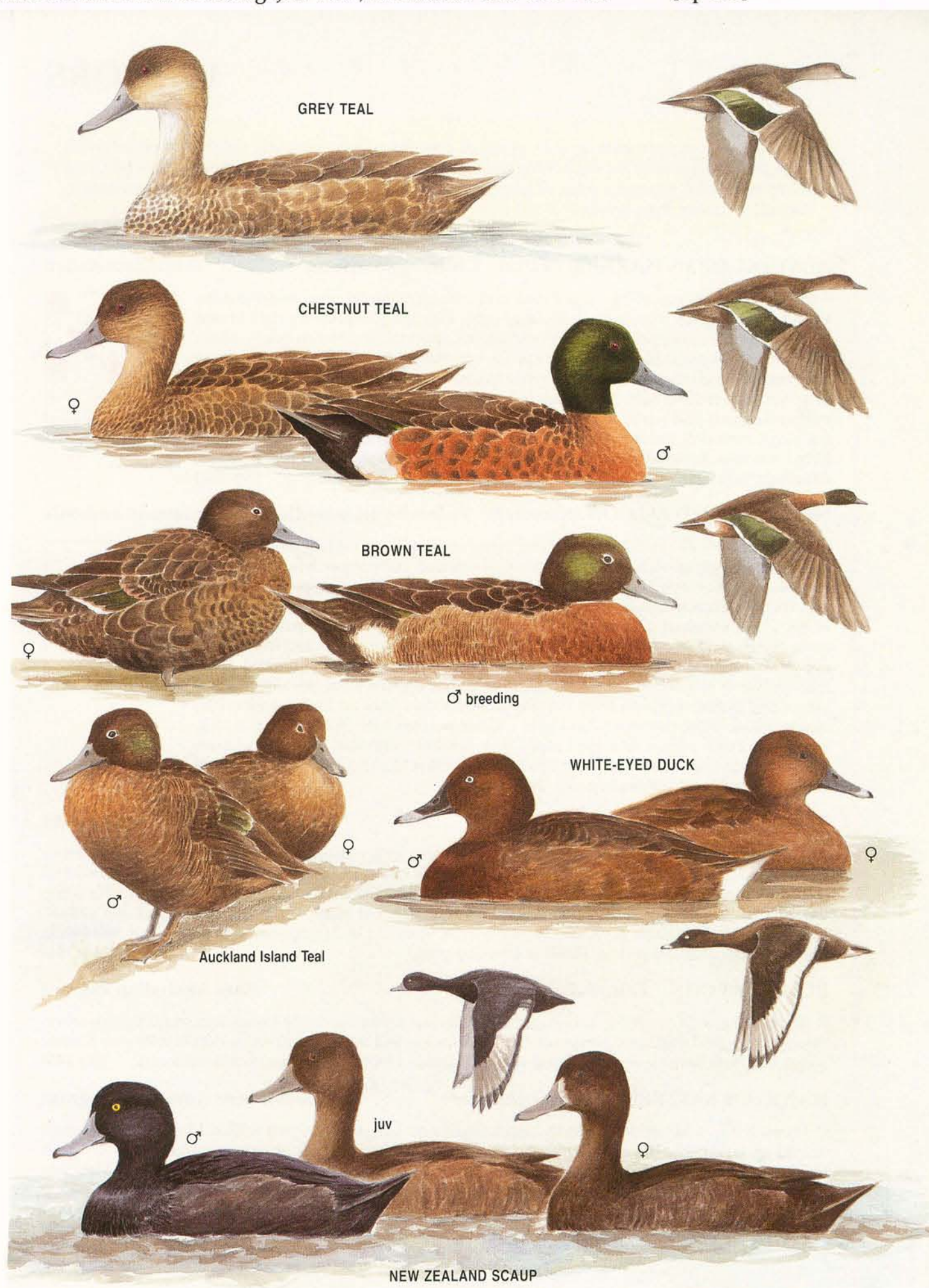
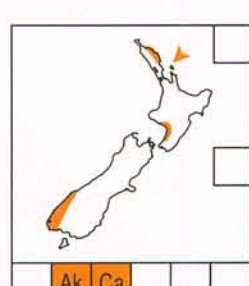


