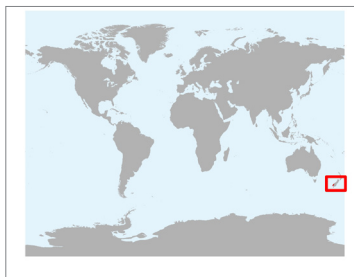




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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Kakapo

The **Kakapo**, *Strigops habroptila*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The only flightless parrot in the world, this nocturnal, ground-dwelling bird is endemic to New Zealand. It is found only on two offshore islands having been lost from all of its original range following human colonisation.

This unique parrot has been decimated by hunting, forest clearance, competition with introduced deer and possums, and heavily predated by introduced mammals such as dogs, cats, stoats and rats. The species is particularly vulnerable to mammalian predators due to its flightlessness, strong scent, ground-nesting behaviour and a habit of freezing when disturbed. The Kakapo's extremely slow reproductive rate means populations have no capacity to replace themselves in response to such impacts.

By the mid-1970s, the Kakapo had been reduced to two tiny, rapidly declining populations in Fiordland and on Stewart Island, and the drastic measure was taken to move all surviving individuals to predator-free islands. It is now the subject of intensive conservation action, which has increased the fragile population from just 51 individuals in 1995 to 123 today.

www.iucnredlist.org
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