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DECORATING AN INADEQUATE LANDSCAPE

Illustrating the acclimatisation of introduced bird species
through wallpaper design.



Ami Rogers - Master of Design Thesis - 2015





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An exegesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Design, College of Creative Arts,
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Abstract

DECORATING AN INADEQUATE LANDSCAPE

New Zealand has the second highest number of introduced bird species of any country (Troup, 2015). This is the result of acclimatisation societies introducing northern hemisphere birds to provide early settlers with European familiarity, ease those afflicted with homesickness and 'enrich' the foreign landscape. Using archival research from the Nelson region, this project employs wallpaper pattern design to exhibit illustrations as a visual display of findings from the period of early introduced passerine bird acclimatisation. The design work functions as a metaphor for the 'decoration' of what was deemed an 'inadequate landscape', and a visual interpretation of written records from one chapter in New Zealand's history.

Figure 1.

Nelson Provincial Museum Tyree Collection.
c.1860s. *Manuka Street, Nelson with scattered
buildings and narrow streets.* Photograph.



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Figure 2.

Goldfinch. Wakefield, Nelson. 2014.
Photograph.

Introduction

I have always had a curious attraction to the wild birds that I saw and heard while growing up in the rural and urban landscapes of New Zealand's North and South Islands.

The native, rare or endangered birds are the species that come to mind when one thinks of the birds of New Zealand. Like many Pakeha New Zealanders, I identify myself as 'Kiwi', a word borrowed from an iconic native bird species that we Europeans have adopted as our own, despite being an introduced species ourselves. While native birds are uniquely important to this country and help to form our national identity and contribute to our iconography, my fascination has always been with the introduced bird species of this country. Most introduced bird species have resided in New Zealand longer than three generations of my family and these birds for the most part are still considered foreign pests.

130 introduced species of birds now reside in New Zealand's forest, bush, gardens, waterways and hill country. What were the reasons for their introduction? How has their introduction affected the landscape of New Zealand as a result? These questions ultimately led to the focus and topic of this Masters project, namely, the result of acclimatisation societies systematically introducing passerine¹ birds to New Zealand, specifically the province of Nelson, which are now abundant in the region and the rest of the country.

¹ Passerine: Sometimes referred to as perching birds due to their talon and leg strength. Passerine birds are small to medium in size and have three toes pointing forward and one pointing back and are often brightly colored. This group includes finches, sparrows, blackbirds, thrushes, skylarks and starlings (Maytnz, 2015).

The design component of this project employs wallpaper design to visually communicate the acclimatisation of these birds. Further, by transforming written records and information sourced from regional historical archives into decorative wallpaper, the design employs visual metaphor to symbolise acclimatisation societies practice of decorating the 'inadequate landscape'.

As an illustrator and visual communicator, representing ideas, narratives and events comes naturally to me. On first discovering the topic of acclimatisation, it became evident that the events accompanying 1860s bird introduction had not been explored or represented a great deal within New Zealand art and design, and that more often than not it is the endemic bird species that are represented and emphasised. In addition to exploring this gap I wanted to push the boundaries and conventions of illustration. Rather than working within the design constraints of a book, poster or journal which employ text and image, I was intent on exercising my skills and knowledge of illustration in a much larger format. This decision consequently led to an exploration of wallpaper design, and the capacity it has to create illustrated pattern design encompassing an entire wall as opposed to pages bound inside a book. Part of this decision came from visiting some regional archives during my research. The archives I visited kept the majority of their documents and records in boxes on shelves and seldom exposed them to the public. I conceived that by selecting some of the archival information and visually representing it through a wall of illustration, this historical information is opened up in a more visually enticing presentation.

This project is not about colonisation of the land or people in New Zealand. Instead, the thesis focuses specifically on Passerine bird introduction and eventual acclimatisation during the 1860s. It is an important and overlooked piece of history, as it helped settlers attune themselves to a new landscape, while allowing them to add diversity to an environment they felt lacked variety.

By creating a series of illustrated wallpaper designs, I aim for the work to become a walled canvas of illustrations, that spatially and figuratively echoes the spread and acclimatisation of introduced birds. The object of this wall of illustration is to translate the written archival information I have uncovered into visual design, bringing the event of introduced bird acclimatisation out from historical records to a much larger audience.

Figure 3.

Female chaffinch. Wakefield, Nelson.
2014. Photograph.



A Brief History

The acclimatisation of bird species is the key topic of this project. Early British settlement began in New Zealand in 1840 after the treaty of Waitangi was signed and the New Zealand Land Company established to progress the population of the 'new land'. The New Zealand company was founded as a commercial operation for investors, and as a solution for improving population growth through allowing surplus population numbers to emigrate from the United Kingdom (Phillips, 2013). British politician Edward Gibbon Wakefield believed that starvation, over population and social distress in Britain could be solved through settlement of the empire's new countries. By further allowing those who could afford it to pay a sufficient price for land in New Zealand, landowners were able to hire labourers work the land for them. To attract these labourers, initial settlers were offered a free passage on the company's ships (see Figure 4) through the advertisement for emigrants in 1839 (Phillips, 2013).

As a new country to the British, New Zealand was a difficult place to settle (Druett, 1983). The open tussock landscapes, marshlands and dense bush were not to European liking. In England, open plains were usually meadows dotted with wildflowers and seasonal woodlands and bordered by hedgerows filled with bird,

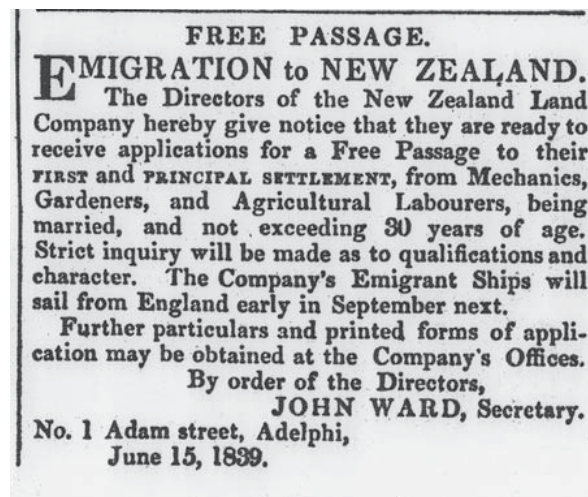


Figure 4.

