

About avian awareness/avoidance

The Department of Conservation, in partnership with the Bank of New Zealand Kiwi Recovery Trust has developed an avian awareness and avoidance training programme for dogs and their owners. The programme is designed to educate owners of the dangers their dogs can be to ground-dwelling native birds, and to teach the dogs to avoid these birds.

Following an educational talk, database descriptions of the dogs are recorded, along with contact details for their owners.

Dogs are fitted with electric collars and exposed to dead ground-dwelling native birds and faeces in a controlled situation. Whilst sniffing these, the dog is "punished" with a small but surprising electric shock. Most dogs quickly learn to avoid the birds following this experience. The owner is encouraged to reinforce this message when the dog shows interest in other birds, at home or out hunting. Following the training, certificates of attendance are issued.

Within a year of initial training, the dog is tested for its learned avoidance or, if required, the dog is retrained. This testing or training is required annually until the dog consistently demonstrates strong avoidance. When a dog achieves this standard, the dog is certified for periods longer than one year. Currently the cost of avian aversion training is approximately \$25 per dog and includes a behaviour standard assessment.

Nearly 1,000 dogs of all breeds, ages (6 months up) and uses have been successfully trained with this method.

How can I get my dog certified?

Certificates that a dog is Bird Safe will only be accepted from an approved assessor. The DOC officer issuing the permit is required to sight the original certificate (not a copy) before a permit is issued.

For further information on training, having your dog assessed and the costs of training and assessment please contact any of the local DOC offices listed next or see www.doc.govt.nz > regional information > east coast hawkes bay

Where can I get a hunting permit?

Permits to **Hunt** and to **Hunt with Dogs** are obtainable during office hours at any of the DOC offices listed below.

Opotiki Area Office Ph: 07 315 1001
cnr Elliot and St John Streets Fax: 07 315 1011
OPOTIKI opotiki-ao@doc.govt.nz

Gisborne Conservancy Office Ph: 06 869 0460
63 Carnarvon Street Fax: 06 867 8015
GISBORNE
echb-conservancy@doc.govt.nz

Te Araroa Field Centre Ph: 06 864 4823
Hospital Hill Fax: 06 864 4574
TE ARAROA

Wairoa Field Centre Ph: 06 838 8252
272 Marine Parade Fax: 06 838 8597
WAIROA

Aniwaniwa Area Office Ph: 06 837 3803
Te Urewera National Park Fax: 06 837 3722
State Highway 38 urewerainfo@doc.govt.nz
ANIWANIWA

Rangitaiki Area Office Ph: 07 366 1080
State Highway 38 Fax: 07 366 1082
MURUPARA

Hawke's Bay Area Office Ph: 06 834 3111
59 Marine Parade Fax: 06 834 4869
NAPIER napier-ao@doc.govt.nz

Puketitiri Field Centre Ph: 06 839 8814
Hukanui Rd Fax: 06 839 8825
PUKETITIRI

Onga Onga Field Centre Ph: 06 856 6808
Bridge Street Fax: 06 856 6709
ONGA ONGA

For further information about the Department of Conservation visit www.doc.govt.nz

Cover: Staffordshire terrier, Stone, courtesy of Brent Mumu. Photo: H Miller

Hunting Dog Requirements

in the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservancy



How you and your dog can help to save endangered species in conservation areas

The East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservancy, covering the eastern side of the North Island from Opotiki to Woodville, is home to a wide variety of native plants and animals. The area is unique as the one place in the world where North Island brown kiwi, North Island weka and blue duck (whio) can all be seen in the wild.

These, and other native New Zealand species are at risk from introduced animals such as dogs, pigs and deer. Following a spate of kiwi deaths caused by dogs in the 2003-4 hunting season, the Department of Conservation (DOC) introduced a range of requirements to manage dogs taken into public conservation areas



North Island Brown Kiwi mauled by a dog.

Photo: W Sporle

From 1st May 2005, no dogs are permitted in all Scenic Reserves, Conservation or Forest Parks and named Conservation Areas unless owners have obtained a permit from DOC. Permits will not be issued unless a number of conditions (listed below) are met. Permits continue to be required to hunt with dogs in Te Urewera National Park, and contiguous conservation areas. Conditions relating to avian avoidance training (see below) apply to dogs taken into the park.

DOC recognises that dogs are a vital tool in controlling pests such as pigs and deer in conservation areas. The conditions listed below are designed to allow for efficient hunting of pest animals while providing protection for native species.

Native birds at risk

The unique birds of New Zealand that evolved in a land without mammal predators are under threat from introduced efficient hunting animals such as dogs. Endangered species such as North Island brown kiwi, blue duck and North Island weka are just some of the birds at risk from dogs.

Blue Duck (whio)

Whio live on, or close to, rivers and streams. They ground-roost along stream edges. Rivers and streams are often popular routes for human travel, increasing the chances of a duck being disturbed or harmed by a dog working or walking along a riverbank.