Aquatic birds with a small rounded head, short flattened bill, rounded body, short legs, webbed feet and a waddling gait on land. They fly strongly with neck outstretched. Sexes alike in swans and geese, but male ducks are usually more colourful than females. Lay large clutches. Chicks leave the nest within days but are guarded for several months until they can fly.

BROWN TEAL (Pateke) *Anas aucklandica*

Rare endemic

48 cm; ♂ 600 g, ♀ 500 g. Like Chestnut Teal, but eye brown with narrow white eye-ring in all plumages. In flight, lacks white triangle in front of speculum. Breeding male has a glossy green head, an indistinct narrow white collar and a conspicuous white flank patch. Eclipse male, female and juvenile are warm brown; breast is mottled dark brown. Bill blue-black. Auckland I Teal flightless, with more subdued colouring. Campbell I Teal also flightless and with prominent white eye-ring. Gather to roost in flocks by day, and feed at dusk and at night. **Habitat:** Tidal creeks, lagoons and swamps, and adjacent wet pasture. Subantarctic subspecies feed in peaty creeks and soaks, and on coastal platforms and kelp beds. Brown Teal mostly on Great Barrier I and in Northland. **Breeding:** Jun–Nov; Auckland I Teal: Dec–Feb. [Sp 134]



WATERFOWL

Anatidae

Swans, geese and ducks are found worldwide in freshwater and marine habitats. There are about 160 species, of which 14 (4 endemic, 4 native and 6 introduced) breed or have bred in the wild in the New Zealand region since 1920. A further endemic species (*Mergus australis*) became extinct in the early years of the 1900s, and another 6 species are vagrants to the region.

In New Zealand, most introduced and some native species of waterfowl are legally harvested during a strictly controlled shooting season. Each year, Fish and Game Councils determine the length and timing of the season and the allowable bag for each species, and monitor the licensing of hunters and annual hunting statistics. A voluntary organisation, Ducks Unlimited, works to create and protect wetland habitats suitable for waterfowl and is also involved in captive breeding programmes for some threatened and rare species.

All species have webbed feet for swimming in freshwater rivers and lakes, or in coastal waters. Their bill is modified for filter-feeding; water and food is sucked in at the tip of the bill and expelled through fine comb-like lamellae at the sides, which catch minute seeds and invertebrates. Although most feed in this way, some species mainly graze on aquatic or terrestrial vegetation and pick seeds (e.g. peas or wheat) off the ground, and the mergansers have serrated bills for catching fish.

Reading Frith, H.J. 1982. *Waterfowl in Australia*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. Madge, S. & Burn, H. 1988. *Wildfowl: An Identification Guide to the Ducks, Geese and Swans of the World*. London: Christopher Helm. Johnsgard, P.A. 1978. *Ducks, Geese and Swans of the World*. Lincoln: Univ Nebraska Press. Williams, M. 1981. *The Duckshooter's Bag*. Wellington: Wetland Press.