Sir George Grey Special Collections. 1839. *Free Passage Emigration to New Zealand*. Newspaper advertisement. Permission of, Auckland Libraries.

flowers and animals. New Zealand bush by contrast was considered to be despondent by the first pioneers, with its evergreen trees, shrubs and few flowers (Druett, 1983). As early as 1826 French explorer Jules D'urville Dumont commented on the New Zealand landscape as a place with "No birds, no insects, no reptiles even, this complete absence of any living creature and the

unbroken silence creates a solemn, almost sinister atmosphere” (Druett, 1983, p. 5). Moreover, the labour required to clear land suitable for stock grazing and settlement was a vast and arduous task. Much of the thick bush had to be burnt off so as to allow for grass seed sowing and stock grazing. The hill country was steep, and, aside from Canterbury much flat land consisted of swamps or was not suitable for the growing of crops (McLintock, 1966). Envisioning and building a ‘little England’ on such a rugged landscape, coupled with surviving on a limited diet of fish, traded pork and the few vegetables that would grow made the task more difficult. Across New Zealand, homesickness set in amongst the earliest settlers, who pined for the comforts of the home they had left behind and the opportunity for recreational sport and game. To counteract the nostalgia and melancholy experienced by many of the settlers, gatherings were held to determine the best way to help pioneers settle, and turn New Zealand into the ‘Britain of the South’ (Phillips, 2012).

In order to make New Zealand more habitable it was decided that animals, birds, plants and fish from Britain would be brought to the country on the emigration ships, the main motive being to provide settlers with a more abundant food supply. Acclimatisation societies were formed around the country and arranged for the influx of game animals. Deer and goat species, trout, rabbits, hare, pheasants, grouse and ducks were proposed as not only providing an activity in the form of hunting, but also sustenance on settler dining tables.

Acclimatisation societies had already been in practice in other European settled countries after the establishment of the first society in France in 1854. *La Société Zoologique d’Acclimatation* was the first official society initiated by French zoologist Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. It was established to enable the study of introduced species, while also placing emphasis on the observation and success rates of introduced species into other countries.

Acclimatisation societies soon followed in Britain in 1860 as one paleontologist Richard Owen conceived an England with African Kudu roaming the green fields (Walrond, 2012). Acclimatisors however did not foresee how their introductions would affect an ecosystem. Instead they saw themselves as important contributors to developing fur and timber industries, fishing and game sports, and assisting bringing ornamentation in the form of plants and bird song from the old country (Walrond, 2012). New Zealand is acknowledged as having the most accurate records of acclimatisation, the introduction of species taking place soon after the practice of acclimatisation had been recognised (McLintock, 1966). Such was the case in the region of Nelson.





Figure 5.

Charles Heaphy. 1841. *View of Nelson Haven in Tasman's Gulf, including a part of the site of the intended town of Nelson. 1841.* This painting shows the Whitby, Will Watch and the Arrow ships anchored in the harbour. Alexander Turnbull Library.

Facing page : Detail

Nelson

Set up in 1863, the Nelson Acclimatisation Society was one of the first to be established in New Zealand. I've chosen Nelson not only for its historical records and detailed bird introduction, but also because it is close to my home at the top of the South Island, and my familiarity and personal knowledge of the region serves to add to the thesis. The Nelson Acclimatisation Society is hence the focus of the work, the specific collected documentation of various bird introduction providing the information for the conceptualisation of wallpaper designs, representing a small example of New Zealand acclimatisation.

Nelson was the second colony settled by the New Zealand Company in 1841 as a result of the Company's emigration plans. Captain Arthur Wakefield chose the harbour for its level land, the Maitai River flats adjacent to the harbour and the word of local Maori iwi that the area provided good fishing (McAloon, 1997). The area became known as Nelson Haven and with the arrival of three ships - the Whitby, Will Watch and the Arrow (See Figure 2), the European population began to expand.

Twenty years after the first wave of migration Nelson was a successful settlement. However similar to other settled regions the generation of earliest settlers still pined for the familiarity of their home land. Acclimatisation, having already proved successful through the exotic introduction of animal, bird and plant species in other European settlements, provided a way for people to reclaim a connection to their mother land, particularly for those suffering from severe homesickness. The sense of melancholy amongst some people was a great concern for the early pioneers intent on building Nelson. Those afflicted with severe homesickness were dispirited by the work required of them. Therefore, wealthier settlers felt it imperative that birds and animals be brought to New Zealand to "counteract any sickness and nostalgia that might interfere with the work that had to be done in laying a good foundation for the years ahead" (Sowman, 1981. p. 8).

While acclimatisation was officially recognised in 1863, game bird introductions were well underway. In Nelson, pheasants had already been liberated ten years

earlier by one individual thus providing a much needed food source. On realising that homesickness was rearing its dismal head the society decided that the small more familiar birds of England should be the first to be introduced into the region (Sowman, 1981). English bird breeders in Sydney were the first to receive shipments of birds from abroad, the most desired species were then sent on to Nelson. Charles Elliot (Figure 6) the acting secretary of the Society, ensured that purchases were made in Sydney and entrusted the handling of birds to select breeders. The first of many passerine bird species were brought to Nelson on the sailing ship *The Prince Alfred* from Sydney in 1863. This shipment included the first skylarks, chaffinches and a single goldfinch. Word of their arrival promptly lifted the spirits of settlers in the region. Soon to follow was the arrival of sparrows, starlings, blackbirds, and thrushes. *The Nelson Examiner* and *New Zealand Chronicle* were two newspapers that regularly published developments on the latest bird arrivals and news from Society meetings, reporting on the success of bird acclimatisation (Figure 7).

..by the efforts of our infant Acclimatisation Society supported by the Government of the Province...and a few private individuals, we are likely to see introduced into the country of our adoption, at an early date, all of the more useful birds of our native land...

(Nelson Examiner, 1863. p. 5)

The description of England as their 'native' land and introduced birds as being more 'useful' affirms that many pioneers were not settled in their new country. Their expressed yearning for English birds is evidence of how valuable the birds were perceived in terms of sentiment and identity. Of the birds imported into the Nelson region for sentimental purposes, it was the thrush, blackbird and skylark that were perhaps the most

treasured due to their birdsong. In settled townships the song of native birds was rare due to bush clearing. The blackbird and skylark provided morning and evening song to the settlement and skies. Over the next four months more passerine birds were introduced, including redpolls, greenfinches, chaffinches and yellowhammers.

