

# A forest is more than trees

A forest, large or small, native or exotic, is home to countless varieties of plant and animal life many of which cannot survive outside the forest environment. It protects the ground from the effects of heavy rains which cause soil erosion, provides attractive scenic backdrops in the countryside, and gives wide scope for recreation pursuits.



Fresh water crayfish or koura (*Paranephrops planifrons*)

Three species of fresh water crayfish are found in New Zealand.

These dull green crustaceans, which are really lobsters, grow to about 13 cm. They are found in small streams, lakes, and ponds throughout New Zealand.

*Paranephrops planifrons* inhabits the North Island and the north and west of the South Island, *P. zealandicus* South Canterbury to

Stewart Island, and *P. setosus* North Canterbury.

Like all crustaceans, fresh water crayfish moult their shells as they grow. A reservoir of lime accumulates in their stomachs to form the new shell.

The female attaches her eggs to hairs on her abdominal legs, and the young emerge as replicas of their parents. They remain attached to their mother until big enough to fend for themselves.



New Zealand Forest Service

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