Annual Report 2025-26

Save the kiwi



Rebuilding the kiwi population of Aotearoa New Zealand

Contents

3 From the Chair

4 Highlights from the CEO

5 In the Numbers

6 Kiwi on the Move

8 Kiwi Avoidance Training has grown by leaps and bounds

9 Working closely with tangata whenua

10 Contributing to a better understanding of kiwi

11 Kiwi Art Trail 2026

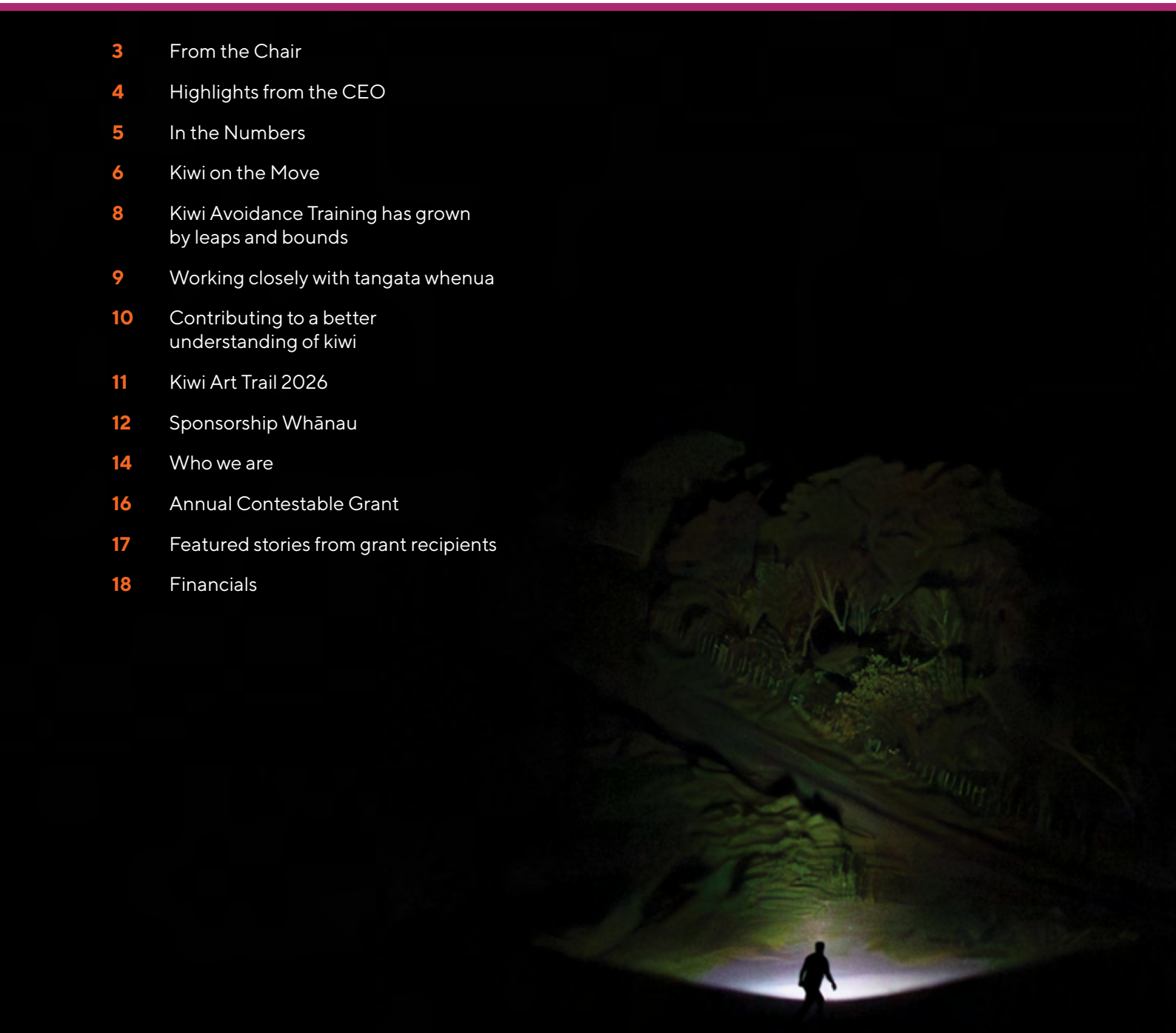
12 Sponsorship Whānau

14 Who we are

16 Annual Contestable Grant

17 Featured stories from grant recipients

18 Financials



Cover photo
© Alex McVinnie

Inside cover photo
© Alex McVinnie

Design
© The Design Cellar Ltd, 2026

From the Chair

Richard Leggat



Save the Kiwi is continuing to do great work and together with a large number of local conservation groups and DOC we are succeeding in reversing the long-term decline in a number of kiwi species. North Island brown kiwi and kiwi pukupuku Little Spotted kiwi in particular are growing in numbers and range.