The introduction of these birds was not without mishap however. For every shipment of birds that arrived safely and in fair health, 75% were lost during the voyage, and the birds that arrived on land were



Figure 6.

Nelson Acclimatisation Society. 1863. *Charles Elliot*, Owner-Editor of *Examiner*, convenor of initial meeting.

It is satisfactory to be able to state that, by the efforts of our infant Acclimatization Society, supported by the Government of the Province, and aided by the enterprise of a few private individuals, we are likely to see introduced into the country of our adoption, at an early date, all the more useful birds and animals of our native land, and of other countries likewise, we hope. Beyond the ordinary domestic animals and birds, the first step towards enriching the country by introducing valuable birds, was taken by Mr. Dashwood, about ten years

Figure 7.

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle. 1863. Volume 127, Issue XXII, 12 December 1863, page 5.

often not strong enough to be released straight into the wild (Sowman, 1981). The ensuing acclimatisation of birds which made it safely to shore was not without failure either. Game birds, including grouse, partridge and smaller passerine birds; robins, bullfinches and diamond finches were introduced multiple times but never established. Despite this, the bird species that acclimatised successfully were celebrated and cherished by settlers. Acclimatisation for most species was quick and within a year many of the birds that had been released had begun breeding, in both native and introduced trees and shrubs, spreading throughout Nelson to the neighbouring province of Malborough. This success was frequently documented in *The Nelson Examiner*, the newspaper published detailed articles of acclimatised species breeding and movements; “...to enjoy again the sweet melody of the woods and field of ‘Old England’, we recommend a walk out to Stoke via Bishopdale or up the Maitai Valley on a bright sunny morning, where may be heard the song of the Lark ,the Blackbird and the Thrush...” (Sowman, 1981. p. 16) . Introduced birds were not only honoured, they were considerably well protected. *The Nelson Examiner* contained advertisements warning that anyone caught capturing or killing birds or eggs would be fined a penalty of £50, the corollary being that at the time English birds were more protected than the endemic birds of New Zealand (Figure 8).

Many bird species continued to acclimatise well, sparrows and starlings in particular reproduced quickly. By 1870 skylarks were breeding in the hills while sparrows had settled in trees and boroughs around the town. The establishment of the birds and efforts of acclimatisors in the years earlier was described as taking steps towards enrichment of the land (Nelson Examiner, 1863). Their ‘enrichment’ of the landscape can similarly be likened to their practice of ‘decorating’ the landscape.

“...to enjoy again the sweet melody of the woods and field of ‘Old England’, we recommend a walk out to Stoke via Bishopdale or up the Maitai Valley on a bright sunny morning, where may be heard the song of the Lark ,the Blackbird and the Thrush...” .

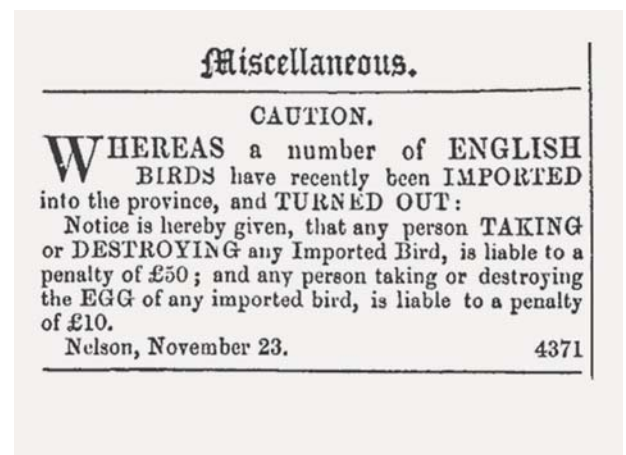


Figure 8.

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle. 1863. Volume 122, Issue 122, 23 November 1863, page 4

BULLERS BIRDS

Toward the end of the first waves of bird introduction, Walter Buller's *History of the Birds of New Zealand* was published 1887. The Dutch artist John Gerrard Keulemans created the illustrations for the iconic book. Working predominately from taxidermied specimens, Keulemans created accurate illustrations of endemic New Zealand birds. The book became immensely popular after publication and today the illustrations are iconic emblems of New Zealand.

In regards to my design work and style, I observed Keulemans ornithological illustrations, such as *Silvereye* and *Bellbird* (Figure 9) for his treatment of line and colour. I was intent on giving my own drawings of introduced birds a similar stylistic treatment. I wanted to represent introduced birds with the same beauty and importance, doing so through a method of traditional illustration.

Figure 10 is my own adaptation of traditional ornithological illustration. The greenfinch required base linework in pen, gouache paint then further linework to capture the accurate character of the bird.



Figure 9.
Keulemans, J.G. 1887.
Silvereye and Bellbird.
Lithographic print.



Figure 10.
Greenfinch illustration,
Gouache and pen.

COLLECTION AND OBSERVATION

Throughout my investigation into this topic I visited Nelson to gather research from the Nelson Museum research facility in Stoke and the Nelson library. The archival centre provided me with the historical documentation, written letters between societies regarding bird importation and records from as far as 1867. Reading through these historical records helped me to determine the passerine birds I wanted to focus my designs on. These were the birds introduced for nostalgic reasons to relieve homesick pioneers. Visiting Nelson gave me the opportunity to observe first hand the results of the Nelson Acclimatisation Society's efforts as I observed passerine birds in the region. Through these observations it was clear the birds had acclimatised well into Nelson, and as Acclimatisors had intended, the abundance of introduced birds was evident in both rural and urban areas. I visited Wakefield, a small village in the region where skylarks have taken residence in the hill country and can be heard singing in the mornings and evenings and planted gardens and native bush are home to blackbirds and thrushes. I took photos, videos and made drawings as recordings, witnessing behaviour, feedings and social interaction within habitat. Observing the habitat of these birds was an important factor when considering how I would place the birds within the design. I watched as a number of starlings feed on native flax flowers leaving with orange dusted beaks. In urban areas sparrows nested together in larger native Hebes and blackbirds and thrushes were as much at home amongst native plants as they were rose bushes.

