



ISSUE 3 • 2019

# THE MEG-A-PHONE

A Newsletter from Moehau Environment Group

FREE  
PLEASE TAKE  
ONE

## MEG Annual Kiwi Listening Survey...

This is why we do it - kiwi in our backyard!

The results of the 2019 Kiwi Listening Survey are in, thanks to our awesome kiwi listening MEG volunteers.

Listening sites were surveyed for 2 hours in the evening during winter from 2-5 times each. The dots show the number of individual kiwi estimated from the call counts.

All sites had both male and female calls, but typically more males were heard (possibly because females call less and are harder to hear at a distance). Numbers were down a little on last year but the mean kiwi call count has been increasing since our records began in 2004, thanks to all the predator trapping efforts by our field team, contract trappers and volunteers!



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**MEG AGM**

**23rd Nov 2019**

**10am @ Coromandel  
Ambulance Rooms**

# New Trap Network at Long Bay Coromandel



In August MEG, in conjunction with Forest & Bird Coromandel, Waikato Regional Council and some of our fantastic volunteers, set up a new trap network at Long Bay Coromandel. Two days later we had our first unfortunate visitor, a rat. Since installation this network, which includes 12x DOC200's, 3x Goodnature A12's and 1x NZ Auto Trap AT220, has caught; 34 rats, 3 weasels, 33 possums and a hedgehog. That's a win for biodiversity! Each trap box has a contact number attached to it allowing track users the chance to txt in if they spot any kill in the traps.

## Waikato Enviro Schools

Our Communication & Engagement Manager, Nat, had the pleasure of running an education session, along with other educators from DOC and local community groups, at Kauaeranga Valley Visitors Centre as part of NZ Conservation Week. The children, aged from 8-15 and from a number of Waikato Enviro schools, got to learn all about kiwi, predators, shore birds, conservation dogs, gecko, stream life & Kauri.

Nat's session focused on monitoring and the children were delighted to be able to build and take home a tracking tunnel...



## MEG Volunteer Trip to Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari



Not only did we wander through a predator free ancient forest with many 100's of years old trees, but we also had encounters with cheeky Kaka, tiny North Island Robin and the rare Hihi or Stitchbird.

After translocation in 2009 the Hihi hasn't really flourished in the sanctuary. The guide assured us that we might get to hear one but definitely wouldn't see one, boy was she surprised when one of our keen volunteers spotted one loitering in the trees just off the track! A HUGE thanks to Willie and Sarni from Coromandel Adventures for generously supplying our transport for the trip.



## The MEG-a-boom!

### Australasian Bittern matuku hūrepo

**NZ status:** Native

**Conservation status:**

Nationally Critical <1000

**Major threats:**

Habitat loss - weed encroachment, artificial flooding, predators

Starvation - poor water quality (sight feeders), food sources - e.g. eels are threatened

Disturbance



Photos: Top L, Dr Kate Richardson attempting to solicit bird calls. Top R, Maps & discussions at Workshop. Bottom R, Kate & Op's Manager Paul installing an acoustic recorder

Many of you will be well informed of the sorry state of our Wetlands, with over 90% of NZ's Wetlands being drained or filled, the plight of the animals that dwell there is dire also. With resident Bittern in our Waikawau Wetland Project area, MEG are keen to do what we can for this rare and illusive bird. Bittern have been spotted around the Peninsula, but we just don't know if they are separate individuals or the same bird. Bittern are capable of travelling long distances which makes it difficult to keep track of their population numbers. It's thought that there are less than 1000 birds nationally.

So in response, this October/November heralds our inaugural 'MEG-a-boom' - a Coromandel Peninsula Bittern survey. This year we are focusing on Wetland areas from Manaia to Northern Coromandel, but eventually hope to be able to expand the survey area over the entire Peninsula.

The male Bittern 'booms' at this time of year to attract a mate. We are using both people and acoustic recorders to record booming at selected wetland sites.

During Conservation Week we held a well attended Wetland Bird Call workshop and Dr Kate Richardson from WRC up-skilled our volunteers and interested locals in preparation for the survey.

Thanks to everyone who has offered to help with our MEG-a-boom Bittern Survey, watch this space for our results!



# Save Kiwi Month



October was Save Kiwi Month and as well as some online promotions we collaborated with the Department of Conservation to run a free Kiwi Avoidance Training, for dogs, in Coromandel town.

We were happy to have 18 dogs complete their aversion training that morning. Whilst kiwi aversion training isn't a replacement for keeping your dog under control at all times, it is a great tool for helping to keep our kiwi safe. We'll be holding another session in January as part of our Summer Holiday Programme. So if you holiday or visit our area over this time with your 'best friend' then please consider having your dog trained to avoid kiwi.

## Catch Data For Target Species



**Stoat**  
2019 - 248  
Project Total - 2377



**Weasel**  
2019 - 79  
Project Total - 906



**Rat**  
2019 - 2135  
Project Total - 16,891



**Ferret**  
2019 - 2  
Project Total - 4

## Sponsor a Stoat Trap

Would you like to sponsor a stoat trap within our kiwi sanctuary? Well you can! For just \$65 per year you can help provide protection for kiwi chicks in the wild. You'll receive a certificate, a map showing the location of your trap and the catch data for the sponsorship year. Not to mention lots of warm fuzzies!

## Thanks to our Volunteers, Members, Sponsors & Funding Partners...



Would you like to be one of our Corporate Sponsors? Email us at [info@meg.org.nz](mailto:info@meg.org.nz)

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