

# Case Study

Cardrona Action Group is predominantly made up of farmers however also includes the Cardrona Distillery and Cardrona Alpine Resort. The catchment borders development around the Cardrona township and outskirts of Wanaka giving it a significant peri-urban connection. The upper catchment is dominated by sheep and beef farming, while deer are farmed in the lower catchment.

“The kārearea is New Zealand’s only native falcon species and is a taonga (treasure) within our environment. Also known as Sparrowhawks in some areas, the species is our most threatened bird of prey, with threats such as predation by introduced mammalian predators, loss of habitat and wide-ranging human impact. The totemic presence of kārearea in the Maunga of Te Waipounamu (mountains of the South Island) is of vital importance to our ecological, cultural and societal health.

There is a significant knowledge gap in our scientific understanding of kārearea in the alpine environment which inhibits conservation management. Simply put, we need to collect more data about the kārearea in order to understand how best to protect it. The magnificent Cardrona Valley has a small population of kārearea and presents an opportunity to develop a science-based conservation approach in tussock grassland mountain ecosystems.” - *The Cardrona Foundation*



PHOTO: CHIFUYU HORIKOSHI

## NAME OF PROJECT

Cardrona Kārearea Conservation Project

## LOCATION

Cardrona Catchment

## CATCHMENT SIZE

Cardrona River has a total catchment area of 337km<sup>2</sup>

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study is to inform conservation management of NZ falcon in the Cardrona Valley and adjacent conservation land in the greater South Island area. Some population demographic parameters – statistics of population health – are critical to the conservation management of any species. Vital parameters not known for falcons in the mountainous Central Otago area are:

- > Population size (number of breeding pairs)
- > Territory size
- > Population trends (stable, increasing or decreasing)
- > Breeding success (productivity)
- > Survival rates of adults and juveniles
- > Methods to mitigate breeding failure or adult / chick mortality based on site-specific information

## ACTION GROUP ROLE

Gaining the trust and collaboration of the local farmers has been tremendously important in the creation of the project and has been a key goal for the first couple of years of the project. Farmers in particular have years of observations that provide invaluable insight into kārearea in the Cardrona Valley. The project is reliant on the good will of these leaseholders/landowners to permit access onto their land so that we may carry out field work. We began by working with our immediate neighbours to Cardrona resort and quickly grew. Farmers are included in regular updates, and invited to assist with the ‘hands on’ side of the projects.

## PROJECT LEAD

Cardrona Alpine Resort

 TAKE ACTION - REPORT YOUR KĀREAREA SIGHTING