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Here is another issue of Kereru News. I'll be on leave for 5 weeks, back in early September. My search engine will keep collecting interesting kereru/kukupu/kuku/parea stories which I'll compile on my return. Please feel free to send in or contribute any stories.

Kereru squatters!

30 July 2010

Hi folks, I have another problem with Kereru - this time a pair of birds, & I am starting to run out of ideas. And, yes, this one is bizarre!

The elderly lady owner of a deer farm has had 2 Kereru take up residence in her large, half round double garage, near Matakana. One bird came in & out a few times, the other one didn't seem to leave the garage, despite her leaving the large tilt a door open all day. One bird spent most of it's time above the door, in the half dark. After 2 days, she called me & I spent an evening trying to get them out. Birds 2, DOC 0. Next morning, after more chasing, I stapled old sheets up along the edge of the roof beams & chased them into the section of garage behind the door, & left them to it. One went in & out a couple of times, No 2 left at 4pm, when No 1 was also out, & Mrs Terzagi shut the door. She noted a 3rd bird in the tree beside her garage. (The garage has no outside windows & is packed to the ceiling with stuff on shelves, a quad etc.) The birds were flying about quite happily & not crashing into anything, but due to some hefty landings, quite a lot of camping gear, chilly bins etc was being knocked off shelves.

She has kept the door shut as much as possible since, but both birds are now sitting in the Oak tree opposite & giving her the strong impression they'll be back in as soon as she opens the door. I think she is right. And while she is prepared to share her garage with 2 crapping Kereru, she can't let them have free range in & out, as she can't leave the door open when she leaves the property overnight or for a few days.

So she is now asking if she can build them a "pigeon house" of some description, & hang it in the nearby Oak or Puriri & try to lure them away from the warm, dry garage. I

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can't recall ever hearing about pigeons using artificial nests, but if anyone can explain a roost set up, I'll pass it on..

She isn't feeding the birds, although is happy to try & do so to keep them out. There is no food kept in the garage, & she has a cat! (Currently shut in the house).

Has anyone ever had (& resolved) a similar problem, because I'm pretty much out of bright ideas.

2 rather poor photos are attached (from me perching on top of a ladder)- of the birds back above the tilt a door. The fluffed up one was asleep at the time - it flies around just fine!

A perplexed ranger!

Thelma Wilson

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Hospital for the Birds

Fri, 09 Jul 2010

<http://blog.forestandbird.org.nz/hospital-for-the-birds/>

Blogger: Web Manager for Forest & Bird, Mandy Herrick

Given their penchant for fermented berries, it comes as no surprise that our kereru is one of the more accident prone birds. In fact, they get in into so many scrapes that a small hospital has been set up in Dunedin to care for these injured birds.

The hospital is supported by our Dunedin branch, DOC and Watties, and relies heavily on the goodwill of volunteers that nurture these birds back from the brink.

Earlier this year, I met up with the people who run the hospital and was introduced to some of their feathery patients.

Video-clip shows some of the results and some discussion of what causes injuries

Kereru on the menu?

Eating off the endangered menu

25-Jun-2010 12:23

By Keith Stewart

<http://www.radiolive.co.nz/Eating-off-the-endangered-menu/tabid/452/articleID/14327/Default.aspx>

If, for example, we initiated a commercial breeding programme for kereru (native wood pigeons) that required those raising the birds for food to release 25% of their annual crop of new birds into a managed release programme in a native bush reserve. This would serve two purposes; the first is to increase the wild population of kereru, and the second is that by making the birds commercially available there becomes no reason to hunt them in the wild, which remains the second greatest threat to their survival.

Such activity could ensure that a large and sustainable wild pigeon population could again be one of this country's great natural assets. It could also ensure that the magnificent dish of grilled pigeon would be restored as a culinary cornerstone of our culture.

Comment from editor: There are issues with the slow reproductive rate of kereru that reduce the financial viability of such a venture. Most people seem to assume that kereru, like other pigeons, lay multiple eggs. Laying only one egg per nest is going to require a long lead-in time before there are sufficient numbers to harvest, and the cost of production is likely to make it a luxury only item.

Comment from Kereru News recipient

We wish to differ with the expert quoted in Kereru News 75 as saying the kereru get hit by cars because they are drunk on berries. In Otatara the roads are frequently surrounded by bush on both sides, the birds are merely flying across or along roads to get to their feed sources, whatever the food is.

When they're full of any type of food they are heavy and dive and often fly low for some distance before increasing height again.

