

How the kiwi lost its wings

A very long time ago in a deep, dark forest Tānemahuta was walking along the cool damp floor of the forest. He looked up anxiously at the tallest trees that were proudly reaching for the sky. The trees were his children and he started to worry because horrible, hungry bugs were eating them and they were getting sick.

In despair Tānemahuta decided to talk to his brother Tānehokahoka. It was agreed that they would call a meeting with all of the birds that lived in the tree tops.

'Something is eating my children, the trees and I need one of you to come down from the tree tops to live on the forest floor. Then my children and your home will be saved. Who will come?' said Tānemahuta.

The forest went deathly quiet.





Anxiously Tānehokahoka turned to Tui.
'Will you come down to the forest floor?'

Tui looked up at the soaring trees and saw the sun filtering through like flickering candles. Tui looked down at the forest floor and saw the cold, dark earth and quivered.

'No, it is too cold and I am afraid of the dark,' said Tui.

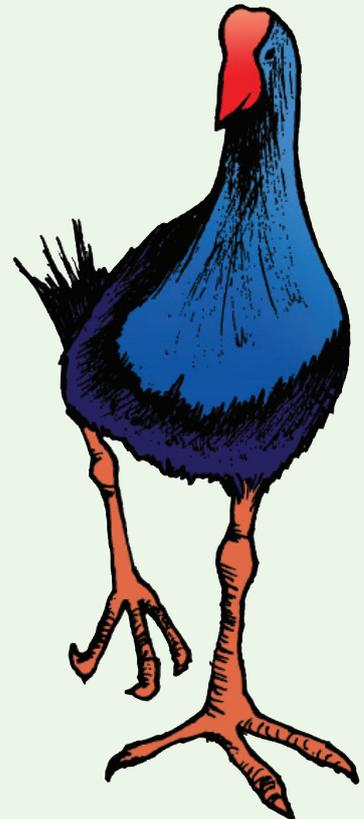
A blanket of silence fell over the forest.

Tānehokahoka turned to Pūkeko.
'Will you come down to the forest floor?'

Pūkeko looked up at the soaring trees and saw the sun filtering through. Pūkeko looked down at the forest floor and saw the cold, dark earth and shuddered.

'No, Tānehokahoka it is too damp and I don't want to get my feet wet.'

The forest went as still as the calm before the storm.



Tānehokahoka turned to Pīpīwharauoa.

'Will you come down to the forest floor?'

Pīpīwharauoa looked up at the soaring trees and saw the light peering through the canopy.

He looked around and saw his family.



'No, I am busy at the moment building my nest,' said Pīpīwharauoa.

There was a hush in the forest. Tānehokahoka felt sad because he knew that if one of his children did not come down to the forest floor all the birds would lose their homes.

Tānehokahoka desperately turned to Kiwi.

'Kiwi, will you come down to the forest floor?' said Tānehokahoka.

Kiwi took one last look at the treetops and the other birds with their beautiful coloured feathers and said goodbye. He turned to Tānehokahoka and said, **'I will.'**



Tānehokhoka turned to the other birds and said,

'Tui because you were too scared to come down from the forest roof, from now on you will wear two white feathers under your throat as the mark of a coward.

Pūkeko, because you didn't want to get your feet wet, you will live forever in the swamp.

Pīpīwharau, because you were too busy building your nest, from now on you will never build a nest again, but lay your eggs in other birds' nests.

However, you Kiwi, because of your great sacrifice, you will become the most well known and most loved bird of them all.'

That is how the Kiwi lost its wings and never flew again.

