

Two More Kiwi Chicks Hatch

Rotorua, 12 September, 2011 – Two more kiwi chicks have hatched at Kiwi Encounter, the hatching facility at Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park, with only 8 to go until the 1000th chick arrives.

Friday saw the arrival of another chick from Ponui Island, a sibling to chick number 2. The chick needed some help to get out of its shell, but is steadily gaining strength.

Chick number 4 of the season is from Waimarino and hatched on Saturday morning in front of a very excited tour group.

Kiwi Encounter began the season with only one dozen hatches to go before reaching its 1000th milestone chick as part of the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust programme. Rainbow Springs has created a giant kiwi nest filled with 12 rugby balls to celebrate and each time an egg hatches it is replaced with a toy kiwi signifying the new arrival.

BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ is a powerful tool to reverse the decline of key kiwi populations. Eggs and chicks are harvested from nests to save them from stoats and cats. The young kiwi are returned to the wild when they weight about 1kg, big enough to fight off these predators. More than 1600 kiwi chicks have been returned to the wild since the programme began in 1994, with captive facilities and hundreds of field workers from DOC and community groups throughout the country contributing to its success. The BNZ Operation Nest Egg™ egg harvesting-chick rearing-return to the wild technique was developed for kiwi through research funded solely by BNZ and is now also used in other species recovery programmes.

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