

NEW ZEALAND'S PASSPORT TO PARADISE

A GUIDE TO THE HISTORY OF
NEW ZEALAND'S NATIONAL PARKS



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CLUB KIWI PASSPORT TO PARADISE

A concise guide to the History of New Zealand's National Parks.

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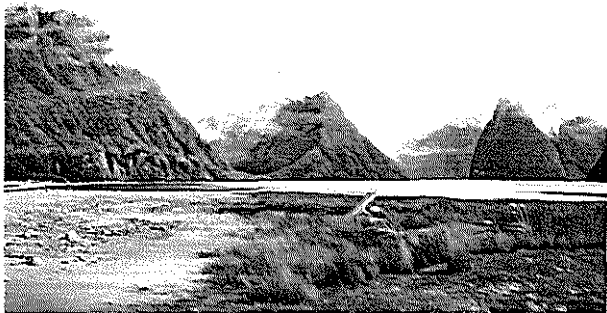
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Title: Clouds and Sunshine. Mitre Peak, Milford Sound, Fiordland National Park. Artist: John R Gatenby

TRAMPING

This book is not intended as a guide to extended walking or tramping expeditions. If you intend to tramp through National Parks, please contact local information centres or conservatories (such as New Zealand Department of Conservation - www.doc.govt.nz) for up to date track and weather information.

PHOTOGRAPHY

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FURTHER READING

Refer to bibliography and web sites of interest on pages 159-161

Club Kiwi Limited wish to thank the New Zealand Department of Conservation for help in sourcing photo images and National Park maps.

ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

The publishers and authors have made every effort to ensure accuracy of information presented. We welcome your comments and contributions.

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NEW ZEALAND'S PASSPORT TO PARADISE

Club Kiwi New Zealand's Passport To Paradise takes you on an amazing journey through all 14 of New Zealand's National Parks, including three internationally recognised World Heritage Areas.

OUR VISION:

Club Kiwi seeks to promote through knowledge, participation and enjoyment, the preservation and restoration of New Zealand's unique natural environments, flora and fauna.

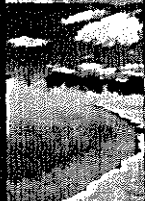
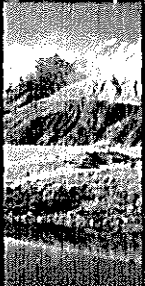
A percentage from the sale of every *Club Kiwi Passport to Paradise* book will be donated to selected conservation projects in New Zealand.

For more information please visit: www.clubkiwi.co.nz

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Welcome

Club Kiwi Passport to Paradise takes you on a fascinating historical journey through all 14 of New Zealand's National Parks, including three Internationally recognised World Heritage Areas of Fiordland and Tongariro National Parks and New Zealand's Sub-Antarctic Island group.

Our journey takes in the birth of New Zealand's unique landscapes; touching on formative years of European settlement; turbulent historical events of war and conquest; of influential characters and great explorers.

Club Kiwi welcome all visitors to these renowned and spectacular parklands and forest parks.

