



Mahinepua - Radar Hill Landcare Group.

Charities Commission Reg. 42272

The Radar Rattler

Newsletter #165 November 23

Kia Ora, everyone 😊

Once again busy times 😊

I have recently been privileged to partake in the lows and highs of Kiwi Monitoring. It has increased my respect for the physical effort required to undertake this "job" and also appreciate the donated hours involved!

Excerpts from Jo's reports over recent months follow below....

Kiwi Taxon July-Aug 2023



Now in early August and still we are locating the signals from Leigh-Ann and Jamie's property. Graham has been in fast mode and for two weeks was definitely nesting - active for less than 3 hours a night, poor guy not much time to find a good feed. We listened again on 15 August and worryingly, his activity had nearly doubled. Four days later, Lesley came with her specialised tracking dog, Yagi to see if we could locate the nest and place a camera. We are sad to

report that the telemetry showed he had moved and was in the gully behind where we expected and there was a change of state. Yagi found an abandoned nest, it smelt of a rotten egg. We continued to search (with Yagi's help) for more evidence, walking in circles through dense native bush and climbing around plenty of supplejack! Looking back at the figures there was one night where he had a change in pattern (out of the burrow and back in later, but stayed out for a longer period) just at the time he must have abandoned. The nest was in the roots of a large puriri with multiple openings - a good safe place on a northern slope. Over the years Graham has often abandoned his first nest so we are hopeful that he

will have another in the weeks to come. We will continue to monitor him. We already suspect that he has moved for a period into the next valley.

Meanwhile over the last month Terry is still active over 10 hours on average each night and emerging from this nest right on sunset currently. The days are getting longer (sunset 5:53pm on the day we recorded). Terry seems to like the gully where he was located in April. At times due to the terrain his signal is hard to locate but we are confident he is moving up and down the gully in a small area. In fact, we have discovered that when recording, if he has already left his burrow and is active before we begin, we lose his signal for a while and then he comes back into range again. Sigh of relief 😊

Kiwi Taxon Aug-Sept 2023

Lynne has been out learning the ropes of telemetry and discovering the challenges. August finished with more wet cold nights and spring arrived to warmer conditions still more rain and then the wind arrived on Radar Hill.

Good news is this month we have been able to locate both kiwi signals weekly from Leigh-Ann and Jamie's property.

An unexpected joy, the first day of spring arrived with a change of state and Terry is nesting - possibly for the first time. Being a younger male, we did not expect him to incubate an egg this year.

Terry seems to like the gully where he was located in April and this week at Doug's we picked up his signal loud and strong compared to the much fainter beeps we get from from Leigh-Ann and Jamie's.

Meanwhile Graham is still in the more northerly gully away from his abandoned nest area. And still showing no sign of nesting. We will continue to monitor him.

Terry is still emerging from this nest around sunset. For the last three weeks he has emerged before 6pm (sunset 6:18pm on the day we recorded) and Graham is now emerging just after the sun sinks over the hills in the west. They are back in their burrows nightly - Terry now around 9:30 pm, meanwhile Graham was back in the burrow at 3:30am this week. A complete reverse of the month before!!



Kiwi Taxon Sept-Oct 2023

Good news on the kiwi front on all counts.

Graham was on the move from the middle of September his signal location moved back into the gully where he had nested. His activity plummeted from 8.5 hours to 5.5 hours over a week, we thought hopefully he is about to sit on an egg again. Good news when we listened again this week he was back in fast mode and incubating his second egg of the season. Fingers crossed this time he is more successful.

It is wonderful news is that Terry is also nesting. We did not expect this from such a young bird. Lesley and I put cameras out last week and he is safely well down a long burrow in a fallen puriri tree.(photo left) Today Terry is still in the same place directionally from Doug's (where his nest is).

The first photographs showed him hopping in and out of the burrow and feeding in the leaf litter close to the nest area. He was joined by a large cheeky rat. (See our website for video footage). A call to our amazing trapper and within 24 hours we had a military operation in place to catch the rat. A week later 5 rats caught and finally a night of none on the camera. Without his transmitter which allows us to get such amazing camera footage we would not have known his peaceful nest was being disturbed and be able to respond so quickly. Even though rats are not significant threat for kiwi eggs Terry was more relaxed on the footage once the rat was absent. The message, even though we thought our mammalian pest control was good, rats are everywhere (we saw one and caught 5). They will be back.



Terry's nest – Who would know that he is there?



Cheeky young possum peering into Terry's camera.

(Formerly Graham's camera)

On another note, a vet in our group was part of an amazing team effort to save a female kiwi from being very close to dying after being hit by a car in September. She had multiple injuries and intensive treatment at Bay of Islands Veterinary Clinic for 5 days until she was well enough for DOC to transfer her to the rehab place in Whangarei. It was a great opportunity to make connections with Massey Wildlife Base and Kiwi Coast's Lesley came and helped show staff how to handle, tube feed and feed sick kiwi. Named Rose, she is doing well and at this stage sometime before Christmas will be returned to her home in the Puketi Forest.

“Important note –there are tight restrictions on who can handle kiwi. If you happen to find an injured (or deceased) kiwi contact DOC, Kiwi Coast or Bay of Islands Veterinary Clinic, Kerikeri for treatment or DNA testing. Staff from Bay of Islands Veterinary Clinic have undertaken training recently, with the Wildlife Base at Massey University in kiwi triage and handling.”



A big Thank You to Kiwi Coast for supplying us with some new road signs – They look great!

We are very pleased with them.

We are ever mindful that Kiwi are not the only endangered species in our area. Going forward we will be featuring both fauna and flora. (Examples below.) We would love to receive any photographs of either that you may have taken locally to share on the newsletter.



NZ Bittern &
NZ Dotterel



There are reports of baby Dotterel chicks at Tauranga Bay – please keep both eyes on your dogs if you walk there.

**UPCOMING EVENT – Come to see us at the
Kaeo Santa Parade. Sunday 10th December
from 11am**

As always...

Voluntary effort helps the group funding applications without doubt. We would be so grateful if you could please record and report on the following :-

Your Possum (and other pest) Kills.

Your volunteer hours and time spent on the removal of noxious weeds etc.

Any revegetation done on private land (for any reason). Number of native plants and area covered.

Now that the North Island brown kiwi is no longer regarded as endangered nationally (it is however, a good indicator species), the presence of other endangered fauna and flora in the Landcare area can be used for funding application purposes where our members are making considerable effort towards achieving sustainable protection of those endangered species.

**Please report information regularly to admin@radarhill.org.nz
Attention Casey**

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Remember to keep checking the MRHLG website.

<https://www.radarhill.org.nz/>

If you would like to pay a subscription or make any donation, please direct credit our bank account **02-0352-0132664-000 - BNZ MRHLG Inc**

Any contribution is greatly appreciated and helps us so much!

Best regards,

Lynne Lucas

Editor, The Radar Rattler

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