Kiwi

Kiwi produce an odour which is highly attractive to dogs. The ground dwelling habits of kiwi add to their vulnerability. Even "good dogs" love the smell of kiwi and will attack them. Dogs are known to be a significant predator of kiwi, and this threat must be managed if kiwi are to survive and flourish in the future. In northern Te Urewera, between January 03 and July 04, of 17 monitored kiwi, 13 were found killed. Evidence indicated that all 13 were killed by dogs.

Weka

Weka are famously feisty and have a curious personality - two qualities that have traditionally made the bird an easy food source for Maori and early European settlers. Weka occupy a range of habitats including forests, sub alpine grassland, sand dunes, rocky shores, and even modified, semi-urban environments. This large, brown flightless bird has no defence against an uncontrolled dog.



Above: North Island Weka pending release into the Whinray Scenic Reserve.

Photo: B Dix



Blue duck family.

Photo: A Reith

Why are dogs required for hunting?

Pigs and deer have significant adverse impacts in conservation areas.

Pigs are destructive. They modify forests and clearings with their feeding habits, eating the seedlings, tubers, berries and roots of a large variety of native plants as well as insects and the eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds.

Deer prevent regeneration of plant species damaging the health and sustainability of native forests.

Recreational hunting is an essential part of the battle to protect our forests from introduced browsing animals such as deer and pigs. Well trained dogs can make recreational pig and deer hunting more effective. However, untrained, unsupervised, wandering dogs kill and disturb native birds. In 1987 a dog roaming Waitangi State Forest in the Bay of Islands, killed hundreds of kiwi in the six weeks before it was caught.



Damage to beech forest by fallow deer.

Dog Owners

In the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservancy, all pig hunters and deer stalkers using a dog require a permit to **Hunt with Dogs** as well as a permit to **Hunt**. Permits to **Hunt with Dogs** will only be issued for hunting deer and pigs when the dog has been assessed by an independent certifier and certified as Bird Safe.

To be certified as Bird Safe, the dog will be required to:

- have successfully attended avian avoidance training, and
- met the minimum behaviour standard, and
- be identifiable (with a tattoo or freeze brand or a local authority microchip).

To meet the minimum behaviour standard, deerstalkers shall demonstrate, at least, the ability to keep the dog within sight and under control of the handler at all times. Pig hunters are required to demonstrate, at least, basic control on the dog such as getting the dog to return to the handler on command and heel.

Dogs will be limited to one per deer stalker and to a maximum of three per pig hunter or per pig hunting party.

All dogs listed on a permit must be registered with a local authority.

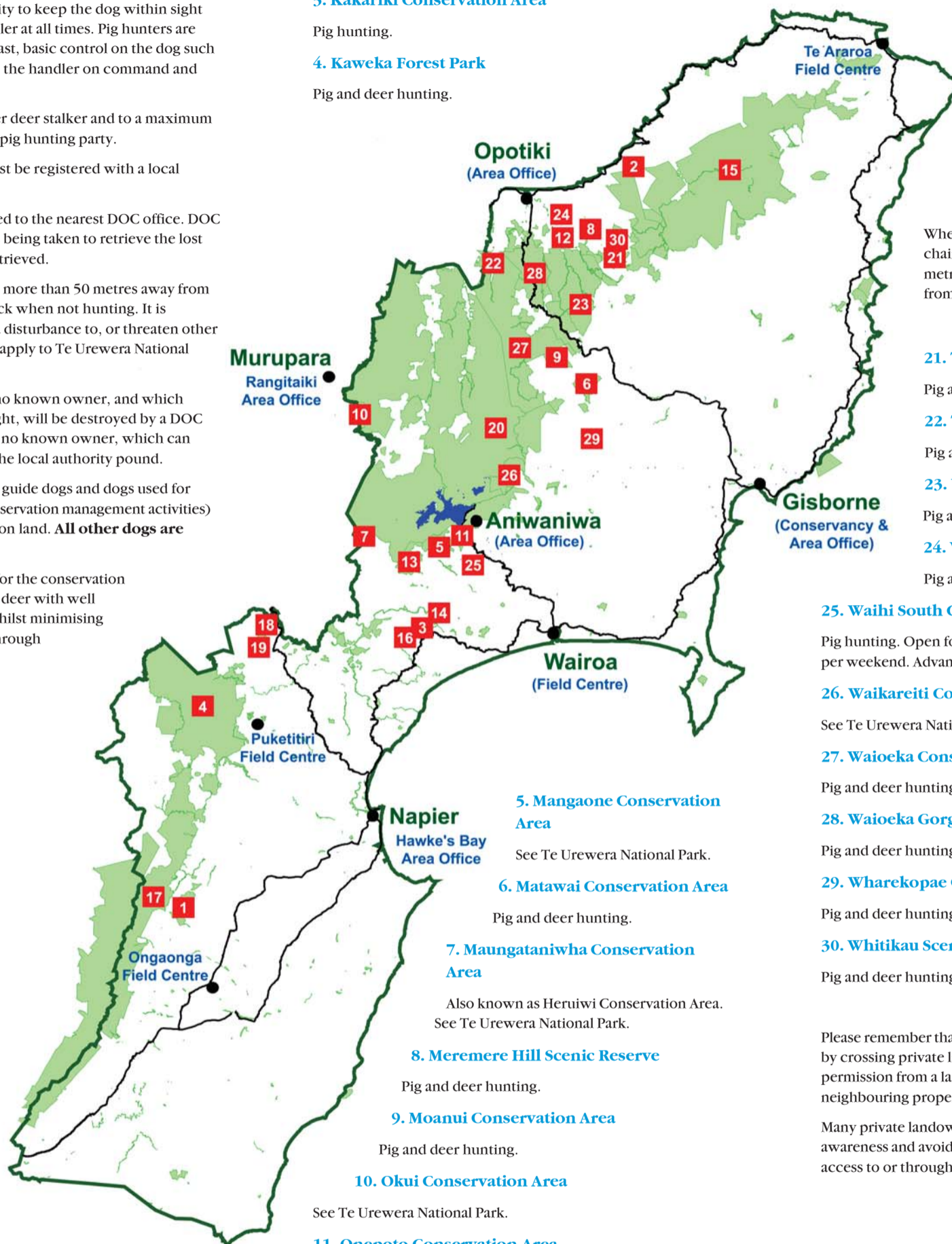
Any lost dogs are to be reported to the nearest DOC office. DOC must be advised about actions being taken to retrieve the lost dog and when lost dogs are retrieved.

