

New Zealand Bird Notes

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KIWI ON KAPITI ISLAND.—When we went to Kapiti at the end of November, 1924, it was only in the higher and damper parts of the Rangatira and Te Rere country, as well as the Kaiwharawhara Basin, that the kiwi could be heard. Kaiwharawhara is about three miles from where we lived and from where they were heard at Rangatira and Te Rere would be a mile or more from our cottage. When we left in 1942, kiwi could be heard calling at night all round the house. The extermination of the browsing animals has allowed the undergrowth—fern, mosses, etc., to re-grow and these keep the ground damp and thus provide suitable feeding places for the kiwi. The planting of many thousands of trees has turned into young forests certain areas which in 1924 were grass-clad and overrun with sheep and goats. Even in these new plantations feathers of the kiwi were picked up. On Kapiti there is a small sedge growing pretty well all over it. This plant (*Uncinia riparia*) Matau-a-maui (the fish-hook of Maui), which every visitor to Kapiti knows only too well, bears seeds which attach themselves to every passing animal, and thus the plant is spread. The hooks are strong enough to catch and hold birds. The following have been found caught up in its folds: Morepork, tui, fantail, tomtit, parrakeet, and the long-tailed cuckoo. We have found the feathers of both *Apteryx mantelli* and *A. oweni* caught in this grass-like sedge. There is no doubt about the success of the introduction of kiwi to the island. The seeds, which appear to be sought after by parrakeets, often prove to be death-traps when once a bird gets properly enmeshed. We have sometimes picked up parrakeets with most of the feathers pulled out.—A. S. Wilkinson, Levin.