Kia Ora - Welcome

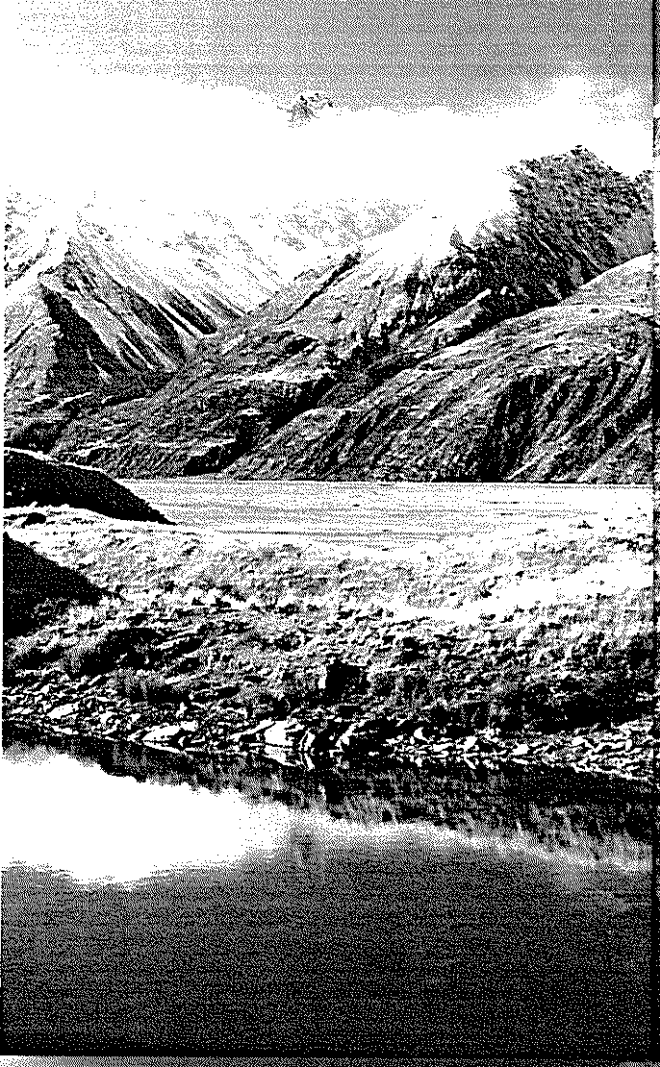
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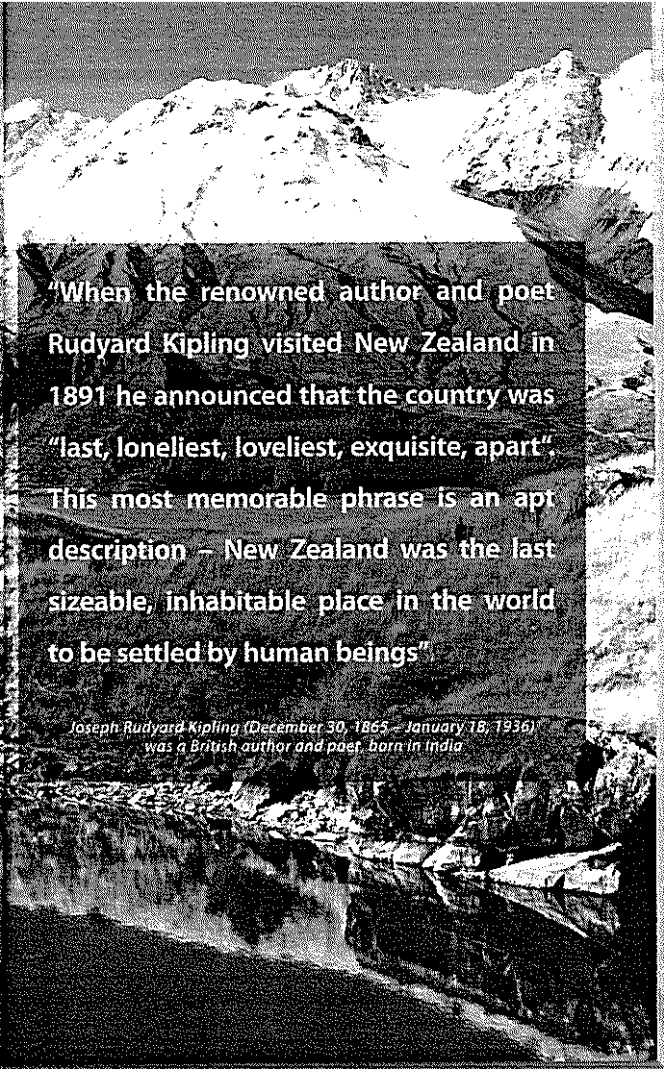
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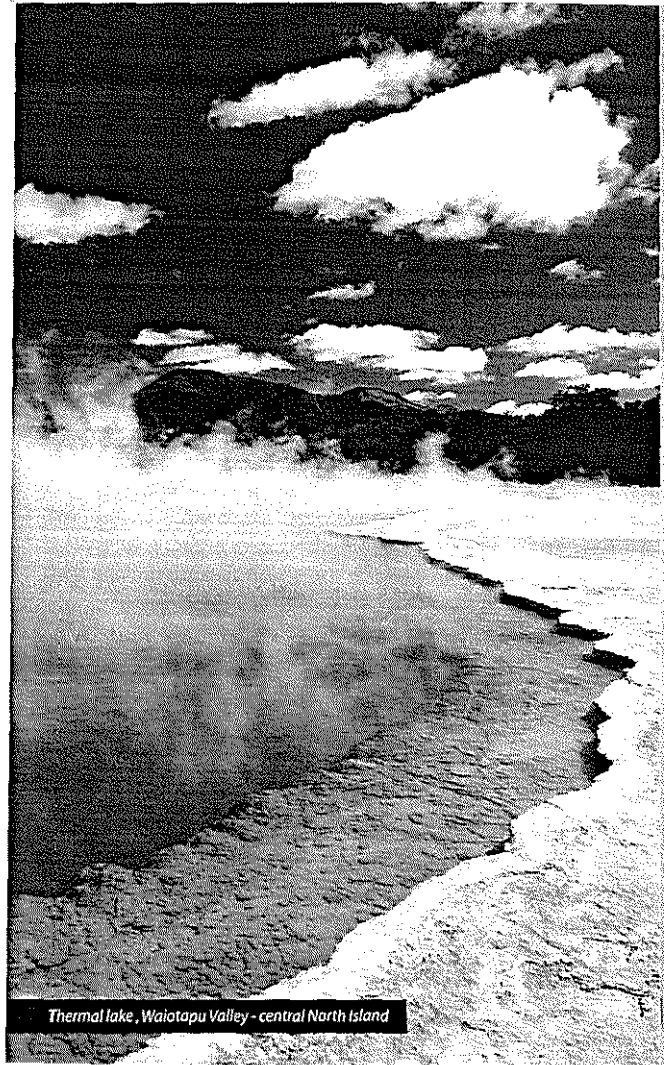
"When the renowned author and poet Rudyard Kipling visited New Zealand in 1891 he announced that the country was "last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart". This most memorable phrase is an apt description – New Zealand was the last sizeable, inhabitable place in the world to be settled by human beings"

