

EXPLAINING NEW ZEALAND'S CURRENCY

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WHAT IS MONEY?

In very early history, and at other times around the world, people traded by barter. Someone who wanted a pot or tool might offer to swap something for it, like a sheep.

All that changed when the ancient Sumerians invented writing around 3,500 BC. This made it possible to record accounting information, and recorded credit was born. Money followed, initially in the form of shell 'rings' with notches. Later the Sumerians developed forms of coin.

Money is a measure that stores wealth. It provides abstract value. As the Sumerians realised, it can be recorded as written numbers, or it can be made real in the form of a token such as a coin. Coins of copper, silver, gold and bronze soon appeared in the ancient world. Eventually, and much more recently by comparison, paper money appeared.

Today our society relies on money in many forms, all descended from these Sumerian inventions. We can buy and sell things using coins, banknotes, cheques, credit cards, and by electronic transactions.

WHAT IS LEGAL TENDER?

Reserve Bank notes and coin are legally defined, in the Reserve Bank Act 1989, as 'legal tender'. This is a technical term meaning that, if you owe money, you can clear up that debt instantly with legal tender. The only exception is when both parties agree to a different sort of payment beforehand. What this means, for instance, is that a shop does not have to accept a cheque – but the shop has to clearly indicate to you that it won't before you start the transaction. That's why you sometimes see notices on shop counters to that effect.

Currency can be used to settle any debt in New Zealand, though there is a minor qualification. The law specifies that you can't use large quantities of coin as legal tender when buying larger items. For example, you can use \$1 and \$2 coins to pay any amount up to \$100. For lower value coins, payment can be made for value up to \$5.

The Reserve Bank is the only organisation in New Zealand that can issue banknotes and coins and determine the denominations and design of New Zealand's currency.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CURRENCY IN NEW ZEALAND

Maori did not use currency in the Western sense before the first Europeans arrived in New Zealand. Items of value were traded by barter, and Maori and early settlers traded in this way as well. The problem with barter is that nobody can agree on any standards and much depends on the skill of individual bargainers.

Coins began to circulate among the growing settler community. Most of the coins were British, but there were few banknotes around. This was partly because they were higher value than were needed for transactions. Some transactions were also made with promissory notes or by contract. Coin was also more durable, which was an advantage on the frontier.

The colony grew quickly after 1840.

The Treaty of Waitangi enabled William Hobson to establish a formal government; and the New Zealand Company set up extensive settlements in New Plymouth,



A FitzRoy promissory note.



Union Bank of Australia note.

Wanganui, Wellington and the Hutt Valley, Nelson and Marlborough. Coins were in short supply and individual traders began issuing low-value paper money instead.

In 1843, Governor Robert FitzRoy caused



Bank of Otago one pound note.

a stir by issuing promissory notes – an act for which the Colonial Office finally sacked him. In general, however, notes and coin were in short supply.

The Imperial Coinage Act 1816 was applied in New Zealand from 1858.

However, currency was in very short supply and traders in Auckland and Dunedin began issuing copper tokens. Some 48 traders in all issued penny and halfpenny 'coins', and the last were issued by a Christchurch business in 1881. They had every advantage for the issuing business; apart from the fact that they were good advertising, they were also cheap to produce and many were never cashed in. By this time both British coins and Australian sovereign and half-sovereigns were circulating 'legal' tender in New Zealand.

By the 1890s New Zealand was changing from rugged colony to a better established nation. Political parties and larger bureaucracies appeared, and government began extending its authority, mostly in a kind of catch-up with Britain. Coins were brought under the Imperial Coinage Act 1870, a British law. After 1897, British coin became the only legal tender in New Zealand. Banknotes, produced by the six trading banks, were also in common circulation. However, it was 1924 before they reached an agreement on a uniform design, and banks were not obliged to accept each other's notes, though most did in practice.



Merchants' tokens: top right, J. Caro & Co; above, Milner & Thompson, 1881; left, R. Grattan, 1872.



Above: The only note issued by the Bank of Aotearoa, established by King Tawhaio in the early 1880s.



Right: Trading bank notes, early 20th century.

