



OIA 18-E-0516 – DOC-5570628

21 September 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 21st August 2018. You requested the following:

How many individual dogs have been positively identified as having killed or attacked a Kiwi?

And of these dogs, a) how many of them were microchipped? b) how many of them carried an identification tag and c) how many of them were under any supervision from their owners?

Based on further correspondence with you on the 31st August 2018, we confirmed that we can provide information on kiwi killed by dogs and any information we know surrounding the circumstances within the North Island, from which you could potentially infer the number of individual dogs responsible. However, in most cases we do not have information regarding the dog responsible, and as such any identifying tags or microchips. You confirmed that this information would still be useful.

On 10 September 2018 we extended your request to 25 September 2018 due to the large quantity of information sought.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

How many individual dogs have been positively identified as having killed or attacked a kiwi?

We have some specific Northland statistics in published scientific papers:

Taborsrsky, 1988

Taborsrsky (1988) reported that 13 out of 23 radio-tagged kiwi were killed by a dog in Waitangi Forest in 1987. Given the distribution of deaths across the forest, the author estimated that the dog may have killed 500 of the 900 resident kiwi in a 6 week period.

https://www.notornis.osnz.org.nz/system/files/Notornis_35_3.pdf?o=ip_login_no_cache%3D07701eaa6e58fo47b5c459ddcb454fb1

Pierce and Sporle, 1997

Pierce & Sporle (1997) analysed the causes of 194 reported kiwi deaths in Northland between 1990 and 1995 and found that dogs were responsible for 135 (70%) of reported deaths.

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?rep=rep1&type=pdf&doi=10.1.1.221.78>

Robertson et al., 2011

Robertson et al. (2011) found that at least 22 adult kiwi and 16 subadults were killed by dogs between January 1994 and December 2008. Since the paper was published, a further eight radio-tagged adult kiwi and three subadults have been killed by dogs. These 49 deaths occurred in 31 separate episodes (an episode is defined as one or more dog killed kiwi at a site within 6 months of the previous dog killed kiwi). Although some individual dogs may have killed kiwi in several different episodes (i.e. with at least 6 months between successive kills of radio-tagged birds) it seems likely that more than 20 different dogs killed kiwi judging by the spatial and temporal pattern of deaths observed.

The deaths of adult kiwi were the critical factor driving kiwi population dynamics in Northland. Dog kills (22) and ferret kills (9) were mainly responsible for the life expectancy of adult kiwi in Northland to be one-third of the life expectancy of adult kiwi in other North Island sites without dogs or ferrets.


https://www.kiwisforkiwi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/experimental_managemet_of_brown_kiwi.pdf

In addition, we have collated records held by DOC from across the North Island where kiwi have been confirmed or suspected to be killed by dogs, and the circumstances around these where known (Appendix 1). Please note that there may be further records held by groups outside of the Department – we have only provided records of dead kiwi found by the Department as part of our monitoring programmes, or kiwi deaths reported to the Department.

In total we have 345 confirmed kiwi killed by dogs, with a further 86 likely to have been killed by dogs. It is likely the actual number is higher since records from more than 20 years ago are incomplete. It is unclear how many individual dogs were responsible for these deaths.

Of these dogs, a) how many of them were microchipped? b) how many of them carried an identification tag and c) how many of them were under any supervision from their owners?

The data in Appendix 1 depicts that there is very little information available around the identity of the dog, and the circumstances leading up to the death of the kiwi. Further information may be held within local Regional and/or District Councils, who are responsible for maintaining dog registration and compliance. Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research are developing a K9 genetic database that will eventually shed more light on the number of individual dogs that are responsible for kiwi deaths.

We hope this information will be useful to you. If you wish to discuss this response to your request, please contact 

Yours sincerely,



Julie Knauf
Director – Terrestrial Ecosystems Unit