134. BROWN TEAL *Anas aucklandica*

Plate 32

Other name: Pateke
Size: 48 cm; male 600 g, female 500 g
Geographical variation: Three subspecies are currently recognised: the Brown Teal *chlorotis* breeds on the New Zealand mainland and some offshore islands, the Auckland Island Teal *aucklandica* breeds in the Auckland Islands, and the Campbell Island Teal *nesiotis* breeds on Dent Island in the Campbell Islands. Recent taxonomic work suggests that the teal breeding on the subantarctic islands result from separate invasions from Australia and should be regarded as full species. The subspecies *chlorotis* is more closely related to the Chestnut Teal of Australia, which suggests that it is a relatively recent colonist.
Distribution: Breed only in New Zealand. They were originally widely distributed in lowland swamps and swamp forest from Northland to Stewart Island, but have declined dramatically. Their stronghold is now Great Barrier Island; their natural range in the North Island is restricted to the eastern coast of Northland from the Bay of Islands to Tutukaka, Coromandel Peninsula and a few on Little Barrier and Great Mercury Islands. In the South Island, they persist only in Fiordland. They have not been seen on Stewart Island since the 1970s. A small population is established on Kapiti Island, derived from a release of captive-bred birds in 1968, and a few birds are still seen in the Manawatu–Horowhenua lowlands from a release of over 300 captive-bred birds in the 1970s and early 1980s. Recent releases on Tiritiri Matangi Island and at Moehau have

been successful.
 The Auckland Island Teal has gone from the main Auckland Island, but remains on Enderby, Rose, Ewing, Dundas, Adams and Disappointment Islands. The Campbell Island Teal was found in 1855, but rarely seen until a small population was found on Dent Island in 1975. They have been re-introduced to Campbell Island, via Codfish Island, following eradication of rats there in 2001. **Population:** Brown Teal: c.1000 birds in 2004; 550+ on Great Barrier Island, 200+ in Northland, 200 in captivity and 100 scattered widely through the rest of the country. Auckland Island Teal: 2000+ birds. Campbell Island Teal: 50–100 birds.
Conservation: Protected threatened endemic. All three subspecies have declined in numbers and range over the last century. The decline of Brown Teal was probably caused by predation by introduced cats, dogs and mustelids, the drainage of prime lowland swamp habitats and the harvest of birds until they were protected in 1921. Conservation efforts for Brown Teal are aimed at securing suitable coastal habitat in Northland and on Great Barrier Island, and controlling predators. Ducks Unlimited has had great success in breeding Brown Teal in captivity, but releases on the mainland have failed because of predation. Both Auckland Island Teal and Campbell Island Teal have been bred in captivity.
Breeding: Campbell Island Teal have not been seen breeding in the wild. Most Brown Teal lay in June–October, but clutches can be laid

at almost any time of year, whereas Auckland Island Teal do not lay until December–January. Brown Teal lay 3–5–8 cream eggs (60 x 43 mm, 61 g) at about 1.5-day intervals, but Auckland Island Teal lay only 3–4–5 cream eggs (64 x 45 mm, 75 g) at intervals of 2–3 days. The nest is a bowl of grass under dense vegetation such as *Carex*, fern or tussock. The male guards the territory while the female incubates for c. 30 days, and contributes to raising the brood. In captivity, the fledging period is 50–55 days. The oldest Brown Teal in the wild lived over 6 years.
Behaviour: Brown Teal are strongly territorial during the breeding season but form flocks at traditional sites in summer. These flocks break up in winter, but juvenile and unpaired birds continue to use the roosting sites through the breeding season. In contrast, Auckland Island Teal pairs remain on territory

all year, but juveniles and unpaired adults form small flocks in protected bays. The males of all forms give soft, high-pitched wheezy whistles and popping calls; females give low quacks and growls.
Feeding: Diet is mainly aquatic or marine invertebrates taken by dabbling from just below the water surface or in mud in shallow water of estuaries, freshwater wetlands, and peaty or muddy pools or trickles on land. Auckland Island Teal often feed among kelp in sheltered bays, and they probe amongst rotting seaweed along the shore.
Reading: Hayes, F.N. & Williams, M.J. 1982. *Wildfowl* 33: 73–80. Weller, M.J. 1974. *Notornis* 21: 25–35. Weller, M.J. 1975. *Auk* 92: 280–297. Williams, M. *et al.* 1991. *Acta XX Cong Int Orn* 876–884. Williams, M. 1995. *Notornis* 42: 219–262.