THE RESERVE BANK ISSUES BANKNOTES

By the 1920s there was a general push around the world to establish central banks for a variety of reasons, including issuing a single national currency. The pattern was set by Britain, where the Bank of England, a central bank like the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, had been issuing currency since the late 1600s. Talk of establishing a Reserve Bank in New Zealand went on through the 1920s. The decision was finally taken in 1930, and steps went ahead to set it up with sole authority to issue New Zealand's currency. Work to design new banknotes began in 1932, and they were issued in August 1934, six months after the Reserve Bank started.

These first notes were intended to be temporary. They had been designed in haste amid heated debate over what they should look like. In the end they included features of the Bank of New Zealand notes already in circulation. The design included a portrait of King Tawhiao, second Maori king, because he had issued notes of his own in the 1880s, a Kiwi, and the Arms of New Zealand. Denominations

were distinguished by colour; 10/- (ten shillings), £1 (one pound), £5 and £50 were coloured brown, mauve, blue-green and red respectively.

The second Reserve Bank issue appeared in 1940, timed to coincide with the centennial celebrations. These notes retained the earlier colours but introduced quite different designs. A new green £10 note was also introduced, and these note designs remained in circulation until the change to decimal currency in 1967.



*Right top: One pound note, Series 1 (1934-40);
centre, ten shilling note, Series 2 (1940-67); bottom,
fifty pound note, Series 2 (1940-67).*

THE CHANGE TO DECIMAL CURRENCY

Imperial currency was relatively complex; pounds were divided into 20 shillings or 240 pence, resulting in 12 pence to the shilling. Guineas were worth slightly more than a pound but not in common use. People became accustomed to doing the fractions, but it was complex and the system of 100 cents to the dollar – and nothing else – was far simpler. The idea of switching New Zealand to decimal currency was raised in 1933 by the New



Zealand Numismatic society, but rejected at the time because of the cost, and – funnily enough – because there was a thought that the imperial fractions were easier for most people to handle. The idea did not go away, however, and there was further talk of decimalisation in the 1950s. In 1957 the Government set up a special committee to investigate; the



Above: Sketch design for Series 3 \$100 note.

idea fell on fertile ground, and in 1963 the Government decided to decimalise — setting the change over, dubbed ‘Decimal Currency’ (DC) day, for 10 July 1967. A great deal of work was required to make the change, including a huge publicity campaign. There were public discussions over what the new decimal money might be called. Words such as ‘kiwi’ and ‘zeal’ were proposed to avoid confusion with ‘dollar’, which most people at the time associated with American money. In the end, though, the word ‘dollar’ was selected, and “Mr Dollar” became the symbol of the transition.

A third series of banknotes was issued by the Reserve Bank as a result, all featuring H. M. Queen Elizabeth II on the face. A fourth series appeared in 1981, to the same design but with some minor differences, largely as a result of a 1979

decision to change the note printer. The contract went to Bradbury Wilkinson & Company, who had built a note printing plant in Whangarei. The main obvious change was an updated portrait of the Queen. A new denomination note, the \$50, was introduced in 1983. In 1990, the Reserve Bank decided to modernise this currency, and after wide consultation the note designs were changed. The designs were slightly modified in 1999 when the Bank switched to polymer bank notes, both as a means of reducing the cost to the public of providing banknotes, and to enable more easily verified security features to be introduced.



Above: Artwork of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II used on the Series 3 decimal notes.



ABOUT NEW ZEALAND'S

BANKNOTES

Up until 1999, New Zealand's banknotes were printed on paper made from cotton. In May that year, the first polymer propylene notes were released into circulation. Today, all New Zealand's notes are made from polymer.

There were two main reasons why the Reserve Bank decided to change to polymer. The average polymer banknote lasts four times as long as a paper note. That keeps the cost of producing money down. Polymer notes are stronger, non-porous, do not get as dirty as paper, and they are easier to make secure than paper, deterring forgers.

DESIGN

The planning, printing and production of a new bank note design is complex. When the decision was made to introduce new design banknotes in 1991, the Reserve Bank consulted widely in order to select the general content of each note. However, this was only the beginning of a lengthy process. Rough drawings were prepared of the images to be used – the people, birds, plants, flowers, watermark, text and colours.

