

Have you got a peacock problem?



Peafowl that have been released into the wild have become feral and, in some instances, have developed into large populations.

While these birds aren't part of Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Plan 2020 2030 (RPMP), when in large numbers peafowl can become a nuisance and cause economic and environmental issues – particularly on rural properties.



About peafowl

FAST FACTS

- Introduced into New Zealand in 1840s.
- Prefer habitat that is rough hill-country and river valleys with good cover, particularly near farmland.
- Male peafowl (peacocks) can weigh up to 4.5kg (peahens can get up to 3.5kg).

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- Feral peafowl are known to forage on farmland, damaging crops and eating animal feed.
- They can interfere with hay bales and have been known to unpick baling twine.
- Seeds and seedlings may be dug up as peafowl scratch and search for invertebrates to eat.
- With few natural predators and no control, peafowl can multiply 10-fold in a year (they can have four to six chicks at a time).
- It has been speculated that due to their diet of seeds, crops and shoots, peafowl can increase the dispersal of pest plant seeds through their faeces.

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDED CONTROL METHODS?

Bay of Plenty Regional Council does not enforce the control of these species – it is landowner/occupier responsibility.

Peafowl are listed on **Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act 1953** (Further information is available on doc.govt.nz and legislation.govt.nz). This means that landowners may carry out lethal control of feral peafowl on their property.

Shooting is recommended as the most effective and humane method of control. You can either undertake this yourself (provided you have a valid firearms licence and adhere to all acts and laws), or engage the services of a professional contractor.



REFERENCES

Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research
landcareresearch.co.nz

New Zealand Birds Online
nzbirdsonline.org.nz

Know your nuisance birds



In New Zealand, there are a number of bird species that can become a nuisance when they start to build up in numbers in the wild.

This can be for various reasons, including:

- The species is particularly territorial, making them aggressive towards other bird species, including natives.
- They can often breed in large numbers, meaning their populations grow quickly.
- Their diet often consists of seeds, plants, flowers, invertebrates and grains. Because of this, they will often dig up crops, pull out plants and saplings, and eat animal feed on rural properties.

While these bird species aren't part of Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Plan 2020–2030 (RPMP), which means we don't enforce the control of these species, it is important to be aware of your rights under the Wildlife Act 1953 when it comes to controlling these species on your land.



Canada goose



Magpie



Spur-winged plover



Rock pigeon



Pukeko



Turkey

What can be controlled?

WILDLIFE THAT IS DECLARED AS 'GAME' UNDER THE ACT (SCHEDULE 1).

What this means: These species are protected, but may be hunted, during the hunting seasons by people holding a game bird licence (subject to a notice developed by the Fish & Game council).

Includes:

- Pukeko
- Black swans.

WILDLIFE THAT IS NOT PROTECTED UNDER THE ACT (SCHEDULE 5).

What this means: These species can be controlled on private land without requiring a gamebird license (hunting on land administered by Department of Conservation requires a permit – please discuss this directly with Department of Conservation).

Includes:

- Rock pigeons
- Magpies
- Turkeys
- Peafowl
- Domestic geese
- Canada geese
- Spur-winged plovers.

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDED CONTROL METHODS?

Shooting is recommended as the most effective and humane method of control. You can either undertake this yourself (provided you have a valid firearms licence and adhere to all acts and laws), or engage the services of a professional contractor.

Larsen traps are particularly effective for controlling magpies. A person who, for the purpose of capturing alive a mammal, bird, reptile, or amphibian, sets a trap or causes a trap to be set must inspect the trap, or cause a competent person to inspect that trap, within 12 hours after sunrise on each day the trap remains set, beginning on the day immediately after the day on which the trap is set.

Further information is available on doc.govt.nz, fishandgame.org.nz and legislation.govt.nz