



The
Ornithological Society

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State of New Zealand Birds 2008

The report *State of New Zealand Birds 2008* has been released by the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc.). It provides a peer reviewed assessment of some key issues facing New Zealand's distinctive birds and the key threats they face at this time.

The report has been published by the Ornithological Society of New Zealand as part of its commitment to assist the conservation and management of birds by providing information, from which sound management decisions can be derived.

The key findings of the report are:

- Introduced predatory mammals pose the greatest threat to most of the native birds that remain on the New Zealand or Chatham Island mainland.
- Aerial application of 1080 remains the most cost-effective method of controlling introduced predators over large areas of rugged or remote terrain.
- The continued use of 1080 or other predator control measures will be necessary to prevent the extinction of black stilt, and Chatham taiko in the short term and wrybill, Huttons shearwater, kaka, mohua, kokako, black billed gull, black fronted tern and the Chatham Island Oystercatcher, in the future.
- Improved management techniques such as predator proof fencing and, in the case of kiwi, Operation Nest egg, support the necessary predator control, but are more expensive and mainly suitable for implementation over smaller areas.
- Understanding the natural cycles that allow numbers of predators to increase requires long term, large scale and multi species science investigation. Too much ecological research on New Zealand birds is short term, or for only single species.
- Braided river bird habitats in the South Island are particularly challenging because not only do they have a full suite of predators impacting directly on birds but additionally invasive weeds and water abstraction directly impact on birds.
- The role and commitment of volunteers to support government and corporate efforts in protecting New Zealand birds is significant.

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand commends this report to national and regional government as a current authoritative statement of the state of New Zealand birds and expects that it will promote debate in assessing the impact of policy development and funding for appropriate conservation measures.

Yours sincerely

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President