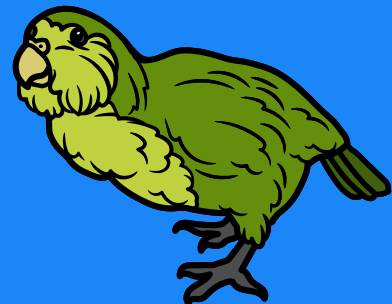
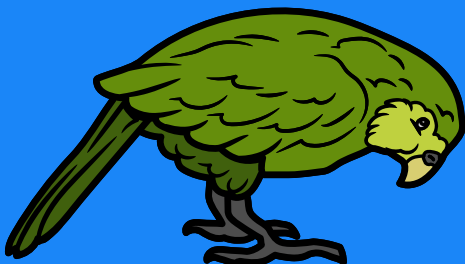


# 10 Fun Facts About the Kakapo to Share with Your Students or Kids

## How to Use this worksheet:

The charming Kakapo is a parrot, endemic to New Zealand. It is one of the world's most rare and unique birds! Use this worksheet to share 10 interesting facts about the Kakapo with your students or kids. Each fact presented is followed by a general trivia question that introduces related key concepts. Use the questions for a fun knowledge test or as a didactic tool to teach kids about this amazing bird and other animals. Answers to the trivia questions can be found on the Answer Sheet provided at the end of the worksheet.



# 10 Fun Facts About the Kakapo to Share with Your Students or Kids



1. The rotund kakapo is a flightless bird. It uses its short wings for support, not for flapping while flying. Its feathers are soft, rather delicate, and not as stiff as other flying birds because they do not need to support flight.

**Trivia:** Out of these 3 birds, which is a flightless bird? Peacock, Kiwi, Secretary Bird.

2. Of the 350 extant (living) parrots on Earth, the kakapo is the heaviest and longest living! Its length is 23"-25" (58-64cm) and weight is around 2-9 lbs (0.95-4.0 Kg). It has a lifespan of 60-125 years!

**Trivia:** How long do birds live?

3. Kakapos are mossy green in color which is mottled with brown and yellow. Their belly is yellowish green with streaks of yellow. The color of the feathers provides excellent camouflage on the forest floor where they live.

**Trivia:** What are the most common colors in a forest?

4. Also known as owl parrots, the adorable kakapos are herbivorous birds. Most of their diet is made up of native plants, seeds, fruits, and pollen. They love the fruit of the rimu tree which may form a 100% of their diet when it is in full bloom. The kakapos and the rimu tree form one of the most enduring and baffling relationships in the wild! It is called a symbiotic relationship where different species interact in a way that benefits both.

**Trivia:** Can you think of an example of a symbiotic relationship in the wild?

5. Early in their evolution, the kakapos inhabited the various islands of New Zealand where there were no natural predators and they had plenty to eat. Therefore, their brains did not develop any defense mechanism and strategy to avoid predators. But when humans called the Māori came to these islands, they brought dogs and cats with them which in turn hunted the kakapos making them endangered.

**Trivia:** What is the name of the island in Western Australia where there are no natural predators?

6. The rimu trees are native to New Zealand, can grow to a whopping 164–197 feet (50–60m) tall and live for more than 1,000 years! They produce cones to reproduce. Astonishingly, the male and female cones grow on separate trees. When the pollen from the male cones is windblown to another tree with female cones, they get fertilized. The resulting seeds are only produced once in 5–6 years.

**Trivia:** Can you name another tree that produces cones?

7. The kakapos disperse the seeds of the rimu tree fruit as they eat them. The tree, in turn, provides the bird with nourishment. The birds do not breed when the rimu tree does not bear fruit! Both are critical to the health of the ecosystem!

**Trivia:** Can you think of an animal that disperses seeds from the fruit that it eats?

8. The Kakapos are the world's only parrot that employ what is called the lek mating system. Several males assemble in one place and dig an approximately 4" (10 cm) deep hole. The male makes sure that his hole is always clean. These holes are often next to a rock face or a tree. This helps to amplify their booming call which is made through the inflation of their thoracic sac (part of the respiratory system). They perform this call for up to 8 hours a night during the mating season. Males also perform a side-to-side rocking movement and make clicking noises with their beaks to attract a female.

**Trivia:** In the wild, birds use different methods to attract their mates. Can you think of another bird that is known to dance to impress a female?

9. The kakapos have extremely strong, scaly muscular legs and climb trees easily. Once on top of a tree, they descend to the ground by using their wings as a parachute.

**Trivia:** Can you think of an animal that has a scaly body, can scamper up tall trees with ease and hang upside down without falling off?

10. Thanks to the conservation efforts by the New Zealand authorities, the kakapo population is slowly rising in various, predator free islands of New Zealand. As of today, there are about 2002 kakapos in the wild.

**Trivia:** Name an animal and a bird that was brought back from total extinction in the USA.

# Answer Sheet

1. Out of these 3 birds, which is a flightless bird? Peacock, Kiwi, Secretary Bird. **Answer is kiwi!**
2. How long do birds live? **Depending on the species, birds can live from about 4 to 100 years!**
3. What are the most common colors in a forest? **Green (leaves) and brown (tree trunks and ground)**
4. Can you think of four examples of symbiotic relationships in the wild?
  - **Sea Cucumber and Shrimp**
  - **Manta Ray and Remora**
  - **Whale and Barnacle**
  - **Sea Anemone and Clownfish**
5. What is the name of the island in Western Australia where there are no natural predators? **Rottneest island – home to the extremely rare Quokka, a medium size marsupial.**
6. Can you name another tree that produces cones?
  - **Cedar**
  - **Fir**
  - **Pine**
  - **Redwood**
7. Can you think of an animal that disperses seeds from the fruit that it eats?
  - **Elephant**
  - **Sea Turtle**
  - **Toucan**
  - **Ant**
8. In the wild, birds use different methods to attract their mates. Can you think of another bird that is known to dance to impress a female?
  - **Peacock**
  - **Red-capped Manakin**
  - **Magnificent Riflebird**
  - **Blue-footed Booby**
9. Can you think of an animal that has a scaly body, can scamper up tall trees with ease and hang upside down without falling off?  
**Gecko**
10. Name an animal and a bird that was brought back from total extinction in the USA. **Bison and Bald Eagle.**