

ISSUE 1 • 2026

THE MEG-A-PHONE

A Newsletter from Moehau Environment Group



Protecting Pōhutukawa from Possums

In 2025, we were very excited and relieved to receive Natural Heritage funding from Waikato Regional Council for three years which has allowed us to continue the predator control programmes we already run and to install a new possum control project protecting pōhutukawa and coastal forests from Tuatēawa northwards. We have installed 75 AT220 automatic self-resetting traps to link with Habitat Tuatēawa and Little Bay community trapping projects. In only a few months, we have taken out over 300 possums.

And over in Port Charles at our MEGa Pest Attack, we recently clocked over 2000 possums in three years!



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Pa Harakeke planted in Tangiaro/Port Charles

Last winter we created a specialty flax weaving garden on TCDC reserve land with thanks to Auckland Botanic gardens for the collection, funding from PowerCo, and the generous mahi of locals. This space will provide a reliable resource for local weavers - with various grades of flax to support people of all stages in their weaving journey, keeping weaving traditions alive and thriving for generations to come. The flax also benefits the local environment by creating shelter and food for native birds and insects.

We're collaborating with school groups visiting Hillary Outdoors Education centre in Port Charles to help keep the Pa Harakeke weed free!



REINTRODUCTION! - Pua o te Reinga

Pua o te Reinga (flower of the underworld) or *Dactylanthus taylorii* is a rare native flowering plant that grows on tree roots (like a mushroom). It produces lots of nectar that our native insects and birds and bats feed upon. Once widespread, it is now only known in a few places in the country and only two spots on the Coromandel! With the blessing of Craig Solomon, Ngāti Maru and thanks to Avi Holzapfel from DOC we were able to source seed for reintroduction into our MEGa Pest Attack zone. Here the plant will be safer from introduced predators, though we need to wait several years for it to flower!



MEGa Kiwi Listening Survey

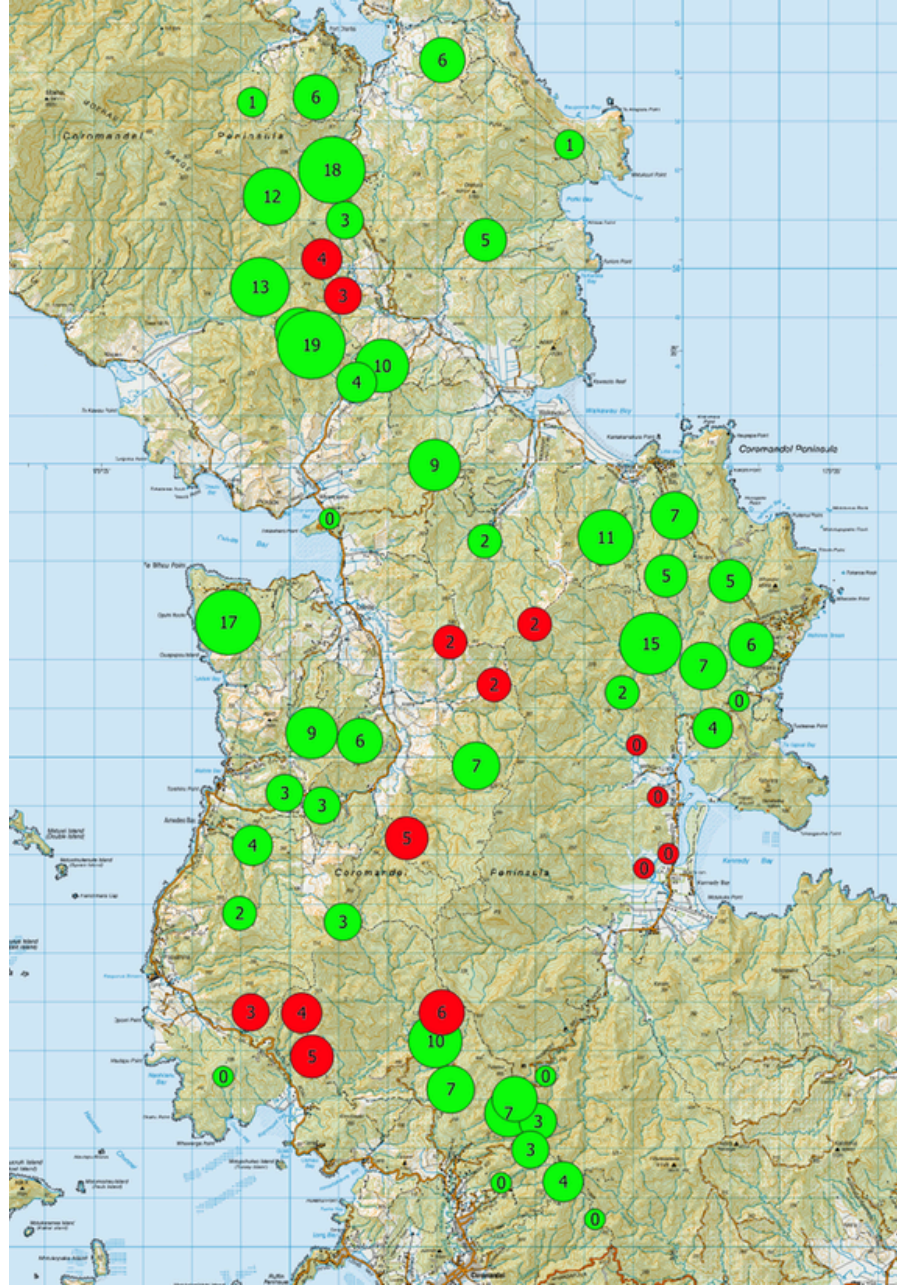
The results of the 2025 large-scale listening survey are in! We repeated our 10-year survey over the MEG kiwi sanctuary area of mustelid trapping. Volunteers sat out on three nights for two hours on dusk, recording kiwi calls.

