

An end to the Conflict

Conflict situations don't just impact people – they also impact kea

Kea behaviour can be destructive and annoying. However unlike other countries, conflict with our wildlife is not life threatening to people. It can however be life threatening for kea. Every year a number of kea are found shot, intentionally injured or poisoned as a result of conflict situations. Additionally a number of kea are relocated each year to areas away from people due to threats of destruction by members of the public. Relocation is a last resort considered in exceptional circumstances only when all other options are exhausted.

It is important to remember that many communities throughout the South Island **DO** live **CONFLICT FREE** with kea. It can be done and is generally only a matter of making a few changes in the way that you live and/or protect your property.

Facts about kea

- Kea have lived in your local area for several million years (humans for less than 700 years)
- They are the world's only mountain parrot
- Are considered to be highly intelligent
- Are unique to the South Island of New Zealand
- Are nationally threatened and declining
- Number fewer than 5,000 across 3.5 million hectares
- Are fully protected under the Wildlife Act
- Populations around human areas are potentially sinks (i.e kea attracted by human activity are more likely to die as a result of human induced threats)
- Face at least 9 main identified threats – one of which is on-going persecution because of conflict situations



Photo – Corey Mosen

Why are they so destructive?

- Kea are neophilic – they love exploring anything new. This is an evolutionary response over millions of years to an extreme environment
- They are therefore attracted to human activity and belongings
- Anything that is able to be manipulated (soft and pliable) is of particular interest
- Anything which provides a food reward is of even more interest (ie food inside a styrofoam container or bin)
- There has been some research to suggest that certain colours attract kea, in particular white, yellow and red.

What can you do about it?

- Don't leave anything that can be damaged lying around outside
- If you can't put it away, cover any vulnerable areas with a kea proof cover
- Close all doors and windows when you vacate a premise
- Ensure all rubbish bins are securely closed at all times
- Ensure no one is feeding kea – it only takes one instance to start the cycle again

- Feed pets inside where possible and dispose of any uneaten pet food
- Do not bang on ceilings, yell or throw things at kea as this will only make them more curious
- Use a garden hose to move kea off areas – be accurate so it doesn't become a 'game' to them
- Use deterrents such as bird spikes to keep kea off roof areas

What will we do?

Our Conflicts Response Programme (funded by Department of Conservation CCPF and Cincinnati Zoo) is currently being developed. It will provide the following resources to help communities resolve kea conflict while protecting remnant kea populations:

- A conflicts database – to record kea issues and track the process of resolution
- An advice package for people with conflict issues – to enable people experiencing issues with information on what they can do and who they can contact.
- On the ground support during conflict events – this will involve free on-site assessment and report of the situation, trialling of kea repellent options and kea proofing areas (where practicable and as funding allows), ongoing support until the situation is resolved.

In addition to this the programme will provide us with the ability to:

- Undertake ongoing research into methods of conflict resolution
- Appoint key people within affected communities to be our eyes and ears for kea
- Encourage community lead kea conservation initiatives to resolve conflict in key areas

Please be aware that removing kea from an area is a last resort, **ONLY** considered in extreme circumstances and when all other options are exhausted. It must be performed by authorised persons (as approved by Department of Conservation).

In order to achieve this we need your help!

- Contact us if you have any issues with kea. We can't help if we don't know about it.
- Complete a survey form if you have ever had or are having conflict issues. Information from past situations might help us better understand ways of resolving specific issues or other factors (such as season, weather, human activity) which is encouraging the birds in. This information will form the basis of the conflicts database.
- We need sites where we can trial different kea deterrent options. If you are having regular issues with kea and are happy to be involved in a trial, please contact us.
- Contact us if you are happy to be our eyes and ears in your community. You can alert us to any conflict situations in the community that we may not be aware of or send us details of any human behaviour which may be contributing to situations arising.
- Contact us if you can keep an eye out for kea. People have threatened to kill kea and we need to know if this is likely to occur or has occurred.
- Help us to help you – we are a charity and as such have limited funds available. We do not charge for our time but would appreciate your support of our staff to resolve these situations. Accommodation and a warm welcome would be enormously appreciated!
- And finally, please be tolerant of kea – they were here long before any people arrived in NZ and they have a right to live here too.

Contact Us

- **Andrea Goodman:** The main Kea Conservation Trust (KCT) contact person to report kea issues in the Motueka/Tasman area is Andrea Goodman. Andrea can be contacted by email at goodman.henderson@gmail.com or phoned on 021 0394 214.
- **Kea Conservation Trust:** Tamsin Orr-Walker (KCT, Chair). Tamsin will be dealing with conflict issues in the Queenstown Lakes area. Tamsin can be contacted by email at info@keaconservation.co.nz or phoned on 0274249594.
- **To report kea damage:** A **KEA CONFLICT/DAMAGE FORM** can be completed online on the home page of our website (www.keaconservation.co.nz).
- **Kea proofing ideas:** If you have had problems with kea and found solutions to these issues, please complete a kea proofing form on our website (<http://www.keaconservation.co.nz/support-kea/kea-proofing/>). This will help others experiencing the same issues. Thank you!