

Following the handling, one bird did not feed for about 48 h and the other for about 60 h. This reaction to radio-tagging has been noted of some wild Kereru (RGP, pers. obs.). The two Kereru were transferred to smaller (1 m³) cages in the late afternoon of 21 February and held overnight, with food and water provided. Early the next morning they were transferred into separate compartments of a travelling box and taken by vehicle to the release site, and were released at 09:25 h. During the following five days both birds were sighted at least twice daily. Subsequently, until 25 March 1993, they were checked about twice a week.

The weather at the time of the release and for the next three days was misty drizzle and mild temperatures, after which it became clear, warm and relatively calm. Following release, both birds flew about 20 m to nearby trees and roosted for several hours. During the first few days, both birds remained within 200 m of the release site and were occasionally seen roosting and feeding with wild Kereru. Such behaviour is similar to that of wild birds. For example, fledgling Parea follow their parents and, once independent, follow other adults and so learn what to eat (RGP, pers. obs.). During the third day after its release, 'Green' flew about a kilometre to an area of tauhinu (*Cassinia leptophylla*) scrub, and on 2 March was located 3.5 km from the release site in native shrub-hardwood forest among pines, roosting in a kaikomako (*Pennantia corymbosa*) tree containing ripe fruit. Subsequently, it returned to the release area, where it was repeatedly found up until 25 March. 'Pink' also moved outside the native forest block during the second week after release, but had returned by 11 March. On 25 March, 'Pink' was feeding on ripe cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*) fruit and 'Green' was roosting in a miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*) containing ripe fruit.

After 25 March 1993, the birds were monitored monthly and both were always found in the Rocky Hill Station forest where they were released. During April and May 1993, 'Pink' was seen with a wild Kereru feeding on pigeonwood and miro fruit. However, on 15 June 1993 all that was found of the bird were fresh feathers, broken lower leg bones and the wings. The distance between paired canine marks in the foam base of the transmitter suggested that the bird had either been killed or scavenged by a stoat (*Mustela erminea*). 'Green' was last seen alive and well on 10 December 1993, after which its transmitter stopped functioning.

We suspect that the following factors in combination, rather than any particular one, were important for the survival of the two Kereru during the first month after release:

- a) one recognised an Australasian Harrier as a predator and reacted appropriately while captive at the National Wildlife Centre;
- b) they had the opportunity to feed on foods present at the release site during the three months before release;
- c) they had time to get used to carrying a radio-tag before release;
- d) they were released when a variety of tree species were fruiting heavily (very visible and often energy rich food sources); and
- e) wild kereru were present which the released birds could follow and so learn what to feed on.

Given the initial survival of the two birds, further hard releases of captive-reared Kereru are warranted to determine which, if any, of the factors is crucial to the survival of released Kereru, and whether they subsequently breed successfully to boost the number of wild birds. It also should be investigated whether captive-reared or wild-caught Kereru would survive and breed following their release in suitable habitat devoid of Kereru to see whether the hard release technique is suitable for establishing new populations.

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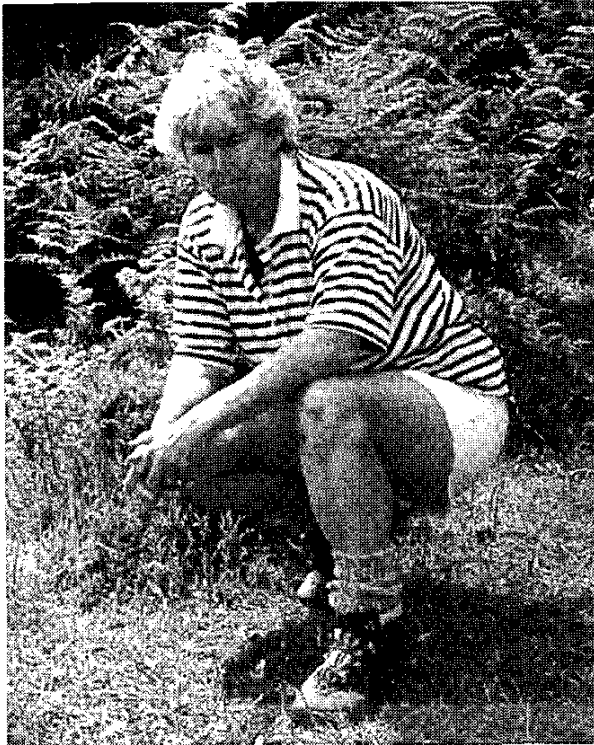
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OBITUARY



Elizabeth Raewyn Smith
(1945 - 1996)



**Gavin Arthur Terence Darke
Woodward**
(1949 - 1996)

Raewyn Smith and Gavin Woodward were participating as volunteers in a Department of Conservation radio-tracking programme of the Chatham Island Taiko (*Pterodroma magentae*). Tragically, Raewyn and Gavin were found dead in the telemetry tent set up on the south coast of Chatham Island on 10 October 1996. This unfortunate accident brought an abrupt halt to the 1996 expedition, just two days after a new bird was caught, banded and fitted with a transmitter.

Raewyn, together with her husband Terry Smith, joined the Hawke's Bay Region of O.S.N.Z. in 1984. They participated together in most of the regional activities, the surveys of New Zealand Dotterel (*Charadrius obscurus*) in the East Cape to Porangahau area, and ably contributed to four Taiko expeditions. Raewyn's interest in birds extended into paleontology, helping R. Holdaway with his studies of moa nesting sites.

Raewyn is remembered as a very observant and energetic ornithologist, an enthusiastic kindergarten teacher, a keen music lover, a loyal friend and a dedicated homemaker. She was a most devoted wife and mother and a loving grandmother to Max and Jack. She is survived by her husband Terry and their three daughters Christine, Rachel and Angela.