Kiwi are now widespread from Moehau maunga down to Coromandel town, heard at 80% of listening sites, indicating to us that the trapping is vitally important to continue.

At 16 sites monitored from 2005, numbers increased 36% in first 10 years, but kiwi have not increased at those sites from 2015 to 2025 and this could indicate the habitat is reaching carrying capacity or kiwi are dispersing further away.

At 22 sites in common from 2015 - 2025, the estimated number of birds is up 30% and two areas of decrease were identified for investigation.

We'll be continuing our annual surveys to keep an eye on the trends over time and check our kiwi are still thriving!



Estimated Kiwi Numbers

The map shows numbers of kiwi heard - green sites listened at by humans, red sites had acoustic recorders.

- 51 sites heard kiwi (80%)
- Average call rate per hour = 2.3
- Estimated adult calling kiwi = 1442 in the operational trapping area.

Huge thanks to all the volunteer listeners and trappers and other predator control groups who contribute their time to catching mustelids.

We are so lucky to live in real kiwi country!



BIO BLITZ 2026



Photo courtesy of Holly Madden

In January we had the chance to spend two nights with knowledgeable herpetologists - researchers working with reptiles and amphibians - helping us search for geckos and frogs in our MEGa Pest Attack. The highlights were finding moko kākāriki/elegant gecko, and raukawa gecko. And we saw so much more on our nocturnal meanderings. Lots of big wētā, super spider webs, rare ferns, ruru and even a kiwi! A beautiful way to experience the ngahere by slowly strolling and observing with a headlamp and torch. And plenty of pepeketua/Hochstetter frogs were found by the streams and we'll be back in better conditions to search for more kuri peke/Archey's frog too!

Catch Data For Target Species



Stoat
2024/5 FY Total - 236
Project Total - 3,315



Weasel
2024/5 FY Total - 93
Project Total - 1,168



Rat
2024/5 FY Total - 2945
Project Total - 30,280



Ferret
2024/5 FY Total - 1
Project Total - 9



Possum
2024/5 FY Total - 1156
Project Total - 2724

Become a Member, Sponsor a Stoat Trap or Donate

Would you like to help us give nature a helping hand? Well you can! Become a MEG member for only \$20 a year and \$30 per family. For just \$65 per year you can help provide protection for kiwi chicks in the wild. Check out all the ways you can become involved at www.meg.org.nz or use the handy QR code.



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



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