

# BUSH TELEGRAPH



News from March-May & key events coming up in June-August

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June 2023



Another successful Kiwi Translocation season has come to an end, and the Taranaki Kiwi Kōhanga Kiwi at Rotokare project couldn't be prouder of the significant effort put in by all the organizations and individuals involved. In partnership with the Taranaki Kiwi Trust, the project has been actively relocating kiwi from the Rotokare Sanctuary since 2020.



This year, 32 kiwi were relocated altogether, with 11 released to the Kaitake Ranges, 10 to Mounga Taranaki, and 11 to the newest release site, Omoana. None of these would have been possible without the support of other organizations such as the Taranaki Mounga project, Kaitake Ranges Conservation Trust, Taranaki Kiwi Trust, and several local landowners who create safe habitats for kiwi.



Starting in March certified kiwi dog handlers swept the reserve with staff and volunteers to locate as many kiwi as possible, taking samples for health checks, sex determination (thanks to SVS Labs), and tagging them with transmitters. The day before the release, skilled practitioners and volunteers track and catch the kiwi for processing. During the processing stage, their transmitters are changed for monitoring at their new home site, and a final health check is performed, including an on-site fecal screening (a big thank you to Guy Oakley who supports us with this).



The project started relocating kiwi from the reserve in 2020, and since then, they have moved an impressive 140 kiwi from the reserve. This year's success story is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all involved, including partners, collaborators, volunteers, and supporters. Without their incredible support, this project couldn't be possible. The project's success highlights the importance of collaboration, passion, and dedication to conserving and protecting kiwi in Taranaki and across New Zealand.



Photos by the wonderful Jenny Oakley. Top to bottom: Kiwi Dog handlers and their pooches, Jess and Tāne with a successful catch, a catching team returning to base, Guy screening kiwi fecal

**THANK YOU!**

Ballace E shift - for you hard work hood clearing

Taranaki Electricity Trust - supporting our Education program with a generous grant

Peter Coles - for the donation of a BBQ and office supplies

OMV - for working bees in April & May

John Cambridge - for donation of wire mesh for trap servicing

# Biodiversity & Sanctuary



The post-breeding season survey and banding was completed by Mhari from Hihi Conservation Charitable Trust. She had a record year, with a whopping 22 birds caught and banded. 19 of those being juveniles and 3 adults. This is an indication of great natural nest success - a big win for the Hihi population here at Rotokare.



It's been a big year for Pāteke here at Rotokare with a huge 79 ducks released into the sanctuary in two separate releases. The population is doing well with staff, volunteers, and visitors buzzing to see ducklings wandering the reserve at dusk in the last couple of weeks.



The Green Mistletoe in the reserve were given a helping hand with seed dispersal this season. One particular plant at Rotokare fruited heavily this year. Seeds were collected and hand sown onto new host plants. It can take up to a year for these seeds to establish and start to grow with this rare parasitic plant.

# Biosecurity & Halo



## Halo Outcome Monitoring

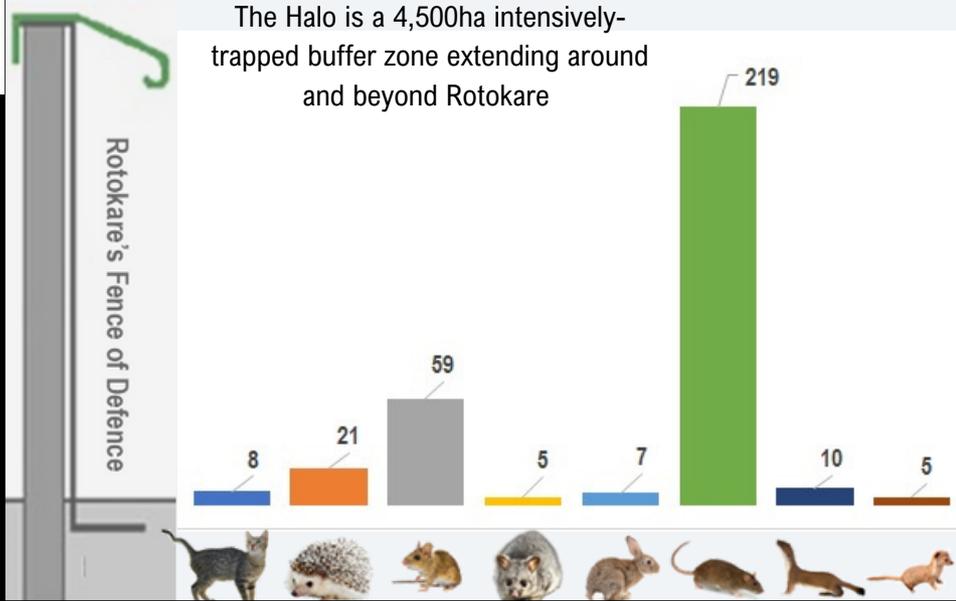
Halo outcome monitoring has recently been undertaken by Rotokare staff, volunteers, and Taranaki Regional Council staff (Kaya from TRC pictured to the right). Consisting of five-minute bird counts and a tracking card survey, this data helps build a bigger picture of the wider impacts of the Halo trapping project (in conjunction with ongoing trap catches) on both pests and native species. Numbers are still being crunched but anecdotal observations from staff is an overall increase in native bird presence in the Halo. Awesome news!