The 2025/26 year was the first after the completion of the Jobs for Nature funding and while challenging having to manage with less resource the management team did an impressive job in transitioning to the new state and continuing to contribute very positively to the resurgence in kiwi populations.

Our overriding objective 8 years ago was to reverse the 2% pa decline in kiwi numbers and achieve 2% pa growth across the 5 species.

Our work has been mostly focused on North Island brown kiwi where we are seeing meaningful growth, but progress is still needed for at least 3 of the other 4 kiwi species, although admittedly data on actual populations is very limited. The question for Save the Kiwi and NI Brown is, is 2% enough, and if not, what are we wanting to achieve?

Looking ahead the board and senior management agree where practical we want to get kiwi back into people's backyards and lives, which means growing kiwi numbers closer to human populations. Our aim is for abundance not just persistence. We also want our efforts to boost kiwi to have significant positive flow on impacts on other indigenous species.

So we are becoming more ambitious in our longer-term objectives based on the success we are seeing. As an example, the translocation of kiwi to Waiheke has gone very well and on a 10-year view we believe the current small population of Waiheke kiwi can grow substantially. Our objective is for kiwi to be regularly heard and occasionally seen around the main Waiheke population centres.

In terms of other species, we have had very early discussions on how Save the Kiwi can provide more assistance to growing South Island kiwi populations and look forward to developing a South Island plan with key stakeholders over the coming 12- 24 months.

Our fundraising efforts over the past 12 months have been successful and through our Kiwi Art Trail – co-run with our great sponsor Gallagher Insurance – we were introduced to a small number of Americans with an association to New Zealand. Michelle visited California in September 2025 and gave a very well received presentation on Save the Kiwi which resulted in several painted kiwi being sold and the promise of further donations.

Following the end of the FY26 financial year there was another successful trip to California meeting with different group of Americans associated with NZ and interested in conservation. This trip was entirely due to the efforts of Jennie Fenwick and was aimed at raising a sizeable sum for a large conservation project on the East Cape. This project is being planned in conjunction with Te Whānau-a-Apanui and if we can raise the funds will involve a large, fenced sanctuary that will do wonders for kiwi and a multitude of other indigenous species. To date the fundraising is going well so we are optimistic this ambitious project could be delivered.

In summarising, Save the Kiwi is continuing to make a positive difference to kiwi and with that success we have become more ambitious. We will update our strategic plan this year and as stated above will likely be aiming for abundance not persistence, more kiwi closer to people, increased efforts in the South Island and more work on raising funds for the East Cape project.

As always, I am indebted to the work done by Michelle and her fantastic team and the support of the board, especially the work done by Jennie Fenwick over the last 12 months. Thanks also to our wonderful sponsors, the Department of Conservation and the large number of community kiwi conservation groups and your incredible volunteers.

Highlights from the CEO

Michelle Impey



I love this work, and I love this organisation. The ripple effect of the work we do runs deep, but to keep it relatively brief, I have three highlights from this past year.

First, we are tangibly growing the kiwi population on the North Island. Our Kōhanga Kiwi mahi is well and truly bedded in. Over 800 kiwi have been caught, health checked and transferred from Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari to other sites in the past four years. We trialed systems this year with a small-scale inaugural muster from Motutapu Island and continue to support projects aspiring to protect and/or return kiwi to their backyards. We have an informal mantra to have 'kiwi where the people are' and it would be harder to find a better example of this than the successful establishment of kiwi on Waiheke Island in the Hauraki Gulf, with a second translocation completed this year.

Second, we are genuinely supporting those out there doing the mahi in multiple ways. It might be training as a kiwi handler or kiwi avoidance trainer or supporting predator control programmes, via a funding grant. Or, it might be through connecting the kiwi community project network as we do with our annual National Kiwi Hui where a record of over 200 people attended in Nelson this year. The rejuvenation and scaling of Kāhui Taiao Tūroa is particularly exciting. This movement is bringing more hapū/iwi into genuine leadership roles in conservation, calling on the lived experience of successful iwi-led largescale restoration work of Raukumara Pae Maunga.

