



August 2025



Kawau Island multi-species eradication project

Working towards a pest free Kawau Island

Operation updates

We have concluded the first 1080 and Feratox toxin treatment of the southern section. The team is now reviewing the results to confirm the next steps for operations in the area. As part of this process, we will be hosting a site visit from the Wallaby Technical Advisory Group, whose expertise will support the refinement of our adaptive approach moving forward. We will keep you informed.

At the same time, we have commenced knockdown hunting operations in the northern section, which started in [Block 8](#). The aim is to maintain pressure on wallaby and possum population numbers while eradication efforts continue in the south. We'll be working closely with the hunting team to expand coverage and ensure continuity across both sections. Island Conservation will be in contact with residents and landowners in those areas about hunting dates.

To date, over 800 wallabies have been removed through hunting operations. Our wildlife camera data and drone surveys remain important tools in helping us understand the remaining population and in guiding any future removal efforts.

Possum team spotlight

Wildlife cameras have detected possums in all blocks (1-10), confirming their presence across all of Kawau Island.

Although overall numbers remain relatively low in the North, Block 1 has the highest possum population. Encouragingly, the possum team has been making strong progress.

In the Department of Conservation reserve, Cameron Gray and Kiri Stack have been particularly effective, working alongside their skilled possum dogs, Cossey and Pip. Their method of using indicator dogs to locate possum scent, followed by strategic trap placement with attractive lures has proven highly successful. So far, 128 possums have been removed from Block 1 through a combination of hunting and trapping.

They will be visiting Sunny, Schoolhouse, Harris, and Karaka Bay next week. Keep an eye out for updates from Island Conservation on when they'll be working in residential areas.



Cameron Gray and Kiri Stack, with Pip & Cossey.

Want a possum trap?

If residents in the Schoolhouse Bay area would like a free loan of a “flipping timmy” possum trap, reach out to Kawau@islandconservation.org and they’ll help you get set up and walk you through how to use it effectively.



Flipping Timmy Possum trap

Kawau Island kiwi survey

Earlier this year, Save the Kiwi, with support from Auckland Council and Ngāti Manuhiri, completed the first comprehensive dog-assisted survey of North Island brown kiwi (*Apteryx mantelli*) on Kawau Island.

The survey builds on decades of listening and camera-based work and is the first to provide detailed health and demographic information about this population. Field work took place between January and March 2025.

Over three field trips, kiwi detection dog Kimihia and handler Tom Donovan located 56 kiwi and 51 birds were handled, measured, and microchipped for future monitoring. Results revealed a population made up almost entirely of adults, with no chicks or juveniles detected. This indicates very low breeding success in recent years and raises concerns about the long-term viability of the population. In addition, most kiwi were also found to be in moderate to poor condition, suggesting limited food and habitat resources.

Kawau Island's kiwi are thought to be descendants of a small founder group translocated from Hokianga in the 1860s by Governor Grey, with possible later introductions from other sites. This restricted founder base may have created a genetic bottleneck. DNA testing is currently underway to provide greater clarity on the origins of the Kawau population as well as the relatedness between individuals. The island's dry conditions, habitat degradation, and potential predation risks from dogs and stoats are further pressures on the population.

The interim findings highlight both the vulnerability and importance of the Kawau kiwi. Ongoing wallaby management, habitat restoration, predator control, and genetic management will be critical to ensure this population is safeguarded and able to contribute to the broader recovery of the species. A full report will be published by Save the Kiwi once the DNA analysis work has been completed.

Kiwi avoidance training – upcoming sessions in Matakana

Kiwi avoidance training sessions are being held in the Matakana area, which are open and free to dog owners from Kawau Island and surrounding communities. These sessions are an important step in helping protect our native kiwi populations by teaching dogs to avoid kiwi through aversion training.

Session Details:

- **Saturday 30 August**
9am – 3pm | FREE (bookings required)
Location: Matakana Pony Club, 207 Matakana Valley Road
- **Sunday 31 August**
9am – 3pm | FREE (bookings required)
Location: Matakana Country Park, Omaha Flats Road

Bookings:

To register, please use the following link: <https://outlook.office.com/book/KiwiAvoidanceTraining@theforestbridgetrust.org.nz/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

For any questions or assistance, please contact: KAT@theforestbridgetrust.org.nz



Have your say on exotic caulerpa rules

Biosecurity New Zealand is reviewing the Controlled Area Notices (CANs) that help prevent the spread of exotic caulerpa seaweed. These notices currently apply to five locations and restrict activities like anchoring and fishing.

The current CANs expire on **30 September 2025**, and feedback is being sought on three options:

- Option 1: No CANs, just public education
- Option 2: Keep current CANs with area-specific rules
- Option 3: Introduce a broader CAN with stronger controls in high-risk zones

Learn more at biosecurity.govt.nz/caulerpa-rules

Share your feedback here: forms.office.com/r/j1YNrc7rKq

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