Once these preliminary details had been worked out, specialist artists produced an exact image or sketch of both sides of the note in the correct size and colours with the aid of a computer-based design system.



WHO SIGNS NEW ZEALAND'S BANKNOTES?

New Zealand's banknotes have been signed by the Governor of the Reserve Bank, or by the Chief Cashier, a post that existed until the early 1980s. Ten different people have signed bank notes in New Zealand: Leslie Lefeaux, Governor 1934-1940; T. P. Hanna, Chief Cashier 1940-1953; G. Wilson, Chief Cashier 1953-1956; R. N. Fleming, Chief Cashier 1956-1967; D. L. Wilks, Chief Cashier 1967-1973; R. L. Knight, Chief Cashier 1973-1977; H. R. Hardie, Chief Cashier 1977-1984, S. T. Russell, Governor 1984-1988; Dr D. T. Brash, Governor 1988-2002; Dr Alan Bollard, Governor 2002-present.

PRINTING

New Zealand's banknotes are currently printed by Note Printing Australia in Melbourne. The process for printing polymer banknotes is different in many respects from that of ordinary printing. The note begins as a roll of clear plastic film, the 'polymer substrate'. This is initially printed with two layers of ink, usually white, on one side – a process known as 'opacifying'. Once opacified, the roll is cut into large sheets ready to be fed into the note printing presses. The note printing presses are known as 'simultan' machines, because they print both sides at the same time – and at up to 8,000 sheets per hour. The notes then pass to special 'intaglio' printers. These are no ordinary printing machines; they are capable of applying the ink under great pressure, creating the 'raised' feel on the surface of a note, which is one of the security features. Separate print runs



The 'Millennium' note issued by the Reserve Bank in 1999 to mark the new millennium.

are needed for each side of the note. From here the notes pass into a letterpress machine, which adds the serial number. Today's New Zealand notes use a number that consists of a two-letter prefix, followed by eight numbers. The first two numbers indicate the year in which the note was manufactured. The notes then pass through another machine which gives them two coats of a protective overcoating varnish. This makes the notes more durable and helps keep them clean. Complete sheets of notes are inspected for faults. From here the printed sheets are guillotined into individual notes, which are placed into containers in alpha-numerical order and taken to a computer-controlled system for counting and banding.

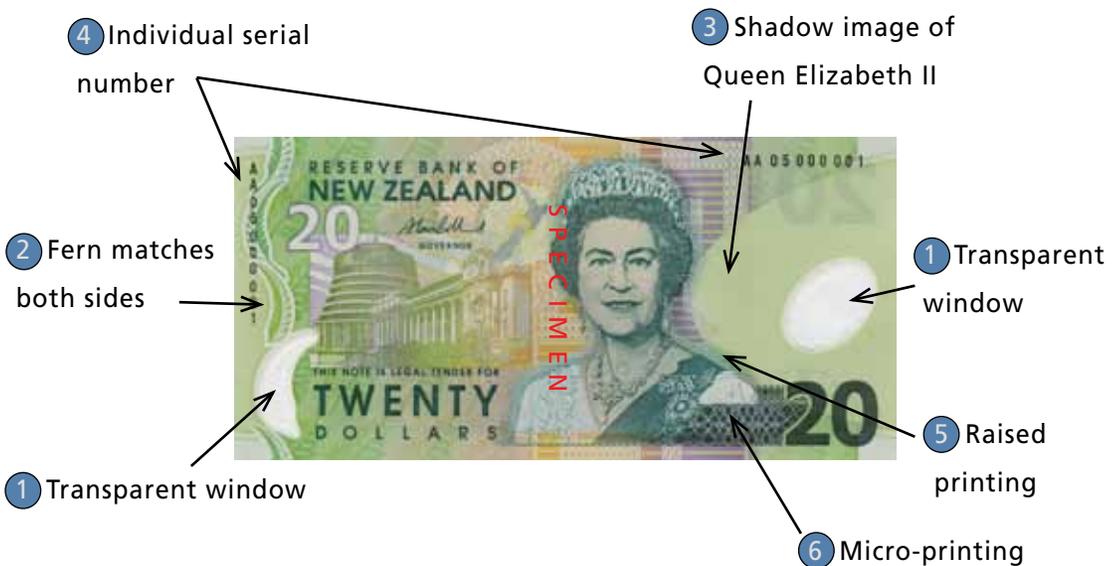


The completed notes are then shrink-wrapped, stacked on pallets, and placed in a strongroom. The final step involves transporting the notes to the Reserve Bank of New Zealand.

