

Kōkako Report

Tiritiri Matangi Island

2024-2025 Season



Contractor: Morag Fordham

Season summary

The season started with 25 pairs. By the end of November this had increased to 26 pairs. Since the end of the last season there have been four divorces. The first nest was found on 3 October, and we thought the season had ended with the last known chick fledging by 22 March. However, the discovery of another fledgling on 17 April extended the season by another four weeks.

This season there were 63 active nests, including the undiscovered nest. One pair successfully fledged two chicks on their first attempt and didn't try again. Eight pairs nested three times and five of them failed each time. One of the eight pairs successfully fledged one chick on their third attempt and the other pair fledged one chick each on their first and third attempts. One pair having nested three times and failed must have had a fourth attempt as an unbanded fledgling was found being fed by a parent in late April. Five pairs produced two fledglings from a single clutch and two pairs produced two fledglings each from different clutches. Nine pairs successfully fledged a single chick. These included our oldest known male who is twenty years old and his nine year old partner, and another pair who are eighteen and nineteen years old respectively. Three pairs nested twice and failed each time. Nine pairs were unsuccessful this season.

Twenty five chicks fledged but only 20 of them were banded. Two of the banded chicks disappeared shortly after fledging. There were three nests that were not accessed and these produced four fledglings who are all unbanded. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to catch these fledglings.

Productivity per nest in 2024-25 was around average for the period since 2010, while productivity per female (per pair) was higher than average (see Table 1, p.6).

Details of breeding season

Rakataura and Aquarius: This was their seventh season together and once again they were unsuccessful. They are a frustrating pair to follow as a substantial part of their territory is inaccessible. On 27 October she was found lining her first nest and was incubating by 8 November. By 25 November the nest had failed. She was found in a new nest on 5 December but left it after 10 minutes. When checked on 17 December the unused nest contained one egg. On 23 December she was found incubating in her third nest and when checked on 19 January they had one small chick and one egg. By 30 January the nest had failed. On 27 October Rakataura was seen chasing off Tuatahi (Wakei and Phantom's son from 2023-24) and on 27 February Tuatahi was found with Aquarius. There was no sign of Rakataura.

Slingshot and Atarau: This was a new pairing, Slingshot having spent the previous six seasons with Jenny. Atarau is Sarang and Discovery's daughter from the 2020-21 season. They had no successful nests. On 31 October she was found building her first nest and by 16 November she was incubating.

By 23 November the nest had failed. She was found incubating in her second nest on 6 December but this had failed by 23 December. On 27 December she was found lining her third nest and by 1 January she was incubating. This nest had also failed by 22 January. It contained 2 unbroken eggs and one broken egg.

Ocarina and Dawn: This was Ocarina and his younger sister Dawn's fourth season together. Their parents are Noel and Rehu. Once again they had no successful nests. Dawn was found building her first nest on 20 October and she was found incubating on 8 November. By the beginning of December they were feeding a chick(s) but the nest had failed by 5 December. Her abandoned nest contained one egg. She was found building her second nest on 12 December but this was not used. She was found building another nest on 29 December, but did not complete it. By 4 January she had returned to her first nest of the season and was incubating, but this attempt had failed by 12 January. When checked, the nest contained fresh lining material but no eggs.

Te Kōkī and Dianella: This was a new pairing as Te Kōkī had spent the previous two seasons with Hina. Dianella is Paraninihi and Wairua's daughter from the 2021-22 season. They had no successful nests. Dianella was seen carrying nesting material on 15 October but the nest was not finished until early November. She was incubating on 7 November but the nest had failed by 16 November. It contained one egg. She was found incubating in her second nest on 7 December but by 19 December it had failed. On 2 January she was found incubating in a nest originally built by Hina in November 2023, but not used by her. This attempt had failed when checked on 22 January.