Third, we are continually heartened by the support we continue to receive for our work. Our stable of generous and committed sponsors led by Gallagher Insurance are a wonderful part of the overall Save the Kiwi team. And we welcomed two new corporate sponsors, EnviroNZ with their Kiwi on the Move team helping move birds around the country and Addiction Pet Foods who support the Kiwi Avoidance Training program.

Although the work is ongoing, in reality, no two years are ever the same in kiwi conservation. We look forward to expanding our support to more Te Waipounamu South Island projects in the coming year, and an exciting capital fundraising project that could see the establishment of a new iwi-led predator free sanctuary on the East Coast of the North Island.

As always, I am so incredibly grateful to our dedicated team who bring passion and commitment beyond expectations. And to our board who give their time, expertise and connections to keeping us on track and moving forward. To all who fund us, and especially to our partners Department of Conservation for the continued confidence in us, expressed through the annual Save our Iconic Kiwi funding. Thank you 1.25 million times over. We have a success story in the making with kiwi, and our vision of taking them from Endangered to Everywhere grows closer by the day.

"Although the work is ongoing, in reality, no two years are ever the same in kiwi conservation. We look forward to expanding our support to more Te Waipounamu South Island projects in the coming year..."

In the Numbers



233
kiwi translocated during whakakao kiwi



48
chicks hatched at the Gallagher Kiwi Burrow



43
chicks raised at the Napier Kiwi Crèche



2837
dogs trained through Kiwi Avoidance Training



$135,000
raised for charities and kiwi conservation through the Kiwi Art Trail

Kiwi on the Move

This is another successful year that Save the Kiwi has translocated kiwi from kōhanga sites to safe homes in the wild.

Western Brown kiwi are thriving

It was another big year with our partners at Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari and Ngāti Korokī Kahukura. This year, 201 kiwi were translocated to Taranaki, Tongariro, and Wellington. This means that more than 800 kiwi have been translocated from the sanctuary, a record-breaking milestone.





Genetic top up

We have partnered with Ngāti Rangi to introduce forty kiwi to Rangataua in Tongariro as part of a genetic top up. Kiwi already live in this area, but these came from a small founder base and adding birds would improve their longterm genetic resilience.





Kiwi in the windy city

Together with The Capital Kiwi Project, we brought kiwi to the windy hills of Wellington from Maungatautari. This year, a pōwhiri was held at the Beehive to celebrate the 250th and last kiwi to be translocated. The project has been an exceptional success and there are now more than 300 kiwi roaming the hills. This has brought together kiwi community projects working with Western brown kiwi and is a testament to the success of the Kōhanga Kiwi strategy.




Translocations in the Western region

We continue to work closely on translocations with the East Taranaki Environment Collective to release birds in Taranaki Mounga and the Department of Conservation in Tongariro National Park. These efforts are boosting the wild kiwi populations of North Island brown kiwi.



Kiwi on the move in the Hauraki Gulf

We celebrated the inaugural muster from Motutapu. Since 2012, 156 Coromandel brown kiwi were brought from the Hauraki-Coromandel region and released on the predator-free island of Motutapu to create a kōhanga site for the taxa. There is now an estimated 600 Coromandel brown kiwi living on Motutapu and Rangitoto islands, and the kiwi population is now growing sufficiently to allow translocations of island-bred kiwi back to mainland sites. Eighteen kiwi were returned marking the next phase of the 'To the Motu and back' strategy.

Save the Kiwi is currently working closely with Ngāi tai ki Tāmaki to strengthen relationships with Hauraki iwi to support future receiving sites.

This year, fourteen more kiwi were brought to Te Matuku Peninsula on Waiheke from Pōnui Island, doubling the current population. The volunteer monitoring team has been phenomenal in gathering information on how the kiwi have settled in and trail cameras are helping keep an eye on the kiwi and their adjustments to Waiheke island life. The cameras are showing that the population is growing with at least four individual chicks sighted during the 2025 breeding season.

All settled in

The kiwi pukupuku that were released to Brook Waimārama Sanctuary during the previous translocation season have settled in and are breeding well. Tamsin Ward-Smith and Nadine Maud visited the sanctuary to remove transmitters from 10 monitored males and train staff as kiwi handlers. There are currently an estimated 10-15 chicks in addition to the 41 adult birds translocated to the sanctuary.













