



# Tiritiri Matangi Kids,

by Stacey

Over a hundred years ago, takahē were thought to be extinct, but hunters and workers on the Milford Road reported seeing them after this time. In 1948, Dr. Geoffrey Orbell found populations in the South Island's Murchison Mountains. There are currently four takahē on Tiritiri Matangi and around 500 nationwide. Enjoy the takahē facts and match the bands with their takahē on the Island.



In 1991, two male takahē called Mr. Blue and Stormy were moved from Maud Island to Tiritiri Matangi. After Ray and Barbara Walter, the first Island Rangers, noticed their nest-building efforts, an egg was brought, also from Maud Island. Mr. Blue and Stormy successfully hatched and raised a chick, Matangi.

We have different traits (genes) that make us special, like curly hair. Animals and plants have traits too. Tiritiri Matangi is part of the programme that moves takahē between sites to ensure that the takahē traits are different. Each takahē has special traits, like some might be really good at finding food, while others might be extra good at taking care of their babies. When they have babies together, those babies can inherit the best traits from both parents. This helps the whole takahē family stay healthy and strong.

Takahē pairs will stay together throughout the year, although they do not always pair for life. Takahē are more protective over their area in the breeding season, which is from October to January. A female takahē can lay one to three eggs a year. After the eggs are laid the parents will sit on the eggs to keep them warm for 30 days. The warmth helps the egg to develop inside.

Takahē chicks have a tough time when they're first born due to other animals wanting to hunt them for food, or they might get sick. Because of these challenges, not all chicks make it through their first few months, and because of this the chicks are not counted in the national population until they are one year old. The chicks stay with their parents for one to two years to help look after and support the next season's chick.

Takahē weigh up to 3.8kgs. They can live for 16-18 years in the wild and 20-22 years in a sanctuary. In the South Island, takahē eat starchy leaf bases of tussock, which is low in nutrients so they need to eat continuously. Takahē poo up to nine metres a day. On the Island, the takahē diet is supplemented with specially developed pellets.



Photos: Jonathan Mower

## Why do we band manu/birds?

It can be tricky to identify manu of the same species. For example, if you were sitting at the sugar feeder on the Island and you saw five hihi visit on Monday, five on Tuesday, and another 10 on Wednesday, how many different hihi visited the sugar feeder in those three days? It could be anywhere between one and 20. Bands allow researchers to identify the manu and observe their behaviour, breeding activities, and movements. Bands are permanent, so they are only used when necessary. Each manu has its own unique four-colour band combination, including a numbered metal band.

## Current takahē bands

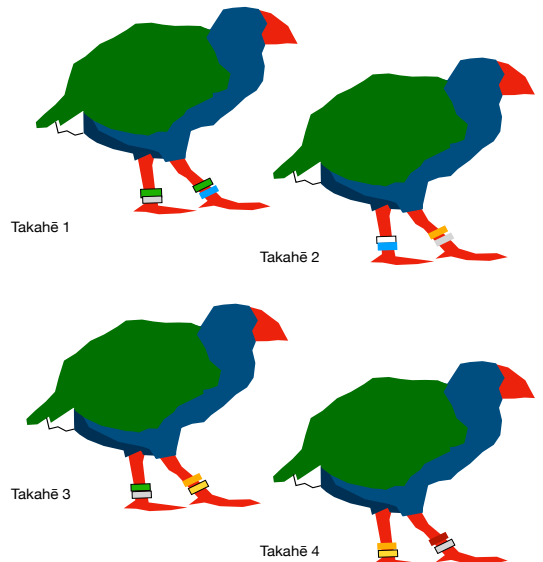
Here is the list of the current takahē and their bands. To read the bands, start with the left leg first, top down.

Northern end of the Island:	Lighthouse pair:
Atawhenua (F) GM - GB	Wakapatu (M) WB-OM
Turutu (M) OY-RM	Anatori (F) GM-OY

(G = green, O = orange, Y = yellow, R = red, W = white, B= blue, M = metal)

Credit: DOC Sounds of Science podcast

Using the table of takahē bands to the left, match the takahē with their names.



Answers: Takahē 1, Atawhenua. Takahē 2, Wakapatu. Takahē 3, Anatori. Takahē 4, Turutu.