

## Bird rescue centres

If you find an injured bird or rescue one from a cat, place it in a secure cardboard box with some ventilation that the bird cannot escape through. Keep it in a darkened quiet place for an hour to overcome shock. If the bird cannot be released back into its area, locate your nearest Bird Rescue Centre for it to be cared for until it recovers.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION:  
<http://www.birdrescue.org.nz>



Photo: Richard Plinston

## Nesting Locations and Materials

A tall tree can be used as a song-post by tui, thrush, blackbird and kingfisher to proclaim their territory. If you are lucky, it may also function as the launching perch for the kereru's aerial display in spring.

Finely-branched shrubs such as matipo and kohuhu provide nest sites for fantail and grey warbler. Kanuka or ti-tree provides the fine nesting material used by tui, and a stand of tall kanuka may be used by tui for a nesting location.

Nesting hollows in mature trees such as puriri, macrocarpa and the tops of dead pongas are a safe place of refuge for morepork and eastern rosella.



Photo: Richard Plinston

**WHITFORD BIRD RESCUE**  
- Mandy Robertson  
All birds accepted  
129 Ara Kotinga Road, RD1  
Manurewa, Whitford  
Tel: (09) 530 8283  
mandy@birdrescue.org.nz

**TAMAKI BIRD RESCUE**  
- Pam Howlett  
All birds accepted  
19 Watene Road,  
Panmure, Auckland  
Tel: (09) 570-4750

**GREEN BAY BIRD RESCUE**  
- Lyn Macdonald  
All birds accepted  
74 Avonleigh Road,  
Titirangi, Auckland,  
Tel: (09) 816 9219

**MANUKAU BIRD RESCUE**  
- Hilary Stollery  
Adult birds accepted  
28 De Havilland Drive,  
Manukau, Auckland  
Tel: (09) 262 2260  
hilary@birdrescue.org.nz

**SPCA BIRDWING**  
- Sylvia Durrant  
All birds accepted  
13 Montgomery Ave,  
Rothsay Bay, Auckland  
Tel: (09) 478-8819

Hedges are favoured nesting sites for thrush and blackbird so be careful with pruning during spring and summer to not expose nests. Both these bird species are good for the garden in keeping slugs, snails and caterpillars under control.

Nesting boxes can be easily made (see useful links) but only introduced birds, such as starlings, will use them. Starlings will also keep your lawn clear of grass grub and other pests.

## Useful links

**BIRD IDENTIFICATION**  
<http://www.whatbird.co.nz/>

**PLANTING FOR NATIVE BIRDS**  
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/publications/conservation/native-animals/birds/tree-planting-for-native-birds/>

**ATTRACTING LIZARDS**  
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/native-animals/reptiles-and-frogs/lizards/attracting-lizards-to-your-garden/>



Photo: Richard Plinston

**NESTING BOXES**  
<http://www.nzbirds.com/more/boxes.html>  
<http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/factsheets/nestbox.php>

**LIZARD HOMES**  
<http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/CnlSer/pw/greennetwk/pdf/lizard-refuge.pdf>

# WILDLIFE AND YOUR BACKYARD



## Wildlife and your backyard

### WHAT?

Wildlife simply refers to animals that are living in their natural habitat. New Zealand native wildlife is under increasing threat due to loss of habitat through urban expansion and smaller gardens. Native birds, lizards, wetas and cicadas are common to backyard gardens. Other useful but introduced inhabitants and visitors are hedgehogs, butterflies, bees and spiders.

### WHY?

By recreating lost habitat in your backyard, you will generate a more balanced ecosystem that will benefit your garden in a number of ways:

- Birds enhance and enliven a garden with their song and activity
- Bees, butterflies and birds pollinate flowers
- Praying mantids, ladybirds and birds control insect pests and grubs, and hedgehogs eat slugs and snails
- Native gardens and wildlife can create ambience
- A garden full of wildlife is a fun place to learn about biodiversity



Photo: Richard Plinston



Photo: Richard Plinston

## Food

**SEEDING GRASSES AND HERBS** - Clumps of seeding grasses and thistles will attract greenfinch, goldfinch, chaffinch and yellow hammer during winter. Seeding lavender will bring family flocks of brightly coloured goldfinch. Seeding grass in lawns is loved by eastern rosella as well as sparrows (which are becoming rare in Britain and Europe). Wild bird seed mix is also available from most supermarkets and will attract finches, doves and sparrows. Leave your herb garden to go to seed – to feed the birds and renew your plants. Of course, herbs when flowering will bring butterflies and bees.

**INSECTS** - Multi-layered vegetation (ground covers, shrubs, trees and climbers) will encourage a variety of insects; and mulch, bark and leaf litter will harbour insects and worms to feed fantail, grey warbler, silvereye and North Island robin\*.

