



PREDATOR FREE TE TAI TOKERAU KIWI CALENDAR

JANUARY

Conditions often dry and hot so kiwi doing it hard, especially chicks.

Stoat numbers high.

Birds can be out for long periods at night (including dawn and dusk at this time of year) as they are struggling for food. They often move to wetter areas, drains, swamps, dams, creeks, so can be in unexpected areas. High risk of traffic strikes and dogs from holiday makers.

Kiwi deaths from starvation and dehydration.

FEBRUARY

Dads on nests if second clutches happening.

Dry and hot conditions make non nesting kiwi more likely to be roaming so at risk of vehicle strike, dog attack and often found in unusual places e.g. culverts, drains on roadsides.

Kiwi deaths from starvation and dehydration sometimes seen depending on season.

MARCH

Second clutch chicks hatching. These can be out all hours and in unexpected habitat as food is generally scarce. Massively vulnerable to predation and dog attacks. Starvation and dehydration still a reality.

APRIL

Last chicks hatching for the season.

Often a bit wetter but not always. Chicks very vulnerable to predation – second clutch chicks are the most vulnerable as stoat numbers are generally higher.

Adults out for longer and longer periods as daylight hours slowly decrease, autumn rains increase food supplies and weight is slowly regained.

School holidays, Easter and Anzac day means more traffic and dogs.

MAY

Kiwi out for long periods and mating beginning. Birds mobile, active and high incidence of vehicle strike.

Longer nights mean dog walkers at dawn and dusk could meet kiwi.

JUNE

Kiwi are mating and are out for long periods each night. Gravid females are often on the surface as they struggle with a large belly. This makes them less mobile, more easily found by dogs and at risk of egg peritonitis if hurt. The long hours spent out and about makes them more vulnerable to car strikes and dogs.

Long weekends this month mean many visitors, often with dogs, and more traffic.

JULY

Birds start nesting. Sometimes this is just the first of 2 eggs laid and put “on hold” until the second arrives. It is vulnerable to pig predation. Females may be gravid so at risk as in June. Kiwi out feeding for long periods.

School holidays means more dogs and cars.

AUGUST

Nesting is in full swing. Exhausted females out feeding for long periods to recover bodyweight.

Males out for a few hours a night if nesting.

SEPTEMBER

Hatching can begin later this month so chicks are at huge risk of predation by cats and stoats.

Once chicks have fledged males will be out for long periods each night trying to regain weight.

OCTOBER

Most hatching occurs around this time. Chicks are extremely vulnerable to predation and misadventure. It will be 6 months before they can fight a stoat off. Chicks can go into unexpected areas and at any time of the day, e.g. open pasture, so at risk of dog, cat attacks.

School holidays and public holidays mean more dogs and cars

NOVEMBER

Hatching of later clutch chicks. Stoats are feeding their young now so are hungry. Feral cats also feeding young.

Adult birds slowly regaining weight and out less as daylight hours increase.

DECEMBER

Stoat kits are leaving the nest so numbers are high. Feral kittens weaned too. Depending on weather, kiwi can be out for longer periods if dry conditions. Chicks can be out for long periods too, anywhere and any time of day, so are very exposed to predation. Some birds may be mating again if conditions are good, so birds may be out and about, and heard at night. Gravid females surface roosting.

Visitor numbers to Northland spike so high risk of dog attacks on kiwi.

All ages of kiwi are at risk from dogs all year round. These are the main killers of adult kiwi in Northland. Visitors bringing dogs and cats to Northland are a threat. Feral cats seem to be breeding most of the year in Northland vs October breeding further south.

Chicks are our most vulnerable life stage and will need 6 months to gain enough weight to fight a stoat off (1200 gm).

Some pairs will have 3 clutches per season so females could be gravid and chicks present for much of the year. First hatchings late September (so 1200gm in March), last April (1200gm October).

Whangarei birds seem to nest earlier than those further North.

Kiwi can be anywhere, anytime.