

Northland Annual Kiwi Call Count Survey: Instructions for Listeners



Purpose

Counting the number of kiwi calls is a simple but effective way of monitoring kiwi.

When calls are monitored in the same place over several years, it helps build a picture of what is happening with kiwi numbers and distribution – are you hearing more, fewer or the same number of birds? Are they in the same places, a smaller area, or has the population expanded over more ground?

When a kiwi population is being managed, the call count results should show the benefits.

Kiwi Call Count Survey's have been carried out in Northland each year for the past 15 years. The data you collect during your kiwi listening is important for your own group/project's monitoring, and also contributes to the regional knowledge of how Northland brown kiwi are doing.

How to do the Kiwi Call Count Survey

1. **Establish a good listening site** that you are committed to listening to for the next 5 - 10 years in order to monitor the success of kiwi recovery for your group/project.

Good spots are:

- Easy and safe to get to in the dark
- Have wide listening coverage (ie you can hear calls over a big area)
- Have little noise disturbance from (ie away from busy roads, talking people, crashing waves)

Use a GPS to mark the location of your listening site and map it so that in the event you cannot continue to be the listener at that site, others can easily find it and continue the monitoring.

If your site is not on your own land please check each year with the landowner or land manager and ensure they are happy for you to be on site. Ask for any information or health and safety updates that will help you understand what is going on at the site and hazards that may have emerged since you were last there.

It's a good idea to go and check your site during the day prior to the listening period each year. Check it is still accessible and safe to get to. Figure out where you will sit to get the best listening coverage. If your site is in the bush, use pegs with some reflective tape, and attach these to the trees along the way to help you find your way out on your return (Get in touch with Ngaire if you need more info on this: ngaire@kiwicoast.org.nz).

2. **Check the dates** of the two Official Listening Windows set by DOC (these will be on the Kiwi Coast Events Calendar (www.kiwicoast.org.nz)). Keep as many nights clear in your diary as you can – the weather is very unpredictable at this time of the year and most listeners find they are hard pressed to complete the four nights in the first window.

First listening window 2019: May 22 - June 10 – aim for this window!!!
Second listening window 2019: June 20 – July 9 – use this as a back up only if needed.

3. **Listen** 4 nights X 2 hours, approx 6pm to 8pm. Only listen if the conditions allow – no point listening during bad weather.

4. **If in doubt about your hearing get someone to give you a hand/ear**, - if you are unsure please ask. The Kiwi Coast website has the kiwi calls and other birds you may hear at night [here](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page).

5. **What to take**

- Copies of the call sheets (check if you need to take the standard and directional sheet)
- Pencils
- Compass (if using your phone ensure it's charged!)
- Torch/headlamp
- Warm clothes, something to sit on, food + drink
- Be sure that someone knows where you are going and when you expect to return.



6. **When you get on site begin filling in your sheet** with the date, site info, etc and get an eye in for distances and terrain, and get comfortable!

7. **Fill in a listening sheet for each night you listen.** Please use a compass and record a bearing for the call and distance in meters (not near, far, over there somewhere!).

8. Once filled in keep the sheets in a in a safe place (data has been lost in the past). Some listeners copy their recorded data onto a new sheet after they get home – the one used at night can get pretty messy!

Keep the original sheets for your own group records and only send on good copies or the electronic spreadsheet. This is your group's essential monitoring data!

9. **Send in the data so it can be included in the Northland Annual Kiwi Call Count Report.** Transfer the data to the electronic spreadsheet- all nights on the same file- save it with your name and site in the file name. Email electronic sheets to your local Kiwi Call Count Coordinator, DOC or Ngaire (ngaire@kiwicoast.org.nz) for collation. If you're not sure where your data should go, check with Ngaire.

10. **Be safe** – use a buddy system so someone knows when you are going kiwi listening, where you are going, and when you have returned safely. And take a back up torch and/or spare batteries!!