

megaphone

THE FACTS & ISSUES

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**"All that you touch, you change.
All that you change, changes you."**
— Octavia Butler



Welcome to Coromandel: Real Kiwi Country

Any dog can kill kiwi. Please help protect our kiwi this summer.

This summer kiwi protection groups all over the Coromandel want to remind visitors with dogs to be aware of the danger they pose to kiwis. If you live near a place where wild kiwi live, or are visiting the Coromandel, you can help us protect our kiwi by making sure dogs are tied up at night, and in sight or tied up during the day. If you're in the bush, keep your dog on a lead at all times.

We were in Coromandel over Labour weekend helping DOC with a kiwi avoidance training day for dogs. 27 dogs went through the training, hopefully helping to make the bush a safer place for kiwi. Free kiwi avoidance training for dogs is being offered around the Coromandel over summer. Contact DOC for details.

A dog approaches a kiwi decoy during kiwi avoidance training in Coromandel town.

The Coromandel Kiwi Project is going from strength to strength, with volunteers protecting 1000ha of kiwi habitat above Coromandel town.

It's springtime and a lovely time to be roaming the bush just behind Coromandel township. The Coromandel Kiwi Project now has eleven active volunteers donating their time each month to servicing over 160 stoat traps. From January 2013 through August 2014 volunteers have removed 416 rats, 81 stoats, 13 weasels, and 9 hedgehogs.

These dedicated volunteers all have part-time or full-time jobs and they still find time each month to play their part in protecting the bush close to Coromandel. We all look forward to hearing kiwi in the hills behind town one day!

Many thanks to the following dedicated trappers: Glenn Beattie (builder), Pete Buddle (pre-school teacher), Mike Coley (carpenter and builder), Sarah Ford (manager guest services), Sarah Forder (conservation professional), Wally Gilmore (builder), Carol Sutherland

(marine mammal observer), Sue Swan (teacher), Liz Whitwell (conservation professional), Jeff Williams (engineer/scientist), Raine Williams (conservation worker). Also, many thanks to Lisa Kearney for organizing bait and volunteers each month.

If you'd like to get involved with the Coromandel Kiwi Project email: coromandelkiwiproject@meg.org.nz



www.meg.org.nz



Save Kiwi Month a hit



Save Kiwi month kept us busy with a charity Golf tournament, Kiwi Avoidance training and Trademe auctions all held during October. Our efforts helped to raise a total of \$1776 for Coromandel kiwi protection.

It began with golf. Moehau Environment Group teamed up with Coromandel Golf Club to host the first Save Kiwi Week Golf tournament on Sunday 5 October. The event raised \$680, with much fun had by all who came. The tournament was won by Colin McNeal, a local golfer who happens to be a keen supporter of kiwi conservation. We plan on making this an annual Coromandel event.

Many thanks to Raine for organising the event and our prize sponsors: Mana Retreat, Earth Sea Sky, Placemakers Thames, Gulf Harbour Marina, Icebreaker, Ripples Cafe, Lakes Resort, The Lost Spring, Pepper Tree Restaurant, Richardsons Real Estate, NZ Golf Mag & Harcourts.

