

The roots of many New Zealand trees growing partly above ground, holes are common under them; but where the *Kakapo* is found many of the holes appeared to have been enlarged, although no earth was ever found thrown out near them. There were frequently two openings to these holes, and occasionally, though rarely, the trees over them were hollow for some distance up.

“The only occasion on which the *Kakapo* was seen to fly was when it got up one of these hollow trees and was driven to an exit higher up. The flight was very short, the wings being scarcely moved; and the bird alighted on a tree at a lower level than the place from whence it had come, but soon got higher up by climbing, using its tail to assist it.

“Except when driven from its holes, the *Kakapo* is never seen during the day, and it was only by the assistance of dogs that we were enabled to find it.

“Before dogs became common, and when the bird was plentiful in inhabited parts of the islands, the natives were in the habit of catching it at night, using torches to confuse it. It offers a formidable resistance to a dog, and sometimes inflicts severe wounds with its powerful claws and beak. At a very recent period it was common all over the west coast of the middle island, but there is now a race of wild dogs said to have overrun all the northern part of this shore, and to have almost extirpated the *Kakapos* wherever they have reached. Their range is said to be at present confined by a river or some such physical obstruction, and it is to be feared that if they once succeed in gaining the stronghold of the *Kakapo* (the S.W. end of the island) the bird may soon become extinct.

“During the latter half of February and the first half of March, whilst we were amongst the haunts of these birds, we found young ones in many of the holes, frequently only one, never more than two, in the same hole. In one case where there were two young ones I found also an addled egg. There was usually, but not always, an old bird in the same hole with the young ones.

“They build no nest, but simply scrape a slight hollow amongst the dry dust formed of decayed wood. The young were of different ages, some being nearly fully fledged, and others covered only with down. The egg is white and about the size of a pigeon's, two inches and an eighth long by one inch and nine-sixteenths broad.

“The cry of the *Kakapo* is a hoarse croak, varied occasionally by a discordant shriek when irritated or hungry. The Maories say that during winter they assemble together in large numbers in caves, and at the times of meeting, and, again before dispersing to their summer haunts, that the noise they make is perfectly deafening.

“A good many young ones were brought on board the ship alive. Most of them died a few days afterwards, probably from want of sufficient care; some died after being kept a month or two, and the legs of others became deformed after they had been a few weeks in captivity. The cause of the deformity was supposed to be the want of proper food, and too close confinement. They were fed chiefly on soaked bread, oatmeal and water, and boiled potatoes. When let loose in a garden they would eat lettuces, cabbages and grass, and would taste almost every green leaf that they came across. One, which I brought within six hundred miles of England (when it was accidentally killed), whilst at Sydney, ate eagerly of the leaves of a *Banksia* and several species of *Eucalyptus*, as well as grass, appearing to prefer them all to its usual diet of bread and water. It was also very fond of nuts and almonds, and during the latter part of the homeward voyage lived almost entirely on Brazilian ground-nuts.

“On several occasions the bird took sullen fits, during which it would eat nothing for two or three days at a time, screaming and defending itself with its beak when any one attempted to touch it. It was at all times of an uncertain temper, sometimes biting severely when such a thing was least expected. It appeared to be always in the best humour when first taken out of its box in the morning, hooking on eagerly with its upper mandible to the finger held down to lift it out. As soon as it was placed on the deck it would attack the first object which attracted its attention—sometimes the leg of my trowsers, sometimes a slipper or a boot. Of the latter it was particularly fond; it would nestle down upon it, flapping its wings and showing