PIROA
Conservation Trust

LISTENING TO THE RANGES

Piroa Conservation Trust kiwi survey 2025/26

Piroa–Brynderwyn Ranges

PART ONE	PCT kiwi monitoring
PART TWO	Piroa within the wider Northland picture
PART THREE	Three kiwi, one landscape

Kiwi at a glance

This season brought encouraging records of kiwi across the Piroa–Brynderwyn Ranges, a closer look at changes in calling activity, and three newly released birds whose journeys are helping us understand the landscape they need.

I. Building a clearer picture across the ranges

Our range-wide surveys covered 29 locations, including eleven surveyed for the first time. Kiwi were heard at fifteen locations, with new records around Cove Road and on the western side of the ranges. Calls were also heard at Jude Road/Pebblebrook and Ruru Way, where earlier surveys had recorded none. Further listening will help establish how consistently birds use these areas.

II. Females and duets heard more widely

The annual comparison network grew to fourteen sites. Among the eleven surveyed in both 2025 and 2026, female calls were heard at nine sites, up from five, and duets at nine, up from three. All three new sites also recorded females and duets. This wider pattern is encouraging, although calls cannot tell us how many individual birds or pairs are present.

III. Most sites recorded more calls, with one decline needing attention

Eight repeat sites recorded more calls, two recorded fewer and one remained silent. The combined total fell slightly, from 474 to 443, driven by the decline at Marunui House #18 from 222 to 58 calls. Repeat listening confirmed lower activity, and cameras and traps were deployed following specialist advice. The cause remains unknown, and monitoring will continue.

IV. A longer-term view from Northland

The Northland Kiwi Call Count Survey places Piroa's results within the wider regional picture. Calling activity varies considerably across our stations, and no clear long-term trend has been established for Piroa as a whole. The longer-running Marunui station continues to record higher call rates than in the early years following releases. Consistent monitoring will help us understand future changes.

V. Three kiwi bringing the landscape to life

Rangiora, Hinekiuta and Matahīapo were released at Te Waorahi in March and continue to be monitored. The females stayed relatively close to the release area, while Rangiora's recorded movements totalled nearly eighteen kilometres between March and August. His journey has sparked local interest and opened conversations about dogs, roads and protecting kiwi beyond property boundaries.

VI. Turning monitoring into protection

Together, the surveys and tracking reinforce the need for connected predator control, responsible dog management and road-safety awareness. They help us decide where to listen again, where to investigate changes and where to work with landowners to strengthen protection. The work of community groups, hapū, volunteers and landowners remains central to giving kiwi a safe landscape in which to settle and thrive.

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Why we listen

Kiwi monitoring helps Piroa Conservation Trust understand where kiwi are being detected across the Piroa–Brynderwyn Ranges and how calling activity is changing over time. These results help guide predator control, identify areas for further surveys and flag changes that may need investigation.

Between 2013 and 2015, 43 North Island brown kiwi were released at Marunui, followed by six more in 2020. In March 2026, a further three kiwi were released at Te Waorahi. Sustained predator control and community involvement support these birds as they move through the wider landscape.

We use acoustic recording devices in two complementary surveys. Range-wide surveys cover different locations to fill gaps in our knowledge, follow up reported sightings or calls, and revisit areas where kiwi have previously been detected. Annual comparison sites are fixed locations surveyed each year at the same time to track changes in calling activity.

Kiwi calls provide evidence of presence, but call totals are not a count of individual birds. The same bird may call repeatedly, and birds may be present without calling during a survey. A recording with no kiwi calls therefore does not confirm that kiwi are absent. Repeated surveys build a clearer picture of kiwi activity and provide information we can use to target conservation work.

PART ONE: PCT KIWI MONITORING

1. Range-wide kiwi surveys

Recorders were placed across the ranges to fill gaps in previous survey coverage, follow up public reports of kiwi and revisit locations surveyed in earlier years. Each device recorded throughout the night and remained in place for seven nights. The recordings were checked for male and female kiwi calls using Raven Lite, which allows us to listen to calls and view their sound patterns.

Between August 2025 and June 2026, we completed 72 acoustic recorder deployments across 29 locations. Three devices failed in the field, leaving 69 deployments with usable recordings.

Kiwi calls were recorded at 27 of these deployments (39%), while 42 recorded no kiwi calls. Males were heard at all 27, and females at eleven. Wherever female calls were recorded, male calls were also heard.

Across the 29 locations surveyed, kiwi were heard at fifteen, including females at eight. These results help build our understanding of kiwi distribution across the ranges, alongside the monitoring at our annual comparison sites.

Where kiwi were heard

Kiwi were heard at several survey locations around Cove Road, in the gorge between Mangawhai and Waipū. Male and female calls were recorded on DOC land near the road and at Old Cove Road, while only male calls were heard in a bush block further south. These recordings help fill gaps in our knowledge of kiwi activity in the eastern part of the ranges.

Near Te Waorahi, all three functioning recorders on Tanekaha Track picked up kiwi calls, with males and females heard at two.

To the south and west, kiwi were heard again at Dreams Come True, Pa Hill and the adjoining bush, and Hokonui. Male and female calls were recorded at Dreams Come True and around Pa Hill, while only males were heard at Hokonui during these surveys. These findings build on previous records of kiwi in these areas.Map 1 shows where we surveyed and where male and female kiwi calls were recorded.

New survey locations

Eleven locations were surveyed for the first time this season, with kiwi heard at four: Old Cove Road, DOC land near Cove Road, Brown Farm and Forestry Ness Road. At Brown Farm and Forestry Ness Road, male calls were recorded at one of the two recording points at each location.

These findings fill gaps in our knowledge of kiwi distribution, although the birds may have been present before these areas were surveyed.

No kiwi calls were recorded at the other seven new locations. These included Oi Kaitiaki, where seven recorders were deployed over a week in September, and locations around Waipū, Baldrock Road and Moana Views.

Results from repeat surveys

Kiwi were heard at two locations where previous surveys had recorded no calls. At Jude Road/Pebblebrook, two of four recorders picked up male calls, following no calls in 2022/23. At the end of Ruru Way, a male was heard in April, following no calls in the 2022/23 and 2024/25 surveys. Further listening will help establish how consistently kiwi use these areas.

Nearby records add to this picture. Both male and female calls were heard on Palmers Property, neighbouring Jude Road/Pebblebrook, and at Massey Road Gate in June.

Other locations recorded no kiwi calls this season. These included Brook Lane and the Fulson property, although kiwi have previously been heard nearby. Birds may move in and out of these bush areas, and those present may not call during a survey, so these results do not necessarily mean kiwi have left.

Lincoln Downs and Piroa Falls Road have each been surveyed across two seasons without recording kiwi calls. Twelve recorders were deployed across these two locations this year.