Attaining recorded evidence in the form of photographs and drawings (Figures 11,12) of the birds in these environments provided further proof of the bird species acclimatisation. All of this evidence was crucial to the conceptualisation of the design as I intended the wallpaper to show introduced birds in a New Zealand environment, amongst native plant species. Researching,



Figure 11.

Sparrow. Illustrations from observation and photographic reference. Pencil.

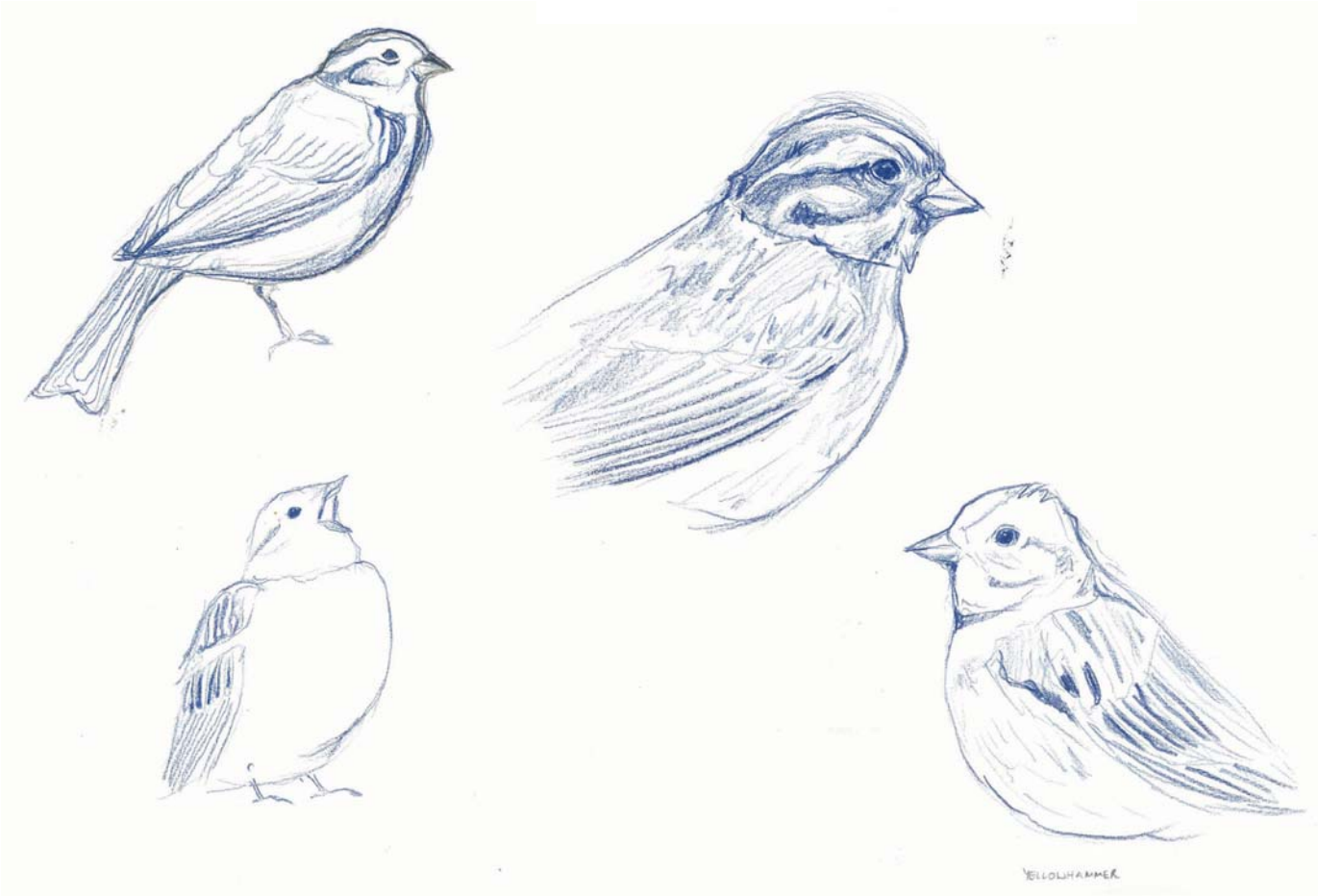
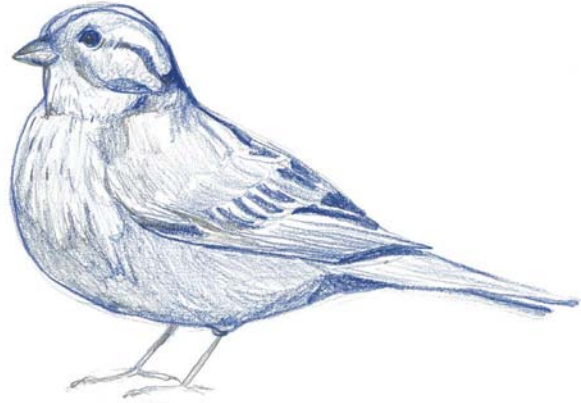


Figure 12.
Bird observation sketches, pencil



Figure 13.
Skylarks in flight. Photograph



Figure 14.
Skylark observation



Figure 15.
Female chaffinch



Figure 16.
Native plants in bird habitats



Chaffinch (male).
Fringilla coelebs



Yellowhammer
Emberiza citrinella Linnaeus

House sparrow (male)
Passer domesticus



Common Redpoll
Carduelis flammæ

European goldfinch
Carduelis carduelis



European greenfinch
Carduelis chloris

Song thrush
Turdus philomelos



Eurasian blackbird
Turdus merula

Common starling
Alauda arvensis



Eurasian skylark
Alauda arvensis

Figure 17.
Passerine bird studies. Gouache
and pen.

reading and handling archival documents from the 1860s and then later watching the acclimatised passerine birds around the region changed my perception of some of this country's overlooked birds, such as sparrows and finches. Understanding the struggle early settlers endured to bring these birds from the other side of the world was furthering my appreciation for their form, beauty, colour and bird song they provide to New Zealand.

