

name: _____

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New Zealand's Natural Heritage



In early New Zealand, the _____ were the first to encounter the unique wildlife of these islands. They found a land with no _____, except for bats, making birds the dominant animals. Among these birds, the _____, a giant flightless bird, stood at the top of the food chain until it was hunted to extinction. The _____, another flightless bird, became a national symbol, representing the uniqueness of New Zealand _____. The Maori also discovered the Tuatara, a reptile that looks like a _____ but is part of a distinct lineage dating back to the dinosaurs. Forests were dense with ferns and _____ trees, creating a green landscape that was both beautiful and challenging to navigate. The introduction of _____ by the first Polynesian settlers started a wave of changes in the _____, impacting many species. European settlers later brought possums and _____, which further threatened native species by predation and competition. Conservation _____ began in the 20th century, focusing on protecting endangered species like the Hector's _____, one of the world's smallest and rarest dolphins. Today, New Zealand's wildlife is a key part of its _____, with ongoing projects to restore natural habitats and remove invasive species. This history of _____ shows the importance of preserving nature for future generations.

efforts ecosystem conservation rats Moa mammals stoats wildlife
lizard Kiwi dolphin Maori kauri identity