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doc.govt.nz

Ref: OIAD-5088

1 May 2025

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 02 April 2025, in which you asked for:

*'all available kiwi count data that exist for the Lewis Pass area particularly the Nina and Doubtful Valleys.'*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

### Context

Data to improve the understanding of the distribution of great spotted kiwi/rorua in the Lewis Pass area has been collected by a number of methods and sources over the years. These include:

- kiwi call count scheme records,
- surveys using acoustic recorders,
- DOC Tier 1 monitoring,
- surveys using conservation dogs, and
- monitoring of kiwi with transmitters.

In answering your request, we have specifically focussed on the Nina and Doubtful valleys.

### Data sources

- The kiwi call count scheme collated data from various observers between 1986 and 2001.
- A DOC led survey was undertaken in the Hope Kiwi in 2008 using a mixture of night listening, playing elicited calls and day and night surveys with contractors with kiwi dogs.
- A DOC led night survey using listening and elicited calls was undertaken in the Doubtful valley around 2008/2009. No calls were detected. Unfortunately, a report of the survey has not been found.
- Between 2011 and 2013, DOC trialled a release of 9 Operation Nest Egg (ONE) juvenile rorua into the Nina valley. The Nina Valley Restoration Group (NVRG), a school group from Hurunui College in Hawarden have been undertaking predator control in the valley since 2009. These kiwi were monitored with transmitters until 2017.

- In 2012, DOC undertook a valley wide acoustic survey of the Nina valley in preparation for a translocation of adult kiwi. The locations where kiwi were detected in the survey mirrored that of the known territories of the ONE kiwi monitored by telemetry using transmitters.
- In 2015, DOC translocated 4 pairs of adult roroa from the Hawdon Valley. DOC and the NVRG monitored the transmitter tagged kiwi until 2017 while University of Canterbury continued post translocation acoustic monitoring as part of a doctorate program.
- In 2017/18, Lincoln University repeated the valley-wide acoustic recorder survey in the Nina Valley two years after the adult roroa translocation. The results of the 2012 and 2017/18 survey are summarised in a single report by Laura Molles. From the Hawdon's results, some of the acoustic recorders failed to detect kiwi despite occupancy of the territories by the tagged kiwi. From the Nina's results, it is suggestive that kiwi in the Nina have a large home range with some kiwi being detected by multiple acoustic recorders.
- In 2019, Robin and Sandy Toy, funded by 'Save Our Iconic Kiwi' undertook a survey using acoustic recorders to determine the distribution of the 'Arthur's Pass' roroa population (including the Lewis Pass area).
- DOC's Tier One monitoring scheme which monitors a random selection of sites each year on a 5-year rotation includes nocturnal acoustic monitoring. Data from plots from the Lewis Pass area is included in the attached spreadsheet. This data is publicly available on the DOC website <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/monitoring-reporting/plot-level-report/>.

#### Other current and planned kiwi related work in the Nina and Doubtful valleys

Predator control in the Nina Valley continues to be undertaken by the NVRG and is now also supported by the Doubtless Conservation community group who have been undertaking predator control in the Doubtful and Doubtless valley since 2022. The group have been extending the predator control network to connect the Nina and Doubtful valleys as well as extending trap lines into the Lucretia and Duchess valleys.

Other community groups trapping in the area include:

- NZDA in the Lewis valley from Riordons creek to the Nina confluence
- Boyle Village Community Group in the Boyle Valley
- Forest and Bird Boyle Base trapping in the Boyle and Lewis Valleys between the Nina and Doubtful valleys
- New Zealand Conservation Trust in the Carlyle Valley.

In 2025, Laura Molles (ex-University of Canterbury) in conjunction with the Doubtless Conservation community group have volunteered to repeat the valley wide acoustic survey in the Nina. This survey is scheduled to be undertaken from 2025 – 2026.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed in Schedule 1 below. In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and attached documents may be published on DOC's website.

If you would like to discuss this response with us, please contact Sandy Yong, Senior Ranger Biodiversity, by email to [syong@doc.govt.nz](mailto:syong@doc.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā



Jo Macpherson  
Regional Operations Director, Eastern South Island  
Department of Conservation *Te Papa Atawhai*

#### Document schedule

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	15 April 2025	Email – Kiwi call count monitoring scheme Canterbury records 1986 - 2001	Released in part 9(2)(a)
2	16 July 2008	Field report _Great spotted kiwi survey_Hope River June 2008_ Rickard	Released in part 9(2)(a)
3	3 May 2012	Kiwi_Hope Kiwi GSK Report June 2008_James Fraser	Released in part 9(2)(a)
4	19 April 2019	Research summary _ Kiwis for Kiwi_ LMolles_ GSK Acoustic monitoring Nina-Hawdon	Released in part 9(2)(a)
5	24 Oct 2019	SOIK- AR Acoustic survey of Roroa Arthur's Pass Hurunui 2019 report	Released in full
6	14 April 2025	Tier 1 plot data	Released in full