A rodent dog audit was completed the first week of May, with the handler, Carol managing to sweep the reserve despite some inclement weather. No pests were detected during this audit. A full sanctuary card run a couple of weeks beforehand had similar results - no pests to be found. Thank you to all the volunteers who put in the hard yards for another tracking card round. A recent capture of a mouse in the public area reminds us that these critters still find their way in, so this hard mahi is paramount to staying pest-free.

## Halo Catches March-May 2023

The Halo is a 4,500ha intensively-trapped buffer zone extending around and beyond Rotokare



# Coming Up @ Rotokare

## Night Tours July - Sept

Our ever popular Night Tours are back for another season. Kicking off with "Family Nights" over the July school holidays (we will be offering these tickets at a discounted family rate), regular tours, and trialing a special "Adults Evening" as a premium experience, with smaller group sizes for optimal viewing and specially brewed kawakawa tea under the stars.

## Tracking Card Run July

Tracking card runs seem to roll back around pretty quickly, huh? This crucial task is paramount to our pest monitoring and ensuring we are immediately on top of any incursions. Next run is due in July. Come out for a day in the bush and a hot BBQ lunch after!

## Kiwi Call Counts July

The long winter nights are prime time for reassessing our kiwi population through call count surveys. Volunteers brave the cold and dark for several hours as they listen intently to and document kiwi calls in the ngahere. By mapping out the distance and placement of these calls, we are able to gain valuable insights into the numbers, territories, and couplings of kiwis at Rotokare.

## Lizard Monitoring August

As ectotherms, lizards are naturally less active over the winter season. As part of monitoring our populations, collecting data over winter can offer valuable insight as skinks and geckos knuckle down to ride out the cold weather.

### SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



MALLARD / GREY  
DUCK / HYBRIDS

Common

Length 50-70cm

Black facial stripe

Grey-brown bill and feet



PĀTEKE  
BROWN TEAL

Endangered

Length <50cm

White eye-ring

Blue-grey bill and feet



CHECK THEM BEFORE YOU DECK THEM!



(Left) Rotokare showcased on new Eltham signage designed by Marie Liddington. (Below) Tāne representing Rotokare at TRC's "Conservation Hub"



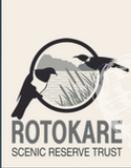
### Rotokare Wish List

The items on this list will help staff and volunteers with their tasks—we welcome donations and contributions towards sourcing:

- Tablecloths for events
- Dewalt 18V Linetrimmer (w/ battery)
- Bush crampons for casual volunteer use
- 100L No.8 brand (Mitre 10) storage bins - black & yellow

Rotokare works hard to deliver significant conservation and community outcomes. If you'd like to help us please lend us a hand by:

- *Contributing wish list items*
- *Donating towards current projects*
- *Volunteering at our Sunday working bees (9am—12pm, with free lunch!)*
- *Becoming "Friends of the Lake" (FOL) with a \$30-\$50 annual donation*



ROKARE

# NIGHT TOURS

tickets available on Eventbrite

Family Nights

4 JULY

7 JULY

10 JULY

12 JULY

DISCOUNTED FAMILY TICKETS  
\$45 (2 ADULTS + 3 CHILDREN)

NIGHT TOURS

11 AUGUST

16 AUGUST

25 AUGUST

STANDARD TOURS  
\$15 ADULTS  
\$7.50 CHILDREN

ADULTS EVENING

28 JULY

PREMIUM EXPERIENCE  
SMALL GROUPS  
KAWAKAWA TEA  
\$30 PP

## Early 2024 Calendar Call

Get out there with your lens' to catch some special snaps of Rotokare for the 2024 calendar.

Pictures to be sent to [contact@rotokare.org.nz](mailto:contact@rotokare.org.nz)

check out our new website!

[http://](http://rotokare.org.nz)

[rotokare.org.nz](http://rotokare.org.nz)



Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust



rotokare



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Members of



Partnered for  
Taranaki Kōhanga Kiwi at Rotokare  
(TKKR) Project

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