

Pukeko *Porphyrio melanotus*

51 cm

NEW ZEALAND NATIVE, NOT THREATENED

Pukeko (swampheens) are large rails with sooty-black necks, back and upper-tail, and with a purplish-blue throat and breast. They have a prominent red bill and frontal shield, and long, reddish legs with long

spreading toes. The under-tail is white and is conspicuous as it is flicked up with each step. Pukeko inhabit lowland swamps and rough farmland, and have benefited from land clearance on mainland New Zealand, Chatham, and Pitt Islands.



Pukeko feeding.

Photo: Rod Morris (DOC).