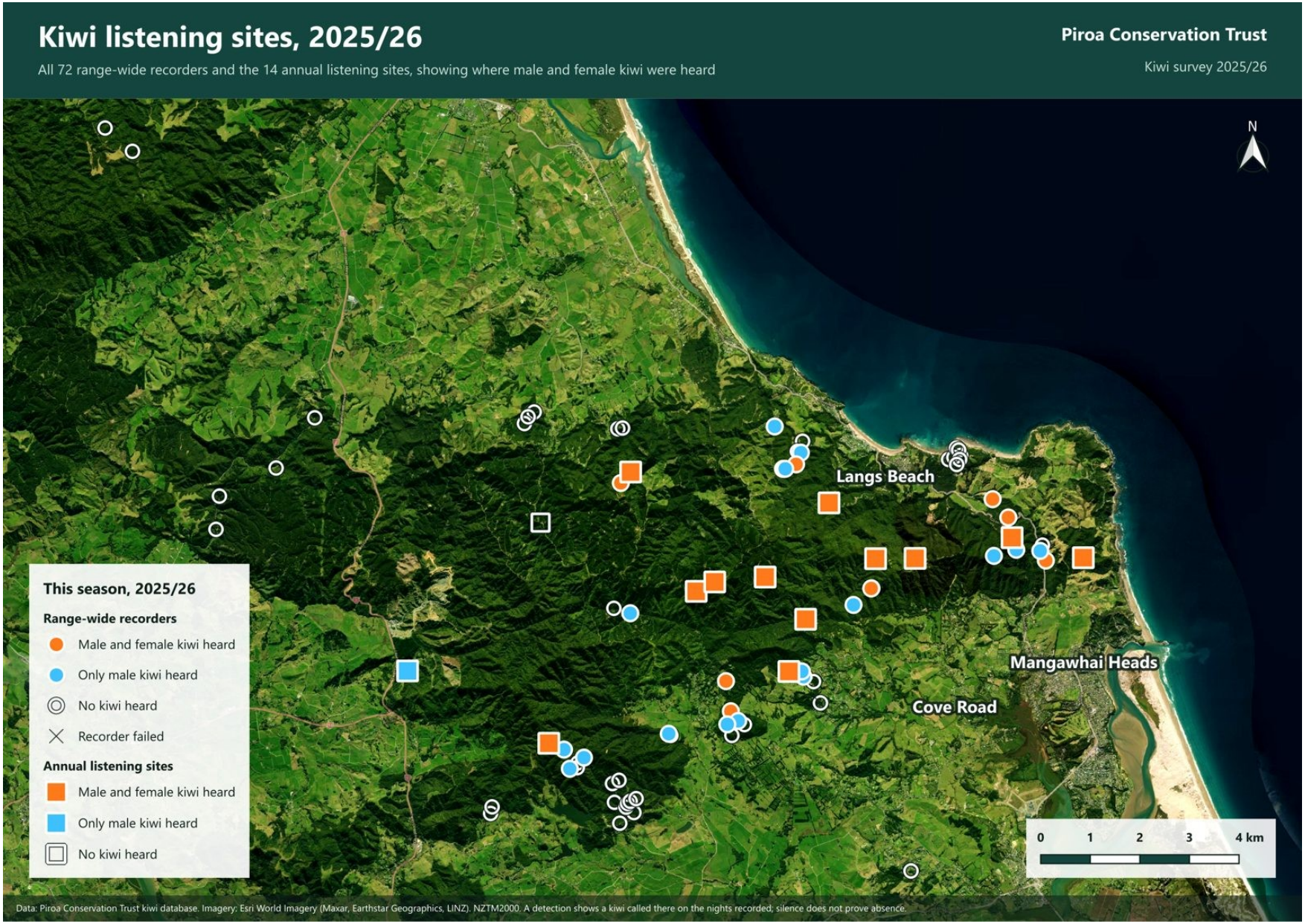
Map 2. Survey coverage and kiwi detections across four seasons, 2022–2026.

What this tells us about kiwi distribution

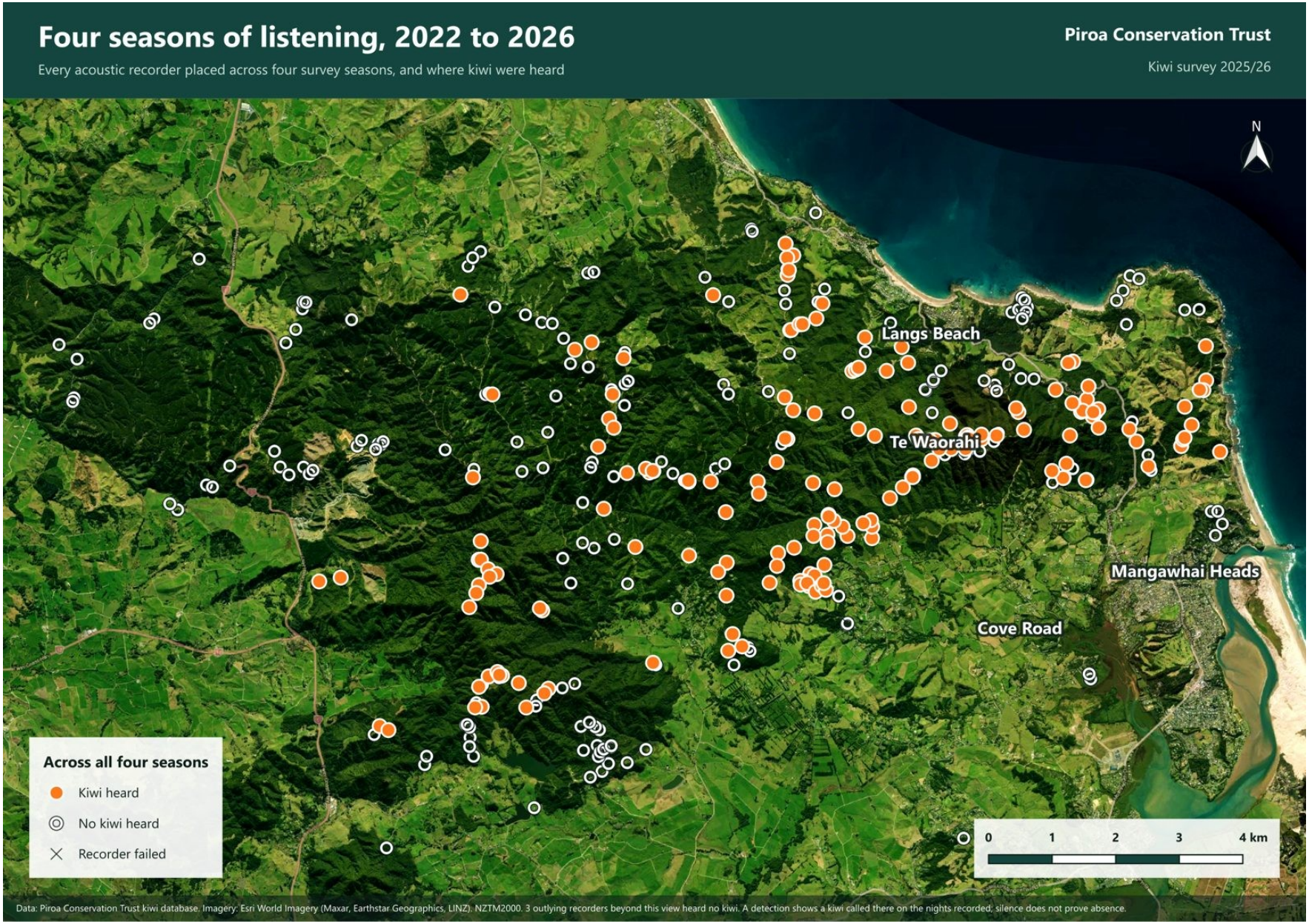
This season’s surveys added to the area where kiwi have been recorded, particularly in the eastern and western parts of the ranges. Calls at newly surveyed locations filled gaps in our knowledge, while records at Jude Road/Pebblebrook and Ruru Way confirmed kiwi activity where earlier surveys had heard none.