I wanted to find further evidence of the positive effects of acclimatisation. This inquiry led me to Australian plant ecologist Angela Moles. Moles investigates how plants evolutionise and adapt to environments, particularly the species that have been introduced and adapted to the Australian climate. Her research has led her to discover that around 70% of the introduced plant species she examined had evolved over the past 100 years. One such example is the clover, originally brought from Britain and which now grows 60% shorter, and as Moles describes consequently 'more uniquely Australian than its European ancestor' (Moles, 2012). While her research only extends to plants in Australia, there is ample evidence in New Zealand that acclimatisation of passerine bird species has resulted in evolutionary changes in birds. Yellowhammers and redpolls in New Zealand have much brighter plumage than their English counterparts, while goldfinch are found in much larger numbers in New Zealand, whereas in England they are relatively rare (Wodzicki, 1984). Further to this, a study was conducted in Nelson in 1995 by two scientists; Peter Williams and Brian Karl and found that species of acclimatised birds contribute to native seed dispersal. Blackbird and thrush faeces were examined during the study and found to contain native seeds of the kahikatea, matai and totara (Karl, Williams, 1996). The evidence thus substantiating that introduced birds contribute to native bush restoration, and have acclimatised themselves to the extent they are able to

There is ample evidence in New Zealand that acclimatisation of passerine bird species has resulted in evolutionary changes in bird species.

Wodzicki, 1984.

Table 2: Summary of all native and adventive fruiting plants present (P) at Eves, Marsden, and Faulkners, and recorded as being eaten by birds, either from faeces samples (F) or from observations (O).

	Location			Endemic birds	Non-endemic birds	Adventive birds				Bird species (n)
	Eves	Marsden	Faulkners			Bellbird	Tui	Blackbird	Chaffinch	
Indigenous fruits										
<i>Alectryon excelsus</i>	P	P			F		F			O
<i>Aristotelia fruticosa</i>	P	P		O	F	F	O	F		
<i>Astelia grandis</i>	P									
<i>Coprosma areolata</i>	P		P							
<i>C. crassifolia</i>			P							
<i>C. grandifolia</i>	P	P		F	O		F			
<i>C. linariifolia</i>	P									
<i>C. microphylla</i>	P									
<i>C. parviflora</i>	P									
<i>C. propinqua</i>	P									
<i>C. rhamnoides</i>	P					O				
<i>C. robusta</i>	P	P		F	O	F	F		F	
<i>C. robusta x propinqua</i>	P									
<i>C. rotundifolia</i>	P			F		F				
<i>C. tenuifolia</i>	P									
<i>Carpodetus serratus</i>	P	P								
<i>Coriaria arborea</i>	P	P		F		F	F			
<i>Dacrycarpus dacrydioides</i>	P	P	P	O	O	O	O		F	O
<i>Fuchsia excorticata</i>	P	P		F		O				
<i>Hedycaarya arborea</i>	P	P								
<i>Iteadanthus micranthus</i>	P	P		F	O	F				
<i>Leucopogon fasciculatus</i>	P					O				
<i>Macropiper excelsum</i>		P		F	F	F				
<i>Melicope simplex</i>	P									
<i>Melicopus micranthus</i>			P							
<i>M. ramiflorus</i>	P	P	P	F	F	F	F		F	
<i>Muehlenbeckia australis</i>	P	P	P	F	F	F	F		F	
<i>Myoporum laetum</i>			P							
<i>Myrsine australis</i>	P									
<i>Neomyrtus pedunculata</i>	P									
<i>Pennantia corymbosa</i>	P	P				F				
<i>Pittosporum anomalum</i>	P									
<i>P. engelmii</i>	P									
<i>P. tenuifolium</i>	P					F				
<i>Podocarpus hallii</i>	P	P		F	F	F	F	F	F	
<i>Prumnopitys taxifolia</i>	P	P	P	F	F	F	F			O
<i>Pseudopanax arboreus</i>	P	P	P	F	O	F	F			
<i>Ripogonum scandens</i>	P	P			O					
<i>Rubus australis</i>	P	P								
<i>Schefflera digitata</i>	P	P				F	F		F	

digest native seeds and fruit.

This research, combined with the lack of art or design celebrating introduced bird species spurred an enthusiasm toward the project. Representing these birds through illustration, and in a medium whereby their stories could be spatially displayed as opposed to being contained in word and archive, became a motivating factor in conceptualising and resolving the design. The history, archival research and evidence of successful bird acclimatisation gave me a set of themes to work into the wallpaper designs. Each story of acclimatisation had to be represented with the appropriate bird species and encompassed all researched aspects of acclimatisation. These became three separate designs : finch, blackbird and thrush, skylark and starling.

Figure 18.

Williams, P., Karl, B. 1996. *Fruit in the*



List of seeds and fruits from native fruiting plants consumed by the European thrush:

- Coprosma
- Kahikatea
- Mahoe
- Pohuehue/ large-leaved muehlenbeckia
- Halls Totara
- Matai
- Pate / Seven-finger



List of seeds and fruits from native fruiting plants consumed by the blackbird:

- Kahikatea
- Matai
- Mahoe
- Totara
- Five Finger
- Pohuehue/ large-leaved muehlenbeckia
- Halls Totara

FINCH DESIGN

Finch species were originally introduced for sentiment and to provide familiarity to landscape (Sowman, 1981). In addition their introduction provided colour to Nelson and thus became the main theme within the wallpaper design.



BLACKBIRD AND THRUSH DESIGN

Similar to other regions around the country blackbirds and thrushes were introduced for their bird song. Futhermore their ability to adapt into the New Zealand landscape and thrive off native tree seeds as evidence of the study, proves how well they have acclimatised. The theme for design thus incorporated the birds and the native seeds they consume and disperse in the bush.



STARLING AND SKYLARK DESIGN

The theme for this design was based on the movement skylaks and starlings added to the landscape and topography of Nelson. Therefore it employed starling flocks and larger individual starlings and skylarks in flight to create movement.



Metaphor as visual language

In addition to the medium of wallpaper, *Decorating an Inadequate Landscape* is a project that explores visual metaphor in symbolically communicating an aspect of New Zealand's history most often found in written form and contained in archival repositories. The use of wallpaper as a metaphorical device for the 'decoration' of this country not only puts on display the sourced information, but does so through my illustrative treatment of each bird species' unique yet familiar beauty. They thus function as a character in the visual narrative and a metaphor for acclimatisation.

