

# Kākāriki Karaka Recovery Monthly Status Report March 2022

Reporting Period: 28/2/2022 – 31/3/2022

## Recovery Programme Status: How are we tracking to our goal “Preventing Extinction”?

### Overall:

- The establishment of a new population at Brook Sanctuary is continuing to look positive and has been further bolstered by an additional translocation this month, with one more planned for next month.
- There is still a significant vulnerability to this population for rapid decline during beech mast events – a priority for 2022 was determining the next sites to establish new populations. At the Recovery Group hui on 11/3/2022, it was agreed to recommend that the Hawdon Valley be our focal release site for season 22/23.
- COVID response continues to create uncertainty regarding translocations/releases, as well as day to day management of the species in the wild and captivity. Contingency plans are in place and Kākāriki Rangers have been trained to support Isaac’s captive operations if required.

## Milestones from this month

### Milestone

- Fourth translocation of kākāriki karaka to Brook Sanctuary carried out in last week of March (20 birds translocated 29<sup>th</sup> March). Planning underway for fifth translocation to the Brook in April (this will be the final translocation of the season).
- 13 nests have been found in the Brook since kākāriki karaka were introduced in November 2021. One nest has so far fledged, with four more expected this/next week. The pairs released last month have started nesting, while pairs that were released last year have started 2<sup>nd</sup> nests.
- The Kākāriki Karaka Recovery Group met on Friday 11 March, with discussions focused on determining next site for translocations in 22/23 and what is required to achieve that. Recovery Group recommends the Hawdon Valley be the focal release site for the 22/23 season.
- Aviary capacity is being increased at Isaacs, with aviaries to be assembled over Autumn providing another two breeding aviaries and nine holding aviaries for juveniles. The NZ Nature Fund is also looking to support construction of four breeding aviaries at Orana Park this year.
- A pair of kākāriki karaka are now on display at Orana Park, increasing opportunities for advocacy.

## Project Issues (new actions bold and italicised)

Critical Issues	Priority	Action Required	Owner	Date First Raised
HT ensure Blumine island Orange-fronted parakeet population understanding and protection is obtained?		Understand how J4N roles can most effectively support Blumine priorities	Director NSI	27/02/2019  <i>To be resolved as J4N plan developed.</i>
How to increase aviary capacity for the Orange-fronted parakeet captive breeding programme?		Support construction of additional aviaries at Orana Park as supported by Governance and Recovery groups.	Director ESI	27/02/2019  <b><i>NZ Nature Fund is in talks with Orana Park to support new aviaries. New aviaries to be assembled at Isaacs over Autumn.</i></b>
How to ensure that work is not being compromised by access constraints, including elevated river levels and restrictions imposed by adjacent leaseholders?		Build relationships and understandings with Mt White station, Eskhead station and Lake Taylor station to establish greater security of access	Director ESI	28/10/2020  <b><i>Still a live issue, access restrictive for some valleys</i></b>
How to ensure that COVID responses, such as Traffic Light Setting changes and interregional travel restrictions, do not impact translocations?		Support travel required to enable translocation as required.	Director ESI	5/11/2021  <b><i>Current mandates are being relaxed over the next month, which will allow ease of travel, but ongoing issue with staff becoming sick will be an issue</i></b>
<b><i>Data deficiencies for Orange-fronted parakeets</i></b>		<b>Continued research into why OFPs have declined in the wild. What might be the leading causes of population declines and how can we reverse this.</b>	Director TSU	30/3/2021  <b><i>Looking at establishing post-graduate positions</i></b>

## Actions for GG Consideration (updates bold and italicised)

Team	Issue	Context	Recommended Actions	Risk of not proceeding	Status
Eastern South Island	Increase captive breeding capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is currently not enough captive breeding capacity to meet the needs of the Kākāriki Karaka.</li> </ul>	<p>Governance Group to mandate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find solution to resolve standoff with building new aviaries whilst go cart issue is being worked through.</li> <li>Funding and install aviaries at Orana Park.</li> <li>Complete Isaac/DOC operational Plan to build new aviaries and secure 10-year tenure for captive breeding</li> <li>Investigate alternative funding options for IVL bid</li> </ul> <p>Current Task assignment for this with ESI Director: <a href="#">DOC-6144305</a></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population declines and extirpation of populations in some valleys - the survival of the species is reliant on captive released birds</li> <li>Species persistence</li> <li>Species extinction</li> <li>Loss of primary captive facility for the species</li> <li>Compromised captive breeding programme</li> </ol>	<p>GG agreed on recommendation during GG meeting. 27/8/20</p> <p>Anne and Mark engaged with Orana and have confirmed with Orana Park CEO that aviaries can be constructed there. Quote has been provided by Orana Park as to what it would cost them to construct the aviaries.</p> <p>Now require confirmation of funds and agreement on design. 27/8/20</p> <p>Nic Toki, Wayne Beggs and Andrew Grant met with Rob Clarke (Chair TICWT) re MOU and ongoing relationship with TICWT 1/7/2021</p> <p>Draft for 2021-2026 MOU has been completed and is with Dir ESI for consideration and signing with TICWT</p> <p>NZ conservation fund is in talks with Orana Park as of March about aviary expansions.</p> <p>The Janszoon aviary are arriving April at Isaacs and along with the Ashburton aviaries, will be assembled over Autumn. These will give us another 2 breeding aviaries and 9 holding aviaries for juveniles.</p>

