

December  
2024



# Working towards a pest free Kawau Island

## Kawau Island multi-species eradication project

### Next community forum meeting

**The next community forum meeting will be held online on Tuesday 17 December (this evening) at 7:30pm.** If you would like to attend, please [register using this link](#). The agenda for the upcoming meeting is attached to this email as are the previous meeting minutes.

The community forum is an important part of the project structure that ensures the community has a voice in the project and is involved in the project design. Ideally it will ensure a diverse range of community voices and perspectives are heard including businesses, charitable trusts, conservation groups, and residents / ratepayers.

The community forum meetings are held monthly online, and any member of the Kawau Island community is welcome to be a part of the community forum.

### Kiwi on Kawau: monitoring and survey work

As part of the Pest Free Kawau Island project, Auckland Council is partnering with Save the Kiwi to carry out kiwi survey work on Kawau Island next year. This work will help us to understand and protect the island's kiwi population and guide conservation efforts. We have two key initiatives planned:

- a comprehensive island wide kiwi dog survey
- a community led Kiwi Call Count

Kiwi are a taonga / treasured species and their presence on Kawau Island is a part of what makes it special. While kiwi sightings are not uncommon, it isn't exactly known how many live on the island, where they are, or how well they are doing.

**The first planned initiative is an island wide Kiwi Dog Survey**, conducted in collaboration with Save the Kiwi and is likely to take place between January and March of 2025. A team of trained kiwi detection dogs and their handlers would search the island to locate kiwi and their burrows. These dogs are specially trained and wear muzzles to ensure the birds are not harmed.

When kiwi are found, they would be carefully weighed, measured and microchipped for long-term tracking. This would:

- provide detailed information about the kiwi population, including their distribution, population size, age, and overall health
- help us understand their condition, breeding habits, and survival rates over time.
- allow us to compare kiwi populations and health before and after the removal of wallabies and possums.

Currently, we suspect that because wallabies are consuming vast amounts of the forest understory, this may be limiting food availability, particularly for younger kiwi.

To achieve the best results, the survey will be island-wide, and **we are seeking permission to access all properties so that specialist dogs and handlers can survey for kiwi**. Kiwi could be anywhere on the island and flexibility in accessing different areas is really important to gathering accurate data. **Please see the attached letter for more detail and contact us at [kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) to provide your approval for property access.**

**The second initiative is a Kiwi Call Count**, would be a community led initiative scheduled for May 2025. This annual survey invites the Kawau Island community to listen for and record kiwi calls during a specific time window. These counts, conducted nationally as part of the Kiwi Call Count Database, provide valuable data about kiwi activity and distribution. Save the Kiwi will offer training to help the community participate, and this work will complement the Kiwi Dog Survey, creating a fuller picture of the island's kiwi population. If you would like to take part in or help lead the Kawau Kiwi Call Count in 2025, please email us at [kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:kawauislandproject@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

There are a number of ways you can help protect kiwi on Kawau Island:

- Keep your dogs on a leash while out walking or hunting with them, as even friendly dogs can accidentally harm kiwi
- Give your pet cat a collar with a bell on it
- Make sure your cat is well fed and has plenty of toys to play with so it's less likely to chase birds and other creatures.
- At night, keep cats and dogs indoors, or dogs securely tied up in a kennel
- Set up rat and stoat traps in your backyard, or participate in predator control programmes such as the [Kawau Community Conservation Trust](#) to reduce the threat of rats.
- Familiarise yourself with [what kiwi calls sound like](#) and see how many you can hear at night.
- Use enclosed compost bins to limit rats access to food and nesting sites, helping to reduce their numbers.

Together, we can work to ensure kiwi thrive on Kawau Island for generations to come.

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