Today the Reserve Bank acts as a wholesale distributor; that is, it sends notes in bulk to the banks, and receives back only bulk deliveries of notes for processing. Damaged notes are destroyed, and good notes are returned to the trading banks. Once in the banks, the notes are made available to the public through tellers and cash machines.

SECURITY FEATURES

1. Each polymer note has two transparent windows. One of the transparent windows is oval-shaped and sloping and has the denomination of the note embossed in it. The other clear window is in the shape of a curved fern leaf.
2. There is a fern immediately above the clear fern-shaped window. When you hold the note to the light, the fern should match perfectly with another fern on the other side.
3. You should easily be able to see a shadow image of the Queen when you hold the note to the light.
4. Each note has an individual serial number printed horizontally and vertically.
5. Polymer notes have raised printing, which stands up on the surface and can be felt when you run your fingers over it.
6. Tiny micro-printed letters “RBNZ” should be visible with a magnifying glass.
7. Under an ultraviolet light, the polymer note appears dull. Most commercial papers used in forgeries will glow under an ultraviolet light. However, polymer notes contain special inks, which make particular features glow under an ultraviolet light. For example, the front of each genuine note has a fluorescent patch showing the denomination numerals, which can only be seen under an ultraviolet light. Remember, all images on your bank notes should appear sharp and well defined – not fuzzy and washed out.



DEFACING BANKNOTES

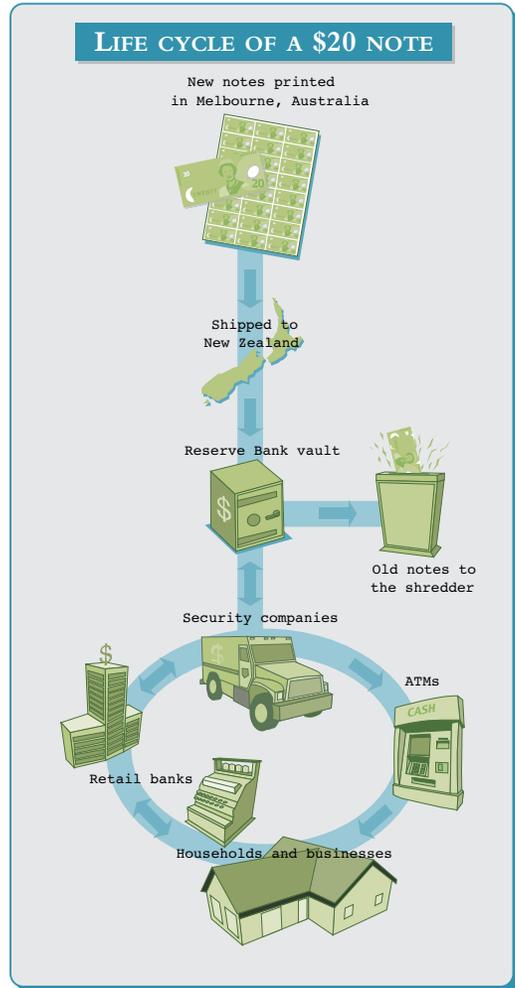
The Reserve Bank Act 1989 says that “No person shall, without the prior consent of the Bank, wilfully deface, disfigure, or mutilate any bank note.” A person can be fined up to \$1,000 if caught defacing a banknote.

ARE DAMAGED NOTES WORTH ANYTHING?

Even badly damaged bank notes may have some value. The Reserve Bank must pay the value of the currency it issues, providing that currency has not been so badly damaged as to be unrecognisable. As a rule of thumb, if you have at least two thirds of a note in a single piece, it is worth full value. If there is less than two thirds but more than one third of the note in a single piece then it worth half face value; and if there is less than or equal to a third of the note then it is valueless. To receive payment on a damaged note, you need to present it to a bank or to the Reserve Bank in Wellington.

