News from Secretary Island

The Trust has received a report DoC showing the kokako are settling in well on Secretary Island in Fiordland. Seven kokako were moved to the island from Kaharoa last year, where they joined other kokako taken from Rotoehu (2009) and Mapara (2008). A recent survey positively identified two birds from this transfer, one from Kaharoa and one from Rotoehu. Kokako were also heard singing on the eastern side of the island, some distance from the release site, indicating that the birds are spreading out.

Secretary Island is very large (8000 ha) and rugged, so Ian Flux (the ecologist) did well to locate these birds! DoC will continue to conduct walk-through surveys to keep an eye on kokako progress.



Carmel Richardson prepares to release kokako on Secretary Island

## More translocations on the cards

Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust has been hoping for some time to re-establish kokako in the protected forest around Mount Otanewainuku (the prominent landmark visible from Kapukapu Road in the direction of Tauranga). Plans for translocating Kaharoa birds are now under way, although the timing of the operation is yet to be confirmed. Pukaha Mount Bruce near Masterton is also likely to receive Kaharoa kokako within the next two years. We will be calling for volunteers to help out when the time comes. Catching operations can provide a wonderful opportunity to see kokako up close.

Footnote: The Kaharoa Kokako Trust was saddened by the recent passing of Wally Rogers, who was a keen supporter of our work for many years. Wally's last contact with the Trust was when we met at the Rotorua Airport to farewell our birds to Secretary Island. Our heartfelt condolences go to Wally's family.

## Kokako Nest Egg on target

Donations continue to feed our Kokako Nest Egg fund, which is now over \$33,000. We are very grateful to the Rotorua Rotary Club who gave us a \$500 donation for the Nest Egg. The Rotarians joined us for an evening bush walk in March to give them a first hand experience of the wonderful place we are working to protect.

The Kokako Nest Egg is an investment fund set up by the Trust to enable financial self-sufficiency for future pest control. The Trust will continue with our various fund-raising activities to continue building the Nest Egg. Our aim is to raise \$150,000 and we thank everyone who is helping us to achieve this target.

**Donations to our Nest Egg can now be made online, thanks to our wonderful web provider, Dabhand**

[www.kokako.org.nz](http://www.kokako.org.nz)