



Kaharoa Kokako Trust

Spring Newsletter - September 2015

www.kokako.org.nz

This newsletter summarises recent Trust activities aimed at ensuring the long-term protection and survival of kōkako at Kaharoa.

In July we were all shocked by the sudden death of Anne Managh. She had been on the Trust since its inception and will be sorely missed by all of the trustees. Anne had a huge wealth of knowledge regarding the Trust and was a great mentor to some of the newer members.



Anne Managh

For the past 18 years The Kaharoa Kokako Trust or KKT has managed pest control in approximately 1,000 hectares of Forest in Kaharoa. Anne was involved with the KKT right from its formation in 1997, first as the secretary / treasurer, then as chairperson.

Twenty years ago in the farming community of Kaharoa, there was some interest amongst the locals in a very small remnant population of the beautiful Kokako in the bush at end of Kapukapu Road past the Managh's farm. There was some protection of them going on by the Department of Conservation but this was about to cease due to lack of funding and there was no certainty that efforts to save them would continue. Some of us were a little incensed that there was a risk of a local extinction of a unique species right under our noses in our own patch of paradise. Peter Davey and Rachael took the initiative to do something permanent and profound to organise a resistance to the extinction threat and called together a bunch of people who might be able to make a difference. Peter recalls that someone advised him that Anne Managh was "the best around" to help build a group of action takers to make kokako recovery efforts at Kaharoa really work.

What an amazing journey that has been and there is absolutely no doubt in our minds that without Anne's exceptional people and organisational skills the Trust would never have been as successful as it has been. One ambitious project that both Anne Managh and Margaret Horner will be remembered for was the idea and establishment of our Nest Egg Fund – capital gathered and invested to earn the Trust dividends sufficient to cover annual running costs, including pest control, so that in time we could be self-sustaining. It seemed an impossible mission but amazingly the Nest Egg Fund target is now 75% fulfilled!

Trust members have commented that their lasting impression of Anne that will stick is her smiling face with a cuppa tea at the ready at the conclusion of the volunteer days – and always, always providing a delicious batch of scones with butter and jam. She will also be remembered for always being conscious of her appearance, well groomed and somehow able to make a pair of blue work overalls look like a fashion statement.

Anne was not only our solid rock and our keystone; she was the glue that held us together since the Trust's inception. She kept us on track and politely made us deliver on what we'd promised. Anne demonstrated through her own actions how people can choose to contribute positively, passionately and meaningfully to the lives and well-being of others, to their community, and to the environments around them. What an amazing example she set for us all about that is possible in life with the right attitude.

So what has the KKT have been up to over the winter? ...

Adult Kokako Census

The Kaharoa Kokako Trust is currently undertaking a full census of kōkako in the Kaharoa Conservation Area, with assistance and support from our local DOC team. A full census was last undertaken in 2006 when 60 pairs and 1 territorial single, i.e. 121 kokako were found. This was an increase from 12 known pairs in 1997 when the Trust began its work in the Kaharoa Conservation Area.

Survey work has been completed in the Aislabies and Onaia West blocks. To date there are 71 kokako pairs and 21 single territory holders, but we are yet to complete the survey in the Onaia East block. When the census report has been written a decision will be made on our pest operation regime into the near future. This will be made in consultation with DOC.



The Survey Team from left to right - Sid Marsh, Nathan Spurdle, Nic Gorman (back), Joel Henton, Carmel Richardson

Workdays

The Trust held workdays in June and July. With these workdays and 'adopt a track' volunteers, the majority of the tracks have been cleared ready for our census which started on the 24 August.

From the survey team : Thank you for clearing the tracks! It makes our survey work much easier when we don't have to spend time working out where a track has gone, or clambering through lots of supplejack.

We are finding plenty of kokako and they are looking fantastic (plump even). They are singing their beautiful song from about 6.30am till 9am most mornings. We've noticed robins and tui have started nest building. A falcon was heard then seen a few days ago (dive bombing a pair of hawks). The shining and long-tailed cuckoos haven't arrived yet but we expect shining cuckoos to arrive back in Kaharoa next week (from the Pacific Islands).

New Trust Members

- Graeme Young has rejoined the Trust after a 12 month break.
- Dale Williams, a foundation trustee, has also rejoined the Trust.
- Emma Bean is a new trustee and has taken on the secretarial role. Emma works at Kiwi Encounter.

The Kokako Specialist Group (previously called Kokako Recovery Group)

The Kokako Specialist Group held their annual 2 day meeting in August in Pureora. It was well attended by community groups such as KKT, DOC staff involved with kokako and scientists. Included were updates on projects, updates on genetic research, discussion about planned and future translocations of kokako and talk about possible volunteer up skilling workshops.

Conservation Week: 1 – 8 November

Conservation Week is a time to celebrate our successes and plan for future projects!

As volunteers, how would you like to celebrate Conservation Week? If you've got any requests of suggestions as to what you'd like the KKT to organise, please let us know and we will try to arrange it!

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