

16 November 2021

Bridget Percy
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Tēnā koe Bridget

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 26 October 2021, in which you asked:

1. *In 2018 a Pukaha kiwi census indicated that there were 18 kiwi living in the Pukaha Forest and the acoustic recordings done in 2020 indicated that there were 12 live kiwi in the Pukaha Forest following the loss of 6 kiwi during lockdown earlier that year.*

Please answer my question 'How many unmonitored kiwi (of the 154 that have been bred at, or brought into Pukaha Mt Bruce since 2005) are known to be living in the Pukaha Forest?' (as the 114 kiwi calls mentioned in the OIA response dated 26 October 2021 gives no indication of how many different kiwi made these calls).

2. *How many kiwi under 1 year of age are there estimated to be currently in the Pukaha Forest which are too young to call?*
3. *In question 2 of the OIA response dated 26 October 2021 Jack Mace stated that 'incursions are very rare' and that they 'are detected quickly with cameras'. As the Pukaha Forest is 942 ha in size and the boundary is not fenced nor under constant camera surveillance where are the cameras positioned that pick up these 'incursions' and how many of them are there?*

From 2013 DOC began a phased handover of management of conservation activities at Pūkaha to the Pūkaha Board. The board (which incorporates a DOC representative) now manages the staff, and oversees the captive management and restoration work. DOC contributes funds and expertise towards national captive management programmes.

We have liaised with Pūkaha Biodiversity Manager, Christine Reed, to provide responses to your questions. Christine's role is to manage Pūkaha's forest restoration and captive breeding for conservation programmes.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *In 2018 a Pukaha kiwi census indicated that there were 18 kiwi living in the Pukaha Forest and the acoustic recordings done in 2020 indicated that there were 12 live kiwi in the Pukaha Forest following the loss of 6 kiwi during lockdown earlier that year.*

Please answer my question 'How many unmonitored kiwi (of the 154 that have been bred at, or brought into Pukaha Mt Bruce since 2005) are known to be living in the Pukaha Forest?' (as the 114 kiwi calls mentioned in the OIA response dated 26 October 2021 gives no indication of how many different kiwi made these calls).

Unmonitored kiwi are by definition not monitored, so therefore are not able to be counted. Annual acoustic surveys are indicators of individual kiwi locations, although there is a (small) risk of detecting the same kiwi on multiple devices. Survey locations are extensive but not all areas of the reserve are surveyed annually.

Acoustic surveys provide sexing information for birds that are recorded. When 'duetting' is heard, this is a good indication that there is a territorial breeding pair. Of the 114 kiwi calls recorded in the April 2021 survey, 82 were from males and 32 from females. Eighteen duets were recorded across six recorders indicating a likely minimum of six pairs. Calls from solo male and females across a number of recorders indicate a likely minimum of a further six birds.

2. *How many kiwi under 1 year of age are there estimated to be currently in the Pukaha Forest which are too young to call?*

There are no radio transmitters presently on kiwi at Pūkaha, so the number of young birds that would not be calling is not known.

3. *In question 2 of the OIA response dated 26 October 2021 Jack Mace stated that 'incursions are very rare' and that they 'are detected quickly with cameras'. As the Pukaha Forest is 942 ha in size and the boundary is not fenced nor under constant camera surveillance where are the cameras positioned that pick up these 'incursions' and how many of them are there?*

Approximately 15 cameras are deployed through the reserve, although numbers vary depending on any targeted surveys during higher incursion risk times. More cameras will be deployed during those rare occasions. The location of cameras across the reserve vary depending on whether they are permanent or temporarily installed during incursions. Permanent camera locations are not disclosed publicly for reasons of security.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Pūkaha Biodiversity Manager, Christine Reed, is happy to meet with you if you would like to discuss any of your questions further. You can contact her on 06 375 8004 or by email at christine@pukaha.org.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Jack Mace

Director Operations, Lower North Island | Kaihautū Matarautaki Kāhui Matarautaki, Mai i Potaka ki te raki, ki Te Upoko o Te Ika ki te tonga, ki Turakina ki te hauāuru, ki Rēkohu/Wharekauri ki te rāwhiti
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