

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Peafowl: pp 131-132.



### PEAFOWL.

**Family** Phasianidae

**Species** *Pavo cristatus*

**Common name** Peafowl

**Status** Introduced from India and Sri Lanka

**Abundance** Common in selected localities

**Size** 1000 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Pheasant 800mm)

**Habitat** In the wild it is a bird of scrublands and low bush in secluded areas. Also found in exotic pine forests.

**New Zealand range** There are large colonies in the Waitangi forest in Northland, along the Whanganui River and on the Mahia Peninsula, Hawkes Bay. Small numbers are found near Kaikoura and the north-western part of the South Island.

**Description – male bird (above)**

**Crown, neck, breast and inner-wing primaries** Iridescent blue. A tuft of black

fan-like feathers, tipped with blue, protrudes from crown. **Face** White, with a black stripe through eye. **Chin** Green. **Back** Green. **Wings** Tightly barred with buff, black and chestnut. **Underparts** Iridescent green. **Tail** This is the most conspicuous part of the male bird, especially in the mating season. When raised it forms a spreading fan of long green-coloured feathers studded with circular whirls of blue and brown.

**Description – female (above)**

**Crown and neck** Metallic green. A tuft of fan-like feathers, tipped with green, protrudes from the back of head. **Face, chin and throat** White with brown eye-stripe. **Upperparts** Brown. **Breast** Buff coloured. **Underparts** Whitish.

**Conspicuous features**

- The spread tail of the male bird during mating.
- Head-crests on both sexes.
- Bright metallic blue on the neck of the male bird.

**Conspicuous characteristics**

- At dusk they are very noisy as they gather together in trees for the night.
- Of a gregarious nature lost birds become agitated and call madly.

**Call** Day call is a loud “may-wee”. Evening call is more of a “wail”.

**Nest** Hollow in grasses and low vegetation. Up to 6 cream eggs are laid.

**Where to find – North Island**

**Northland** – Bay of Islands at Waitangi State forest. P. 283.

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

**North Auckland** – South Head near Lake Kereta. P. 294.

**Bay of Plenty** – Pongakawa District. P. 323.