Sarang and Discovery: They have been together since the 2014-15 season. Discovery had two nests again this season. Her first nest was found on 27 October and incubation was confirmed by 1 November. The nest had failed by 16 November. Her second nest was found on 19 November and by 12 December they were feeding chicks. Their two chicks, **Nilah** (female) and **Puoro** (unknown gender), were banded on 22 December. Nilah who was bigger had fledged by 14 January and Puoro who was much smaller had fledged by 24 January.

Tātākī and Erenora: Five-year-old Erenora and her three-year-old brother Tātākī are Chatters and Te Rae's offspring. This was their third season together and once again they had no successful nests. On 16 October Erenora was found incubating but this nest had failed by 3 November. She was found lining her second nest on 14 November and was incubating on 19 November. By 1 December the nest had failed. It contained three eggs. She was found incubating in her third nest on 9 December but this had failed by 2 January. A fourth nest was confirmed by 23 January and she was incubating by 30 January. By 6 February, this had also failed.

Hotu and Haeata: Haeata was found lining her nest on 11 October and by 27 October she was incubating. By 1 November the nest had failed. It contained two broken eggs. She was found lining her second nest on 7 November but this was never used. On 21 December her third nest was found. It contained two chicks who were banded on 27 December. Although they had both fledged by 18 January, only the larger fledgling, **Titok** (female), was seen after 25 January.

Hēnare and Honey: This was a new pairing, Honey having spent the previous seven seasons with Rimu. Hēnare is Sapphire and Pūtōrino's son from the 2021-22 season. He spent most of the 2023-24 season with Moana. Honey was found incubating on 14 November but by 9 December the nest had failed. She was found incubating in her second nest on 21 December and their chick, **Comet** (male), who was banded on 24 January had fledged by 14 February.

Aweawe and Joy: Aweawe is Sapphire and Pūtōrino's son from the 2021-22 season and Joy is Te Hari (now deceased) and Phantom's daughter from the 2020-21 season. This was their second season together. They have carved out a small territory bordering Hēnare and Honey's territory. Joy was found incubating on 20 November but the nest had failed by 13 December. It contained two eggs. She was found incubating in her second nest on 25 December. They were feeding a chick(s) on 10 January but the nest had failed by 23 January. On 7 February she was found incubating in her third nest of the season. Although they were feeding a chick(s) on 19 February the nest had failed by 27 February. Predation is suspected in both cases.

Noel and Kopakopa: This was a new pairing, Noel having spent the previous fourteen seasons with Rehu. Kopakopa is Crown and Pureora's daughter from the 2022-23 season. Kopakopa was found building a nest on 5 October and was incubating by 24 October. Their chick, **Quill** (male), was banded on 28 November and had fledged by 11 December. She was found incubating in a new nest on 29 December but this had failed by 3 January when she was found building her third nest. She was incubating by 10 January. On 5 February the nest showed one egg and one chick, **Puiaki** (female), who was banded on 14 February and who had fledged by 5 March.

Apato and Koto: Koto and Apato have been together since the 2018-19 season. On 25 October Koto was found incubating, but by 11 November the nest had been abandoned. It contained one large egg and one smaller egg. She was found incubating in her second nest on 20 November and by 11 December they had two chicks. **Hikari** (female) and **Hime** (female) were banded on 25 December and they had fledged by 9 January.

Themba and Luna: This was a new pairing, Themba having spent last season with Marihi. Themba is Rimu and Honey's son from the 2022-23 season and Luna is Chatters and Te Rae's daughter from the 2022-23 season. She was found building her first nest on 23 November and was incubating by 1 December. By 23 December the nest had failed. She was found incubating in a new nest on 2 January and by 22 January they were feeding one chick, **Tāwera** (male), who was banded on 7 February. He had fledged by 26 February. The nest also contained one egg.

