The **Kakapo** ([Māori](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_language): ***kākāpō***, meaning *night parrot*), *Strigops habroptila* ([Gray](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Robert_Gray), 1845),[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-1) also called **owl parrot**, is a [species](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Species) of large, [flightless](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flightless_bird) [nocturnal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nocturnal_animal) [parrot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parrot) [endemic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endemism_in_birds) to [New Zealand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Best1984-2) It has finely blotched yellow-green plumage, a distinct facial disc of sensory,[vibrissa-like](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vibrissa) feathers, a large grey [beak](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beak), short legs, large feet, and wings and a tail of relatively short length. A certain combination of traits makes it unique among its kind—it is the world's only flightless parrot, the heaviest parrot, nocturnal, herbivorous, visibly [sexually dimorphic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_dimorphism) in body size, has a low [basal metabolic rate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basal_metabolic_rate), no male parental care, and is the only parrot to have a [polygynous](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polygyny) [lek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lek_(mating_arena)) breeding system. It is also possibly one of the world's longest-living birds.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Powlesland2006-3) Its anatomy typifies the tendency of bird evolution on oceanic islands, with few predators and abundant food: a generally robust physique, with accretion of[thermodynamic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thermodynamics) efficiency at the expense of flight abilities, reduced wing muscles, and a diminished [keel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keel_(bird)) on the [sternum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sternum).[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Powlesland2006-3)

The Kakapo is critically endangered; as of February 2012, only 126[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Kakapo_count-4) [living individuals are known](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Kakapo),[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-5) most of which have been given names.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-6) The common ancestor of the Kakapo and the genus [*Nestor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nestor_(genus)) became isolated from the remaining parrot species when New Zealand broke off from [Gondwana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gondwana), around 82 million years ago. Around 70 million years ago, the kakapo diverged from the genus *Nestor*.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Wright-7)[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-Grant-Mackie-8)[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-deKloet-9) In the absence of [mammalian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mammal) predators, it lost the ability to fly. Because of Polynesian and European colonisation and the introduction of [predators](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predator) such as [cats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cat), [rats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rat), [ferrets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferret), and [stoats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stoat), the Kakapo was almost wiped out. Conservation efforts began in the 1890s, but they were not very successful until the implementation of the Kakapo Recovery Plan in the 1980s. As of April 2012, surviving Kakapo are kept on three predator-free islands, [Codfish (Whenua Hou)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codfish_Island), [Anchor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchor_Island) and [Little Barrier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Barrier_Island)islands, where they are closely monitored.[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-10)[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-barrier-11) Two large Fiordland islands, [Resolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resolution_Island,_New_Zealand) and[Secretary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_Island), have been the subject of large-scale [ecological restoration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Island_restoration) activities to prepare self-sustaining [ecosystems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecosystem) with suitable habitat for the Kakapo.

The conservation of the Kakapo has made the species well known. Many books and documentaries detailing the plight of the Kakapo have been produced in recent years, one of the earliest being *Two in the Bush*, made by [Gerald Durrell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Durrell) for the [BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC) in 1962.[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-GeraldDurrellBBC-12) A feature length documentary, *The Unnatural History of the Kakapo*[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-13) won two major awards at the[Reel Earth Environmental Film Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reel_Earth_Environmental_Film_Festival). Two of the most significant documentaries, both made by [NHNZ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NHNZ), are *Kakapo - Night Parrot* (1982) and *To Save the Kakapo* (1997). The[BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC)'s Natural History Unit also featured the Kakapo, including a sequence with [Sir David Attenborough](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Attenborough) in [*The Life of Birds*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Life_of_Birds). It was also one of the endangered animals that [Douglas Adams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Adams) and [Mark Carwardine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Carwardine) set out to find for the radio series and book [*Last Chance to See*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_Chance_to_See). An updated version of the series has been produced for BBC TV, in which [Stephen Fry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Fry)and Carwardine revisit the animals to see how they are getting on almost 20 years later, and in January 2009, they spent time filming the Kakapo on Codfish Island.[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-14)[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-LCTSee-2009-15) Footage of a kakapo named [Sirocco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sirocco_(parrot)) attempting to mate with Cawardine's head was viewed by millions worldwide, leading to Sirocco becoming "spokesbird" for New Zealand wildlife conservation in 2010, as part of the International Year of Biodiversity.[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-16) The kakapo was featured in the documentary series *South Pacific* (renamed *Wild Pacific*) episode *Strange Evolutions,*originally aired on June 13, 2009.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakapo#cite_note-17)

The Kakapo, like many other New Zealand bird species, was historically important to the [Māori](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people), the indigenous people of New Zealand, appearing in many of their traditional legends and folklore. It was hunted and used as a resource by Māori, both for its meat as a food source and for its feathers, which were used to make highly valued pieces of clothing. It was also sometimes kept as a pet.