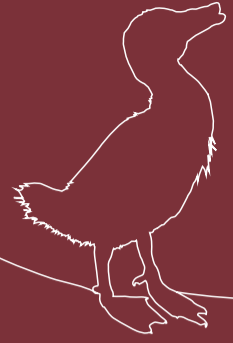


Whio are under threat



Whio/blue ducks are found nowhere else in the world and need our help to survive and thrive. With an estimated total population of under 3,000 birds, the endangered whio is rarer than some species of kiwi.

Whio were once widespread throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, but their populations are now patchy and restricted to rivers in forested headwater catchments in backcountry areas of the North and South Islands.

Whio territories can span up to 5 km long stretches of river, so they need management at a big scale to ensure their survival. This can be extremely challenging and requires significant resources to manage their threats.

Whio foes



Predators

Stoats and ferrets present the greatest danger to whio, as they attack females on the nest, steal eggs and take young ducklings from the river's edge. But weka, cats and dogs have also been known to eat whio eggs, as have falcons, harriers and other birds.



Weather

Although whio like fast-flowing rivers, flooded waterways can destroy their nests and drown whio ducklings.



Moulting

Whio moult between February and May, and this loss of plumage puts them in grave danger. Whio are unable to fly until their new feathers grow through, so they literally become 'sitting ducks' to predators.



People

The deforestation of land for farming and urban development, pollution, and river diversions have all affected the waterways whio call home.

How can you help?

- Give whio space – they may seem tame and unafraid, but you should watch them from a distance to keep them safe
- Keep waterways and their surrounding environments clean
- Be careful not to disturb whio families during the breeding season
- Volunteer with your local community trapping group
- Report any whio sightings to [iNaturalist.nz](https://www.inaturalist.org/)
- Take your dog through an avian aversion training programme – visit [kiwiavoidancetraining.nz](https://www.kiwiavoidancetraining.nz/)



To find out more about whio, visit doc.govt.nz/whio or join the Whio Forever community [@WhioForever](https://www.facebook.com/WhioForever)  