

5.26 Rooks (*Corvus frugilegus*)

Why are they a threat?

Rooks are large, black birds with a violet-blue glossy sheen that originate from Europe. They will forage on fields of cereal at all stages of the crop and will tear up large areas of pasture in search of grass grub and other invertebrates. Rookeries (nests) are generally built in pine or eucalyptus trees, although they have been found in poplar and walnut trees. When established, rookeries may approach several hundred birds.



Historically, there were rookeries present in Marlborough. Through active management over the last few decades, these are no longer present. From time to time, vagrant birds appear

Objective

Over the duration of the RPMP, prevent the establishment of rooks (*Corvus frugilegus*) in the Marlborough district to prevent future impacts on economic wellbeing.

Intermediate Outcome:

Exclusion	Eradication	Progressive Containment	Sustained Control	Site-led
-----------	-------------	-------------------------	-------------------	----------

Principle measures to achieve the objective

1) Council Inspection and Service Delivery

Inspection by Council may include staff or contractors:

- a) Delivering a service to respond and investigate sightings of rooks in Marlborough.
- b) Delivering a service to control rooks if required, in liaison with the occupier.
- c) Visiting properties or doing surveys to determine whether pests are present.
- d) Monitoring effectiveness of control.
- e) Carry out control using administrative powers of the Biosecurity Act 1993, if necessary.

2) Requirement to Act

Land owners and/or occupiers or other persons may be required to act where rules or statutory obligations dictate the presence of pests is to be reported.

3) Advocacy and Education

Council may:

- a) Encourage land owners and/or occupiers and other persons to report any pests they find.
- b) Facilitate or commission research.

Rules

Rule 5.26.2.1

Any person is required to notify Council of any suspected rook (*Corvus frugilegus*) within 5 working days of making the initial observation. A breach of this rule will create an offence under section 154N(19) of the Biosecurity Act.

Explanation of the rule:

The purpose of this rule is in accordance with section 73(5)(a) is for the entire community to assist Council with surveillance. Requiring people to notify Council of sightings, in addition to Council's own surveillance, will assist Council in achieving the objective of the programme. This will mean birds new to the district can be found quickly with control plans put in place if they are persisting in an area.

Notifying the Council of the presence of the specified pest will enable the Council to:

- Update its records.
- Map new sites of this pest.
- Carry out control work before they spread.
- Determine whether new control regimes should be considered.
- Provide advice and information to occupiers where appropriate.

Council as the management agency will administer the rule.