These findings are encouraging, but do not yet confirm that kiwi distribution is expanding. Birds may have been present but not heard during previous surveys, or may be moving through these areas. Repeat listening will help establish whether kiwi are using them consistently.

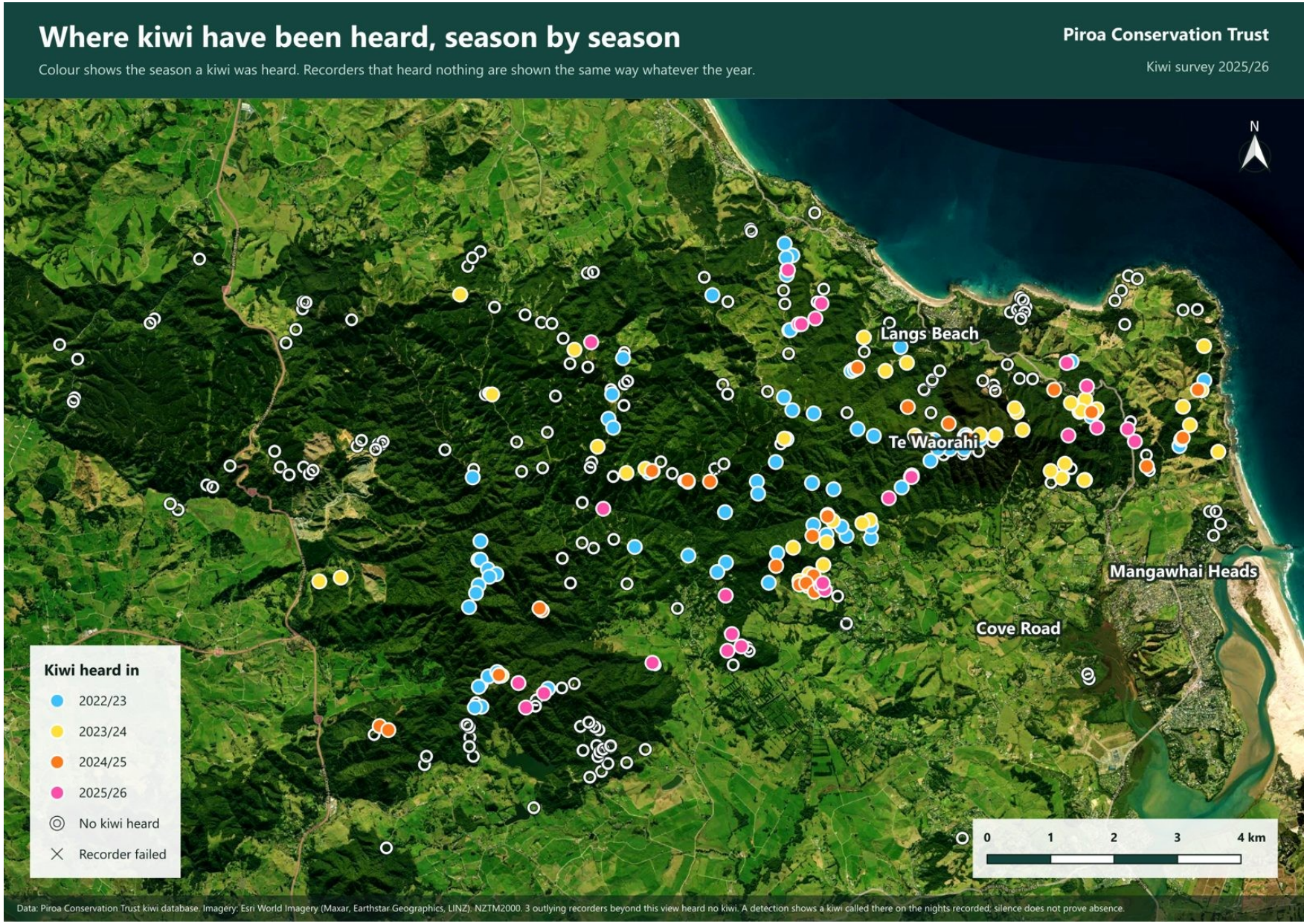
Locations where we continue to record no calls also help guide future surveys. Together, the results build a clearer picture of kiwi activity across the ranges and help identify areas for follow-up monitoring and protection.



Map 1. Where kiwi were heard, 2025/26.



Map 2. Four seasons of listening, 2022 to 2026.



Map 3. Where kiwi have been detected, season by season.

2. Annual comparison sites: watching for change

Our annual comparison sites allow us to track changes in kiwi calling activity by returning to the same locations each year. This is the second year of a planned five-year monitoring programme.

This season, the network grew from eleven to fourteen sites, with new recorders at Marunui Edge, the Trig Station on Cullen Road and near the forestry gate on Massey Road.

Across all fourteen sites, 563 kiwi calls were recorded: 468 male and 95 female calls. We also identified 71 duet events, where male and female kiwi called together.

To compare results between years, we use the eleven sites surveyed in both seasons. These recorded 443 calls in 2025/26, compared with 474 in 2024/25. The three new sites recorded a further 120 calls, providing a starting point for future comparisons.

Recently released kiwi were also tracked near some annual comparison sites. Rangiora was located approximately 380 metres from the Marunui House #18 recorder during its May survey, while Hinekiuta was located near Te Waorahi West before and after its survey period. Their calls may be included in the results, although we cannot distinguish them from those of other kiwi.

The chart compares total calls at the eleven repeat sites. The tables show male calls, female calls and duet events recorded this year, with the new sites presented separately. The map shows the locations of all fourteen annual comparison sites.