Bátor and Marihi: This was a new pairing, Bátor having spent the last three seasons with Skye, though he and Marihi were being seen together by February 2024. Bátor is Te Hari and Phantom's son and Marihi is Paraninihi and Wairua's daughter. She was found building a nest on 14 October and had started incubating by 3 November. Although there was one small chick on 23 November the nest had failed by 27 November and predation is suspected. She was incubating in her second nest on 20 December but this had failed by 11 January. Marihi was found building another nest on 16 January and incubation was confirmed on 2 February. The chick, **Rākautū** (male), was banded on 2 March and had fledged by 22 March.

Honesty and Miro: Honesty is Ocarina and Skye's son and he was the last fledgling of the 2020-21 season. Miro is Noel and Rehu's daughter from the 2021-22 season. This was their second season together. On 8 November Miro was found incubating and by 2 December they were feeding their chick, **Electra** (female), who was banded on 13 December. She had fledged by 26 December and continued to be fed mainly by Honesty. This nest also contained one egg. On 7 January Miro was found incubating in a new nest and they were feeding a chick(s) on 26 January. However, by 6 February the nest had failed and predation is suspected.

Haar and Oran: Six-year-old Oran, who is Rimu and Honey's daughter, is paired with her four-year-old brother Haar. This was their third season together. Due to the nature of their territory, this pair is difficult to find and follow. Initially, Oran's first nest couldn't be found but we know it was successful as they were seen together with their unbanded fledgling on 23 December. Haar was left feeding the fledgling and she was found incubating in a new nest on 23 January. It contained one chick and two eggs when checked on 6 February. However, the nest had failed when checked on 15 February. The chick and one egg had disappeared leaving one egg which appeared to be cracked. Her probable first (successful) nest was also found a few metres from this failed nest.

Wakei and Phantom: Phantom who is 16 years old and her three-year-old grandson Wakei have now been together for three seasons. She was found building on 29 October and by 20 November she was incubating. By 11 December the nest had failed. It contained half a broken egg and two unbroken eggs. A second nest containing three eggs, one of which was broken, was found on 8 January. Phantom was found building her third nest on 15 January and by 7 February she was incubating. The nest contained two eggs. On 20 February they were feeding one chick and there was still one egg in the nest. By 1 March both the chick and the egg had disappeared. Predation is suspected. On 17 April Phantom, who was in moult, was seen and photographed feeding a fledgling. This is the latest we have ever had a pair nest.

Crown and Pureora: They have been together since being translocated from Pureora Forest in August 2008 and were unsuccessful this season. She was found lining her first nest on 21 November and she had started incubating by 28 November. The nest had failed by 5 December and when checked it was empty and predation is suspected. Pureora was found incubating in a second nest on 19 December but by 5 January this nest had also failed.

Sapphire and Pūtōrino: This was their sixth season together and this time round they were unsuccessful. On 8 November Pūtōrino was found incubating but by 21 November this nest had failed. A possible new nest was found on 22 November but was not used as she was found incubating in another new nest on 29 November. On 20 December they were feeding a chick but by 25 December the nest had failed. It contained two eggs. On 5 January another new nest was found and by 10 January she was incubating. They were feeding a chick(s) on 30 January but by 6 February this nest had also failed.

Tama and Shelly: This was their third season together. She was found lining her first nest on 5 October and was incubating by 14 October. By 1 November they were feeding two chicks. On 22 November the attempt to band had to be abandoned as there was only one chick who was too big to safely band. This chick had fledged by 4 December. On 24 December Shelly was found incubating in a new nest and by 17 January there was one chick and two eggs in the nest. **Rocky** (male) was banded on 25 January and he had fledged by 12 February.

Whistles and Te Hia: Whistles is Waipapa (now deceased) and Shelly's son from the 2021-22 season. Te Hia is Apato and Koto's daughter from the 2020-21 season. This was their second season together. They have a very small territory. Te Hia was found lining her first nest on 10 October and was incubating by 25 October. Although chicks were due by 13 November she was still incubating on 22 November. The nest, containing three eggs was abandoned by 24 November. On 27 November she was found building a new nest and was incubating by 1 December. By 27 December they were feeding their chick, **Mardle** (male), who was banded on 8 January. He had fledged by 26 January.