DEMONETISED NOTES AND COIN

Once a note or coin has been demonetised, it cannot be used for legal tender. However, the Reserve Bank accepts for exchange any demonetised Reserve Bank coins and notes.



REPRODUCING OR IMITATING CURRENCY

It is an offence to reproduce currency, or produce something that could reasonably imitate or be mistaken for currency, without the prior consent of the Reserve Bank. Guidelines are published on the Reserve Bank's website: www.rbnz.govt.nz/currency/money

NEW ZEALAND'S BANKNOTES

FIVE DOLLAR NOTE



FRONT

Sir Edmund Hillary (1919 - 2008)

Sir Edmund Hillary is New Zealand's best known explorer. In 1953 he was the first to climb Mount Everest, and in 1958 the first to drive overland to the South Pole.

Mount Cook/Aoraki

Mount Cook/Aoraki, in New Zealand's South Island, is New Zealand's highest mountain. It was the scene of Sir Edmund Hillary's earliest climbing successes, and is regarded by Hillary as one of his favourite mountains.

Massey Ferguson tractor

Sir Edmund Hillary drove to the South Pole on these tractors, which required only relatively minor modifications to work in the harsh Antarctic conditions.



BACK

Campbell Island scene

Campbell Island is the southernmost of New Zealand's outlying islands, about 600 kilometres southeast of Stewart Island. The Department of Conservation has eradicated all rats from the island as part of the largest island restoration project in the world.

Yellow-eyed penguin or hoiho (Megadyptes antipodes)

The hoiho has a distinctive yellow iris and yellow band of feathers across the back of its head. The bird is unique to New Zealand and is one of the world's rarest penguins. It is found along the southeastern coastline of the South Island, and on Campbell, Stewart and the Auckland Islands. The species is

threatened by habitat destruction by humans and predation of chicks by stoats, dogs, ferrets and cats.

Subantarctic lily (Bulbinella rossii)

The subantarctic lily produces spectacular yellow flower heads in early summer and grows to a height of about one metre. It is unique to the subantarctic.

Daisy (Pleurophyllum speciosum)

This plant has colourful white and violet flowers and is a giant member of the

daisy family, found on Campbell Island. Here the plants grow close to the ground to avoid wind chill, and have corrugated leaves to help trap the sun's heat and energy.

Bull kelp (Durvillaea antarctica)

Bull kelp can grow up to several metres long, and is found on New Zealand coasts as well as subantarctic islands. It has very tough skin and the strands are honeycombed inside for buoyancy.

SPECIAL NOTES

From time to time the Reserve Bank issues special circulating notes. These are still legal tender, though often retained by collectors in pristine condition. In 1990, the Reserve Bank issued a special \$10 note to mark the sesquicentennial signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, featuring a new design on the back showing the Treaty being signed.

In 1999, the Bank issued another special \$10 note, commemorating the new millennium. This also introduced new security features, notably a clear window featuring two silver ferns. If the note is folded and the map of New Zealand viewed through the clear window, the letters "Y2K" become visible on the North and South Islands.

TEN DOLLAR NOTE



FRONT

Kate Sheppard (1848 - 1934)

Kate Sheppard was a prominent leader of the campaign to give women the vote in New Zealand. She worked tirelessly to organise and promote this cause. A long campaign culminated in 1893 when New Zealand became the first country in the world to give all people the vote.

White camellia

In 1893 white camellias were given to Members of Parliament who had supported the bill to give New Zealand universal suffrage. The flower has become a symbol of the fight for the vote by New Zealand women. The flowers on the ten dollar note are *Camellia japonica alba plena*.

BACK

*Blue duck or whio (*Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos*)*

The blue duck is an endangered species which is found mainly in mountainous



areas of New Zealand. It usually lives in pairs or family groups and prefers fast-flowing river habitats. Now totally protected, the whio is in a serious state of decline. Habitat degradation and introduced predators (notably stoats) are recognised as the primary threats to the whio's survival.

