

MENZSHED NEWSLETTER INFORMATION EXTRA

NEST MONITORING PROTOCOL¹

OBJECTIVES

- Locate active nests
- Establish incubation
- Establish age of chicks for taking blood
- Test chicks for metabolic bone disease and lead levels
- Establish time of fledging
- Monitor final success of nests

You are in a unique position to witness kākā chicks growing up. We want to reduce the number of people accessing these nest boxes so please don't share the location. Disturbance and human scent trails can disturb the adults and attract predators.

KĀKĀ BREEDING BEHAVIOUR

Egg laying:

- Kākā lay 4-5 eggs, rarely more.
- Usually the first 3 eggs are laid 2 days apart (days 1, 3, and 5) and incubation by the female begins when the third egg is laid.



Incubation:

- The remaining eggs will be laid 2-3 days apart.
- The females incubate the eggs for 45-60 minutes before leaving to feed, often in response to the arrival of the male.
- The incubating female will be fed by the male.
- She may also forage away from the nest, leaving the eggs for 5 to 15 minutes.

¹ Based on Zealandia kaka monitoring protocols written by Raewyn Empson and Judi Lapsley Miller

Chicks hatch:

- The first 3 eggs usually hatch about 24 days after incubation begins.
- The younger eggs hatch after they too have been incubated about 24 days.
- If all 5 eggs hatch, the youngest will hatch at least 4 days later than the oldest chicks and be smaller.
- Photo on right is a 5 day old chick.



Growing chicks:

- As the chicks grow the female will spend increasing time away from the nest to forage for food.
- Only the female enters the nest to feed the chicks – her mate will continue to feed her.
- The chicks will have bloods taken at approximately 40-45 days age, and fledge at ~60 days.
- Photo is of chicks 37-40 days age.