Dogs must be securely tied up more than 50 metres away from any hut and 25m from any track when not hunting. It is important dogs do not cause a disturbance to, or threaten other park users. Special conditions apply to Te Urewera National Park.

Any dog found at large, with no known owner, and which will not allow itself to be caught, will be destroyed by a DOC officer. Any dog at large, with no known owner, which can be caught, will be handed to the local authority pound.

Only permitted hunting dogs, guide dogs and dogs used for special services (including conservation management activities) may be taken onto conservation land. **All other dogs are banned.**

These new criteria will allow for the conservation benefits from hunting pig and deer with well trained dogs to be retained, whilst minimising the risk imposed on wildlife through uncontrolled dogs.



Map not to scale.

What areas are open to hunting with dogs?

The following areas in the East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservancy are open for pig hunting and/or deer stalking with certified dogs:

1. Gwavas Conservation Area

Also known as Wakarara. Pig and deer hunting. Open for weekends only and limited to two parties per weekend. Advance booking is required.

2. Hawai Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting. All dogs must be on a lead along the ROW until they are within the scenic reserve.

3. Kakariki Conservation Area

Pig hunting.

4. Kaweka Forest Park

Pig and deer hunting.

18. Stoney Creek Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

19. Tarawera Creek Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

20. Te Urewera National Park and named contiguous scenic reserves and conservation areas

Pig hunting.

The hunting season using dogs is open from 1 May to Friday of Labour weekend. The hunting season using dogs in the Lake Waikaremoana catchment area is open from 1 May to 31 July.

Dogs taken into lake area must be sighted at Aniwanuiwa Visitor Centre when hunting is completed.

The following areas are closed to hunting pigs with dogs for all or part of the year:

- Otamatuna/Mangaone study area in northern Te Urewera,
- Ruakituri Wilderness Area,
- Waikaremoana kiwi recovery area, and the
- catchment of Lake Waikareiti.

When not being used for hunting, dogs must be chained up and at all times must be at least 100 metres from huts or bivouacs and 25 metres from tracks provided for public use.

21. Toatoa Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting.

22. Tukainuka Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting.

23. Urutawa Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

24. Waiaua Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting.

25. Waihi South Conservation Area

Pig hunting. Open for weekends only and limited to one party per weekend. Advance booking is required.

26. Waikareiti Conservation Area

See Te Urewera National Park.

27. Waioeka Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

28. Waioeka Gorge Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting.

29. Wharekopae Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

30. Whitikau Scenic Reserve

Pig and deer hunting.

Please remember that, when accessing public conservation areas by crossing private land, it is the hunters' responsibility to gain permission from a landowner. Please contact a DOC office for neighbouring property contact details.

Many private landowners also require that dogs complete avian awareness and avoidance training before allowing hunters access to or through their land.

PENALTIES FOR DOG ATTACKS ON WILDLIFE

The owner of any dog that attacks any protected wildlife and causes:

- the death of any protected wildlife; or
- such injury to any protected wildlife that it becomes necessary to destroy that animal to terminate its suffering

commits an offence.

On conviction, the owner is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or both.

The Court may, on convicting the owner, make an order for the destruction of the dog.



Hunting dog undergoing kiwi avoidance training

Photo: A Small

See Te Urewera National Park.

11. Onepoto Conservation Area

See Te Urewera National Park.

12. Pakihi Conservation Area

Pig and deer hunting.

13. Panekiri Conservation Area

See Te Urewera National Park.

14. Pihanui Conservation Area

Pig hunting. A maximum of 10 permits are issued per month. Advance booking is required.

15. Raukumara Forest Park

Pig and deer hunting.

16. Rewarewa Conservation Area

Pig hunting.

17. Ruahine Forest Park

Pig and deer hunting.