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|------|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| 6001 | Pōhutukawa - Tui | <i>Metrosideros excelsa</i> - <i>Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae</i> | NEW ZEALAND CHRISTMAS TREE - | <p>Pōhutukawa produce masses of bright crimson pōhutukawa flowers from December to January, a spectacular sight in coastal forests in northern parts of New Zealand. The flowers attract many birds including tui. Huge spreading branches and gnarled, twisting roots cling to cliff faces often overhanging water. The very durable wood was used by Māori in canoe building, with intricate parts formed by years of careful training of the living boughs. Pōhutukawa is under threat from browsing by the introduced possum which strip the glossy, oblong leaves.</p> <p>Tui appear black at first glance except for a small tuft of white feathers at the neck and a small white wing patch. Closer up, tui have a multicoloured iridescent sheen that changes in different lights. They are well known for their song – a mix of bellbird-like notes with clicks, cackles, timber-like creaks and groans, and wheezing sounds. Each bird has its own unique repertoire. Nectar is the normal diet, but fruit and insects are also eaten. Nectar sometimes ferments, resulting in tui flying in a fashion that suggests they may be drunk.</p> |
| 6002 | Ti kōuka - Kererū | <i>Cordyline australis</i> - <i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i> | CABBAGE TREE - NEW ZEALAND PIGEON | <p>A widely branched tree endemic to New Zealand, growing to 20 metres, with a stout trunk and sword-like leaves up to one metre long. Māori valued ti kōuka as a source of food, but it also provided durable fibre for textiles, anchor ropes, fishing lines, baskets, capes, cloaks, and sandals. An iconic feature of our landscape, hardy and fast growing in a broad range of habitats, including forest margins, river banks, and near swamps. In spring, small white flowers form in large clusters, the fruit is a source of food for the kererū, pīwakawaka, and other native birds. Found in forests from Northland to Stewart Island in habitats from coastal to montane. Growth to 51cm in length and 650g in weight made them an important food for Māori. Generally a shiny green-purple colour, the breast is white, the bill, feet and eyes are orange-red. Kererū wings make a distinctive whooshing sound in flight, often slowly ascending before making impressively steep dives.</p> |
| 6003 | Kānuka - Pīwakawaka | <i>Kunzea ericoides</i> - <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i> | TEA TREE - NEW ZEALAND FANTAIL | <p>Growing to around 15m, kānuka is larger than the very similar mānuka, but with smaller flowers and capsules. The narrow pointed leaves are highly aromatic. In summer small white flowers smother the tree attracting many insects and birds. Kānuka colonises areas where bush has been destroyed. The wood is very durable, and was used by Māori to make tools and weapons. The pīwakawaka is a small native bird, 16cm including the long fanned tail. Known for its friendly 'cheet-cheet' call and energetic flying antics while feeding on the insects disturbed by passers-by. The aptly named fantail is one of the most common and widely distributed native birds in New Zealand. During the summer months pīwakawaka build compact, cup-shaped nests usually in the forks of trees such as kawakawa. Nest are made from moss, bark and fibre, often completed with spider's web for warmth.</p> |
| 6004 | Kauri - Kōkako | <i>Agathis australis</i> - <i>Callaeas cinerea</i> | | <p>Majestic and long lived, this slow growing forest giant is among the most ancient trees in the world. Kauri may live for over a thousand years, and reach a massive girth. Māori valued the excellent timber for canoe building, while later kauri was extensively milled by European settlers for construction. Juvenile kauri have a distinct pyramid shape while the slender trunk thickens. By maturity the lower branches have been shed and a large crown forms above the canopy. The carnivorous kauri snail <i>Paryphanta busbyi</i> was once common in kauri forests, often residing in clumps of epiphytes growing high in the canopy. It is now more often found as a ground dweller in areas of dense scrub and fern. The flaking bark defends kauri from climbing parasitic plants. Flowers in October followed by cones which open to disperse the windborne single-winged seeds. Kōkako has a beautiful, clear, organ-like song which may be heard for up to one kilometre. Breeding pairs sing a bell-like duet for up to an hour in the early morning. Different populations have distinctly different songs.</p> <p>Kōkako is a poor flier and seldom flies more than 100 metres on its short, rounded wings. It prefers to hop and leap from branch to branch or to forage on the ground for leaves, fern fronds, flowers, fruit and the occasional small insect.</p> |

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