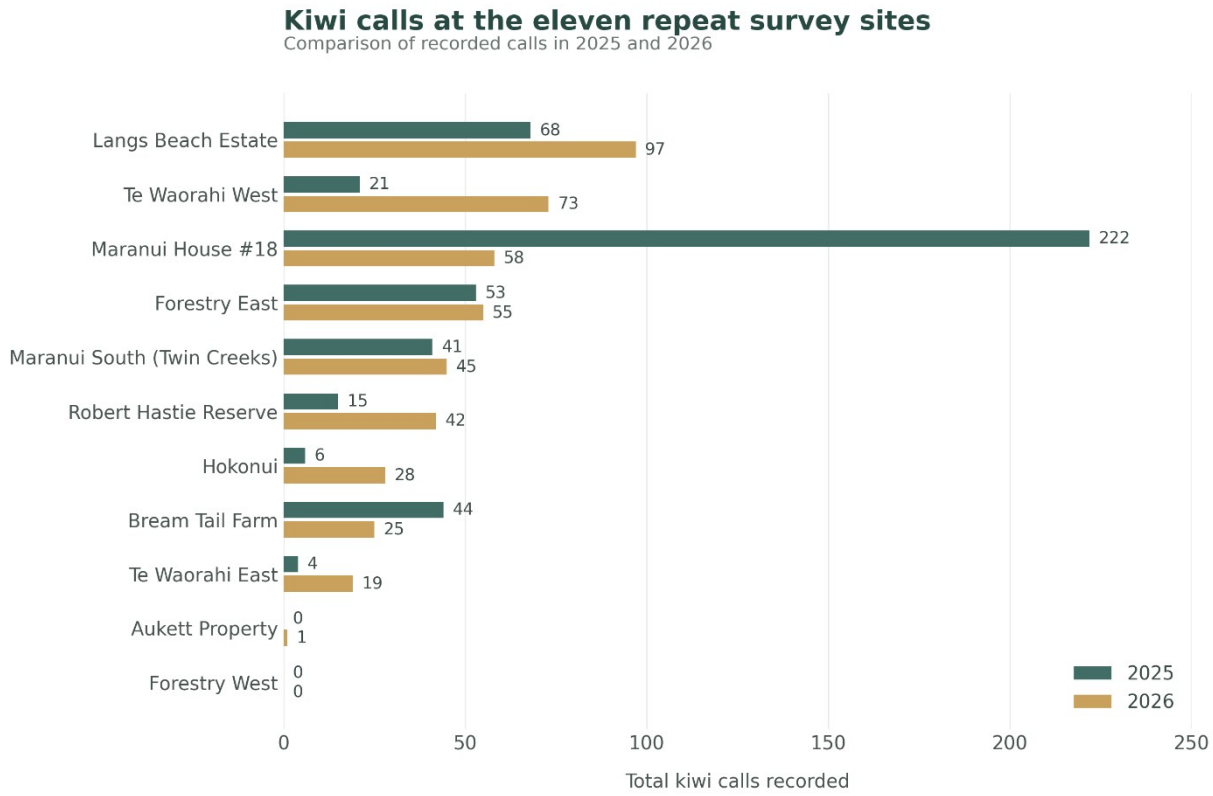


Figure 1 Total kiwi calls recorded at the eleven annual comparison sites surveyed in both 2025 and 2026. Call totals indicate calling activity, not the number of individual kiwi.

Table 1 and 2: All fourteen sites in 2025/26: 563 calls (468 male and 95 female) and 71 duet events. Male and female calls make up the total call count. Duet events are not additional calls to add to those totals, and do not represent distinct pairs.

Table 1: Results at the eleven repeat sites

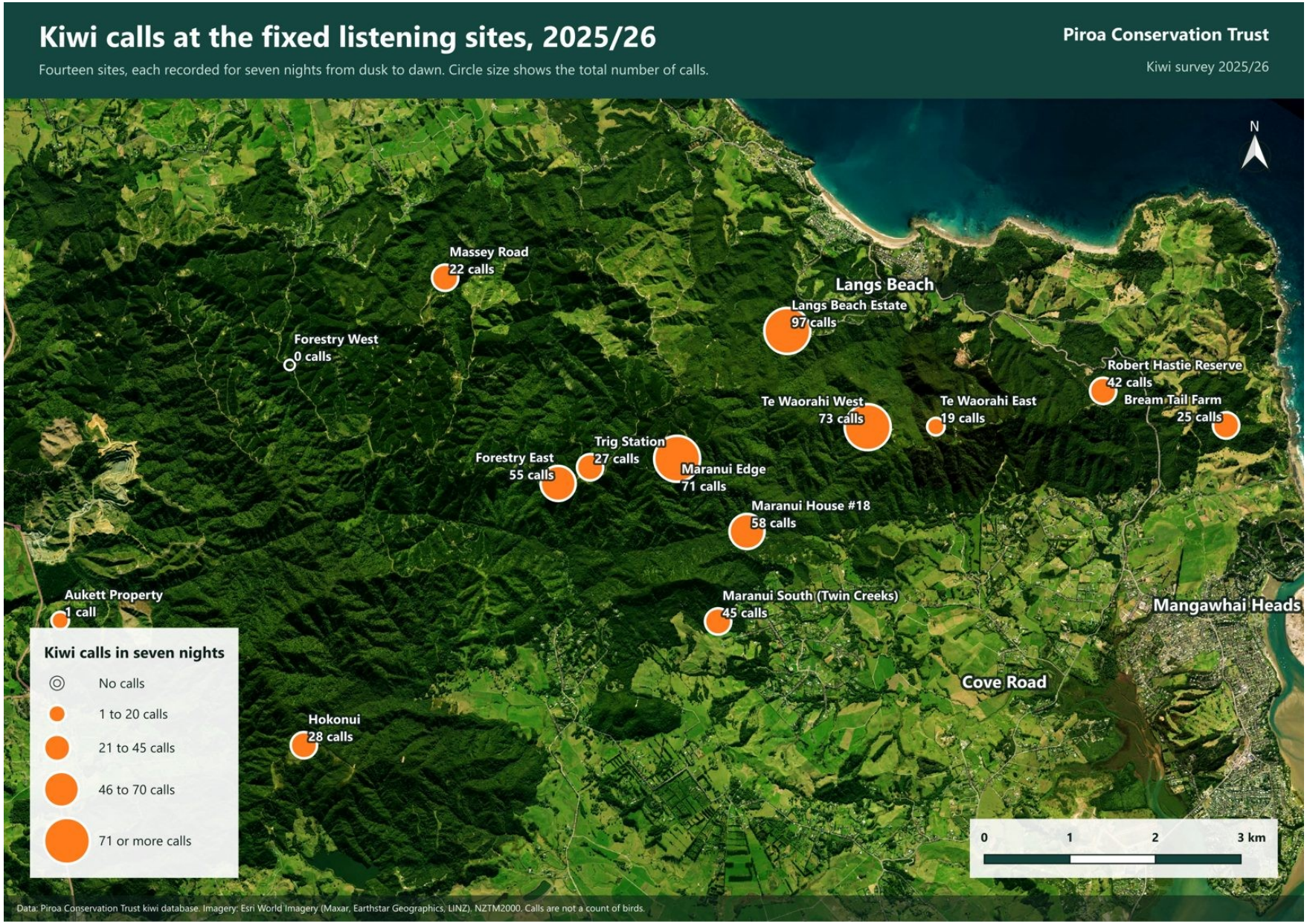
Site	Total calls	Male calls	Female calls	Duet events
Langs Beach Estate	97	82	15	13
Te Waorahi West	73	56	17	17
Marunui House #18	58	55	3	3
Forestry East	55	43	12	4
Marunui South (Twin Creeks)	45	25	20	15
Robert Hastie Reserve	42	41	1	1
Hokonui	28	26	2	2
Bream Tail Farm	25	21	4	1
Te Waorahi East	19	17	2	2
Aukett Property	1	1	0	0
Forestry West	0	0	0	0
Repeat site total	**443**	**367**	**76**	**58**

Table 2: Results of new sites surveyed in 2026

Site	Total calls	Male calls	Female calls	Duet events
Marunui Edge	71	59	12	8
Trig Station	27	25	2	2
Massey Road	22	17	5	3
New site total	**120**	**101**	**19**	**13**

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Map 4. Annual comparison sites, 2025/26.