Drought is killing kereru

DELWYN DICKEY - Rodney Times

Last updated 05:00 24/06/2010

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/rodney-times/3844604/Drought-is-killing-kereru>

MANY kereru - native wood pigeons - face starvation because of the long-term effects of Rodney's near-record drought.

A lot more of the birds than usual are being brought to bird rescue agencies.

"We have had about five wood pigeons, and fostered out 10 more which were brought in starving," says Sylvia Durrant, the "bird lady" of Rothesay Bay.

"One woman at Puhoi said a bird just fell out of the sky – many have come from Rodney," she says.

Further north, where the drought was more severe, Whangarei Native Bird Recovery Centre chairman Robert Webb says they have had 20 very skinny young birds handed in during the last two months.

The birds are frugivorous – meaning a big part of their diet comprises fruit, particularly from larger native trees like miro, puriri, tawa and taraire.

Closer to built-up areas they also eat exotic fruits like guava and have a particular taste for plums. They will also eat young shoots.

Over summer and autumn the birds feed heavily to carry them through the winter when there isn't so much fruit or new growth to eat.

During the recent drought, many trees became stressed from lack of water.

One of the natural survival mechanisms for trees under stress from dry conditions is to drop their fruit prematurely, putting all their reserves into surviving.

This year has seen many native and exotic trees whose fruit the birds rely on dropping fruit early.

In the case of taraire trees, there have also been higher numbers than usual dying off.

Bounce-Back

July 12, 2010

<http://www.animalsanctuary.co.nz/news/bounce-back>

Due to the summer/autumn drought, the berries on our native trees didn't ripen. There's no food for the beautiful NZ kereru (wood pigeons), and we've had lots of skinny, starving kereru brought in to The Sanctuary. We wondered what had become of Bounce, a beloved baby kereru whom we hand raised last spring. Bounce spent all summer in our backyard, accepting support feeds as she gained strength and confidence. Gradually she spent more and more time in the bush, and eventually disappeared to a life in the wild, as it should be. We hadn't seen her for months, and worried about whether she'd survived. Recently we noticed a skinny kereru in our backyard, and thought: "Could it be Bounce?" We rushed outside...and she immediately flew onto Michael's head! Sure enough, Bounce had come back to the place she knew she could get 3 good meals a day...AND she brought a handsome male with her. Smart bird! We're delighted she remembered, and very happy to be able to support Bounce and her mate through this lean winter.

***Hamilton Zoo's relationship with the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust (MEIT).
Presented by Cheridan Mathers and Adrian Peterson.***

<http://www.zooaquarium.org.au/ArticleDocuments/169/Hamilton%20Zoos%20relationship%20with%20MEIT.pdf.aspx>.

Abstract

Due to the relative proximity of Hamilton Zoo to the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust Reserve we have had the privilege of assisting with the rehabilitation of some of the reserves injured wildlife. The assistance of New Zealand zoo's in programs like the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust is a rewarding and important part of our role as advocates for conservation, giving us the opportunity to put back in. We will present some of the experiences of our cooperation with Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust (MEIT).

How can the development of a functional habitat corridor for Kereru and the White Faced Heron drive the design of urban landscape ?

www.catalystlandscapes.co.nz/emeraldnecklace.php

- To gain an understanding of the habits and habitats of the White Faced Heron and Kereru.
- • Develop an ecological habitat corridor for the White Faced Heron and Kereru that traverses the Auckland isthmus from Titirangi to Meola Reef.
- • Make amendments to the Auckland City district plans open space rule and regulations to accommodate the implementation of this corridor.
- • To show how this ecological entity could work at a site scale using birdlife analysis data and integrating this with human processes; which drives the production of a design that provides unique, exciting open space that meets all current and proposed zoning requirements.

Video, Audio and photos

Painted boxes

There are quite a few transformers and other such boxes that have been disguised with paintings including kereru.

<http://auckland-west.co.nz/?p=3047>



<http://auckland-west.co.nz/?s=kereru>



Kereru photos can be found on DigitalNZ at <http://search.digitalnz.org/>

Radio Live interview with Alan Tennyson and Stephanie May about kereru

Alan Tennyson from Te Papa on when it arrived in New Zealand
Stephanie May – ecology and management of kereru PhD

<http://www.radiolive.co.nz/NZ-wood-pigeon-and-its-secret-life/tabid/506/articleID/14776/Default.aspx>

Kereru shower

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcnA-M2Vo4E>

YouTube Video of a nice bit of kereru behaviour. Quite intriguing how the bird nearly turns itself inside out to get water under that wing

Kereru chick being fed

Awesome photo and very dorky looking chick

<http://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/Science-Stories/Conserving-Native-Birds/Sci-Media/Images/Kereru-chick-being-fed>