The Coromandel subspecies of brown kiwi are the rarest of North Island brown kiwi.







Kiwi Avoidance Training has grown by leaps and bounds

Over the past few years, there has been an increased demand for training throughout the country as kiwi populations spread and overlap with people and dogs, with increasing demand in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty.

To meet this national demand, Save the Kiwi holds an annual wānanga to induct and train up and coming trainers. This year's wānanga which was held in Wellington at the Mākara School brought together experienced and newbie trainers from all over the North Island, seven of whom are now trainers in the programme. In the coming year, the team is looking to create more trainer capacity on the South Island.

ADDICTION®
WE GO FURTHER FOR PETS

Addiction Pet Foods have come on board to support this programme (including provision of generous sample packs provided for each dog that undergoes training)













Working closely with tangata whenua

Kāhui Taiao Tūroa (KTT) was established by Save the Kiwi in 2014 as a kaupapa to explore indigenous, place-based approaches to conservation.

Since then, KTT has travelled across Aotearoa, partnering with hapū and local organisations to host wānanga grounded in the lived realities of each place.

In 2025, KTT was hosted in Te Kaha alongside the work of Raukūmara Pae Maunga. This hui brought together whakaaro, experience, and practice – reflecting both national insights and the lived delivery of a whole-of-ngahere restoration at scale. In the coming months, Kāhui Taiao Tūroa and Raukūmara Pae Maunga will host a webinar series which will draw from their lived experience, science practices, and practical delivery at scale and share how they actively bring iwi, hapū, practitioners, and partners together.











Contributing to a better understanding of kiwi

Save the Kiwi has been conducting research to better understand the different kinds of habitats that kiwi use. Part of this is looking into how kiwi move through and use plantation forests before, during and post harvest activities. This is a continuation of a Jobs for Nature workstream where we engaged closely with the forestry sector, providing practical training and resources so that they can support kiwi on the land they manage.

With over 1.7 million hectares of plantation forest in New Zealand, this could be significantly more habitat for kiwi when there is enough predator control. Save the Kiwi is working closely with forestry companies to better understand how kiwi move through and use plantation forests. This will be the first time a coordinated national research project has closely monitored kiwi movement within active commercial forestry sites, and our findings will help inform best practices for kiwi recovery in these places.

We have also been supporting local communities who are looking to better understand the health of kiwi populations in their area and how to best manage this. Save the Kiwi has supported surveys at various sites including Tupou Bay, Mokoia Island, and Kawau Island.



Kiwi Art Trail 2026

For the first time ever, the Kiwi Art Trail was held on Te Waipounamu the South Island, kicking off at the New Zealand Golf Open where the sculptures decorated Millbrook Resort in Arrowtown. During the following months, the trail was brought to the Bannockburn Cycle Trail and Alexandra-Clyde Cycle Loop in Central Otago.

This year's trail featured artwork from fourteen New Zealand artists, creating a memorable showcase of talent with sales generating more than $135,000 for kiwi conservation and charities.





















Sponsorship Whānau

Gallagher Insurance

The Gallagher Kiwi Burrow continues its legacy, now having hatched more than 450 kiwi eggs since opening. The team also cares for the chicks growing up in the crèche at Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary and assists during translocation season. On top of this, Gallagher continues to support the Kiwi Art Trail, which has been running since 2023.

Millennium Hotels

The Manaaki programme of Millenium Hotels allows guests in their hotels around the country to opt in to feed a kiwi by not having their room serviced. This supports the care for young kiwi growing up at the Napier Kiwi Crèche.

EnviroNZ

Enviro NZ have joined the sponsorship whānau to help with one of our biggest endeavours... translocating kiwi. The Enviro NZ Kiwi on the Move programme will help transfer kiwi from kōhanga sites to predator-controlled habitats across Aotearoa, boosting the kiwi populations where they have been absent for generations.

Enviro NZ Chief Financial Officer, Jason Miles says the partnership reflects a shared commitment to long-term environmental stewardship. “This partnership forms part of Enviro NZ’s broader commitment to environmental responsibility and supporting initiatives that deliver measurable, lasting impact for New Zealand. We’re very excited to be involved with Save the Kiwi.”



Whittakers

We’ve received extraordinary support from Whittakers this year. The Chocolate Kiwi finally returned after 3 years with 30c from each one sold during the Easter season. Plus, all room bookings to their 130th anniversary Whittaker’s Hotel Sweet were donated to Save the Kiwi.