Changes in calling activity

Of the eleven annual comparison sites surveyed in both 2025 and 2026, eight recorded more kiwi calls, two recorded fewer, and one recorded no calls in either year.

The largest increases were at Te Waorahi West, where calls rose from 21 to 73; Robert Hastie Reserve, from 15 to 42; Hokonui, from 6 to 28; and Te Waorahi East, from 4 to 19. Langs Beach Estate also recorded an increase, from 68 to 97 calls.

Recently released kiwi may have contributed to some of these results. Tracking records placed Hinekiuta near the Te Waorahi West recorder before and after its survey period. Her calls may be among those recorded there, although we cannot distinguish them from calls made by other females.

Calling activity was broadly steady at Forestry East, with 55 calls compared with 53 last year, and Marunui South, with 45 compared with 41. Aukett Property recorded a single male call, its first detection in the annual comparison series. Forestry West recorded no calls for the second year.

Two sites recorded fewer calls. Bream Tail Farm fell from 44 to 25, while Marunui House #18 fell from 222 to 58. The Marunui decline was the largest change recorded and prompted further listening and predator monitoring, described below.

The database lists Marunui's survey dates as June 2025 and May 2026. This difference in timing needs to be considered when interpreting the result. With only two years of monitoring, these changes describe the results of individual surveys rather than established long-term trends.

The three new sites provided useful baseline results: 71 calls at Marunui Edge, 27 at the Trig Station and 22 at Massey Road. All three recorded female calls and duets.

Follow-up at Marunui

Calls at Marunui House #18 fell from 222 in 2025 to 58 in 2026. This marked decline prompted further investigation.

We returned a recorder to the same location during the second winter kiwi listening window. This survey gave similar results, so we used the first survey period for the comparisons presented in this report. The repeat survey showed that calling remained low across both periods.

We discussed the results with experienced kiwi specialists, who identified predation by a dog or ferret as a possible explanation. In July, the Trust worked alongside the Marunui team to install six camera traps and two live capture traps around houses 17 and 18 and in the valley bush behind them. The cameras were baited with rabbit, and the live capture traps with rabbit and sardines. Monitoring continued for three weeks.

The cameras recorded possums, pigs and harriers, but no dogs or ferrets. This does not rule out an earlier predator event, as an animal may have moved through before monitoring began.

The cause of the decline remains unknown. Marunui residents also reported hearing fewer kiwi calls, supporting the pattern recorded in the surveys.

Possible explanations include birds moving within the landscape or changes in the local population and calling behaviour. For example, the loss of a dominant female could disrupt established relationships and temporarily increase calling as birds re-establish territories or pair bonds. If this occurred before the 2025 survey, last year's high count may have reflected a period of increased activity. This remains a possible explanation rather than a confirmed event.

Further monitoring will help establish whether calling remains at the lower level recorded this year or whether the first year's count was unusually high.

This follow-up shows how annual comparison sites can flag changes that warrant investigation and help guide a timely conservation response.

Male and female calls

Male calls were recorded more frequently than female calls. Call totals do not tell us the population's sex ratio, as males and females differ in how often they call and how readily their calls are picked up.

Female calls were heard at nine of the eleven repeat sites in 2026, compared with five in 2025. Four sites recorded their first female calls in the annual comparison series: Langs Beach Estate, Hokonui, Te Waorahi East and Robert Hastie Reserve.

All three new sites, Marunui Edge, Trig Station and Massey Road, also recorded females. This brings the total to twelve of the fourteen sites surveyed this year.

Although females were heard at more sites, the total number of female calls across the eleven repeat sites fell from 107 to 76. This was driven by Marunui House #18, where female calls dropped from 67 to three. Across the other ten sites combined, female calls increased from forty to seventy-three.

Recently released birds may have contributed to some recordings, particularly at Te Waorahi West, where tracking records placed Hinekiuta nearby.

Hearing females at more sites is encouraging and adds to our understanding of kiwi activity across the ranges. It does not establish that the number of females has increased, but continued monitoring will show whether this wider pattern of detections persists.

Figure 3. Female kiwi calls were recorded at nine of the eleven repeat annual comparison sites in 2026, compared with five in 2025.



Figure 2. Female kiwi calls were recorded at nine of the eleven repeat annual comparison sites in 2026, compared with five in 2025.

Duets

Duets occur when male and female kiwi call together and can indicate pair activity. Duets were recorded at nine of the eleven repeat sites in 2026, compared with three in 2025.

Across these repeat sites, we recorded 58 duet events this year, compared with the corrected total of 53 last year. The main change was therefore how widely duets were recorded, rather than the overall number.

Six sites recorded their first duets in the annual comparison series: Te Waorahi West, Langs Beach Estate, Hokonui, Te Waorahi East, Bream Tail Farm and Robert Hastie Reserve.

Duets at Marunui South increased from ten to fifteen, and at Forestry East from three to four. At Marunui House #18, they fell from forty to three, alongside the decline in overall calling activity.

All three new sites also recorded duets, bringing this year's total to 71 events across twelve of fourteen sites. These events may include repeated calling by the same pairs and do not confirm breeding success.

When kiwi called

Calling activity peaked between 9 pm and 10 pm, was lowest around 2 am, and increased again towards dawn. Approximately 17% of recorded calls occurred between 6 pm and 8 pm, the standard evening listening period used for the volunteer call count.

Recording throughout the night captures activity beyond this two-hour period and complements the volunteer surveys.

PART TWO: PIROA IN THE NORTHLAND CONTEXT

The Northland Kiwi Call Count Survey provides a longer-term view of kiwi calling activity across the region. Calls are recorded at fixed listening stations during two-hour periods after dark, over four nights within the winter listening windows. Most stations use volunteer listeners, while some use acoustic recording devices. Piroa's records in this dataset extend back to 2014.

Results are reported as calls per hour during these standard listening periods. They are separate from the full-night call totals presented in Part One, even where recordings from the same devices contribute to both surveys. These approaches provide complementary information about kiwi calling activity.

Piroa's results in 2025

Eighteen Piroa listening stations contributed results in 2025, with an average of 1.29 kiwi calls per hour.

Calling activity varied considerably between stations. Pa Hill recorded 8.13 calls per hour and Marunui recorded 5.0, while Bream Tail Farm recorded 0.75 and Waorahi recorded none. These differences show why the overall average needs to be considered alongside individual station results.

Across Northland monitoring areas, average call rates ranged from 0.33 calls per hour at Pukenui to 19.38 at Motatau–Marlow. Piroa's average was among the lower rates recorded.