Parahebe catarractae

This riverside plant, a close relative of the hebe – the largest plant group unique to New Zealand – is found only in Fiordland. It grows in crevices in rocks, beside streams and sometimes in the spray of waterfalls. It can grow up to 60cm high and is notable for its trailing stems and attractive purple flowers.

Blechnum fern or mountain kiokio

This is a very common fern throughout New Zealand, which grows best in damp and shady places. In young plants like the specimen on the note, the fronds are tinged pink.

TWENTY DOLLAR NOTE



FRONT

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (1926 -)

This note features an official portrait of the Queen taken at Government House, Wellington, on 26 February 1986 by Ronald Woolf. Her Majesty is wearing the Sovereign's Badge of the Order of New Zealand. The ribbon is based on a taniko pattern.

Parliament Buildings, Wellington

The \$20 note shows two of the three buildings of the New Zealand Parliament, situated in Wellington. The older building, clad in Takaka marble, houses the Legislative Chamber and was completed in 1922. The Beehive Executive Wing, designed by Sir Basil Spence, was begun in 1969 and completed in 1977.

BACK

*New Zealand falcon or karearea (*Falco novaseelandiae*)*

Sometimes called the bush hawk, the New Zealand falcon is an adaptable hunter and



solitary predator. It is seldom found north of Rotorua, and favours isolated bush-clad mountain valleys.

*Marlborough rock daisy (*Pachystegia insignis*)*

This small spreading shrub is unique to Marlborough and North Canterbury. It grows in places such as cliff sides and the edges of scree slopes, and can flourish in areas from sea level to 1,200 metres.

*Flowering red tussock (*Chionchloa rubra*)*

There are 23 species of tussock grass in New Zealand, and red tussock, which has a distinct red tinge to its leaves, is found in both the North and South Islands.

Mount Tapuaenuku, Inland Kaikouras

The highest peak in the South Island's Inland Kaikoura range, Mt Tapuaenuku is 2,885 metres high. The view on the \$20 note is from the east side of the Inland Kaikouras, looking up from the Awatere Valley floor.

FIFTY DOLLAR NOTE



FRONT

Sir Apirana Ngata (1874 - 1950)

Sir Apirana Ngata played a significant role in the revival of Māori people and culture during the early years of the twentieth century. He was the first Māori to graduate from a New Zealand university, was an accomplished leader of the Young Māori Party, and an elected Member of Parliament for 38 years.

Porourangi meeting house

Designed by Sir Apirana Ngata, the Porourangi meeting house stands at Waiomatatini Marae, near Ruatoria on the North Island's east coast.

Tukutuku pattern

The tukutuku pattern was designed by Sir Apirana Ngata and is known as 'poutama porourangi'. 'Poutama' is the style of tukutuku pattern meaning 'stairway to heaven' and 'Porourangi' is the name of the Ngati Porou meeting house which features the pattern.



BACK

Kokako or blue wattled crow (Callaeas cinerea)

The kokako is a large native bird with a distinctive steel-grey body and a black face 'mask'. The variety pictured on the note is the North Island kokako.

Pureora Forest Park

Pureora Forest Park, established in 1978, covers 72,335 hectares close to Taupo in the central North Island. It is one of the most ecologically significant forests in New Zealand, home to a large population of kokako.

Supplejack or kareao (Ripogonum scandens)

Supplejack leaves are eaten by kokako, and the plant forms impenetrable thickets used by the birds for nesting.

Sky-blue mushroom (Entoloma hochstetteri)

This mushroom is notable for its bright blue colour that fades with age.

HUNDRED DOLLAR NOTE



FRONT

Ernest, Lord Rutherford of Nelson (1871 - 1937)

Internationally recognised as the 'father of the atom', Ernest Rutherford changed the basic understanding of atomic science on three occasions: he explained the perplexing problem of naturally occurring radioactivity, determined the structure of the atom, and changed one element into another.

Nobel Prize medal and diagram

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry, which Rutherford received in 1908, is represented on the note. Overlaying the medallion is a graph plotting the results from Rutherford's investigations into naturally occurring radioactivity.