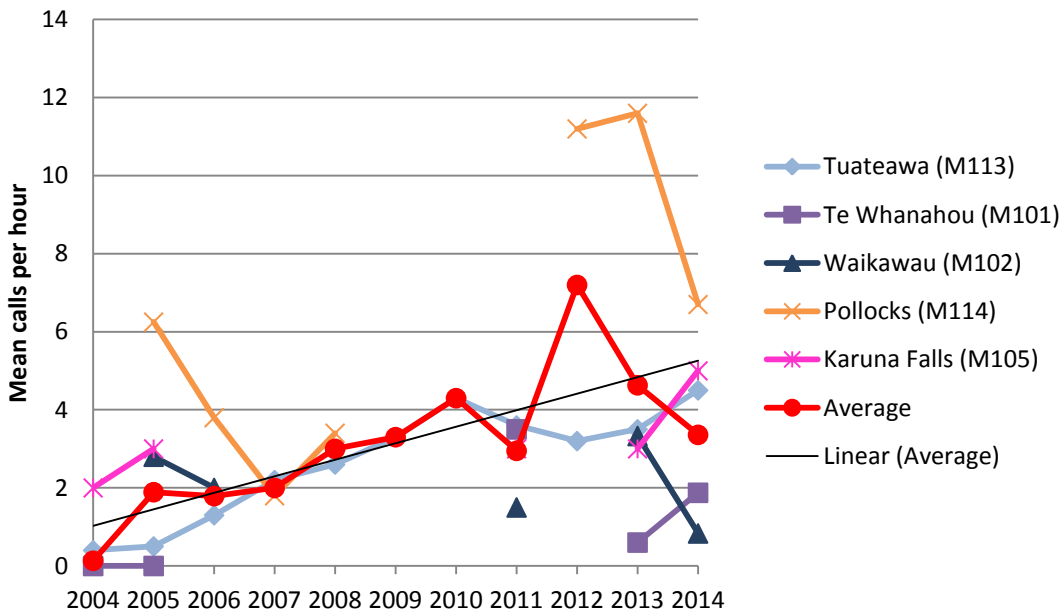
We also ran some Trade Me auctions in conjunction with Kiwis for Kiwi. Castaway Cottage in Tuateawa and Kaka Cottage in Little Bay donated some fantastic accommodation and we auctioned a Coromandel town package (two nights accommodation at 'Sea Perch', return ferry tickets with 360 Discovery cruises and a family pass to Driving Creek Railway). Plus MEG donated a kiwi experience.

Huge thanks to all the generous businesses that donated prizes. We had a fantastic response to our campaign, and it all helped to raise much needed funds for kiwi. Nationally, Kiwis for Kiwi raised just under \$50,000 for kiwi protection.

Above: Two local golfers line up their putts. Below: The MEG girls (from left, Kathi Parr, Natalie Collicott, Raine Williams, Lettecia Williams) show their support at the Save Kiwi Golf tournament in Coromandel



Mean annual kiwi call rates per hour for five sites in MEG Kiwi Sanctuary



Kiwi Call counts..

MEG uses annual kiwi listening at five sites to monitor population trends in our Kiwi Sanctuary. Our results are encouraging.

It is difficult to analyse trends in our data as the total hours listened each year is highly variable. However, it does look like there is an upward trend in both the number of individual kiwi heard and the average call rates. We also have male and female kiwi calling at a site (M101) where we heard none when we began. It's not just kiwi our volunteers hear. They also hear plenty of morepork, kaka, pukeko, weta, dogs, possums, cars and cows during the wintry nights. Our 2005 census showed around 160 kiwi in the sanctuary. We hope to complete another census in 2015.

A succession of successes

Wayne Todd reminisces on the evolution of a dune ecosystem at Waikawau Bay.

Waikawau Bay, 1984: a bright white sand-dune, clean of rubbish, and used by thousands each summer. It's here, that 20-plus NZ dotterels are breeding and fledging chicks alongside 12 variable oyster catchers. There's a small colony of banded dotterel too. By 1987 these populations have crashed. Predation, human impact, and 2 cyclones in one summer all factors in their decline.

Enter a summer ranger to try and save the remaining birds. Some sleuthing around after dark found a few rabbits (not so many then) and hedgehogs!! There were hedgehogs everywhere, which solved the mystery of footprints left behind at nest sites. They had been having scrambled eggs most nights during the breeding season.

Trapping over the next few years saw a decline in hedgehogs and an increase in dotterel and oystercatcher numbers. But the banded dotterels didn't return until 3 years ago.

While doing night work the ranger became aware of the huge numbers of European snails feeding on the lupins which covered the dunes at that time. (There was an immediate connection with the "Bogor" cartoon: snails/hedgehogs..ahhh,.hedgehogs). Hours spent exploring the dunes revealed 'anvil' stones heaped up to a foot deep around with smashed snail shells; evidence left by the many thrushes that fed on them.



