

Dispersal of juvenile kakariki from a fenced mainland sanctuary

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Red-crowned parakeets, or kakariki, were once common on the mainland, but today are primarily confined to offshore islands, due to habitat destruction, hunting, and predation by invasive mammals. In 2010, kakariki returned to the capital—after a more



than one hundred year absence—through their reintroduction to Zealandia, a fenced sanctuary nestled within suburban Wellington. Since then, the birds have multiplied, and in 2015, Zealandia banded its 500th kakariki chick. However, while the birds are unquestionably thriving within the sanctuary, they can and do leave the valley, and little is known about their activities once over the fence line.

Thanks to the generous support of the Birds NZ Research Fund, along with Zealandia, the Wellington City Council, FH Muter Trust, EM Pharazyn Trust, and the Karori Sanctuary Trust, we will investigate kakariki movement and activity in an urban setting, by attaching radio transmitters to juvenile kakariki and tracking their movements. We will include birds born both early and late in the breeding season to

examine if dispersal and survival differs with hatch date, as it does in many other bird species. Given that kakariki are still only recently reintroduced to Wellington, their establishment on the mainland is not yet a guarantee. While the species may flourish in predator-free Zealandia, to ensure that kakariki successfully populate the greater Wellington region more information is needed on the areas they prefer and their survival outside the sanctuary, knowledge we hope to gain from this study.