Who we are

The Save the Kiwi Team



Michelle Impey
Manahautū
CEO



Ross Halpin
Pou Matua Rapu Pūtea
Marketing & Sponsorship General Manager



Debbie Howard
Pou Pūtea Tūmatanui
Events & Sponsorship Manager



Tineke Joustra
Pou Matarau
Operations Manager



Janina Castro
Pou Pāpāho Whakapā
Social Media and Communications Executive



Clare Tyler
Āpiha Pūtea
Finance Manager



Sian Potier
Mātanga Tuku Tāonga
Release Site Specialist



Paula Judd
Pou Whirinaki Kōhanga Coromandel Brown Kiwi
Kōhanga Coordinator, Coromandel Brown Kiwi



Tamsin Ward-Smith
Pou Whirinaki a Rohe Eastern Brown Kiwi
Regional Coordinator, Eastern Brown Kiwi



Morgan Cox
Pou Uruao a Motu
Māori Engagement National Coordinator



Ora Barlow
Pou Uruao a Motu
Māori Engagement National Coordinator



Will Kahu
Field Operations and Training Coordinator



Helen McCormick
Pou Mātanga Whakamaru Kiwi
Husbandry Manager, Gallagher Kiwi Burrow



Kimberley McGuire
Poutiro Kiwi
Senior Kiwi Keeper, Gallagher Kiwi Burrow



Emma Craig
Pou Taumaru Kiwi | Pou Whirinaki a Rohe Te Tai Tokerau
Dog Specialist & Regional Coordinator, Northland Brown Kiwi



Kelsi Thompson
Kaitiro Kiwi
Kiwi Keeper, Gallagher Kiwi Burrow



Miriam Strachan
Kaitiro Kiwi
Kiwi Keeper, Napier Kiwi Crèche



Amy Giddens
Kaitiro Kiwi
Kiwi Keeper, Napier Kiwi Crèche



Bev Wilkinson
Pou Mātanga Whakamaru Kiwi
Husbandry Manager, Napier Kiwi Crèche

The Board



Richard Leggat



Lady Jennie Fenwick



Joe Harawira
Ngāi te Rangi – Ngāti Awa – Maniapoto – Tūhourangi



Dr John McLennan



Ruud Kleinpaste



Kate Graeme



Alistair Ryan

Our Ambassadors

We would like to extend our thanks to the Save the Kiwi ambassadors who support our mahi.



Dame Lisa Carrington
New Zealand Olympian



Rt Hon. Sir John Key
Former Prime Minister



Rt Hon. Helen Clark
Former Prime Minister



Kane Williamson
New Zealand Cricketer



Jenny-May Clarkson
TV Personality



Miriama Kamo
TV Personality



Kat Quin
Kuwi the Kiwi
Author & Illustrator



Ruud Kleinpaste
'Bugman' & Kiwi Ambassador

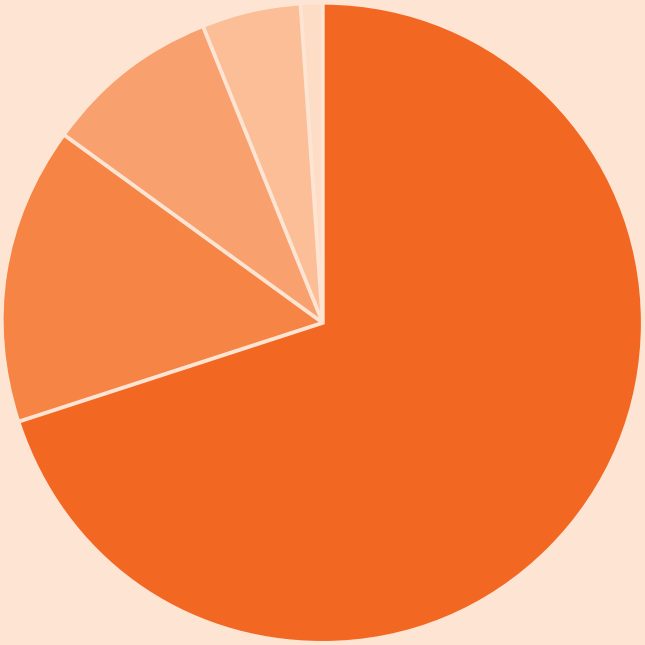


Sir Graham Henry
Former All Blacks Coach

Annual Contestable Grant

The Save Our Iconic Kiwi funding allows us to bolster community and Māori-led conservation groups through our Annual Contestable Grant.

