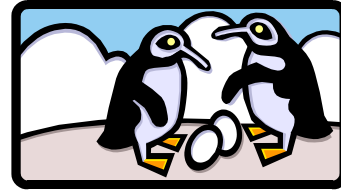


Ornithology



“Mum, Dad, look what I found.”

Sam appeared at the door excitedly holding a large, white, roundish, bird’s egg.

“Where was it?” his mother asked.

“I found it on the ground, under a Puriri, beside the pond.” replied Sam.

“It looks like it’s fallen from its nest. It will have been abandoned. Lucky it didn’t break.” said his mother. “Do you want to try to hatch the egg and get it ready for life on its own?”

“Yes please.” said Sam and he and his father constructed a box with a 60 watt light bulb attached to the removable lid.

“When it hatches what will I feed it?” Sam asks.

“I think water and a few worms will do but let’s look it up in an ornithology book to be sure.”

“What’s that?” asked Sam.

A book all about birds his mother replies.

Sam successfully hatches the eggs and finds it is a baby Ruru, Morepork (NZ Owl)

The Ornithology book tells them that it is nocturnal and eats moths. One evening three weeks later when the down had changed to feathers, Sam takes it up to the bush, and lets it go.

It flew silently away, swooped back, sat on a nearby branch for a moment, then flew away again. Sam was sure it was saying goodbye and thank you.