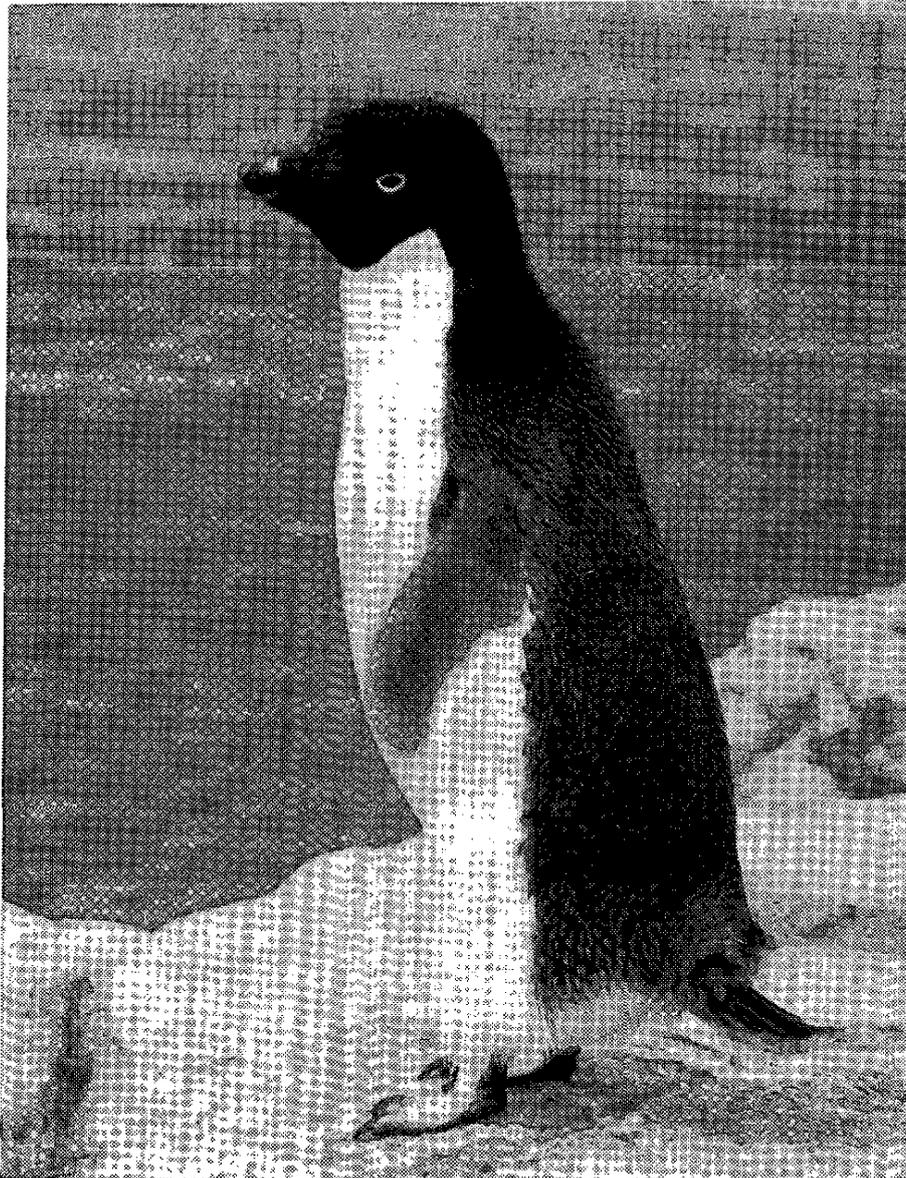


First live record of an Adélie Penguin in New Zealand

In 1963 S.R. Kennington published the first official record of an Adélie Penguin (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) in mainland New Zealand (*Notornis* 10: 234). This concerned a bird found as a dried-out corpse on the Marlborough coast near Long Point on 22 December 1962. Dr R.A. Falla confirmed the identification. According to the *Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand* (Turbott, E.G., convener, 1990) this is the only known record.

Here we report the sighting of a live Adélie Penguin in Kaikoura.

While returning from work on the Red-billed Gull (*Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus*) colonies on 30 December 1992, we noticed a large black and white bird on the wave platform in the first bay south of the carpark at the end of the peninsula. The bird did not seem disturbed by the many tourists passing by on their way to the seal rookeries and gull colonies.



A closer inspection revealed the bird was an Adélie Penguin. It was either a subadult or a non-breeding adult/failed breeder. The plumage was well worn and large parts of the feather tips on the back had changed from bluish black to brown, although the bird did not seem to have come to the actual stage of moulting. It appeared to be in perfect physical condition, so after taking some photographs and noting down the characteristic features (long spiny tail, white eye ring, stubby chestnut beak), we decided to leave it alone rather than taking it into captivity. The next morning it had moved to an even more public place and was eventually shifted to a remote beach by Mike Morrissey, the local Department of Conservation Field Officer.

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North Island Weka on Rakitu Island

Rakitu Island is a 350 ha privately owned island 2.5 km off the eastern side of Great Barrier Island. It comprises two bush-covered volcanic hills, 220 metres high, and a central farmed valley. At the time of our visit in October 1992, there were 40 cattle, 300 sheep and 100 goats. The goats were fenced in an area north of the Cove, and the sheep and cattle were in the central valley and had access to the bush.

On 22 October 1951, 13 North Island Weka from Gisborne were liberated on Rakitu Island by the Department of Internal Affairs (Bell & Brathwaite 1964).

The North Island Weka (*Gallirallus australis greyi*) was assigned "threatened" status in July 1991, after surveys during 1990-92 established that there had been a further decline in the East Cape/Bay of Plenty population (Chris Ward pers. comm., Beauchamp, unpubl. data), a substantial decline in Northland and on Kawau Island, and a decline on Mokoia Island, Lake Rotorua, since the 1980s (P. Jansen, pers. comm.). The status of the only other population, on Rakitu Island, was unknown.

We decided to assess the Rakitu Island population in October 1992. Previous assessments had been made in June 1957, January 1960 (Bell & Brathwaite 1964) and January 1981 (Bellingham *et al.* 1982). Bell & Brathwaite estimated the population at between 20 and 40 Weka, and attributed their very timid nature to disturbance by dogs during mustering. P. Stein reported that the island's caretaker thought there were up to 100 Weka in 1960. Members of the Auckland University Field Club counted Weka from seven locations during dusk and the following two hours of darkness on 5 January 1981. Cross tabulation of calls gave at least 60 Weka.

We traversed the lower bush areas at dawn on 19 and 20 October to assess the activity, feeding, distribution, age structure and breeding status of the population. On the evenings of 18 and 19 October we counted Weka from six locations (Figure 1) in the 1.5 hour period from before dusk to