

The kiwi's eye sockets are not separated by a plate as most birds are. Instead, they are divided by large nasal cavities – just like most mammals.

In 1987 a single feral dog killed at least 500 kiwi in a North Island forest.

Female kiwi have two functional ovaries, unlike other birds... and more like a mammal.

Kiwi are burrowers and birds can have as many as 50 such burrows dotted across their territory.

Like many birds, when a kiwi sleeps it often turns its head back against its body and tucks its head under its wing, a posture can make the kiwi look slightly ridiculous – its 20-centimetre beak does not easily tuck under the tiny crooked stump of its vestigial wing!

Traditionally only Maori chiefs were allowed to eat kiwi meat and wear the soft kahukiwi (kiwi feather cloaks), and special chants and rituals took place before a kiwi hunt began.

Only 10 per cent of kiwi chicks survive to six months of age, and less than five per cent survive to adulthood.

S.E.A. School - An ocean of learning!

P.O. Box 5130
Papanui
Christchurch
New Zealand

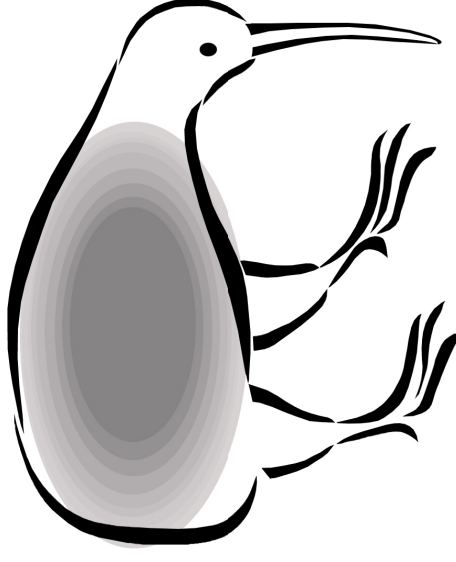
Telephone: (03) 377 3474
Fax: (03) 377 9196
Email: educ@southernencounter.co.nz

www.southernencounter.co.nz

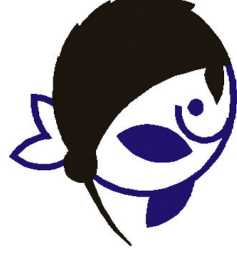
Did 1

you

know?



Kiwi



AQUARIUM & KIW HOUSE

Although the birds themselves are about the same size, a kiwi's egg is approximately six times the size of a chicken egg.

According to recent DNA studies, the kiwi's closest relative is the Australian emu, NOT the moa as once thought.

There were once ten species of moa, now all extinct, which ranged from one metre in height to over three metres.

On Stewart Island kiwi live in extended family groups but elsewhere in New Zealand they live alone or in pairs.

Kiwi's blood temperature is much lower than most other birds which range from 39°C - 42°C. The kiwi is more like a mammal, with a temperature between 37°C and 38°C.

Once a kiwi has been tricked into capture with tapes or whistles, it is hard to fool a second time – a kiwi 'remembers' its bad experience for at least five years!

A kiwi maintains a territory that may be the size of 60 football fields and it can cover this territory in a single night.

Kiwi are only found in New Zealand.

The first species of kiwi (the Southern Brown Kiwi) was discovered in 1811, and the last (the Great Spotted Kiwi) in 1871.

Kiwi eggs take three months to hatch, but the chicks are independent within three weeks.

The female kiwi is up to 25% larger than the male, and has a longer bill.

Kiwi have whiskers almost like those of a cat.

Most birds have interlocking barbs on their feathers so that they retain their shape but kiwi feathers lack these, making the kiwi look like it is covered in fur.

A kiwi once kept in the Chicago Zoo and provided with a worm dispensing machine, stuffed the sensor hole with leaves so that the machine coughed out an endless supply of worms.

Because it does not fly, its bones do not have to be super light. So, instead of air sacs, the kiwi's bones contain marrow.

A kiwi egg is 20%-26% of the female birds bodyweight—that's like a woman giving birth to a 15kg baby!

Kiwi are the only birds in which the nostrils are at the tip of the bill and one of the few birds with a good sense of smell.

There are only 150 to 200 Okarito Brown Kiwi left in the entire world.

Kiwi can live to be 40 years old.

19th century scientist Sir Richard Owen published an important paper of the kiwi heart – but he had accidentally used the heart of a platypus for his model!

Kiwi eggs are 60%-65% yolk. Those of other birds with well developed young (such as chickens or ducks) are about 30% yolk, while those with poorly developed young (such as sparrows) are about 20% yolk.

A kiwi's wings are about the size of a bent matchstick.

Jake the Peg was a three legged Great Spotted Kiwi found in a drain on the West Coast in the 1980's. Because of his disability he was kept in captivity.