Metaphor is frequently used to simplify a complex idea or issue through representation or symbol and often employs natural forms, shapes, colours, patterns and textures. I intended to create wallpaper design as a visual representation of the archival information I had uncovered throughout my research. The birds illustrated in a wallpaper medium allowed them to be a decorative focus, their presence decorating a room as a metaphorical representation of their physical introduction into the landscape. Comparable to the application of wallpaper to a blank room, introducing birds to the landscape added colour, sound movement and a sense of liveliness to the topography.

Figure 19.

First bird paintings and layout. Birds in formations from flight moving down the composition to land. A metaphoric representation of acclimatisation.



Decorative Theory

Throughout history decoration has served as a way of making a space more habitable, more comfortable, more beautiful, through ornamental enrichment, enhancement and beautification. The purpose of decoration is to allow an individual to change their space depending on their personal opinions of design, style or trend, either through furniture, textile adornment or object placement. Decoration and ornamentation are not only important within the domains of architecture and interior structures, but also play a role according to the criteria of pattern and order, and how we interpret our surroundings. The decoration of a space serves to create order, through the use of patterns, negative space, balance, rhythm, colour and symbol. Sir Karl Popper theorized that the perceptual and sensory interpretation of our surroundings begins at birth. As a newborn each person has a clean slate - that is until we start to understand our surroundings and receive knowledge through our senses. Decoration and ornamentation turns space into an area that provides the viewer with knowledge of a period in time, an understanding of texture through touch, a person's particular style, the

affect of colour or light, or the preference for variety in contrast to monotony, or order versus chaos (Gombrich, 1979).

The Theory of Decoration can be linked back to the natural formations and patterns that occur in nature. Art historian Ernst Hans Josef Gombrich states that ornamentation and decoration derive from nature and man's pleasure in exercising order through the art of pattern making and configuration comes from what we see, observe and inspires us.

“Get rid then, at once any idea of Decorative art being a degraded or a separate kind of art. Its nature or essence is simply its being fitted for a definite place: and, in that place, forming part of a great and harmonious whole, in companionship with other art; and so far from this being a degradation to it – so far from Decorative art being inferior to other art because it is fixed to a spot – on the whole it may be considered as rather a piece of degradation that it should not be portable...”

John Ruskin, 1859. Quote from s Lecture Delivered at Bradford.

John Ruskin was a British writer, artist and philanthropist who placed emphasis on the importance of nature in decoration. He was among an early group of critics who had great influence on contemporary art and design in the nineteenth century. In his writings and lectures he theorized that decoration was not ‘inferior’ to fine art and that an object’s function should not be its only purpose, but that it should possess its own level of beauty through decoration (Frank, 2000). Further to this he proposed that an object sits within a hierarchy, the higher regarded the object the more decoration it required. For example, an immobile, well protected wall surface should be adorned with frescoed figurative forms, while handled utensils should have simple geometric patterns (Frank, 2000). Ruskin maintained that beauty in decorative and fine art should come from the imagination of the maker and should be inspired by the natural world. Moreover Ruskin conceived that true beauty could not be learned but rather helped to flourish through the observation of nature (Frank, 2000). In opinion hand crafted objects over machine production served to be more sincere.

Therefore, as I understood Ruskin’s theories of decoration it was apparent that my own design work had an important role decorating an interior space, creating beauty inspired by nature to adorn a wall in the form of wallpaper. As my thesis is intrinsically connected to nature, it was important that I represented that beauty as accurately and skillfully as possible through my own method of craft and choice of medium.

Using wallpaper metaphorically reflects the decoration of the landscape undertaken by early settlers through acclimatisation. It was imperative that I narrow my decorative focus to wallpaper design, examining its role as decoration and analysing case study design precedents.

Wallpaper

A DECORATIVE ART

Since its creation, wallpaper has been a method of decoration that at different times through history has seen great success, fallen out of favour and then been brought back into demand through revived designs. The concept behind it is simple. Anyone can take a pattern, texture or image and transfer that form on to the interior walls of their home. Wallpaper can be used to hide or enhance a wall, play with the architecture and interior space of a home or disguise them. The medium is also contended as a personal statement and exemplifying the creators personal aesthetic (Brittain-Catlin, 2006).

Albrecht Dürer, is acknowledged as setting the standard of appying delicate drawn beauty in a repeating pattern design around 1515 (Hapgood, 1992). *The Satyr Family* (Figure 20) is a wallpaper design created by Dürer from repeating woodcut prints and is regarded by scholars as one of the earliest surviving wallpapers. As wallpaper evolved through time from delicate illustrative Toiles such as Jean-Baptiste Huet's *L'Abrevoir* (Figure 21) to wall murals such as Jean-Julien Deltil's *Vues*

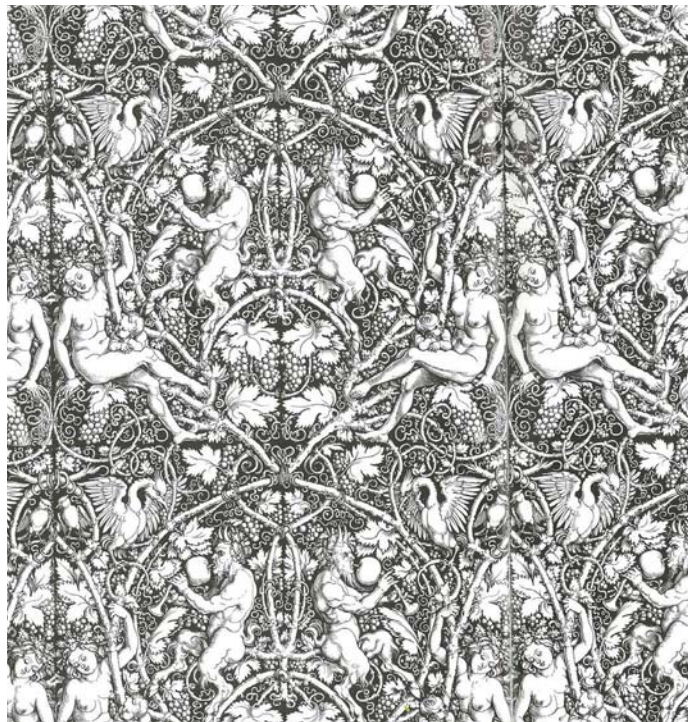


Figure 20.

Albrecht Dürer. c.1515. *The Satyr Family*. Wallpaper woodcut montage.



