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South Island Brown Kiwi, *Apteryx australis australis*, Shaw & Nodder, 1813, Endemic
1811 South Island

Captain Barclay of the ship Providence apparently obtained the first skin about 1811 in Sydney (McLennan et al, 1990). Fleming (1983) stated the skin came from Dusky Sound, but Andrews (1987) said that this was based on circumstantial evidence. Barclay arrived in England in May 1812, and a Mr. W. Evans passed the skin onto George Shaw, Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum. After Shaw's death, the skin made its way to Lord Stanley, the Earl of Derby. It is now lodged in the Liverpool Museum. The Fiordland Brown Kiwi can be further divided into northern and southern taxons, genetically and geographically separate (Shepherd & Lambert 2008).

Worthy (1997) discussed skeletal elements from Kings Cave, South Canterbury, which he thought could be an undescribed species of kiwi. This was based on their distinct size and relative robustness. Shepherd & Lambert (2008) found that ancient DNA from these bones fell within the *australis* range, suggesting it was not a separate species.

The 11th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (Anon 1911) gives some interesting details of the early history of this iconic New Zealand bird.

KIWI, or Kiwi-Kiwi, the Maori name - was first apparently introduced to zoological literature by Lesson in 1828, and is now very generally adopted in English and is one of the most characteristic forms of New Zealand birds, the *Apteryx* of scientific writers. This remarkable bird was unknown till George Shaw described and figured it in 1813 from a specimen brought to him from the southern coast of that country by Captain Barclay of the ship "Providence". At Shaw's death, in the same year, it passed into the possession of Lord Stanley, afterwards 13th Earl of Derby, and president of the Zoological Society, and it is now with the rest of his collection in the Liverpool Museum.

Considering the state of systematic ornithology at the time, Shaw's assignment of a position to this new and strange bird, of which he had but the skin, does him great credit, for he said it seemed "to approach more nearly to the Struthious and Gallinaceous tribes than to any other." And his credit is still greater when we find the venerable John Latham, who is said to have examined the specimen with Shaw, placing it some years later among the penguins, being apparently led to that conclusion through its functionless wings and the backward situation of its legs.

At that time no second example was known, and some doubt was felt, especially on the Continent, as to the very existence of such a bird - though Lesson had himself when in the Bay of Islands in April 1824 heard of it; and a few years later J. S. C. Dumont d'Urville had seen its skin, which the naturalists of his expedition procured, worn as a tippet by a Maori chief at Tolaga Bay and in 1830 gave what proves to be on the whole very accurate information concerning it. To put all suspicion at rest, Lord Derby sent his unique specimen for exhibition at a meeting of the Zoological Society on the 12th February 1833, and a few months later William Yarrell communicated to that body a complete description of it, which was afterwards published in full with an excellent portrait.

Cruise in 1822 had spoken of an "emeu" found in that island, which must of course have been an *Apteryx*. A legless skin was sent to the society obtained by W. Yate of Waimate, who said it was the second he had seen, and that he had kept the bird alive for nearly a fortnight, while in less than another couple of years additional information came from T. K. Short to the effect that he had seen two living, and that all Yarrell had said was substantially correct, except underrating its progressive powers.

In 1847 much interest was excited by the reported discovery of another species of the genus, and though the story was not confirmed, a second species was soon after made known by John Gould under the

name of *Apteryx oweni* - a just tribute to the great master who had so minutely explained the anatomy of the group. Three years later A. D. Bartlett drew attention to the manifest difference existing among certain examples, all of which had hitherto been regarded as specimens of *A. australis*, and the examination of a large series led him to conclude that under that name two distinct species were confounded. To the second of these, the third of the genus, he gave the name of *A. mantelli*, and it soon turned out that to this new form the majority of the specimens already obtained belonged. In 1851 the first kiwi known to have reached England alive was presented to the Zoological Society by Eyre, then lieutenant-governor of New Zealand. This was found to belong to the newly described *A. mantelli*, and some careful observations on its habits in captivity were published by John Wolley.

It is believed that *A. mantelli* is the representative in the North Island of the southern *A. australis*, both being of a dark reddish-brown, longitudinally striped with light yellowish-brown, while *A. oweni*, of a light greyish-brown transversely barred with black, is said to occur in both islands. About the size of a large domestic fowl, they are birds of nocturnal habit, sleeping, or at least inactive, by day, feeding mostly on earth-worms, but occasionally swallowing berries, though in captivity they will eat flesh suitably minced. (A. N.)

Stewart Island Brown Kiwi, *Apteryx australis lawryi*, Rothschild 1893, Endemic 1890 Stewart I

Sir Walter Buller (1891a) described this kiwi at a meeting of the Wellington Philosophical Society.

“At a meeting of this Society, held on the 2nd July, 1890, I exhibited and made remarks on a large Kiwi from Stewart Island, which I had no hesitation in referring to *Apteryx maxima*, Jules Verreaux. At that time, as I then stated, this was the only known example of the species in any public or private collection. Since that date, however, four more examples, two males and two females (all from Stewart Island), have been brought to Wellington, and I had favourable opportunities of examining them before they were shipped alive for Europe. All these birds presented the same distinguishing characters as the specimen I had the pleasure of exhibiting; so that the species may now be considered well established. One of the females was even larger in all its proportions. This was one of a pair sent to England by the “Arawa” in December last, consigned to a private collector, who had already received the former pair in safety.

Since the above notes were written I have received a letter from Lord Onslow (dated from the Bluff, 3rd February), stating that he had just returned from a visit to the Sounds and Stewart Island in the “Hine-moa,” and had been successful enough to obtain another of these large Kiwis, which he hoped to take to England with him alive. Assuming the identification to be right, this gives us six examples of *Apteryx maxima* during the last eighteen months; but, unfortunately, not one of our local museums possesses a single specimen.”

A. maxima is not a valid name however, as there was no description given in the original note, and the specimen it referred to has disappeared. Walter Rothschild eventually named this species in 1893.