
Disease in kiwi (*Apteryx* spp.)

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Numbers of kiwi in the wild are continuing to decline at an alarming rate. Predation of chicks by mustelids, cats and dogs are primarily responsible for this decline. The hatching of wild eggs in captivity, with subsequent rearing and release of chicks back into the wild is increasingly important in ensuring the survival and continuation of populations of wild kiwi.

However, the marked elevation in density and the high turnover of kiwi in captive situations increases the risk of exposure to infection and subsequent disease. In addition, there are very many kiwi housed in captivity for both display and breeding purposes. The importance of disease is likely to increase as the Kiwi Recovery Plan moves to increase the breeding of captive birds with release of chicks back into the wild, as well as increasing the number of wild-born eggs hatched in captivity.

This paper will review known diseases affecting kiwi both in captivity and in the wild, and will present some preliminary data from a study of coccidia in kiwi.