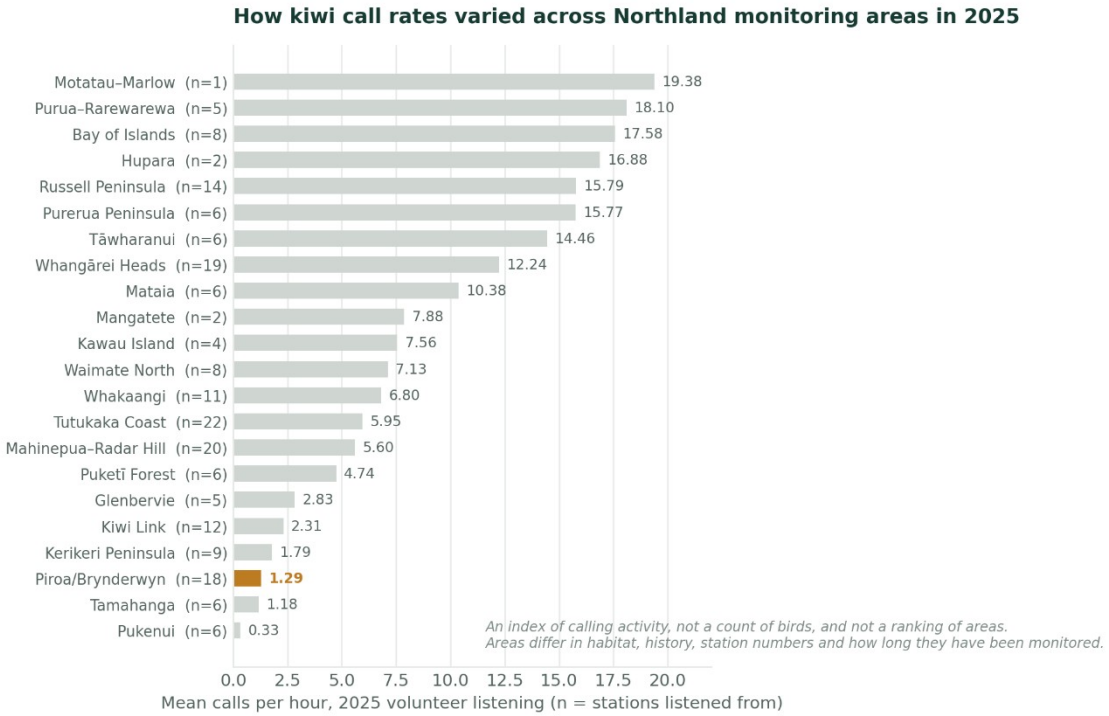


Figure 4. Average kiwi calls per hour across Northland monitoring areas in the 2025 volunteer call count survey. Piroa is highlighted in gold.

Regional comparisons provide useful context, but call rates are not direct counts of kiwi. Results are influenced by habitat, calling behaviour, listening conditions and the locations of survey stations. Monitoring areas also differ in their history of kiwi releases and protection.

Piroa's network includes stations where no calls were recorded. These results contribute to our understanding of kiwi distribution, but adding stations in quieter areas can lower the overall average without indicating a decline at existing stations.

Changes over time

Marunui has a continuous volunteer listening record from 2014 to 2025. Its call rate rose from 1.13 calls per hour in 2014 to 5.63 in 2018. Since then, rates have fluctuated between approximately 3.0 and 5.1 calls per hour, with 5.0 recorded in 2025.

This shows a sustained increase in recorded calling activity at that station compared with the early years following the Marunui releases. It does not, on its own, establish how the wider population has changed.

The Kiwi Coast regional analysis found no statistically significant long-term trend across Piroa's volunteer survey results. Changes in the number and location of stations also need to be considered when interpreting the area-wide average.

The volunteer surveys and annual comparison sites have complementary roles. Continuing the longer-running volunteer stations preserves their historical record, while our fixed acoustic sites provide a consistent network for tracking future changes in calling activity.

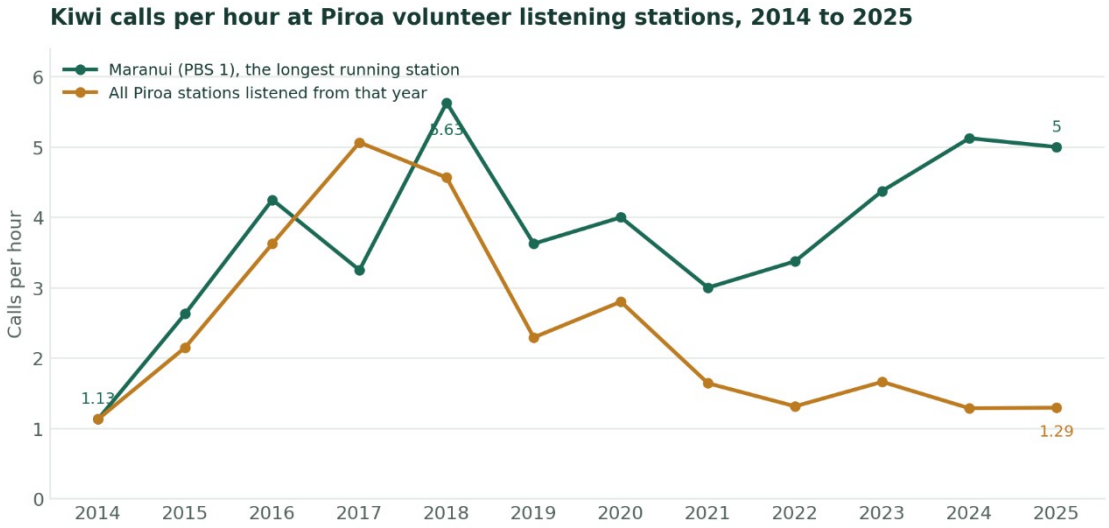


Figure 4. Kiwi calls per hour at the Marunui volunteer listening station and the average across participating Piroa stations, 2014–2025. The stations contributing to the Piroa average vary between years.

Supporting kiwi recovery across the landscape

Other landscapes where kiwi have been reintroduced provide useful context. In 2025, Tāwharanui recorded an average of 14.46 calls per hour and Mataia recorded 10.38. Their results show the levels of calling activity recorded in other managed populations, but do not provide a timetable or forecast for Piroa.

Piroa covers a broad landscape of native forest, regenerating bush, farms, forestry and residential properties. Protecting kiwi as they move through this landscape requires sustained predator control, responsible dog management and cooperation between neighbouring landowners and community groups.

The wider Northland analysis highlights the value of sustained predator control alongside dog management. Continuing this work, supported by monitoring, will help the Trust protect kiwi and identify where further effort is needed.