Figure 22.
A.W.N Pugin, c.1850. *Tudor*.
Wallpaper for the Houses of
Parliament, London.

Figure 23.
Jean-Julien Deltil. 1834.
“Stagecoach and the Natural
Bridge”, from the panoramic
Vues d’Amerique du Nord. Panel
Wallpaper.



Figure 21.
Jean- Baptiste Huet. c.1792.
L’Abreuvoir (The Horse Trough).
Plate printed cotton.

d’Amerique du Nord (Figure 23), there was a distinct emphasis on the value of the interior walls that encased a home. Through times of revival wallpaper was used an alternative to artwork or to signify ones taste or wealth. Furthermore and central to my design work, is the ability wallpaper has to tell a narrative through either geometric or illustrative motif pattern repeats to transform a room into an exhibition space (Figure 22).

As decorative wallpaper has evolved over time and changed accordingly through each art and design era. I felt that to gain an understanding of wallpaper during a period of it’s popularity during the Arts and Crafts Movement.

THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT

Although wallpaper has evolved through various transformations in style from one decade to the next there have always been rules as to how it should be treated. For example, Victorian-era theory dictated there should be a 'clear distinction' between the decorative art and the painted art (Hapgood, 1992). It was insisted that while the artist should paint a flower so as to appear three-dimensional, the decorator should create a flower that was stylized or two dimensional. Aside from Chinese wallpaper and early scenic French decoration it was believed that wallpaper, although decorative, should serve as the background to a room and not be the focal point (V&A museum, 2015). In addition it was held that this 'room feature' privilege belonged to the 'high art' of painting. However, traditional Victorian attitudes regarding the function and purpose of wallpaper would eventually change with the establishment of one textile company, namely, Morris & Co.

The philosophies and works of designer, artist and theorist William Morris (Figure 24) were core to the thesis development. Frequently referred to as the 'father' of the Arts and Crafts movement, Morris first established himself as a textiles designer and later the voice of the movement that opposed the factory produced era of the Industrial revolution through hand craft and beautiful object protestation (Parry, 2013). As a young boy he had visited an Elizabethan hunting lodge and on witnessing some of the tapestries hung within the rooms, he realised that textiles and decoration were more than just mere objects to fill a space, but were capable of representing historical romance and evoking an emotional response that surpassed their physical requirements (Parry, 2013). This experience inspired him to closely examine the role of textiles and furniture as interior decoration. Morris consequently went on to study the works of Ruskin, whose writings and theories challenged the concept of art



Figure 24.
Portrait of William Morris, c. 1878.

in the Victorian era. Ruskin's re-discovery of the Gothic art of the Middle Ages inspired Morris, as too did his ideal of nature. Morris' examination of Ruskin's work, as well his observation of factory labor and the quality of mass production during the industrial revolution provided grounds for his own beliefs that, like Ruskin, challenged the norms of the Victorian era.

As a result his textiles business established as Morris & Co. in 1875 and advocated the importance of traditional craft, which included hand printing through woodblock printing methods (Figure 26). The aim to create products of superior quality, while also placing value on the method of manufacture and treatment of the craftsman.



Figure 25.

Morris & Co. 1883. *Kenne Wallpaper print*. Left is the Woodblock, used to print the textile. Morris returned to hand crafted methods of textile printing

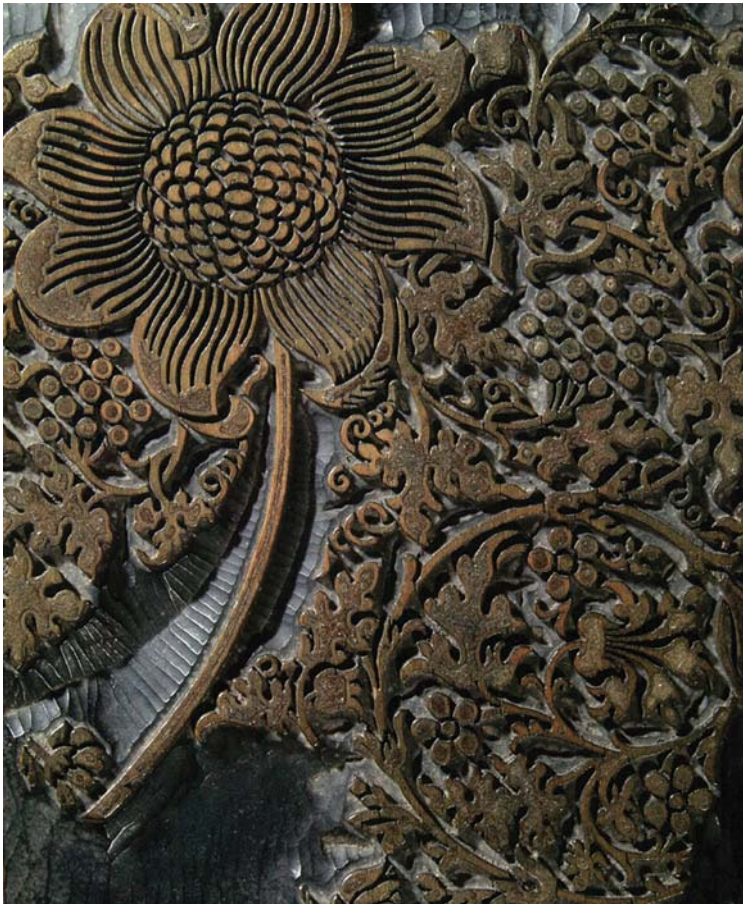


Figure 26.

Morris & Co. 1883. *Kenne Woodblock*. Used to print the textile.



Figure 27.

Morris & Co. 1883. *Strawberry Thief*,
Detail.

William Morris

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

William Morris' ideals and theories of decoration are important in understanding the value of decoration and the role of ornamentation in the home. Further, his work is visual evidence of his application of his theory to his practice. I've always been drawn to Morris' work and as a child owned a colouring book of his patterns. Unlike other children's colouring books, where the figures were more crudely drawn and colours needed not match, I, then aged nine, applied the 'stay inside the lines' rule unquestionably to the blank patterns I felt the colouring book required. My admiration for Morris has continued to inform this thesis resulting in a case study analysis of one of his most important designs.

