

NZ Game Animal Council Media Statement

30 October 2019



Game Animal Council
NEW ZEALAND

Hunters backing the kārearea for bird of the year

The kārearea or NZ falcon has been chosen by hunters and supporters of the Game Animal Council as the hunter's choice for this year's bird of the year competition.

The kārearea is our most threatened bird of prey with only around 5,000 thought to remain.

"Hunters have a natural affinity with the NZ falcon, which is New Zealand's native apex hunter," says Game Animal Council Chair Don Hammond. "It's also one of our native species that probably doesn't get the recognition it deserves."

Having handily accounted for the kea, whio and kiwi in polls conducted on the Game Animal Council's Facebook page, the kārearea has the support of New Zealand hunting community. However, it is not all over for the other three birds with STV style voting meaning that hunters can vote for all four if they wish.

"Hunting organisations like the Sika Foundation, the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation and the NZ Deerstalkers Association are heavily involved in conservation projects including kea monitoring, whio recovery and pest control operations to protect both kiwi and whio," says Hammond.

"At the end of the day the greatest conservation resource we have are the thousands of hunters and other recreationists who are out in the hills each weekend," says Hammond. "They are the eyes and ears of New Zealand's conservation movement and it is important that they are supported to contribute to native species preservation."

As well as giving it their vote, hunters are encouraged to report sightings of kārearea to either the Wingspan National Bird of Prey Centre (www.wingspan.co.nz) or at www.nzfalcon.org.nz.

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.

Contact:

Don Hammond, Chair

Phone 0274885940
don.hammond@nzgac.org.nz