

# KĀKĀ COMFORT

ALL THE ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR A COMFORTABLE KĀKĀ ENCLOSURE

## WATER AND FOOD

Kākā in captivity will need their food and water provided during their stay. They need a balanced diet of fruit, water, nectar/sugar-water, and plants such as coprosma or karaka to browse on. There are specialised kākā food pellets available as well. Daily fresh water is essential. Running water is best.

## TOYS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Kākā are very curious and intelligent. They need to be able to explore and play in order to be happy. Adding toys or new items for them to discover and play with helps make their environment enriching while they are in captivity. All permanent structures need to be very sturdy as kākā can easily

## ENOUGH ROOM

Kākā are good fliers and need room in their enclosure to exercise their wings. Clear flight paths between perches is a must. They are also very social creatures and naturally live in flocks, so having a large enough enclosure to house many kākā is a good idea, as well as multiple enclosures to separate kākā if social dynamics get tense.



## A PREDATOR-PROOF CAGE OR FENCE

Kākā chicks and nests are especially vulnerable to predators, so if they are to be kept in captivity they absolutely must be protected from any predators that might invade.

Use a strong cage with holes that stoats or possums cannot get through, and if using a fence, make sure it is high enough and covered with a rounded lip so that pests cannot climb over into the enclosure.

Double doors mean keepers can come and go without letting anything else in or out.

## SUITABLE TREES AND GROUND

Kākā are “arboreal”, meaning they spend most of their time in trees. Their toes and beaks are used for climbing and swinging, so for kākā to be comfortable they must have tree branches to spend their time in. They also like to strip the bark with their beaks, looking for grubs and sap. A variety of substances on the ground, such as woodchips, gravel, and soil mimics the forest floor and encourages insects which kākā love to forage for as well.

## NESTING PLACES

Kākā breeding in captivity is one of the ways to make sure their chicks are safe from predators. They need nesting boxes that mimic their usual nesting places of hollow tree-trunks. If keepers are monitoring chicks then it is good for these to be accessible in a way that doesn't disturb the birds too much.

## BOTH SHELTER AND OPEN AIR

Because kākā have less freedom to roam when in captivity, they need enough shelter from sun or wind or rain to be provided for them. They are adapted to living in the open air, so having large open-air spaces is important, too.

# HOW CAN WE HELP?

WAYS TO SUPPORT KĀKĀ AND OTHER NATIVE BIRDS

## SUPPORT OROKONUI

Dunedin's ecosanctuary is three square kilometres of predator- and pest-free forest habitat for our native birds, surrounded by a 9km-long predator-proof

fence. It provides a haven for birds such as kākā to live and breed without the danger of predation, and provides the right plants for food and nesting.



orokonui  
ecosanctuary

## CONTRIBUTE TO THE HALO PROJECT

The Halo Project is an effort to make the land surrounding Orokonui safe for native birds to venture into. You can contribute by:

- Using pet-safe traps to get rid of pests such as possums, rats, weasels and stoats in your garden.
- Keeping pet cats indoors at night so they have less chance to hunt birds.
- Keeping dogs on a leash around potential nesting places
- Creating good habitat for native birds and animals by planting lots of diverse plant species, especially those that kākā use for food or nesting.
- If you find a native bird nest, install a metal band around the tree trunk to prevent climbing predators from getting to the nest.



## IF YOU SEE A KĀKĀ

You can put out food for it (fruit, sugar-water or seeds, but **not bread**). Make sure its nest is safe from predators if you find it by putting a stoat trap at the base of the tree, or a metal band around the trunk. Quietly observe the kākā.

Record it on iNaturalist at: <https://inaturalist.nz/projects/find-the-kaka>, or

email [kaka.haloproject@gmail.com](mailto:kaka.haloproject@gmail.com) to let The Halo Project know about it.

