

Name: _____

Kiwi

By Guy Belleranti

Many people hear the word “kiwi” and think of the small, fuzzy kiwi fruit. However, there's also a small, fuzzy bird called a kiwi. This long-beaked, tail-less chicken-sized bird lives in New Zealand. In fact, it's New Zealand's national symbol.



The kiwi has tiny wings that are hidden under coarse and shaggy hair-like feathers. There are five species of kiwi, and none of them can fly. The kiwi is a ratite, just like the much larger ostrich, emu, cassowary, and rhea. A ratite has little or no keel on its breastbone. The keel is what anchors the muscles needed for wing movement. No keel means no flying.



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e kiwi is
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n fast to

A male kiwi doesn't attract a female with fancy colors or beautiful feathers. Instead he follows her around, making grunting sounds. The female is larger than the male and lays an egg weighing 20% of her weight. This is the largest egg of any bird in relation to its body size. In fact, it's like an ostrich laying an egg weighing 40 to 45 pounds! The mother kiwi's belly gets so large that it touches the ground before she finally lays the egg in a burrow or hollow log. The male kiwi then incubates the egg.

At one time New Zealand was a safe and far-away place for the kiwi to live. However, when settlers came to New Zealand in the late 1800's they brought with them predators like cats, dogs, ferrets and weasels. And since then humans have also cleared much of the bird's habitat. As a result this unique bird is now an endangered animal.

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1. A kiwi is...
- a. a type of bird
 - b. a type of fruit
 - c. both a bird and a fruit
 - d. neither a bird nor a fruit

2. List six foods mentioned in the article that kiwis eat.

3.



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4.

- a. Kiwis can fly, but robins can't.
- b. Kiwis have much larger wings than robins.
- c. Robins have longer beaks than kiwis.
- d. Robins have tails, but kiwis do not.

5. Where do wild kiwis live?

- a. in the Netherlands
- b. in New Guinea
- c. in the Western Hemisphere
- d. in the Southern Hemisphere

6. List four predators that pose a threat to kiwis.

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The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. _____ z f u y z

hint: covered with tiny hairs

2. _____ u e m

hint: species of large bird that can't fly

3. _____



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4. _____

5. _____ q u e u n i

hint: unlike anything else

6. _____ r e t f e r s

hint: weasel-like animals

7. _____ i l n s t r o s

hint: holes in an animal's nose

ANSWER KEY

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1. A kiwi is... **c (1st paragraph)**
 - a. a type of bird
 - b. a type of fruit
 - c. **both a bird and a fruit**
 - d. neither a bird nor a fruit
2. List six foods mentioned in the article that kiwis eat. **(3rd paragraph)**
worms, insects, insect larvae, berries, seeds, and leaves
3. How does a male kiwi attract a female? **(5th paragraph)**
He chases her and grunts.
4. A kiwi is different from a robin because... **d (1st paragraph; Also requires knowledge of robins)**
 - a. Kiwis can fly, but robins can't.
 - b. Kiwis have much larger wings than robins.

5.



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6. List four predators that pose a threat to kiwis.

cats, dogs, ferrets, and weasels (also accept: humans)

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The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. **fuzzy**

z f u y z

hint: covered with tiny hairs

2. **emu**

u e m

hint: species of large bird that can't fly

3. **odd**

d o d

hint: unusual; strange

4. !

5. !



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6. **ferrets**

r e t f e r s

hint: weasel-like animals

7. **nostrils**

i l n s t r o s

hint: holes in an animal's nose