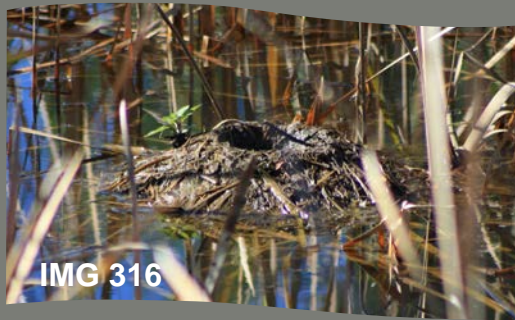


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NZ DABCHICK

Poliiocephalus rufopectus

The New Zealand dabchick is generally a silent bird, except for an occasional wee-ee-ee call, which gave rise to its Māori name Weweia. The dabchick is a highly specialized waterbird. The slim, long neck and small head are perfect for diving, as are the lobed, flexible toes, used to propelling and steering underwater.



Dabchicks have webbing on each toe, unlike ducks, which have webbing joining their toes together.

Description

A small bird with a short bill and fluffy tail. They have yellow eyes and a light brown neck and breast. Fine silver feathers top its head.

Food

Weiweia feed mostly on aquatic insects and their larvae. They are excellent divers and also feed on freshwater crayfish, or small fish.

Breeding

Breeding is from June - March. The female lays 2-3 eggs in an anchored, floating nest. Juveniles have white, pale brown and black stripes on their head and neck, creating an irregular mottled appearance.