A New Zealand dotterel (c) Raine Williams

Eventually the lupins were removed and the snails reduced dramatically as did the thrushes. However the hedgehogs remained and it wasn't until DOC installed a stoat trap-line along the beach in 1999 that a real improvement was observed.

In the following two years 60-80 hedgehogs and 50-70 mustelids were taken out of this area each year. The NZ dotterel population stabilized at about 15-20 birds, and the oystercatchers went from just 2 birds left to 45 in 12 years.

Incidentally there are very few thrushes seen these days, but a ground dwelling small bird-the NZ pipit has gone from a rare sighting 20 years ago to many pairs successfully breeding throughout the dune system. Oh, and the folks enjoying the beach are really keen to help these days just by keeping out of the breeding areas.

So a real success story then? No... not entirely. If it's not one thing it becomes another. There may be fewer stoats and weasels but there

are now thousands of bunnies living in fifteen storey underground apartments all through the dunes. With no effective predators, rabbits have bred like rabbits. Which has attracted feral cats...which are eating a few bunnies and the birds. A cat trapping programme over the last 12 months has removed at least 18. There are wins over time but it is a long investment to get quality gains and takes smart thinking and lots of patience to achieve long-term outcomes. Just a case of keeping on top of it. It's worth it though.

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Summer Programme

Come encounter nature this January, with activities for all ages & abilities. Look out for our Summer Programme booklet or download one from www.meg.org.nz

Kiwi Avoidance training

5 Jan at Waikawau Bay. Get your dog trained to avoid kiwi for free. Call 07 8666903 to book



is offering MEG members a fantastic deal through their online store.

Buy any Earth Sea Sky product online and enter the code 'MOEHAU' to earn a 10% discount for you with another 10% of sales going to Moehau Environment Group.



Visit www.earthseasky.co.nz to check out their fantastic NZ-made outdoor clothing range.

Shop Online

Our shop has a range of items for sale including gift cards, key rings, and T-shirts.



Stock up on gifts for Christmas. Or for those who have it all, why not gift a 'trap sponsorship' - just \$65/yr.

100% of the profit of these items will fund local conservation projects.

To make a purchase visit www.meg.org.nz/support-us/shop/

Support our Work

Become a member of Moehau Environment Group.

You will directly help to protect the unique species and ecosystems on the Coromandel.

It's easy! Simply fill in the form below...

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	
I'd also like to volunteer	Please circle: YES NO

Annual Membership fees:

Single: \$10, Family: \$20, Corporate: \$250

I would like to donate a further:

\$ _____

Please include payment by cheque.

Cheques payable to: Moehau Environment Group, Port Charles, RD4, Coromandel.

You can also pay online here

www.meg.org.nz/support-us/membership/ or by direct debit into our account 02 – 0304 – 0342229 – 02.

If paying by direct debit, please insert the word "MEMBERSHIP" and your name as a reference.

Members subs are due in January.

Have you paid? If so, many thanks. We really appreciate your support.

For further information please contact:

Natalie Collicott (our Coordinator)

Ph (07) 866 5337

E: natalie@meg.org.nz



Follow us on Facebook

'Like' Moehau Environment Group and help spread the word

Big thanks to our sponsors

Richardsons Real Estate

has renewed their commitment as a Kiwi Call Corporate Sponsor. We really appreciate Richardson's incredible support.



AJ Productions

have donated three UOVision trail cameras. These motion activated cameras will allow us to influence of human activity. Stay tuned for footage...

Kaka Cottage

We're thrilled to announce our newest 'Kiwi Call' Corporate sponsor: Kaka Cottage, a new eco-bach in Little Bay nestled in the heart of kiwi country.



NZ Asset Management

have generously donated \$2000 towards our Kiwi Sanctuary. We are so grateful to our sponsors who allow us to target funds to where they are most needed.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



Steel Craft Ltd