Chatters and Te Rae: They have been together since the 2007-08 season. Te Rae was found incubating on 9 November, and their chick was banded on 7 December. By 19 December the chick had disappeared and predation is suspected. On 5 January she was found incubating in a new nest. Their chick, **Hihana** (male), was banded on 25 January and he had fledged by 14 February.

Hemi and Te Rangi Pai: For the fifth year running Te Rangi Pai and her brother Hemi had no successful nests. She was found incubating on 13 November and the nest was still active on 2 December but was abandoned sometime after this. On 7 January Te Rangi Pai was found incubating in her second nest but by 25 January this had failed. She was found starting to build another nest on 26 January but did not complete it.

Awenga and Wai Ata: Awenga is Chatters and Te Rae's son from the 2021-22 season and Wai Ata is Sarang and Discovery's daughter from the 2020-21 season. This was their third season together. On 10 November Wai Ata was found incubating and by the end of November they were feeding two chicks. The chicks were banded on 6 December and both had fledged by 22 December. However, by 2 January only **Huna** (male) was still around. On 9 January Wai Ata was found building a new nest and by 16 January she had started incubating three eggs. They were feeding one chick on 6 February but the nest had failed by 19 February.

Parininihi and Wairua: This was their sixth season together. Wairua's first nest was found on 13 November and she had started incubating by 17 November. The nest had failed by 7 December. She was found incubating in a new nest on 19 December. By 9 January they were feeding their chick, **Kawata** (female), who was banded on 18 January. By 5 February she was very active and fledged a few days later. The nest also contained one egg.

Lyric and Waitangi: This was their fifth season together and they were finally successful in raising two chicks. Waitangi was found building a nest on 12 November and had started incubating by 19 November. By 18 December they were feeding two chicks. It was not possible to access this nest and the first unbanded chick fledged on 12 January, followed by the smaller unbanded chick on 14 or 15 January.

Rēkohu and Yindi: Yindi is Te Hari and Phantom's daughter from the 2018-19 season and Rēkohu is Slingshot and Jenny's son from the 2020-21 season. This was their third season together and they were finally successful in raising two chicks. Yindi was found incubating on 16 November but the nest had failed by 22 November. She was found incubating in a new nest on 8 December and they were feeding two chicks by 20 December. The nest was empty by 1 January and predation is suspected. Yindi was found incubating in a third nest on 18 January and by 31 January they were feeding two chicks. The larger chick, **Sombra** (male), was banded on 13 February and the smaller chick, **Shadow** (unknown gender), on 15 February. Both chicks had fledged by 9 March.

Season	Nesting females	Nests	FE	% FE	FP	% FP	YF	% YF	OU	No. fl.	Ave fl/nest	Ave fl /female
2010-11	5	12	8	66.7	2	16.7	2	16.7		2	0.17	0.40
2011-12	5	6	3	50.0	0	0.0	3	50.0		3	0.50	0.60
2012-13	9	15	9	60.0	2	13.3	4	26.7		6	0.40	0.67
2013-14	10	21	11	52.4	2	9.5	8	38.1		12	0.57	1.20
2014-15	11	16	5	31.3	6	37.5	5	31.3		5	0.31	0.45
2015-16	15	30	10	33.3	4	13.3	16	53.3		20	0.67	1.33
2016-17	16	30	17	56.7	2	6.7	11	36.7		13	0.43	0.81
2017-18	14	21	7	33.3	8	38.1	6	28.6		9	0.43	0.64
2018-19	12	26	8	30.8	11	42.3	7	26.9		10	0.38	0.83
2019-20	13	18	11	61.1	2	11.1	5	27.8		6	0.33	0.46
2020-21*	17	33	15	45.5	6	18.2	12	36.4		18	0.55	1.06
2021-22*	17	23	8	34.8	7	30.4	8	34.8		9	0.39	0.53
2022-23	21	37	19	51.4	7	18.9	8	21.6	3	9	0.24	0.43
2023-24	26	38	22	57.9	4	10.5	12	31.6		13	0.34	0.50
2024-25	26	63	29	46.0	13	20.6	19	30.2	2 [#]	25	0.40	0.96
Totals		389	182	46.8	76	19.1	126	32.7	3	160	0.41	0.73

