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North Island giant moa: pp 249-250.

North Island Giant Moa *Dinornis novaezealandiae* Owen 1843

This was the first species of moa to be described, from bones collected in Poverty Bay in 1840. Professor Owen identified the first moa bone (of this species) as belonging to “a race of struthious birds of larger and more colossal size than the ostrich”. J.W. Harris had collected the bone between 1831 and 1837.

D. giganteus Owen 1844 and *D. struthoides* Owen 1844, have recently been found to be synonyms of *D. novaezealandiae* (Huyen et al. 2003). These larger ‘forms’ have been identified as females, based on molecular sexing. The extreme reversed size dimorphism is unique among birds or mammals, with the largest females being 150% the height, and 280% the weight, of males. Caughley (1977) presciently considered it strange that no such bimodality of sexes had been then discovered in moas, especially as in ratites this is a prevalent condition.

SUB-FOSSIL SPECIES

These species are considered to have become extinct since human settlement in the 14th century.

Up to 64 species and 20 genera of Moa have been recognized over the last 160 years. Turbott (1990) recognized 11 species in two families, Emeidae and Dinornithidae. Baker et al. (2005) using ancient DNA analysis found that there were fourteen lineages of Moa, which they thought probably corresponded to 14 distinct species. Bunce et al. (2009) have now found that there were only nine species in six genera, but *Megalapteryx* is placed in its own (basal) family. The sequence differs from Checklist Committee (OSNZ) (2010). Moas may have been extinguished in a very short time, only 50-160 years after first contact by Polynesians (Holdaway & Jacomb 2000).

Ka ngaro i te ngaro a te moa - lost as the moa is lost.