*Joseph Rudyard Kipling (December 30, 1865 – January 18, 1936)
was a British author and poet, born in India*



INTRODUCTION

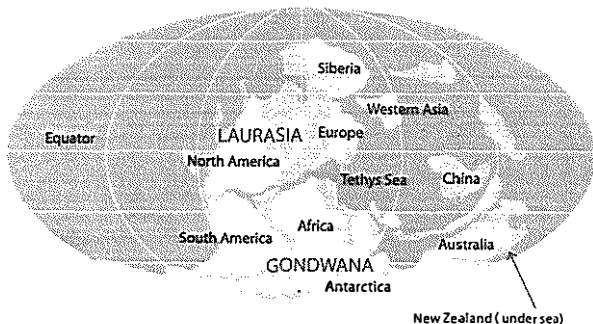
While New Zealand was once part of Gondwana, one of the supercontinents that existed until about 80 million years ago, it is also geologically young, its soils replenished by volcanic activity. This is in sharp contrast to the nearest continent—Australia—which is old, comparatively barren, and dry. Instead, New Zealand has been shaped by the forces of the earth, of fire, ice and water to produce fertile soils, dramatic landscapes and ecological diversity. New Zealand's 14 National Parks reflect both this natural lushness, and the progress of human settlement. Human links with this landscape extend back one thousand or so years, and the lands chosen as national treasures and preserved in the form of National Parks reflect both this natural diversity and the ecological values that New Zealanders put upon this land. This book provides a natural entry point for all visitors to understand the origins of the landscapes, flora and fauna found within these National Parks.



Thermal lake, Waiotapu Valley - central North Island

BIRTH OF A NEW LAND

New Zealand's dramatic and contrasting landscapes reflect its position at the junction of two of the earth's tectonic plates. Evidence of millions of years of earth-shattering geological activity is visible throughout the country in the form of mountains, volcanoes and uplifted and jumbled sections of stratified crust. Tectonic plate theory is a relatively new geological approach—it was only developed in the second half of the twentieth century—and while the idea of the earth we walk on being composed of a molten ball of plasma, coated in fractured, floating and mobile sheets of rock is astonishing, this theory is a very useful way to explain both the visible landscape, and the distribution of plants and animals in New Zealand.



Mississippian – the grouping of the continents, approximately 330 million years ago

New Zealand is geologically very young. The recognisable form of the country, with two main islands and Stewart Island, has only existed for about 10 000 years. In addition, even the ancestral land mass came into existence only 140 to 120 million years ago. In contrast, the Australian continent consists of rock approximately 3 800 million years old, rock that was formed comparatively soon after the planet itself came into existence approximately 5 000 million years ago. New Zealand's youthfulness is a result of the meeting of the Indian-Australian tectonic plate and the Pacific tectonic plate.

Early in the life of the planet, the continents as we now know them were clustered into two groups—Laurasia, which contained those continents now found in the northern hemisphere, and Gondwana which contained the land now found in India, Australia, South America, Africa and Antarctica. The Pacific plate was undergoing subduction at the Indian-Australian plate that formed this eastern edge of Gondwana, but approximately 140 to 120 million years ago material too light to be successfully pushed down into the subduction zone collected at this boundary, mainly from volcanic activity previously to the west of Antarctica. This converging, shearing and buckling of the Pacific and Indian Australian plates broke up the sea floor and upper mantle along with contorted piles of sediment which were thrust up above sea level to form new land. This land, that was to become New Zealand, although formed much later than the rest of that supercontinent, was colonised by the plants and animals of Gondwana.

But this rising out of the sea did not produce the New Zealand of today. The land created at this time was ten times larger

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Individual Parks

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