



The Kakī Visitor Hide

Guided tours of the Kakī Visitor Hide offer a unique opportunity to see kakī and learn about their ecology and conservation. A display aviary next to the hide enables a close-up kakī encounter. Inside the hide two television display units show close-up footage of hatching chicks, young kakī and adult birds in the Captive Breeding Centre (season dependent).



Ruataniwha Wetlands

This 90-ha region of wetlands was created by Project River Recovery and can be seen from the Kakī Visitor Hide. They are home to many different bird species during the summer months such as black-fronted tern/tarapirohe, banded dotterel/turiwhatu, Australasian pied stilt/poaka, South Island pied oystercatcher/tōrea and many wetland waterfowl.



Bookings

Regular guided tours of the Kakī Visitor Hide occur from late October to April at 9.30 am and 4.30 pm each day. Bookings are essential, at least 30 minutes before the tour is due to depart. Please note that you will require your own transport to the hide.

You can make a booking and payment through either:

Twizel Information Centre
C/- Twizel Events Centre, 61 Mackenzie Drive, Twizel. Phone: 03 435 3124 Fax: 03 435 0416
E-mail: twizel@mtcook.org.nz

Lake Pukaki Visitor Centre
Lake Pukaki Dam, SH 8, Mackenzie Basin. Phone: 03 435 3280 Fax: 03 435 3283
E-mail: lake.pukaki@xtra.co.nz

Group and family discounts are available.

For large groups or school groups, please contact the Department of Conservation's Te Manahuna Area office. Phone: 03 435 0802 Fax: 03 435 0852.
E-mail: kakivisorhide@doc.govt.nz

For further information on birds and conservation visit: www.doc.govt.nz

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Guided tours— Kakī/black stilt Visitor Hide

TWIZEL, SOUTH CANTERBURY



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

The kakī story

Kakī/black stilts are an endemic wading bird with completely black plumage in their adult form and long red legs. Unique to New Zealand, they are regarded by Māori as a taonga species (living treasure).

At the time of European settlement, kakī were common in many of New Zealand's rivers and wetlands. Habitat was abundant and the risk of predation low.

As European settlement intensified, New Zealand's environment began to change. Settlers introduced foreign plants and animals, drained wetlands for development, and channelised rivers. With the spread of new predators and extensive modification of their habitat, kakī numbers declined to a low of just 23 birds.

Kakī have been intensively managed since 1981. The Department of Conservation's Captive Breeding Centre near Twizel plays an important role in the Kakī Recovery Programme. A number of kakī pairs are held at the centre for captive breeding. Clutches of eggs are collected from both captive pairs and as many wild pairs as possible. They are artificially incubated and the young chicks are raised in captivity. At between three and nine months they are released into the wild. Rearing them in captivity significantly increases their chances of survival by preventing predation when they are most vulnerable (as chicks and eggs).

Conservation efforts to date have succeeded in averting extinction and increasing kakī numbers. The next phase of the recovery programme, now in operation, addresses the complex issues associated with managing kakī in the wild.



Threats to the kakī population

The main threats to kakī include:

Predation – especially by introduced mammalian predators like feral cats, stoats, ferrets and hedgehogs.

Habitat loss and modification – through hydroelectric and agricultural development, and through weed invasion.

Human disturbance

– people and vehicles in riverbeds can crush eggs or chicks and scare adult kakī away from their nests.

The challenge now is to learn how and when to manage these threats.

Current research involves determining whether large-scale predator control is effective in allowing more kakī to survive. Also GPS collars are being used to find out more about feral cat movement and habitat use.



Hedgehog invading a nest