**NECTAR AND FRUIT** - A variety of flowering and fruiting plants will ensure a food source from your garden. Hebes, cabbage tree and mānuka flowers are a good source of nectar for butterflies and bees, including bumble bees and small native bees that live in holes in clay banks.

Kowhai will bring tui and kereru to your garden in spring while rewarewa, flax and pohutukawa will ensure tui stay for summer. Winter is a difficult time for tui, silvereye and

bellbird\*. Puriri, kohekohe, *Tecomanthe*, bottlebrush, flowering gum, proteas and *Erythrina* (coral or flame tree) ensure a good winter nectar source.

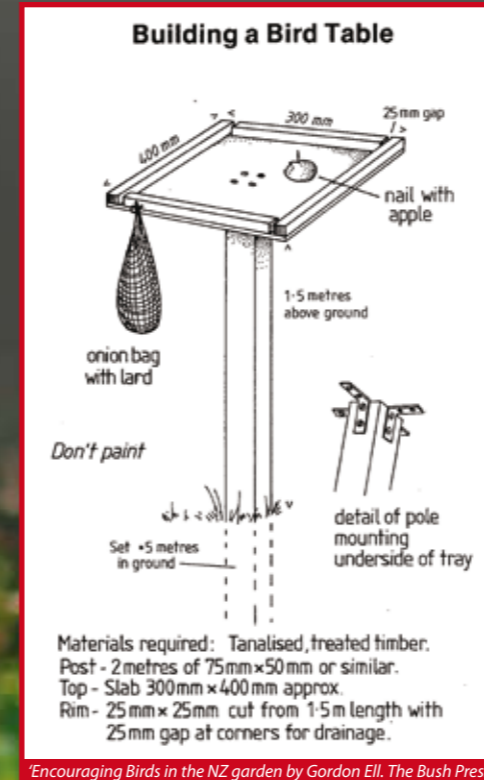
Large fruits such as karaka, tawapou, taraire and tawa are eaten by kereru. Tui prefer puriri, cabbage tree, fivefinger, kahikatea, totara, *Coprosma* and mapou fruits. These smaller fruits will also be taken by silvereyes and blackbirds.

There are two types of lizard in New Zealand – skinks (ground-dwelling) and geckos (arboreal). Both eat insects, spiders, flies and small fleshy fruits of *Coprosma* and *Muehlenbeckia*, and geckos also feed on nectar.

**SUGAR WATER FOR TUI AND BELLBIRD\*** - Mix half a cup of white sugar with hot water to dissolve it, and make it up to one litre of cold water. Put out a little at a time in a pot or half coconut shell secured as high as you can in a tree.

It is best to feed tui through winter when nectar is in short supply. To initially attract tuis decorate the pot with large red flowers such as bottlebrush or flame (coral) tree flowers, or even add a few drops of red food colouring - but don't use this long term.

Commercially made sugar water feeder bases for use with a plastic screw top bottle are available from the shop at Tiritiri Matangi (see photo). - *Note: Never use honey in your sugar water as it attracts bees and can spread bee diseases.*



**BIRD CAKE FOR SILVEREYES** - Mix melted down lard with some of the following: stale biscuits, cake crumbs, bird seed, stale bread (never use mouldy bread as it can cause sickness), bacon rind, meat scraps, wheat and dried fruit. Mix well, then cool and shape into a round cake. Pack into a mesh onion bag and hang as high as you can. - *Note: Never use salt, salted nuts, uncooked rice or desiccated coconut as these foods will kill birds.*

## Water

Water sources can be provided with a bird bath, small pond or large dog bowl on the ground for lizards, hedgehogs as well as household pets. You may be lucky enough to have a stream running through your property. If it could do with weed clearing and replanting refer to our streamside planting leaflet: <http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/CnlSer/pw/greenetwk/pdf/streamside-planting.pdf>

## Shelter and Protection

Piles of randomly stacked rocks, stones, tiles, bricks or logs can provide lizards with a safe home or platform for basking in the sun. Leaf litter, mulch and bark encourage earthworms and insects. Rotting trunks and branches provide a safe haven for wetas.

The puriri moth is our largest native moth, emerging at night and dying the next day after breeding. Plant puriri, putaputawētā and kanuka to encourage puriri moth into the garden to lay their eggs in the bark of these trees.



Photo: Te Ara Encyclopedia of NZ

Dense hedging provides safety and shelter for birds to roost at night. A tall mamaku within a bush area may be used by morepork for its day roost. It is the variety and multiple layers of vegetation that can offer the best shelter from weather and provide predator-safe resting places for your garden wildlife.