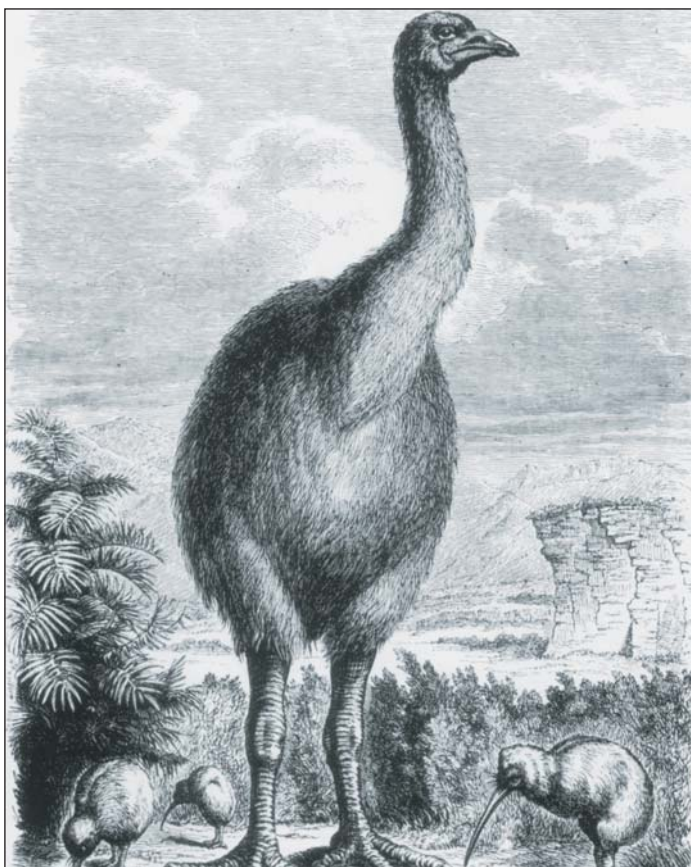


NEW ZEALAND HISTORY

Despite the Clear Evidence, Some Archaeologists Did Not Want to Accept the Story the Bones Told

Academics Agree to Pre 1350AD NZ Ancient Rat and Moa Bones Point the Way to Early Settlement



This interpretation of a moa first appeared in Ferdinand von Hochstetter's book *Neu-Seeland*

Human settlement in New Zealand has been officially settled on as around 1350AD. This is what is in the 'accepted' history books. This is what new generations of New Zealanders are taught. The conclusion is based upon a theory that the first canoes arrived from Polynesia sometime after the violent eruption of Mount Tarawera of around 700 years ago – a cataclysmic event not mentioned in Maori oral history. Scientists basing conclusions on genetic testing calculate that "the founding population of Aotearoa must have been at least 100 to 200, including at least 50 females, in order to grow to around 100,000 with the amount of genetic diversity existing when Europeans first arrived." This is the 'Short Chronology' of human settlement in New Zealand, based on the assumption that Polynesians are the only travellers to settle in New Zealand. But vital evidence proves the 'Long Chronology' of much earlier occupation and this evidence was reluctantly accepted by a slim majority of members at the New Zealand Archaeological Association Conference in 2002. So, what are the facts?

Who Ate all the Moa?

The fate of the Moa has intrigued researchers since Europeans first arrived in New Zealand, as a huge number of Moa skeletons surfaced right around the country. Julius Haast, PH.D. and Member of the Royal Society wrote several papers in the 1870s, listing painstaking evidence leading to his conclusion that Moa were hunted to extinction by an ancient people who inhabited New Zealand before Maori. He said: "It has been the fashion to assert that the present native inhabitants of New Zealand, the Maoris, are the race who have hunted and exterminated the Moa... it is my duty to examine the data and bring in turn what I consider overwhelming evidence to the contrary, namely that the forefathers of the Maoris not only have neither hunted nor exterminated the Moa, but that they knew nothing about it... Haast quoted an earlier exhaustive study by Rev. William Colenso in which he wrote: "From native traditions we gain nothing to aid us in our enquiries after the probable age in which this animal lived; for although New Zealand abounds in traditional lore, both natured and supernatural, he appears to be totally ignorant of anything concerning the Moa... If such an animal ever existed within the time of the present race of New Zealanders, surely to a people possessing no quadruped and but very scantily with both animal and vegetable food, the chase and capture of such a creature would not only be a grand achievement, but one also, from its importance, not likely to be ever forgotten; that many things of comparatively minor importance are by them handed down from father to son in continued succession from the very night of history." It appears Maori had virtually no first hand knowledge of Moa.

Haast commented that early voyagers, Captain Cook, Captain Vancouver, Admiral d'Entrecasteaux and Captain King noted down carefully local flora and fauna and the "traditions of the natives," with no mention of the existence of the Moa. He concluded that Moa flourished in the post-pliocene period (from 2.588 million years ago), because most of the huge quantities of their bones were found in alluvium of that era. Stone implements and flint tools found with the bones closely resembled those found in post-pliocene beds in Europe.

In 1868 Haast received two ancient human skulls found in shifting sandhills near an encampment of Moa hunters "near the Selwyn" and sent it to Professor Dr C. G. Carus, the president of the Imperial German Academy of Naturalists. This eminent physiologist informed Haast he was mistaken in identifying them as Maori, as they belonged to "some other race." Haast also noted: "The natives assert that in the interior of the North