This funding has been pivotal for supporting critical aspects of kiwi recovery including supporting Operation Nest Egg™ and training kiwi handlers, understanding where kiwi are and how they are doing, and improving access to Kiwi Avoidance Training. Many of the funded programs foster knowledge sharing with neighbouring projects and contribute to the network of kiwi recovery programs around the country.



Predator control (70%)
Controlling predators in kiwi habitat is the prime focus of the hundreds of community-led kiwi conservation groups around the country. The work done also provides a haven for other native birds, reptiles, and insects. Save Our Iconic Kiwi funding helps these projects set up and maintain hundreds of trap lines that form a protective shield against invasive pests and predators like stoats, ferrets, and rats. This safe habitat will be home to the increased numbers of kiwi that we will breed in years to come.

Project Support (15%)
To coordinate projects that rely heavily on volunteers and run 365 days a year often requires full-time staff support.

We recognise the necessity of these roles and provide administration and project support funding. We also support advocacy work and kiwi avoidance training for dogs.

Monitoring & Translocations (9%)
In order to know when we can lift eggs, keep an eye on the overall health and genetic diversity of kiwi populations, and understand what's going on in the wild, we need to monitor kiwi. Translocations are used to manage genetic diversity, move kiwi into underpopulated, but protected, areas, and support Operation Nest Egg.

Operation Nest Egg (5%)
Rearing chicks in secure facilities gives them the best chance of surviving until they reach around 1kg in weight, at which point hey are much less vulnerable to predation. Operation Nest Egg is a highly effective way of increasing the survival rates of kiwi chicks so they have more chance of reaching breeding age and contributing to increasing kiwi populations.

Advocacy & Research (1%)
For projects that welcome more people into kiwi conservation, including campaigns, education, and events, and initiatives that will deepen our understanding of and result in more effective management of kiwi. Research projects typically focus on but are not limited to kiwi biology and ecology, translocations, and predator control.

Featured stories from grant recipients

Mahakirau Forest Estate Society

The funding supported a substantial upgrade in the mustelid-focused predator control network in the Mahakirau Sanctuary (620 hectares). This included updating traps and auditing existing traplines, and conducting eDNA diet analysis. Locals report increased observation in kiwi and signs of their presence (i.e. feathers, scats, etc).

Beyond this, the Sanctuary contributed to wider knowledge-sharing among the community through presentations, workshops, field-based training and more. Mahakirau supported regional predator-response networks and contributed to a developing ferret genetics project investigating dispersal and population connectivity across North Island kiwi landscapes.

"We are delighted that Mahakirau residents are increasingly experiencing personal encounters with kiwi in their own backyards. It is an extraordinary and deeply rewarding outcome after decades of collective commitment to predator control and habitat protection."







East Taranaki Environment Collective

The funding covered the mustelid pest control for the project area (18,000 hectares) and intensified rat and possum control within the Pouiatoa where reintroduced kōkako population is also growing.

ETEC also supported Ngāti Mutunga on the adjacent Taramoukou trapline near Pouiatoa, strengthening landscape-scale protection and reducing reinvasion pressure for kiwi and other priority species. On a regional level, ETEC has also organised the third regional pest control hui to bolster regional knowledge-sharing.



Financials

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

REVENUE

Fundraising revenue	214,890
Donations, sponsorship and royalties	1,201,427
Grant revenue	1,399,551
Interest, dividends and other investments	45,244
Total revenue	**2,861,112**

EXPENSES

Conservation project funding	394,866
Fundraising expenses	148,775
Organisational support	2,298,122
Total expenses	**2,841,763**
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to The Kiwi Trust	**19,349**

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH JUNE 2026

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank	1,038,719
Debtors and prepayments	116,857
Property, plant, equipment and investments	725,964
Total assets	**1,881,540**

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Creditors, accrued expenses and employee costs payable	265,129
Deferred revenue (grants with conditions)	0
GST payable	0
Total current liabilities	**265,129**
Total assets less total liabilities (net assets)	**1,616,411**

Photography credits:
© Alex McVinnie
© Lucy Schultz
© Jenny Oakley
© Moana Ellis
© Sean McGrath
© Joshua James





www.savethekiwi.nz