## OPERATIONS REPORT

### Population situation (includes captive and wild sites)

SITE	Situation
ORUAWAIRUA/BLUMINE ISLAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approximately 81 birds</b> (based on survey conducted in August 2020) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 7 nests confirmed this season (1 unsuccessful)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
BROOK WAIMĀRAMA SANCTUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approximately 27 birds + 20 birds have arrived this month and have been released (27-81 including unaccounted release birds 54)</b> (based on sightings since release), <b>this total is expected to be much higher.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 20 birds released in November, 20 in December, 24 in February and 20 in March.</li> <li>○ Two birds have died (one predated by falcon), and one turned up at a private aviary. This bird has since been transported back to Isaacs.</li> <li>○ 15 birds from first translocation were resighted at least one week after being released, as were 14 birds from second translocation</li> <li>○ 8 nests confirmed this season (1 unsuccessful), 1 confirmed fledgling.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
HAWDON VALLEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Likely no birds</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Surveys undertaken in 2021/22 have not detected kākāriki karaka.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
POULTER VALLEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Likely no birds</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Surveys undertaken in 2021/22 have not detected kākāriki karaka.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
SOUTH BRANCH HURUNUI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approximately 280 (237-323) birds</b> (based on mark-resight analysis in Fig. 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 9 nests confirmed this season</li> <li>○ 20 birds released in January</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
NORTH BRANCH HURUNUI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least 2 birds</b> (based on 2021/22 searches) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 3 localised OFP sightings (2 sightings of a male OFP and 1 of a female OFP) recorded over two days in July 2021</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
ISAACS CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE TRUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>22 adults, 22 chicks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 8 breeding pairs, one pair still nesting but the rest have stopped for the season.</li> <li>○ 3 pairs not breeding, swapping aviaries and birds around.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
ORANA WILDLIFE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 adults</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 older pair (on display), 2 pairs breeding</li> <li>○ 2.2 birds for flock mating</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
AUCKLAND ZOO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6 adults</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2 breeding pairs, 1 non-breeding pair</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
MT BRUCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 adults</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1 pair on display</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL POPULATION ESTIMATE</b>	<p><b>Current</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Captive ≈ 62 (adults and juveniles)</b></li> <li>• <b>Wild ≈ Between 347 ~ 490</b></li> <li>• <b>Total ≈ Between 409 ~ 549 birds (including juveniles in captivity)</b></li> </ul>

**2020/21**

- Total ≈ 351 birds

**2019/20**

- Total ≈ 304 birds

**2018/19**

- Total ≈ 180-230 birds (pending revision)