PART THREE: THREE KIWI, ONE LANDSCAPE

Rangiora, Hinekiuta and Matahīapo

The Te Waorahi release

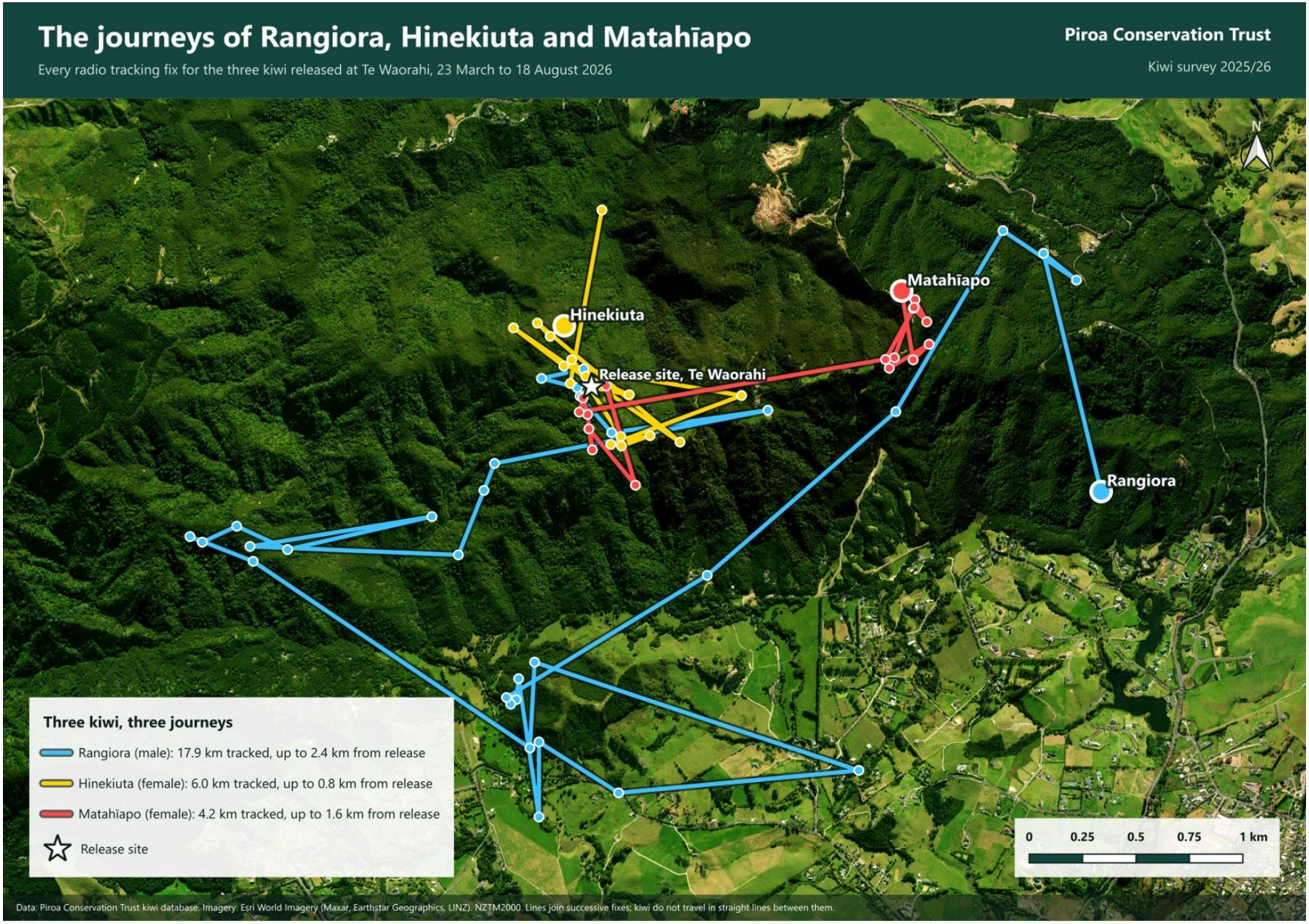
In March 2026, three young North Island brown kiwi were released at Te Waorahi, in native forest behind Langs Beach. Kiwi had previously been heard in the area, but this was the first release at Te Waorahi.

The birds came from Matakohe-Limestone Island and were gifted by Ngāti Hine. Accredited handlers caught the birds that morning, and the release brought together Patuharakeke, Te Uri o Hau, Te Parawhau and Ngāti Hine.

Rangiora, a male, was named by Patuharakeke after one of their pā in the Takahiwai Hills. Hinekiuta, a female, was named by Ngāti Hine, and Matahīapo, also female, by Te Uri o Hau.

Te Waorahi is owned by Bruce and Janine Copeland. Land previously intended for housing is now managed as native habitat, with years of predator control helping prepare the area for the release.

The release builds on the reintroduction of 49 kiwi at Marunui between 2013 and 2020. All three birds were fitted with transmitters so their locations could be monitored as they moved through the surrounding landscape. Following their movements helps us understand how released kiwi use the ranges and where protection is needed.



Map 5. The movements of the three kiwi released at Te Waorahi, March to August 2026.

Following the Kiwi

Since their release, we've been following the movements of Rangiora, Hinekiuta and Matahīapo, with checks now carried out weekly. All three wear transmitters that give us a fascinating insight into what they are doing out in the hills.

Each bird has its own radio signal, which helps us locate it. The transmitters also include chick timers, sending a data stream through a sequence of beeps. These tell us how much battery life remains, when the bird becomes active and how long it is active overnight.

Changes in activity help us understand their behaviour and flag anything that may need further attention. In males, these patterns can also indicate incubation and hatching, giving us information about possible breeding activity without visiting a nest.

The accounts below describe their recorded movements from March to August 2026.

Hinekiuta

Hinekiuta remained close to Te Waorahi throughout the monitoring period. After moving south into the bush block during her first day, subsequent tracking found her in the same general area.

Her four recorded locations between May and August were within approximately 130 metres of each other and around 400 metres of the release area. These clustered records suggest she was using a relatively localised area, although further tracking is needed to establish her home range.

Matahīapo

Matahīapo stayed within about 500 metres of the release area for her first eleven days. Then, between 31 March and 3 April, she moved almost 1.5 kilometres east.

After that move, we kept finding her in roughly the same area. Her recorded locations through to August were within about 350 metres of each other, around 1.5 kilometres east-northeast of the release area, towards Cove Road. She appears to have found an area she is happy to keep using.

Adding the distances between her recorded locations gives a minimum movement distance of about 4.2 kilometres, the shortest of the three birds.

Rangiora

Rangiora has been the traveller of the group. He stayed close to the release area for his first week, within about 240 metres, before heading west and south. By late April and into May, we were finding him around two kilometres from where he started.

Between 24 and 25 May, his recorded position shifted about 1.6 kilometres. He continued moving around the country to the south-east, sometimes turning up a kilometre or more from his previous location. By early June, he had moved east towards Cove Road, into the wider area where Matahīapo had been since April.

His June and August locations were in the same general area, about 2.4 kilometres east of Te Waorahi. He may have begun to settle there, although two records separated by two months cannot tell us what he did between visits.

The distances between his recorded locations add up to nearly eighteen kilometres. His actual travels will have been longer, as we only record where he is at each check.

In June, two of our range-wide survey recorders also picked up male kiwi calls about 430 metres from one of his tracking locations. We cannot say whether those calls were Rangiora's, but he may have contributed to the recordings.