BACK

Yellowhead or mohua (Mohoua ochrocephala)

The yellowhead, sometimes known as the bush canary, is a diminutive and colourful bird. It is found in tracts of native bush



throughout the South Island. Yellowheads are in a serious state of decline as a result of hunting by rats and stoats.

Red beech or tawhairaunui (Nothofagus fusca)

Beech forests are one of the two main types of forest in New Zealand, found in both the North and South Islands, and is the favoured habitat of the yellowheads in the Eglinton Valley.

Eglinton Valley

Located within the Fiordland National Park on the Te Anau-Milford Sound highway, the Eglinton Valley is home to a fine stand of red beech and a declining population of yellowheads.

South Island lichen moth (Declana egregia)

Found in Fiordland beech forests, this distinctively patterned moth blends with the lichens that cling to the trunks of the trees. The caterpillar form feeds on Pseudopanax.

ABOUT NEW ZEALAND'S

COINS

A HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND COINS

The story of uniquely New Zealand coins began in the early 1930s. Although the Reserve Bank controlled the design and issue of banknotes, coins remained with The Treasury. The first true New Zealand 'silver' coins – a 50/50 mix of silver and copper – were produced at the Royal Mint in London in 1933, matching British coins in every respect. Bronze pennies and halfpennies followed in 1940. The 'silver' coins were switched to a copper-nickel alloy in 1947, as a cost cutting measure. When decimal coins appeared in 1967, the sizes were closely matched to the key imperial coins; the 20 cent, for instance, was also a florin; the sixpenny piece became a five cent. One little-known feature was the fact that a weight of this initial decimal coin in 5, 10 and 20 cent denominations would also have the same value, in money, as the same weight in another of these denominations – thus, \$20 worth of 20 cent pieces would have



New Zealand imperial coins: top left, 1940 halfpenny proof; top right, 1937 threepenny proof; above, 1933 florin; above left, 1933 threepenny.

the same weight as \$20 worth of 10 cent pieces.

Rationalisation of government services in 1989 gave the Reserve Bank legal authority over coinage. By this time the effects of inflation had eroded the value of the lowest denomination coins, and 1 and 2 cent pieces were withdrawn from



New Zealand imperial currency.

circulation. They stopped being legal tender in early 1990. The decision to introduce \$1 and \$2 coins was made in 1986, and they were introduced in 1991, made of aluminium-bronze alloy and replacing the \$1 and \$2 notes.

By the late 1990s, New Zealand's cupro-nickel 'silver' coins were among the largest and heaviest in the world, and there was talk of rationalising them. The decision to review the coinage was taken in 2004, and after public consultation, during which over 2,000 submissions were received by the Reserve Bank, the decision was taken to modernise New Zealand's currency and reduce the public cost at the same time. Lighter and smaller plated steel 10, 20 and 50 cent pieces were introduced; and the 5 cent piece – by this time worth less than half a cent had been in 1967 – was taken out of circulation. Forgery of coins is fairly uncommon, mainly because the work required to forge a coin is hardly worth the small reward. Nevertheless, all designs on a real coin should be clearly defined, and it should have a distinct 'ring' when dropped on a table-top, rather than a 'thud'. The \$1 and \$2 coins have special security edging.

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER CAMPAIGN

An extensive public awareness campaign accompanied the change to New Zealand's 'silver' coloured coins, based around the slogan 'Change for the better'.

Small Change

Smaller Change

On 31 July this year, our 10, 20 and 50 cent coins will be getting a makeover. The new 10, 20 and 50 cent coins will all be smaller and lighter. The new 10 cent coin will be copper coloured. And our 5 cent coin will be removed from circulation. The designs on the coins will not change.

If you have been hoarding silver coins, now is a good time to start thinking about getting them out of the bottom drawer and taking them to your bank. You might be surprised how much cash you have accumulated!

Our new small change. It's a change for the better.

