

Some Dunedin Bellbird flowers

The Bellbird (*Anthornis melanura*) is common in the Dunedin Botanic Gardens. From July 1983 to July 1985, when visiting the Gardens, I made a note of the flowers at which I saw Bellbirds feeding. They are listed below, together with the number of days on which they were recorded and the months.

New Zealand native plants

Fuchsia excorticata 37, May-Dec; *Metrosideros* spp. 13, Nov-Feb; *Phormium* spp. 9, Nov-Jan; *Pittosporum umbellatum* 4, Jul-Aug; *Pseudopanax* spp. 20, Jun-Sep; *Sophora* spp. 28, May-Oct; *Vitex lucens* 10, Apr-Aug

Exotic plants

Albizia lophantha 14, Apr-Aug; *Arbutus unedo* 18, Mar-Aug; *Arctostaphylos manzanita* 3, Jul-Aug; *Banksia* spp. 48, Feb-Oct; *Bomarea caldasii* 4, Apr-Jun; *Callistemon* spp. 10, Dec-Feb & May; *Camellia x williamsii* 4, Jul-Aug; *Chiranthodendron pentadactylon* 13, Nov-Mar & Jul; *Colquhounia coccinea* var. *mollis* 2, Mar; *Correa* spp. 5, Jun-Sep; *Crinodendron hookerianum* 4, Dec-Jan; *Cytisus proliferus* 1, Jun; *Erica* 'Wilmorei' 3, Jun-Jul; *Eucalyptus* spp. 41, Apr-Feb. *Fuchsia* 4, Mar & May; *Grevillea* spp. 21, Dec-Oct; *Hymenosporum flavum* 1, May; *Kniphofia* 8, Jan-Feb; *Lapageria rosea* 3, Apr-May; *Mahonia* spp. 7, Apr-Jun & Aug; *Melaleuca* spp. 17, Jan-Jun; *Protea* spp. 13, Jan-Jun; *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis' 5, Jun-Jul; *Rhododendron* 10, Jun-Aug; *Ribes sanguineum* 5, Aug-Sep; *Styrax japonica* 1, Mar; *Syzygium paniculatum* 1, Apr

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A Kakapo at the Paringa River in 1965

Mr Chris Stephen of Warkworth, in the course of recent conversation about birds, mentioned to me that he and his brother John had seen a Kakapo in mid-August 1965 in the Paringa River valley, South Westland, some 10 miles upstream of the main road bridge. Until our conversation neither Chris Stephen nor his brother had fully realised the significance of such an observation. The brothers have since told me more. At the time they were camped on the true left bank some 30 metres from the river. Just after dawn they saw a large parrot quietly perched on a low moss-covered mound within 20 metres of their tent. The bird was light greenish-yellow and estimated to be 18-24 inches tall. The brothers moved on without approaching the bird more closely for fear of frightening it away.

The Stephen brothers have spent much time in the New Zealand back country and are familiar with the bird life around them. They well know Kakas and Keas. Both are certain that the parrot they saw in the Paringa 20 years ago was indeed a Kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*).

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