



KERERŪ DISCOVERY PROJECT NEWS 2009

Whaia tonu tō mātauranga o te kererū hei painga mō ngā uri o āpōpō.

Increase your knowledge of the kererū for the benefit of tomorrow's generations.

Kererū research – Victoria University of Wellington

From Monica Awasthy, PhD candidate, and Dr Wayne Linklater, Lecturer in Conservation Biology in the School of Biological Sciences Victoria University.

Tracking Wellington kererū

The total number of birds tracked around Wellington now includes 11 wild birds and 16 rehabilitated birds. The rehabilitated birds were released from the Native Bird Rescue Wellington Trust or Nga Manu Nature Reserve.

Keep an eye out for them – six have radio transmitters, and all still have their coloured jesses (leg tags). We have received a number of reports about jessed kererū appearing in people's yards.

'White' the kererū

Over the last few years, our most well-known rehabilitated kererū has been visiting Ngaio and Khandallah residents. 'White' (named after the white jess on her left leg) has been landing on people's houses, cars, and even shoulders. Her friendly nature is attributed to her young age when she was brought in for rehabilitation.

Please don't feed White! She is capable of feeding herself, but she still looks for the occasional hand-outs.



Rehabilitated Kererū called "White" perched on a residents shoulder and clothes-line (right).

Photo credit: Scott & Michelle Harrison.



Online reports of kererū sightings

Since the launch of the Kererū Discovery Project website in 2006, we have been collecting your sightings and observations of kererū throughout the country.

We are using the information from the Wellington region to create distribution maps. We hope to make these available by the end of this year, either on the website or in a newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who contributed data. You will soon see how your information is being used – keep on sending it!

Kererū Discovery Education

A study we recently completed shows that hands-on research experience can increase children's wildlife knowledge and environmental awareness.

We researched the different effects on children's knowledge of:

- hands-on experiences in tracking wild kererū
- teaching by an in-class biologist.

Groups who participated in radio-tracking exercises demonstrated a greater awareness than groups who received in-class teaching alone.

The iconic status and ecological role of kererū make it an ideal species for integrating such biological research and community education initiatives.



Rehabilitated kererū prior to release at Nga Manu Nature Reserve.
Photo credit: Monica Awasthy

Rehabilitated kererū in Waikanae

Every year, a lot of time, effort, and money are invested in rehabilitating injured wildlife. Kererū are frequently injured, recovered, and rehabilitated. Rehabilitation, however, is successful only if animals returned to the wild survive to breed.

We are following kererū released in Wellington and around Waikanae to better understand the challenges they face after release. Our aim is to improve the success of rehabilitation.



Karin Wiley releasing a rehabilitated Kererū in Otari-Wilton Bush.
Photo credit: Monica Awasthy

Project Kererū - Dunedin

Project Kererū is a voluntary, community-based project that is changing the fate of sick and injured kererū in Dunedin and surrounding areas. The project is led by Nik Hurring and her dedicated helpers.

As far as we are aware, Project Kererū is the only conservation project of its kind in the country. Many other facilities care for sick and injured birds, but Project Kererū is the only one dedicated to kererū.

Preventing window strike

Project Kererū is trialling attractive window decals (stickers) in Dunedin to prevent kererū from striking windows.

Birds of many kinds fly into windows, and they do so for various reasons. A new house may have 'sprung up' in a long-used flight path. Windows may appear to be a thoroughfare if they are in line with each other. Windows can reflect trees, giving birds the impression that they can land safely.

The stickers

The stickers we have found to prevent window strike are placed on the outside of the window. From the inside, they look like small areas of frosted glass. To the birds, they appear much larger. They reflect ultra-violet light, warning the birds away.

The designs are attractive – a butterfly, hummingbird, or snowflake (see below). They are unobtrusive, measuring approximately 10cm at the widest point. They last for about 18 months and are easy to remove.

So far, the stickers have had a positive response from the public.

For more information about the decals visit: <http://www.windowalert.com/index.html>

Ordering stickers

If you would like to order stickers, please email Nik or Liz at projectkererū@xtra.co.nz

They will send them to you with full instructions and details on payment. The charge is \$5 per sticker. The stickers are imported from the United States, but the team hope to get them to you fairly quickly.



Kaupapa Kererū – Ngāi Tahu

E kūkū te kererū – A book of oral histories and recent research into the Banks Peninsula kererū

The kererū is a lowland forest-dwelling bird that is unique to New Zealand.

E kūkū te kererū records stories, observations, and memories that testify to the enduring significance of the kererū for Banks Peninsular residents. It provides an arresting account of kererū in the region – their numbers, feeding habits, and habitat. In particular, it records how people have viewed these birds in the past and present.

The results and summaries of various research projects carried out by Kaupapa Kererū accompany the oral histories.

Published July 2008, \$19.95

61 pages, paperback, 150mm x 210mm

ISBN 1-877392-99-3



Please send mecopy/ies of

E kūkū te kererū

*Special price 20% off (RRP \$19.95)
= \$15.95 + \$2 postage (orders in NZ)*

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Kaupapa Kereru
8 Thornlea Place
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Christchurch 8025

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Kererū feather research

Kahu huruhuru ME 15756

The Kahu huruhuru ME 15756 (top, right) has six rows of green kererū feathers from the korokoro (throat), plus white kererū feathers from the uma (breast) and puku (belly).

Orange kākā underwing feathers line the triangles of the two middle rows. Light green kākāriki body feathers line the top and bottom two rows of triangles.

The top five and bottom four horizontal lines have rusty brown kākā belly feathers. The middle two lines have green and brown kererū feathers from the tuarā (or back).

Pākē ME001170

Feathers on the pākē, or rain cape ME001170 (right, below), in Te Papa's collection have been identified by Noel Hyde (former Te Papa taxidermist). The feathers are split pākau (wing feathers) and huruhuru remu (tail feathers) of the kererū.



ME 15756 Kahu huruhuru. Feather cloak with Kererū, kākā, and kākāriki. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.



ME 001170 Pākē. Rain cape made with harakeke (*Phormium tenax*), dye, wool and kererū feathers across the top. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa



Kererū feather chart. Prepared by Noel Hyde. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.



Kererū, Days Bay, Wellington. 1973. Photo credit. J.L. Kendrick. Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai.