

New Zealand Birds

by Bronwen Wall



Shared reading

Shared reading provides students with opportunities to behave like readers and to engage in rich conversations about texts that they are initially not able to read for themselves. It encourages enthusiasm for and enjoyment of reading, builds knowledge, strengthens comprehension, and fosters understanding of the features of a wide range of texts (including narrative, poetry, and non-fiction).

Shared reading involves multiple readings of a text, led by the teacher, with increasing interaction and participation by students. After many shared reading sessions, students become able to read, with increasing independence, the small books that accompany the big books.

Overview

This report describes the characteristics of some endemic New Zealand birds (birds that are found only in New Zealand). As well as reading this book for interest or to support specific curriculum topics, you can use it to build students' awareness of the features of non-fiction texts.

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at readytoread.tki.org.nz (This audio includes the calls of the birds.)

Cross-curriculum links

Science (Living World) – levels 1 and 2 – Life processes: recognise that all living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive. Ecology: Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat. Evolution: Recognise that there are lots of different living things in the world and that they can be grouped in different ways.

For further information about the science content in this book, see Building Science Concepts Book 3: *Birds – Structure, Function, and Adaptation* and scienceonline.tki.org.nz/What-do-my-students-need-to-learn

Related texts

- Non-fiction texts: *Camouflage* (shared); *Duckling Palace* (Purple 2); *Blue Eggs* (Gold 1); “Our Treasure Island” (JJ 37); “Catching Mustelids” (JJ 43); “Haast’s Eagle” (JJ 51)
- Stories and poems: *Fantail, Fantail* (shared); *A Bird in the Classroom, Feeding the Birds* (Yellow 2); *Purr-fect* (Yellow 3); *I Want to Fly* (Blue 2); *The Hissing Bush* (Blue 3); *Did You Shake Your Tail Feathers?* (Purple 2); “Hoiho” (JJ 43); “Tūi Returning to the City” (JJ 46); “Ring Ring”, “Tūi” (JJ 49); “Kāhu and Hōkioi” (JJ 51)

Text characteristics

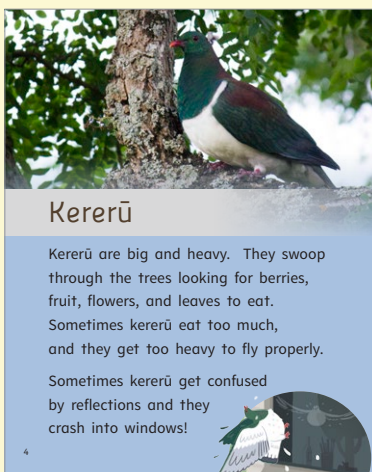
Unlike guided texts, shared reading texts are not levelled and may be used with a wide range of students. Many of the text characteristics of *New Zealand Birds*, as described here, are similar to but more complex than those in texts for guided reading.

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make connections between ideas

Some information that may be outside the students' prior knowledge but can easily be related to it

The structure of the text as a report, with an introduction, a series of main points, and a conclusion

The Māori names for the New Zealand birds, the use of macrons to support pronunciation, and the convention of using the same word for singular and plural



Visual language features (a contents page, headings, photographs, captions, text boxes, illustrations, and bold print for key vocabulary)

Some new topic vocabulary (for example, “endemic”, “balance”, “claws”, “prey”, “parrots”, “beaks”, “kōwhai trees”, “Adult tūi”, “tuft”, “throat”, “owls”, “nocturnal”, “crickets”, “nostrils”, “tussock grass”, “stoats”, “endangered”), the meanings of which are supported by the context, the sentence structure, visual language features, and/or by explanations

Some features of the language of non-fiction:

- the use of the simple present tense
- precise descriptive language (for example, “small”, “quickly”, “swoop”, “bigger than”, “mostly”, “as fast as”, “point forwards”, “clever and curious”, “fly silently”, “dangerous”, “not many”), including noun phrases (for example, “long tail feathers”, “fierce hunters”, “powerful claws”, “a big nuisance”, “a tuft of white feathers”, “strong red beaks”)
- the use of words such as “also”, “but”, “because”, “like”, “This”, and “too” to link ideas within sentences

Reading purposes and learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

Select from and adapt the suggestions in this teacher support material according to your students’ strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8, Knowledge of the Learner, page 6*).

Each reading purpose is accompanied by learning goals. The learning goals are the sorts of behaviours that you want your students to demonstrate after multiple readings of this text.

Often the first reading of a shared text will be with the whole class. The focus is on making meaning. The teacher leads the reading, and the students join in as they feel confident, allowing them to focus on responding to the content and thinking about the topic or main idea. A focus on building deeper understanding of the topic and exploration of word and text features can be left for subsequent readings.

A suggested purpose for the initial reading

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

To find out about New Zealand birds

Possible learning goals

During the first reading, the students can:

- **make connections** to their prior knowledge
- **identify** some facts about New Zealand birds
- **ask questions**
- **notice** some ways the text and visual language features work together to help the reader.

Introducing the text

To provide support for English language learners, spend some time exploring the photographs and introduce some topic vocabulary before you read the book with the wider group.

- Read the title and discuss the photo of the tūi on the cover. *What bird is this?* Some students may also be able to identify the birds in the smaller photos. *What other New Zealand birds do you know?* Confirm this is a non-fiction text.
- Turn to the contents page and discuss its purpose. Draw attention to the photos beside the headings, then read the names of the birds, encouraging the students to join in if they know them.

- Encourage the students to share what they know about any of the birds and any questions they have. You could record their questions or start a K, W, L chart to record what they know (K) and what they want to find out (W).
- Share the purpose for reading.

Reading and discussing the text

- Adapt the following suggestions according to your students’ interests and prior knowledge. Some of the ideas in this book are likely to be new and of great interest. Allow plenty of time for discussion in order to help them explore new information and to ask questions. You may choose to spread the first reading over more than one session.
- Use a pointer to help the students track the print as you read. On the contents page, reread the first heading and point out the associated page number before turning to page 2.
- Page 2 – Use intonation to clarify that “endemic” birds are different from birds that are also found in other countries. Read the text box and the names of the birds, encouraging the students to join in with the names of any birds they recognise. They may notice that these are the same birds as on the contents page.
- Page 3 – Read the heading, prompting students to notice that, like page 2, it is the same as the heading on the contents page. (Please note, some students may know other names for pīwakawaka, such as “tīwakawaka”, “tīrairaka” and “pīrairaka”.) You may need to explain that this page is about *all* pīwakawaka, not just one. Also, point out that there is no “s” at the end of words in te reo Māori. Encourage the students to explore the detail in the photograph and to answer the question in the text box.
- Pages 4–11 – As you read about each bird, allow time for the students to take in and discuss new information. Use intonation and ask questions to draw attention to words that link some of the ideas. For example:
 - pages 3 and 4 – Pīwakawaka are small ..., Kererū are big and heavy.
 - page 8 – Tūi are clever birds, too.
 - page 10 – Kiwi are nocturnal, like ruru
- Encourage students to notice any answers to their questions and to share any new questions or interesting discoveries.
- Page 12 – After reading this page, encourage the students to identify birds that fit the categories listed.

- Remind the students of the reading purpose. Before discussing the book as a group or recording any answers to their questions, give the students an opportunity to clarify their thinking. Ask them to share with a partner an answer to a question they had or something new and interesting they have found out.

Suggested purposes for subsequent readings

You can return to this text many times with a different purpose. Subsequent readings of the big book may be with a group of students who have similar learning needs rather than with the whole class. **Select from and adapt** the following suggestions.

Suggested reading purpose

To find out more about the birds in this book

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- summarise** the main points about a particular bird (or birds)
- ask questions** about aspects they would like to know more about and look for answers in the book (or elsewhere)
- make connections** between ideas (for example, notice similarities and differences about birds).

Choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- The students could choose a bird to read about. Support them to find the relevant page, using the contents. Remind them about the photos on the contents page that help with the birds' names. After reading the relevant page/s, model how to summarise the main points, using information in the photos, illustrations, and text boxes as well as in the body text. To provide a framework for the students' thinking, ask: *What is this page telling us about the bird?* Repeat the activity, focusing on a different bird. You could record the information in a chart like the one shown in the next column.

Information about New Zealand birds			
	pīwakawaka	kererū	kārearea
What they look like	- small - long tail feathers that look like a fan	- big and heavy - green and white with a red beak	- mostly brown, stripy wings - powerful claws
How they move	- fly - use their tails to balance and turn quickly	- swoop through the trees	- can fly as fast as a car
What they eat		- berries, fruit, flowers, and leaves	- birds, lizards, big insects like grasshoppers, small animals like rabbits
How they behave (what they do)	- spread their tail feathers into a fan	- sometimes get too heavy to fly properly - might crash into windows	- hunt prey
Other interesting facts	- also called fantail		

- You can use a summary chart such as the one above as a reference for several further activities. For example:
 - to identify similarities and differences between birds
 - to identify birds that fit the categories listed on page 12
 - to identify gaps in the information that they would like to explore, for example, which bird is the biggest, what pīwakawaka eat, whether any of the other birds are endangered. Support them to find answers to their questions in the book, or elsewhere, for example, in the school library or at forestandbird.org.nz
 - as a framework for shared writing about one of the birds (or a different bird) for creating riddles, as described below
- The students could create riddles for classmates to solve. Together, brainstorm what they know about one bird (for example, kiwi), referring to the summary chart and/or the book. Model the process of creating the clues. (You can use the singular form "it", as shown here, or plural form "They" to refer to the bird.)

It has brown feathers.
It eats worms and wētā.
It is nocturnal.
It cannot fly.
It has nostrils.
It has a long beak.

Have the students work in pairs to create their own set of 4–6 clues. They could share their riddles with the other students, one clue at a time, and note how many clues were needed before their riddle was guessed.

Suggested reading purpose

To notice the parts of this book that help us understand the information about birds

Learning goals

Over a number of sessions, the students can:

- **explore** how the non-fiction text features help the reader
- **identify** and discuss important words about birds (topic words and descriptive words)
- **explore** how ideas are connected within and between sentences.

Choose one of the suggestions below for each session.

- Support the students to identify how information is organised in this book. Explain that it is a report and that a report has a beginning, a middle, and an end. As you reread the text with the students, identify these aspects, as shown in the chart below.

Section of the book	Purpose
The beginning (the introduction)	Says what this book is about Explains the meaning of endemic
The middle	Gives us information about eight endemic New Zealand birds
The end (the conclusion)	Reminds us how interesting our endemic New Zealand birds are

- As you reread the book, encourage the students to identify the words in bold print. Remind them that bold print shows that the words are important. Support students to notice information in the text and visual language features that helps explain their meanings. For example:
 - on page 2, prompt them to notice the words “That means” as a signal to the reader. *What other information on this page helps you to understand what “endemic” means?*
 - on page 5 ask: *What helps you to understand the word “prey”?* (You may need to show how it is different from the word “pray”.) Draw attention to the word “catch” in line 3 that precedes “prey”, along with references to hunting and “powerful claws”. On page 9, prompt them to notice the use of the word “prey” in relation to ruru. (Some students may notice on page 11 that the takahē itself is “prey” for stoats.)
 - on pages 9–11, help the students identify clues in the text and/or the visual language features to the meanings of “nocturnal”, “nostrils”, and “endangered”.

- As a follow-up, you could support the students in creating their own glossary for the words in bold print and other topic words of interest.

- Reread the book with a focus on how the text features help the reader. Build a chart of the features as you discuss them. For example:

Book Features	How they help us
Contents page	Tells us what information is in the book and what page it is on
Headings	Tell us what the page or section is about Help us check we are on the right page
Words in bold print	Show that the word is important and that it is explained in the book
Photographs	Show us what things look like
Captions and labels	Help us understand what is in a picture or photo
Illustrations	Make the book more interesting Show us some things that might be hard to see in a photo

- Ask questions to prompt the students to notice how the author uses descriptive language to help the reader visualise the information about each bird. For example: *What words help you build a picture of what kererū are like? How are kererū and kārearea different?*
- Build vocabulary and draw attention to the use of descriptive language by:
 - helping the students create a word web for some of the birds. They could start with words from the book (for example, for kererū: “swoop through the trees”, “eat berries, fruit, flowers, and leaves”, “get too heavy to fly properly”, “crash into windows”) and then add their own ideas, including ideas from the photos
 - choosing a photo from the book and modelling how to describe it. Then have the students choose a different photo and orally describe to a partner what the bird looks like. You could make this into a barrier game, where the students work in pairs with a barrier, such as an upright book, between them. Each student has a copy of the book. They take it in turns to describe a photo, and the other student uses the description to identify the correct one. Tasks like these encourage precision with language because there are no visual clues to rely on.
- Draw attention to words that clarify links between ideas and practise constructing similar sentences in shared writing. For example:
 - the use of “also” and “too” (on pages 2, 5, 8, 9) to mean “as well”
 - the use of “but” (on pages 2, 3, 7, 10, 11) to indicate something unexpected
 - the use of “like” (on pages 5, 8, 9, 10) to indicate examples or similarities.