

Rock Wren Named As New Zealand's Bird of 2022

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Awareness (Noun) /ə'wærnəs/ knowledge or understanding about something
Example: People need to raise awareness about the negative effects of climate change.
2. Theme (Noun) /θi:m/ a design that fits a particular topic or subject; the main idea in a book, movie, game, etc.
Example: The theme of my sister's party was Moulin Rouge.
3. Attention (Noun) /ə'tenʃən/ notice or interest given to someone or something; the mental power of giving notice or thought to someone or something
Example: Paying attention to someone while they're talking is a way of showing respect.
4. Nickname (Noun) /'nɪkneɪm/ an informal or humorous name
Example: Her style of wearing green stiletto shoes earned her the nickname Dorothy of Oz.
5. Predator (Noun) /'prɛdətər/ an animal that kills other animals for food
Example: The jaguar is one of the top predators in the Amazon.
6. Transferable (Adjective) /træns'fɜ:rəbl/ able to be moved to be owned by another person
Example: She cannot attend the event but was lucky enough since her ticket was transferable.



The pīwauwau /pee-wow-wow/, also known as the rock wren, has been named New Zealand's Bird of the Year for 2022. The Bird of the Year competition is run by environmental organization Forest & Bird to raise awareness of New Zealand's birds and the dangers they face. The theme of 2022's competition was "underbirds" — based on the word "underdog," which refers to someone or something that is believed to be unlikely to succeed or win. For Forest & Bird, this meant birds that are not as famous as the country's other popular birds.

One bird that was "banned" from taking part in the 2022 competition was the kākāpō. The world's heaviest parrot, the kākāpō is the only bird to have won Bird of the Year twice, once in 2008 and again in 2020. Organizers were worried that the big parrot would take too much attention from other birds. Other New Zealand birds not on the 2022 list included last year's winner, the pekapeka — which is actually a bat — and the kiwi — the bird that gave New Zealanders their nickname.

The pīwauwau is a small, round, green-and-white bird with long legs that lives in New Zealand's Southern Alps. Climate change has put these little birds in danger as warmer weather has made it easier for predators like rats to climb higher into the mountains where they live. The pīwauwau was also in danger of coming second after the kororā, the world's smallest penguin. The little penguin got more first-place votes, but after transferable votes were counted the pīwauwau took the top spot.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on New Zealand's Bird of the Year?
2. Is your country home to any famous or unique birds?
3. Are any of your country's native birds in danger of becoming extinct?
4. Do you know anyone who's into birdwatching?
5. Have you been to New Zealand? If so, did you see much wildlife? If not, would you like to?