

Fantail Fact Sheet

Fantails are one of New Zealand's most common and well-known birds because of their fanned tails and loud chirp. Fantails are small birds with a small head and beak. There are two colours of fantail; the pied - which is grey, brown, black and white, and the black which is mostly black.



Life Span

Up to 3 years

Size

Measure up to 16cm

Weight

Approximately 8g

What Do They Eat?

Fantails eat moths, flies, spiders, wasps and beetles. They sometimes eat fruit. They occasionally hop upside down to get bugs from the underside of leaves.

Fantails catch insects in three different ways:

- Hawking – the fantail perches in a tree to spot groups of insects and then flies at them to eat lots of insects at a time.
- Flushing – the fantail flies around to disturb insects, flushing them out of the plants before eating them.
- Feeding associations – the fantail follows another bird or animal to catch insects disturbed by their movements.

Did you know?

Fantails use their tails to change direction when they are flying, just like a boat uses a rudder.

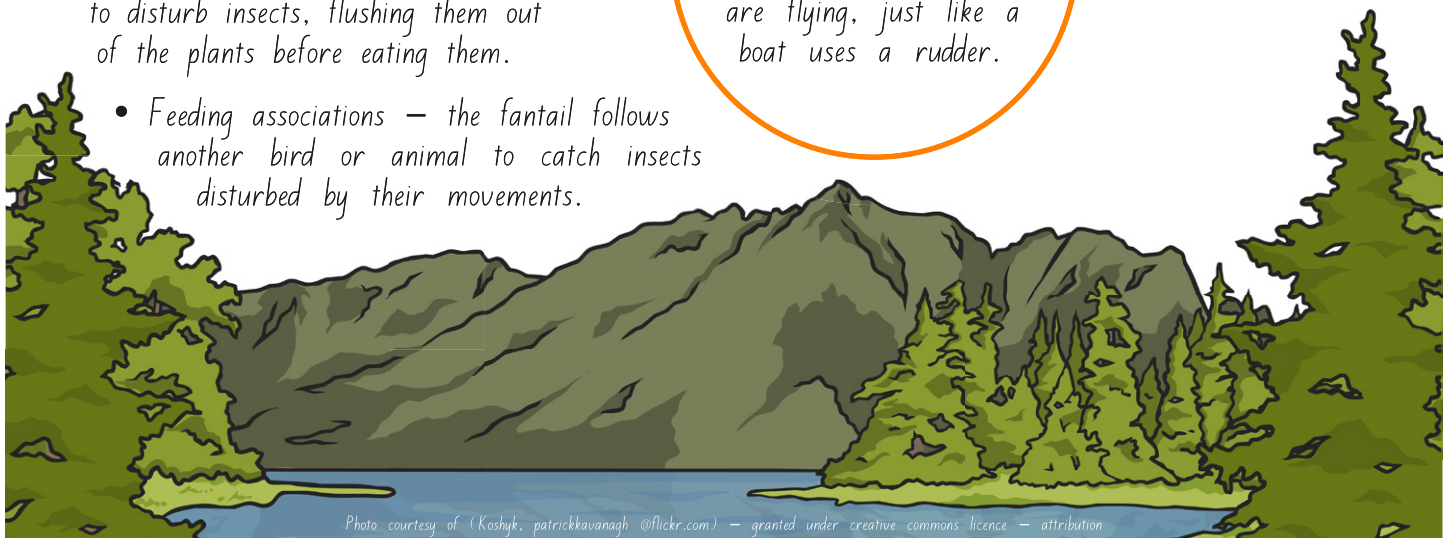


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