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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Red-crowned parakeet: pp 213-214.



RED-CROWNED PARAKEET

Family Platycercidae

Species *Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae*

Common names Red-crowned Parakeet, Kakariki

Status Endemic

Abundance Common in selected areas

Size 280 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Yellow-crowned Parakeet 250 mm)

Habitat On the main islands of New Zealand it is a bird of tall, old forests. On offshore islands it is a bird of the rocky cliff faces, low scrub areas, secondary forests, as well as older and taller forests.

New Zealand range Seldom found on either the North or the South Islands but abundant on many of the offshore islands. Birds are occasionally seen in the

forests of the central North Island. It is also occasionally seen in North Auckland and Northland, the birds probably arriving there from offshore islands such as Tiri Tiri Matangi and Little Barrier. Predation by rats and stoats is thought to be the cause of the decline of this bird. Stewart Island has good populations everywhere.

Discussion New Zealand Parakeets, which include the Red-crowned Parakeet, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Yellow-crowned Parakeet and the Antipodes Island Parakeet, are thought to share a common ancestry with the Australian rosellas. This common ancestor is thought to have differentiated in New Zealand and then spread to New Caledonia, Lord Howe Island, Norfolk Island and Tahiti in the north, and to the Chatham Islands, Macquarie Islands, Auckland Islands and Antipodes Islands in the south (Fleming 1982).

Description

Forehead A red cap extends from bill to above the eye. **Upperparts** Green.

Wings Green with violet-blue primaries. **Underparts** Yellowish-green.

Conspicuous features

- A small parakeet but bigger than a budgerigar.
- When in flight the bird appears to have a long tail for its size.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Chattering call.
- Fast flight.
- In forests usually found in by the trunk of a tree or on the heavier inside branches.
- When feeding on low coastal vegetation they are bold and easy to see.

Call A rapid series of “chit chit chit chit” notes is made when in flight. The sound has thin rattle-like, over-tones. It is constantly made when flying from one bush to the next.

Nest Usually in holes in trees about five metres up, but also low to the ground in flax bushes, rock crevices and undergrowth. Up to 7 white eggs are laid.

Where to find – North Island

North Auckland – Tiri Tiri Matangi Island. P. 292.

North Auckland – Whangaparaoa at Shakespear Park. P. 294.

Where to find – Stewart Island

Oban and Ulva island – Widespread in these localities. P. 367.

New Caledonia Can be seen in Blue River Reserve and at Yate along the roadsides. These areas are about a one hour drive north and inland from Noumea and are generally very good bird-watching places to visit.