

Whakaupoko Landcare Five Minute Bird Survey Form Guidelines.

We use the form below which can be rearranged to suit birds common to your area. The 5 minute survey data is an excellent outcome focus to provide simple information around how successful or otherwise pest control programmes are over long periods of time. They provide a positive activity and form of monitoring for communities (rather than just killing things). As well as monitoring they provide much debate and discussion and have excellent learning outcomes for your community.

Set up some 5 minute bird count sites with a focus on recording some key species that are easy to identify and that are sensitive to pests. Tui are excellent. Also kereru bellbirds and robins. Fantails are not so sensitive to pest levels but are easy to identify and record as well. They provide excellent confirmation that with any long term trend lines you are not simply getting better at identifying birds. You can record all bird species if you wish. In line with Landcare Research we use a distance of 100m. As a result when it comes to smaller bird species we tend to combine many of them into a 'small bird' category.

With the sites choose a location where there is a reasonably close view into trees that is not going to become crowded out with any revegetation growth from new plantings.

Recording of other species is an education bonus as the first priority is to have no barriers for entry for people to take part.

Once you are back home we recommend that you record this information on a computer file and graph trend lines for key indicator species over time. If you want a copy of what XL sheets we use then contact either:

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Over time of 5 - 10 years this data provides excellent feedback that is easy to interpret with the graphed results by all members of the community and funding agencies. While it is preferable to have regular bird surveys it is not critical. Graph dating format allows for this. At Whakaupoko Landcare we use 3 surveys /year choosing the 3 school holiday periods outside the Christmas break. Landcare Research use a biannual bird survey in Hamilton as part of the Halo project. What is important is to ideally establish some good baseline data prior to intensifying your pest control programmes. Also to be consistent. Ideally this biodiversity outcome monitoring can have wider application and reflect for example the success or otherwise of regional and even national pest control initiatives.

This is a living document that we are keen to see used in a wide range of environments. We welcome your feedback on how the enclosed can be improved. We want to achieve a form of monitoring that is simple, easy to understand by all, no barriers to entry and that has wide application across all areas of biodiversity that incorporate native birds.