Table 1: Annual summary of nesting attempts: 2010-2025

FE = Failed at egg stage

FP = Failed at pullus (chick) stage

YF = At least one young fledged

OU = Outcome unknown

*One female-female pair was omitted from the figures for 2020-21 and 2021-22

[#] The two nests whose outcome was unknown in 2024-25 were either FE or FP; we could not determine whether the eggs had hatched.

Other Birds

Rōreka and Jenny: This is a possible new pairing, Jenny having spent the previous six seasons with Slingshot. Rōreka is Parininihi and Wairua's son from the 2023-24 season. They were found together on 22 December and were still together when last seen on 9 March. To our knowledge they did not attempt to breed.

Skye: Skye had spent the previous three seasons with Bátor (who is now with Marihi). She has often been seen in Marihi's previous territory which is next to her own old territory, but has also been seen elsewhere, so she appears to be unsettled. In late October she was seen with **Wedel** who is Hotu and Haeata's son from the 2023-24 season. More recently Skye has quite often been seen with **Fonn** who is Chatters and Te Rae's son from the 2023-24 season.

Rehu (Noel's previous partner for fourteen seasons) hasn't been seen since 31 August.

Rimu who was Honey's partner for seven seasons has been seen on his own on the edges of his old territory. The last sighting was on 21 February.

Moana who spent most of the previous season with Hēnare has been seen on her own in the same area as Rimu.

Hina who was Te Kōkī's previous partner for two seasons has possibly been seen once this season.

Kiseki and **A Cappella**, two youngsters from the 2023-24 season, have quite often been seen together.

Iorangi (f), **Kiri** (f), **Nuka** (m), **Rondo** (f), **Tāne** (m), **Tūpari** (m) and **Unbanded 10** have all been sighted.

Awhi, (female from 2022-23) has also possibly been sighted once.

Aroha (f) and **Kaiako** (f) have not been seen in the 2024-25 season and are presumed dead.

Population summary

As far as we can tell, during the 2024-25 season we had a maximum of 72 adult kōkako on the Island, 35 males, 36 females and one of unknown gender. With the addition of this season's fledglings, this gives us, at the beginning of April 2025, a possible total of 95 (43 males, 44 females and eight, including six unbanded, of unknown gender), an increase of 34%.

Future actions

Given the number of kōkako on the Island and the rate at which they are breeding, it is becoming impractical to continue monitoring at the current rate. We are therefore reviewing our methodology to see how we can continue adding to our long-term data within the limits of our resources.

In the longer term, we will continue to manage the population as best we can to optimise its genetic composition. Translocations both on and off the Island could continue to play a role in this, especially if there are other sites that wish to receive birds from us. If the opportunity arises we would also look at the possibility of egg swaps with the Hunua Ranges.