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

31 JULY 2006

For more information, please visit www.newcoins.govt.nz

RESERVE BANK OF NEW ZEALAND

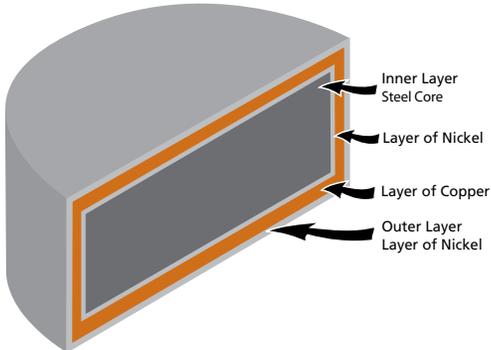
RESERVE BANK OF
NEW ZEALAND

Harold Holt
GOVERNOR

AL 04 15

WHAT ARE PLATED STEEL COINS?

Plated steel coins differ from older cupro-nickel. During the manufacturing process the steel core is covered with layers of nickel and copper, giving the coin its characteristic colour and surface.



Cross-section of the 50 and 20 cent pieces.

New Zealand's plated steel coins are manufactured by the Royal Canadian Mint, in their Winnipeg factory. The photographs on this page show stages in the manufacturing process.



COIN DESIGNS

Designs on New Zealand's coins have not changed significantly since decimal currency was introduced in 1967. These initial coins were intended to match some of the previous imperial currency, for example the 20 cent piece was the same size as a florin. Consideration was given at the time to issuing a \$1 coin; but in the end it was the late 1980s before the two lowest denomination notes, the \$1 and the \$2, were 'coined'. These coins were released in 1990, made of aluminium-bronze, and featured a Kiwi on the \$1 coin and a kotuku on the \$2 coin. A 20 cent piece featuring a Maori 'pukaki' carving was released in 1990, because the kiwi motif was moved to the \$1 coin. The 'heads' design featuring the Queen's portrait was updated in 1986 and again in 1999.



Die for striking a 50 cent coin.



The portrait of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II has been updated twice since 1967. Top left: 1986 portrait, as used on a 1995 coin. Above right: 1999 portrait, used on the 2006 plated steel 20 cent piece.



New Zealand's cupro-nickel 'silver' decimal coins, prior to the change to plated steel, and withdrawn in 2006.

NEW ZEALAND'S COINS



Ten cent coin

Alloy: plated steel

Diameter: 20.5mm

Weight: 3.30g

Design: A Maori carved mask or koruru with Maori rafter patterns.

Twenty cent coin

Alloy: plated steel

Diameter: 21.75mm

Weight: 4.00g

Design: A Maori 'pukaki' carving. The edging on this coin is distinctive and known as 'Spanish flower'.

Fifty cent coin

Alloy: plated steel

Diameter: 24.75mm

Weight: 5.00g

Design: The barque Endeavour, commanded by Captain Cook, sailing south, with Mount Taranaki in the distance.

One dollar coin

Alloy: Aluminium-bronze

Diameter: 23 mm

Weight: 8.0g

Design: New Zealand's national bird, the Kiwi.

Two dollar coin

Alloy: Aluminium-bronze

Diameter: 26.5 mm

Weight: 10.0g

Design: The kotuku (white heron) is one of New Zealand's rarest birds and is held in particularly high regard in Maori mythology.

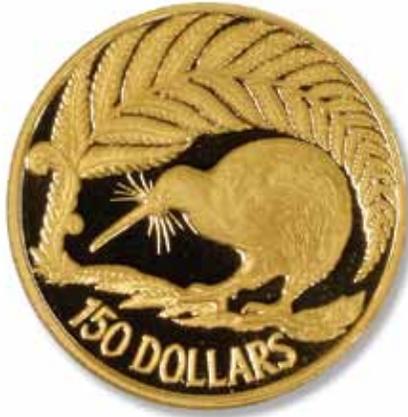


'Spanish Flower' edge detail, 20 cent.

COMMEMORATIVE COINS

To mark special occasions, or to honour special people, commemorative coins are produced from time to time by the Reserve Bank, and are marketed and sold by New Zealand Post Ltd. These coins are legal tender but do not usually enter circulation.

Top: \$1 coin commemorating the royal visit of 1986; far right, a 1997 \$10 coin commemorating the discovery of gold in Gabriel's Gully; right, \$150 proof coin commemorating the 1990 sesquicentennial.



RESERVE BANK OF
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Harold Holt
GOVERNOR

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