

About the kārearea

The kārearea / New Zealand falcon is one of our most spectacular birds. They are the country's only endemic raptor, or bird of prey, and are capable of flying over 100km/h. The bird features on the \$20 note and is displayed on emblems and logos across the country. For Ngai Tahu, kārearea are a taonga species, a treasure of cultural importance.

Māori observed birds carefully, and their actions were often believed to predict the weather. The kārearea's cry was said to foretell the weather, as in the saying:

Ka tangi te kārewarewa ki waenga o te rangi pai, ka ua āpōpō.

Ka tangi ki waenga o te rangi ua, ka paki āpōpō.

When a kārearea screams in fine weather, next day there'll be rain.

When it screams in the rain, next day will be fine.

Māori observed birds carefully, and their actions were often believed to predict the weather. The kārearea's cry was said to foretell the weather, as in the saying:

Ka tangi te kārewarewa ki waenga o te rangi pai, ka ua āpōpō.

Ka tangi ki waenga o te rangi ua, ka paki āpōpō.

When a kārearea screams in fine weather, next day there'll be rain.

When it screams in the rain, next day will be fine.

Kārearea is a rare species of falcon that is only found in New Zealand. There are no more than 4,000 breeding pairs in the wild. Kārearea are strictly territorial, sparsely distributed and slow to reproduce. Ecologists classify the bird as at risk of extinction. Falcon found in other countries are a different species.

While kārearea prefer to live in forests and shrubland distant from people, they do venture into human inhabited areas in search of food, particularly during winter. The many small garden birds, insects and rodents around our farms and homes can be easy pickings for a hungry kārearea.



Australasian
Harrier



Kārearea or
New Zealand Falcon

Spot the difference

Kārearea can be easily mistaken for harriers / hawks.

Kārearea in flight have shorter and more rounded wings than harriers and are most often found flying fast with rapid wing beats or flying low to the ground trying to surprise prey. They have a piercing kek-kek-kek call. They are rarely seen as they perch in trees or on rocky outcrops waiting to ambush prey.

In contrast, harriers / hawks are generally seen with their longer wings held open in a shallow V-shape, slowly quartering the ground in search of food or prey. Harriers / hawks are generally silent, with a simple kee-a call heard during late winter and spring. They are frequently seen as they search for food on the wing.

For more information

Visit www.nzfalconsafe.org.nz to learn more about protecting kārearea / New Zealand falcon.



KāreareaSafe

Keeping Kārearea / New Zealand falcon safe

Aurora Energy and the Department of Conservation are working together to reduce the risk of kārearea / New Zealand falcon being electrocuted when they perch on overhead power equipment. Kārearea are rare and face a range of threats including introduced predators, loss of habitat, illegal shooting and electrocution when landing and taking off from un-insulated power structures. We have formed a conservation partnership to address suspected kārearea electrocutions on overhead power lines in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago areas.

Aurora
ENERGY

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



What's the risk?

When flying around built up areas, kārearea are at risk of electrocution on overhead power equipment. Kārearea frequently like to perch in trees, resting there to watch and wait for their next meal. A kārearea sees power poles as similarly attractive vantage points. Kārearea can perch dangerously close to live components, in the same way they perch amongst greenery. When a bird prepares for flight, their half metre wing span can bridge live electrical equipment and the bird may receive an electric shock.

What is being done?

Aurora Energy and the Department of Conservation are working together to minimise the risk of kārearea electrocutions in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago areas and raise awareness of other risks to this rare and beautiful bird.

To date, we have pinpointed components of overhead electrical equipment, including transformers and lightning arrestors, that could potentially be hazardous to kārearea. Aurora Energy has devised methods to insulate and safeguard their equipment for bird electrocutions – to make them safer for kārearea.

Aurora Energy will build any future overhead installation to the new design standards to reduce the electrocution hazard across the network. We will also share our developing knowledge on kārearea safety with other electricity networks in the hope that other parts of the country can be made safer for kārearea.

Aurora Energy has already retrofitted insulation to four sites in Glenorchy and will identify priority sites to change in the future. The new designs aim to prevent a falcon's wings from bridging live wires and equipment. The poles we have made safe are marked KāreareaSafe.



How can you help?

Kārearea face multiple threats. With your help, we can protect this special bird.

- All public observations of kārearea are helpful to better understand where the species is living and breeding. The www.nzfalconsafe.org.nz website contains links to report any sightings of this rare native bird.
- If you find a kārearea under a power line or overhead transformer, please record an accurate pole location and report it to Department of Conservation who can then inform Aurora Energy of the location for corrective action.
- As with all native birdlife, community predator control helps the kārearea through eliminating introduced rats, stoats and possums.
- If you manage farmland, consider the potential impact on the kārearea's habitat before clearing pockets of native shrubland. These habitats are important for nesting and hunting.
- If you are having difficulty with kārearea defending a nest near your home or public place, or attacking chickens, then please report this to your nearest Department of Conservation office for assistance.
- Please do not attempt to strike or hit the bird. Even a slight injury may hinder its ability to hunt and fend for itself and young. Move away and the birds will stop defending the nest.

Together we can help conserve the kārearea for generations to come.