

Snippets about kereru, and determining where the gaps are in our knowledge about the species.

### **1. Kereru attacking its reflection - Alastair Fairweather**

My sister's place has a lot of tree lucerne on it which the kereru are feeding on at present (August). One of the birds landed on her windowsill, took a major dislike to its reflection and managed to knock itself out after repeated attempts to peck at its image (despite my sister physically trying to move the bird on at one stage)! Anybody else had a similar experience?

### **2. Kereru nest in Wellington - Jonathan Anderson**

There are a couple of kereru preparing to nest in Trelissick Park, Wellington. I watched them yesterday (17 September 2006) collecting twigs and carrying them to a tree and later mating. I think the tree was used for nesting last year as well as I have previously watched a bird push its way up into the top of the tree amongst a tangle of *Muehlenbeckia* towards dusk. I will have to check my notes to see what time of the year this was.

The nest tree is a karo / mahoe clump with *Muehlenbeckia* on the edge of an open area near the stream and the main walking track. The nest site would be about 4-5m off the ground. There are food sources in the immediate area, including broom (they were feeding on flowers yesterday), tree lucerne and willow shoots.

### **3. Kereru feeding on brassicas - Chris Smuts-Kennedy**

Following on from the sighting of parea feeding in a rape crop on Chatham Island, that reminds me that occasionally 1 or 2 kereru during 1990-95 were seen feeding on the leaves of broccoli and cabbage in our vegie plot on Little Barrier Island. While standing on the mature plants they took a few packs out of mature leaves, not the central florets.

### **4. First sighting of kereru at Makara, Wellington - Ted Smith**

Ted Smith has been a resident of Makara for over 70 years. He reports in early September that the first kereru he has seen in the valley arrived in August, and has been visiting his property about every 2 days to feed on kowhai leaves.

### **5. Increase in numbers of kereru seen on Long Island - Paul Van Klink**

I was working on Long Island in the Queen Charlotte Sound in May and late July. I noticed that there was at least a 4 fold increase in kereru numbers on the island from May (very few) to July (20-30) suggesting that it might be an important island habitat for winter feeding of kereru in the area.

### **6. What do we know about kereru, and where are the gaps in our knowledge? - Ralph Powlesland**

I thought it might be a useful exercise to find out where the gaps in our knowledge are with regard to kereru, especially those that if 'filled' might contribute to conservation of kereru. As a first step here is a list of topic headings. If you note any omissions please let me know, and then the next issue, perhaps, I'll indicate what information for each topic that I'm aware of in order to determine what we still need to investigate.

**Kereru - where are the gaps in our knowledge**

|                     |  |                                 |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Scientific name     | <i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandae</i>                                |                                 |
| Description         |  |                                 |
| Taxonomy            | near relatives   |                                 |
|                     | basis for  | structural<br>DNA               |
| Measurements        | geographic   |                                 |
|                     |  | male                            |
|                     |  | female                          |
|                     |  | fledgling<br>juvenile           |
| Weight              | mean, minimum, maximum   |                                 |
|                     |  | juveniles, males, females       |
|                     |  | regional<br>seasonal            |
| Plumage             | description  |                                 |
|                     | moult  |                                 |
| Voice               | adult calls  |                                 |
|                     | contact  |                                 |
|                     | alarm  |                                 |
|                     | nestling calls   |                                 |
| Body maintenance    | preening   |                                 |
|                     | rain-bathing   |                                 |
|                     | sun-bathing  |                                 |
|                     | stretching   |                                 |
| Social organization | solitary   |                                 |
|                     | pairs  | pair bonds                      |
|                     | family groups  |                                 |
|                     | flocks   |                                 |
| Social activities   | aggression   |                                 |
|                     | alarm  |                                 |
|                     | anti-predator activities                                       | when feeding, roosting, nesting |
| Population          | Responses to people  |                                 |
|                     | past   |                                 |
|                     | present  |                                 |
|                     | densities  |                                 |
| Home range          | annual monitoring  |                                 |
|                     | long-term monitoring   |                                 |
|                     | annual   |                                 |
| Movements           | seasonal   |                                 |
|                     | juvenile   |                                 |
|                     | daily  |                                 |
| Habitats            | seasonal   |                                 |
|                     | foraging   |                                 |
| Foraging            | breeding   |                                 |
| Foods               | movements on / within shrubs / trees / lianes to access foods  |                                 |
|                     | gap size   |                                 |
|                     | food types buds, foliage, flowers, fruit, invertebrates, water |                                 |
|                     | food species   |                                 |

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|                  |                                   |                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                  | food size                         |                                   |
|                  | seed passage times                |                                   |
| Breeding         | courtship activities              | noisy preening                    |
|                  |                                   | bobbing / bouncing                |
|                  |                                   | allopreening                      |
|                  |                                   | beaking                           |
|                  | display flights                   | gender                            |
|                  |                                   | timing in relation to breeding    |
|                  | copulation                        |                                   |
|                  | nest site selection               | gender roles                      |
|                  | nest sites                        |                                   |
|                  | nest building                     | materials                         |
|                  |                                   | gender roles                      |
|                  |                                   | duration                          |
|                  | pre-lay period                    | duration                          |
|                  | egg-laying                        | time of day / night               |
|                  | egg                               | size                              |
|                  |                                   | shape                             |
|                  |                                   | yolk / albumen quality            |
|                  | incubation                        | duration                          |
|                  |                                   | gender roles                      |
|                  |                                   | addition of nest material         |
|                  | nestling rearing                  | duration                          |
|                  |                                   | crop milk                         |
|                  |                                   | gender roles                      |
|                  |                                   | brooding                          |
|                  |                                   | nestling growth / weight increase |
|                  |                                   | plumage development               |
|                  |                                   | foods of nestlings                |
|                  |                                   | nest-leaving process              |
|                  |                                   | nest survival /                   |
|                  | fledgling rearing                 | duration                          |
|                  |                                   | roles of parents                  |
| Breeding effort  | variability from year to year     |                                   |
|                  | nesting attempts per season       |                                   |
|                  | re-nesting after failed attempt   |                                   |
|                  | over-lapping nesting attempts     |                                   |
| Breeding success | % nesting success                 |                                   |
|                  | reasons for failed attempts       |                                   |
|                  | predators at nests                |                                   |
|                  | responses to pest control         |                                   |
| Juveniles        | duration                          |                                   |
|                  | identification of Juvs vs adults  |                                   |
|                  | foraging                          |                                   |
|                  | movements                         |                                   |
|                  | home range                        |                                   |
| Age at maturity  | male vs female                    |                                   |
| Life expectancy  |                                   |                                   |
| Longevity        |                                   |                                   |
| Mortality        | diseases                          |                                   |
|                  | impact fatalities                 |                                   |
|                  | predators of subadults and adults |                                   |

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|   | when most vulnerable to predators   |
| Competitors   | native introduced   |
| Hunting   | impact on populations   |
| Injuries  | descriptions care required for injured kereru   |
| Captive maintenance                                     | indoor care aviary care diets of nestlings of adults  |
| Release procedures for rehabilitated kereru             | of adults taken into care of nestlings taken into care  |
| Monitoring populations                                  | methods of population estimates determining start and end of breeding season  |
| Responses to management pest control                    | weed food species removal planting of food species provision of water sources   |
| Threats to kereru from management / research operations | mist-netting banding jessing radio-tagging nest monitoring devices at nests – video cameras, data loggers possum trapping bait stations aerial pest control |
| Sources of information                                  | journal papers magazine articles reports books websites   |
| Bibliography  |   |