Territorial pairs in 2024-25				Unpaired birds, March 2025			
Male	Bands	Female	Bands	Male	Bands	Female	Bands
Rakataura* ²	GM-W	Aquarius	RM-GJ	Kiseki	RW-WM	A Cappella	JW-WM
Slingshot	M-WR	Atarau	WM-Y	Rōreka	GW-WM	Jenny	--RM
Ocarina	RM-Y	Dawn	RM-GG	Fonn	GY-WM	Skye	GM-WW
Te Kōkī	RM-W	Dianella	GyM-GyR	Nuka	JY-WM	Hina	RM-Y
Sarang	W-M	Discovery	GM-RY	Rimu	M--	Iorangi	RR-WM
Tātākī	RM-YG	Erenora	RM-RY	Tāne	GR-WM	Kiri	YR-WM
Hotu	M-J	Haeata	RM-W	Tuatahi* ¹	RG-WM	Moana	YM-JR
Hēnare	YM-JW	Honey	RM-YY	Tūpari	GyR-WM	Rehu	M-J
Aweawe	GyM-JY	Joy	WM-WY	Wedel	GyG-WM	Rondo	YGy-WM
Noel	M-R	Kopakopa	YM-GJ	Comet	GyY-GyM	Awhi	YM-GY
Apato	GM-JR	Koto	RM-JG	Huna	JG-GyM	Electra	JR-GyM
Themba	YM-GW	Luna	YM-GG	Mardle	WY-GyM	Hikari	WG-GyM
Bátor	WM-JR	Marihi	RM- YW	Quill	GG-GyM	Hihana	YJ-GyM
Honesty	GM-YG	Miro	GyM-GR	Rākautū	JJ-GyM	Hime	WJ-GyM
Haar	GM-RJ	Oran	GM-GY	Rocky	GyW-GyM	Kawata	YG-GyM
Wakei	WM-YY	Phantom	W-M	Sombra	YY-GyM	Nilah	RY-GyM
Crown	GM--	Pureora	GM-R	Tāwera	GyJ-GyM	Puiaki	YW-GyM
Sapphire	JM-WW	Pūtōrino	GM-W			Titok	WR-GyM
Tama	RM-WG	Shelly	RM-R				
Whistles	GyM-GyG	Te Hia	WM-YW	Puoro	RJ-GyM	Unknown gender	
Chatters	G-M	Te Rae	OM-JO	Shadow	GyGy-GyM	Unknown gender	
Hemi	RM-WR	Te Rangī Pai	RM-GR				
Awenga	GyM-GyY	Wai Ata	GM-RW				
Parininihi	M--	Wairua	M-RG				
Lyric	WM-RY	Waitangi	GM-Y	One unbanded bird of unknown gender (Ub10)			
Rēkohu	GM-YR	Yindi	WM-GG	Five unbanded birds of unknown gender (Ub11-Ub15)			

*¹ paired with Aquarius since late February

*² Not seen since late February

Fledglings from 2024-25 are shown in green.

Table 2: Birds present at some stage during the 2024-25 season

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you to the wonderful team of trained volunteers who, despite the often adverse weather, put in so many hours to find the nests, check on their progress and keep tabs on what the birds are up to: Kay Milton, John Stewart, Yvonne Clarke, Gina Wilson, Alison Forbes, Alison Bray, Karin Gouldstone, Kathryn Jones, Chris Hannent, Geoff and Terri Beals, Yukiko Kojima, Julie Scott, Val Lee, Luca Kornélia Kósa, Janet Petricevich, and Simon Downer.

A special thanks to Kay Milton who does most of the paperwork and gives her time to attend meetings, and to John Stewart for his work on data recording, liaison with academic collaborators and, again, being our principal bander of chicks. Thanks to Simon Fordham for helping with the banding.

Thanks also to Kathryn Jones, Luca Kornélia Kósa, Janet Petricevich and Simon Downer who accessed most of our nests this season.

Thanks to Emma Gray, Darren Markin, JP Mower and Abbey Skilton for helping us in several ways during the season. Thanks also to the many other SoTM members who gave us helpful sightings of individual birds.

Also thanks to Debbie Marshall and Gail Reichert who managed the often necessary changes to our ferry bookings.

Special thanks to Pub Charity Limited and to Foundation North for funding a portion of the kōkako management on Tiritiri Matangi Island.

Thanks also to Explore Group for allowing us to travel free on the ferry, to DOC for allowing us to use the accommodation on the Island, and to our DOC rangers, Talia Hochwimmer, Keith Townsend and Nick Fisentzidis, for their assistance and support when needed this season.