

Roroa distribution northwest Nelson

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Roroa or great spotted kiwi are declining at about 2% a year. The goal of the Kiwi Recovery Plan is to turn this decline to a 2% per annum increase. However, obtaining the reliable distribution data necessary for effective management is challenging for a secretive, nocturnal species that is largely restricted to remote mountainous habitat. We are using acoustic recorders to:

- determine the current distribution and relative abundance of roroa across 650,000 ha of northwest Nelson
- compare the current distribution with that determined 20-30 years ago
- provide a baseline against which to assess future changes in distribution and population of roroa in northwest Nelson
- increase understanding and support for roroa by involving conservation professionals and volunteers in deploying acoustic recorders.

Preliminary results from thousands of hours of recordings were presented at the Birds NZ 2017 conference. The Birds New Zealand Research Fund will enable us to deploy recorders in areas that have been inaccessible to date and fill crucial gaps in our understanding. The study is also supported by Kiwis for Kiwi, by several groups who have loaned recorders and by numerous individuals whose assistance and commitment in placing recorders all through the back country is gratefully acknowledged.