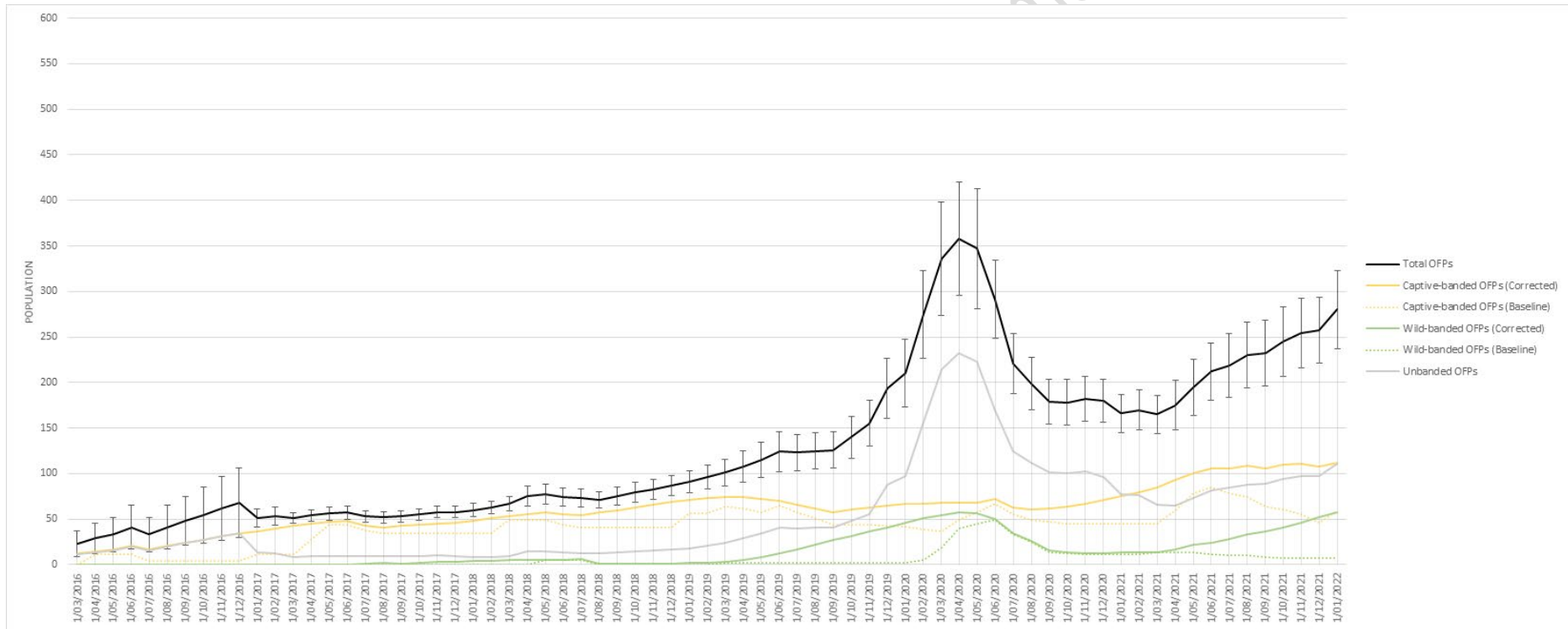


Fig. 1: Rolling population estimate for OFPs in the South Branch of the Hurunui, based on mark-resight survey data collected in the year leading up to each date. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. The analysis includes a 3-month pre-survey period to determine the baseline number of banded birds present. The impact of releasing birds in the wild is only fully realised in surveys that commenced after the date of their release. An interim correction factor has been applied to account for this.

## Work programme (includes captive, operations, and research)

SITE	Last Month – <i>What happened since last report?</i>	Next Month – <i>What is planned for next month?</i>
<b>Rangiora</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fourth kākārīki release in Brook Sanctuary (29/3/2022)</li> <li>• Post release monitoring in the Brook Sanctuary</li> <li>• Bait station lines flagged in the Hawdon</li> <li>• Bait station preparation and installation in the South Branch and Hawdon Valley</li> <li>• Trap checks in all valleys</li> <li>• Recruitment of new Blumine B Band ranger</li> <li>• Nest finding and protection South Branch</li> <li>• Repairs to South Branch access through Esk Head</li> <li>• Contingency planning for COVID 19</li> <li>• Post 1080 tracking tunnel monitoring – for Stoats</li> <li>• Cat, Deer and Possum scat monitoring in the North and South Branch</li> <li>• Initial talks with Canterbury University staff (Prof. Tammy Steeve and Prof. Elissa Cameron), Landcare Research staff (Dr. Chris Niebuhr) to create post-graduate student positions. Additional OFP staff have been in talks with staff from Charles Sturt University (Associate Prof. Melanie Massao) about post-grad studies involving OFPs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth Kākārīki release planned for Brook Sanctuary</li> <li>• Track cutting for bait station installation in the Hawdon and South Branch</li> <li>• Bait station lines flagged in the Hawdon</li> <li>• Trap checks in all valleys</li> <li>• Nest finding and protection South Branch</li> <li>• Post 1080 tracking tunnel monitoring – for Stoats</li> <li>• Preparing a “Change request” for the Te Waipounamu project</li> <li>• Chainsaw training for staff</li> <li>• Valley wide surveys for OFPs in the Poulter and Andrews (to determine if there could be a remnant population.</li> <li>• Ongoing talks with higher education facilities about post graduate students studying OFPs.</li> </ul>
<b>Oruawairua</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of all nests</li> <li>• Feeder cameras installed</li> <li>• Monthly trap and device checks</li> <li>• Training of Picton based rangers in Brook Sanctuary</li> <li>• Public access track cut</li> <li>• Install wasp bait stations</li> <li>• Resource consent work for 2x Portacom units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wasp bait operation – <i>Vespula</i> species have never been controlled on island</li> <li>• Recruitment of rangers for fixed-term positions</li> <li>• On-island implementation of research plan from Rangiora staff</li> <li>• Support 1080 operation</li> <li>• Monthly trap and device checks</li> <li>• Biodiversity track cutting from volunteers</li> </ul>
<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No update available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No update available</li> </ul>
<b>Captive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release to the South Branch to dump chicks from 2 of our prolific breeders, so their genes don't flood Brook (which we have actually done!)</li> <li>• Unfortunately, we lost Casper the last of the Casey chicks to a ruptured liver from trauma (he was from one of the pairs that where not breeding) and also our great Red female who did all the fostering, from trauma after getting stuck in a log.</li> <li>• Pair of red-crowned kākārīki acquired from Willowbank for fostering.</li> </ul>	