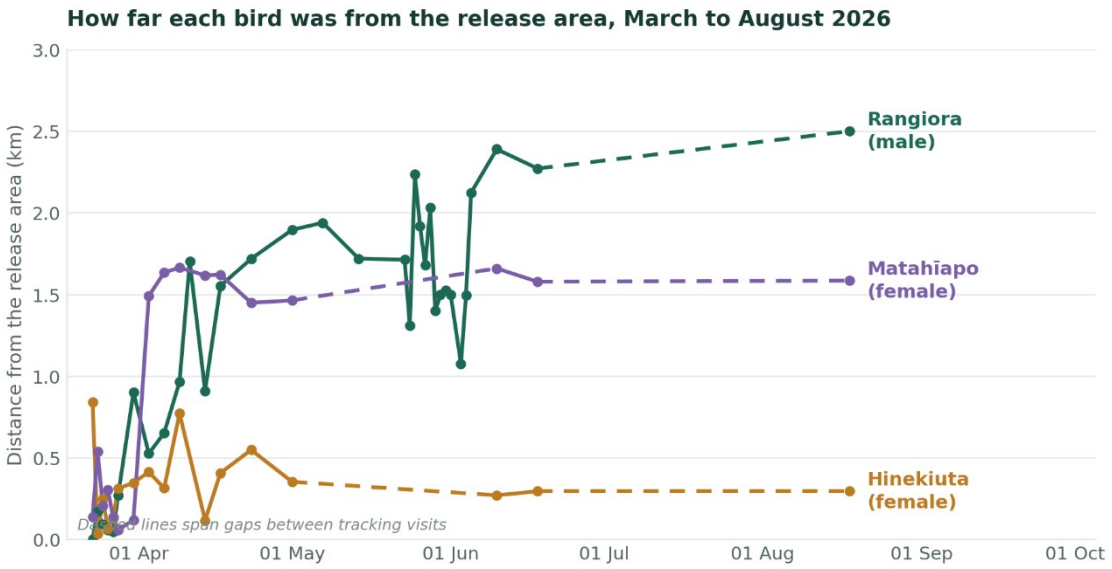


Figure 6. How far each bird was from the release area through the tracking period.

What their movements tell us

The three birds have taken different approaches to their new surroundings. Hinekiuta has remained close to Te Waorahi, Matahīapo moved east before repeatedly being found in the same area, and Rangiora travelled more widely before his later locations began to cluster.

Rangiora's recorded movements add up to nearly eighteen kilometres, even though his later locations were only about 2.4 kilometres from the release area. His travels show why protection needs to extend beyond the property where kiwi are released.

These records give us an early picture of how the birds are using the landscape. Continued tracking will help us understand where they settle and which areas they use over time.

Rangiora and community involvement

Rangiora's movements have also brought kiwi conservation closer to home for people around Mangawhai. On 25 May, he was located in the Echo Valley Road area, a couple of kilometres south-east of Te Waorahi. His journey has since featured in several Mangawhai Focus articles and sparked conversations with local residents.

Having a named kiwi nearby gives people a clear connection to the conservation work happening around them. It also creates opportunities to talk about keeping dogs contained, protecting kiwi habitat and taking care on roads at night.

On 2 August, the Trust held a Know Your Dog workshop with Lesley Baigent, covering dog behaviour around wildlife and responsible containment. Twenty-six people registered and thirteen attended. Workshops and conversations with landowners are part of the ongoing work to help people keep kiwi safe.

Protecting kiwi across the landscape

The tracking results reinforce the importance of connected predator control. Kiwi can move between properties, so neighbouring landowners and conservation groups have a shared role in protecting them. The Trust's work to connect areas under sustained predator control will help support birds as they disperse and settle.

Dog management is particularly important. Dogs can kill adult kiwi, and a single roaming dog can cause considerable harm. Rangiora's movements through areas where people live and keep dogs highlight the value of secure containment, landowner engagement and practical advice for dog owners.

Road safety is another priority. Kiwi moving through the wider landscape can encounter roads, putting them at risk from vehicles. The Trust is working to install signs at either end of the Cove Road gorge between Mangawhai and Waipū, reminding motorists to slow down and watch for kiwi, particularly at night.

Although three birds cannot tell us where future releases will go, their locations help identify areas for landowner contact, follow-up monitoring and continued protection. Combining this information with our acoustic surveys gives us a clearer basis for planning conservation work across the ranges.

WHAT WE TAKE FROM THIS SEASON

This season's monitoring has added to our understanding of where kiwi are active across the Piroa–Brynderwyn Ranges. Kiwi were heard again in several previously surveyed areas and at four locations surveyed for the first time. Calls were also recorded at Jude Road/Pebblebrook and Ruru Way, where earlier surveys had heard none.

Female calls and duets were recorded more widely across the annual comparison network. Among the eleven repeat sites, females were heard at nine in 2026, compared with five in 2025, and duets at nine, compared with three. Duet events increased slightly, from a corrected total of 53 to 58. These are encouraging findings, although they do not establish an increase in the number of birds or breeding pairs.

Eight repeat sites recorded more calls, two recorded fewer and one remained silent. The marked decline at Marunui House #18 prompted repeat listening, specialist advice and camera and trap monitoring. No dogs or ferrets were detected during that follow-up, but the cause of the decline remains unknown.

The range-wide surveys also recorded no kiwi calls at 42 of the 69 successful deployments. These results highlight gaps in recorded kiwi activity and help guide further surveys. Continued listening will help distinguish occasional visits from more consistent use of newly recorded areas.

The Northland call count results provide valuable longer-term context. Calling activity at the Marunui volunteer station remains above its early recorded levels, while the regional analysis found no clear long-term trend across Piroa as a whole. Maintaining consistent monitoring will strengthen our understanding of future changes.

Following Rangiora, Hinekiuta and Matahīapo has shown how differently released kiwi can use the landscape. Their movements reinforce the importance of connected protection beyond release properties. Rangiora's journey has also created opportunities to involve local residents in dog management, road safety and kiwi conservation.

Recommendations

1. Continue the annual comparison programme and long-running Northland call count stations. Keep recording effort and seasonal timing consistent, and document any differences that affect comparisons.
2. Repeat surveys at Jude Road/Pebblebrook, Palmers Property and the eastern locations around Cove Road to establish how consistently kiwi use these areas. Revisit bush areas where calls have previously been heard but were not recorded this season.
3. Maintain clear call and duet records in the database. Note nearby tracked birds when interpreting results, recognising that individual calls cannot usually be attributed to them.
4. Follow up marked declines at annual comparison sites with repeat listening and further investigation where warranted. Continue monitoring at Marunui to determine whether this year's lower calling activity persists.
5. Use tracking and acoustic survey results to identify gaps in protection, particularly between Te Waorahi and Cove Road, and work with neighbouring landowners to maintain and extend connected predator control.

6. Continue landowner engagement and practical dog-management workshops in areas used by kiwi. Support road-safety messaging along Cove Road and other roads where kiwi may be at risk.
7. Consider surveying Lincoln Downs and Piroa Falls Road less frequently, while retaining periodic checks. This could allow more effort at locations with new detections and areas where survey coverage remains limited.

Acknowledgements

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To Kiwi Coast, the Department of Conservation and Northland Regional Council for the wider network that lets us see where we fit.