



Waitangi Forest, showing *Pinus elliotii* in compartment 7, with *P. radiata* in the foreground. This 84-ha compartment was estimated to contain eight kiwi territories in 1978.

# Kiwis and pine forests

PRESS REPORTS in 1979 stating that Waitangi pine forest contained an estimated 400 kiwis and, furthermore, that kiwis were known to be present also in Glenbervie and other northern exotic forests triggered a series of inquiries to the Wildlife Service that are still continuing. Attitudes have ranged mostly from polite incredulity to hostile scepticism. How could these “barren monocultures”, these “biological deserts”, possibly cater for the requirements of such specialised birds that evolved with, and depend entirely on, the luxuriance of our native forests for their survival? To suggest that some plantations may have more birds per unit area than are believed to be present in many North Island indigenous forests was, to one irate correspondent, “misleading propaganda that should be discredited immediately”.

SEVERAL WRITERS, though being pleased that our “national emblem” may have the versatility to adapt to pine plantations, expressed concern that if these provided suitable homes for kiwis, then another

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argument against the conversion of our dwindling in-

digenous vegetation to exotics was weakened. A senior forester saw the situation entirely differently. He remarked, somewhat drolly, that “it would be ironical if a moratorium is placed on log-