Much of Morris's intricate pattern textile work relies on the patterns and formations found in nature and typically includes leaves, flowers and a few animals. His designs were created to be applied to walls, drapes, furnishings and ornaments, and many were used to offset the paintings, furniture or other artwork (Hapgood, 1992). The success of Morris' designs was due to his ability to represent nature in an intricate stylised pattern. His designs featured flora common to his mostly European audience and included roses, chrysanthemums,

bluebells, tulips and poppies as well as garden scenes, citrus trees, fruit and vegetables. Morris's designs were complex. This ensured the viewer has to look closely at the pattern to discover the organisation of motifs. His layers of pattern repeatedly interweave with each other, to prevent the viewer's eye from becoming restless or bored as is the case with simple motif pattern repeats (Hapgood, 1992). The effect of layering and interweaving patterns allowed for depth to be applied to a two dimensional pattern.

STRAWBERRY THIEF

Understanding Morris' work, technique and subject matter informed some of the decisions I had to make in crossing over as an illustrator into wallpaper design. As the project explores visual metaphor, I chose to analyse one of Morris' most recognisable works. Of his many designs, the one that I feel best relates to my own work is the *Strawberry Thief* (Figure 27). Printed in 1883, his most complex designs and one of the few incorporating fauna, *Strawberry Thief* was created after he witnessed the



Figure 28.

Morris & Co. Strawberry Thief wallpaper. Right image shows how the colour distribution and motif placement create circular shapes within the design.

thrushes in his garden stealing his seasonal strawberries from his strawberry patch at his home in Kelmscott Manor. He admired the boldness of the small birds and set out to create a pattern inspired by them, capturing the behaviour of the birds. The complexity of the pattern creates a feeling of opulence to the design whilst the subject matter remains a visual representation of everyday life. The use of warm tones brings the birds to the foreground of the composition to become the primary focus of the pattern. The lighter tones of white and pink are repeatedly used through the flowers to assist the viewer's eye to move through the design and follow the symmetrical layout. The bright red strawberries and contrast to both the green and dark indigo blue of the background.

The stylised leaves and flowers create architectural forms around the birds and reiterates Morris' preference for medieval inspired design. As the design is a reflective repeat, circular shapes are created within the design with the help of colour distribution, highlighted this in Figure 28. The narrative of this design drew me to it as inspiration for my own series. The feeding behaviour of the birds might be seen as a nuisance, however their thieving of Morris's strawberries incited creativity within the designer and resulted in a detailed representation of an everyday occurrence.

Just as Morris drew attention to thrush behaviour through the Strawberry Thief, my own design draws attention to both blackbirds and thrushes behaviour



Figure 29.
Morris & Co. *Strawberry Thief*. Indigo.
Wallpaper sample.



Figure 30.
Morris & Co. *Strawberry Thief* in
chocolate. Wallpaper sample.

in the Nelson bush. The design is contextualised from the Karl and Williams research study of seed dispersal in Nelson. Both these birds contribute to native bush regeneration as they eat and disperse native plant seeds.

Provided with evidence of the behaviour and diet of these introduced passerine birds, I design the wallpaper as a step pattern, each bird paired with a corresponding native plant and seed. Similar to the thrush holding a strawberry in its mouth in Morris' design (Figure 30), I placed native Karamu seeds in the mouth of my own thrush motif as an illustrative reference to their ability to eat and aid with native seed dispersal.

Timorous Beasties

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

The second designer case study is the contemporary wallpaper company Timorous Beasties. Set up in Glasgow in 1990 by two designers, Alistair McAuley and Paul Simmons. Timorous Beasties combine their admiration of nature and the re-purposing of historic design and methods, in the variety of their hand printed and digital textile designs on wallpaper and fabric. Like Morris, these designers look to Ruskin for their design principles and to nature for much of their design inspiration. McAuley and Simmons state that “the art critic John Ruskin related a universal connection between nature, art and society. Timorous Beasties share a similar world view, where plants, animals and society are visually inextricable”(McAuley, Simmons 2015). Both designers grew up in houses decorated with

wallpaper, and wanted to bring elements of traditional designs into a contemporary light, while utilizing motifs from nature. Many critics describe Timorous Beasties’ work as a new take on the ‘twee’ world of wallpaper. Twee, by definition means to be sentimental or quaint. However when applied to textile design, describing wallpaper as ‘twee’ carries negative connotations of being old-fashioned or conservative.

Despite this, Timorous Beasties’ designs are anything but quaint. They consistently employ experimental colour palettes and concepts juxtaposed with pre-modern themes (Pester, 2006). Simmons says they continuously look to the past for repeats and patterns both within textiles and structures as inspiration. The results are very process driven and they often observe what is around

“The art critic John Ruskin related a universal connection between nature, art and society. Timorous Beasties share a similar world view, where plants, animals and society are visually inextricable.”

McAuley, A. Simmons, P. 2015



Figure 31.
Timorous Beasties. *Ruskin*
Collection.

them to create contemporary versions of older designs. As my project's style of illustration references ornithological drawings of 1800s, I selected for analysis Timorous Besaties' floral and botanical work. In keeping with their company's name McAuley and Simmons employ many kinds of 'beasties' (Figure 31) in their work; bees, birds, butterflies and beetles fly and crawl across their designs (Pester, 2006). Botanical imagery serves as a kind of muse to Timourous Beasties, but rather than being small chintz-like emblems of animals and foliage, they are exaggerated, covering expanses of fabric or wallpaper. An example is their textile collection titled *Ruskin*, inspired by both the critic and nature and includes their popular *Birds n Bees* wallcovering (Figure 32).



Figure 32.
Timorous Beasties (2015).
Detail from *Birds n Bees* linen
print.



BIRDS N BEES

Birds n Bees is an example of one of Timorous Beasties' most successful wallpapers. It employs traditional ornithological and botanical illustration in a contemporary design. I've chosen to analyse this design as a precedent to my own work, particularly for the treatment of birds and foliage.

This design uses colour as to emphasise the bird motifs and bring them to the foreground, immediately drawing the eye. Aside from a few coloured leaves and flowers around each bird motif, the remainder of the twisting foliage is printed in linear illustrative style in a neutral tone. The tone of the foliage changes depending on the background colour of the design.

Movement is created in the design with the addition of the smaller flying bee motif. The birds remain stationary as the bees add a layer of interest. Rather of focusing on one plant or animal, the design is a blend of fauna and a contemporary adaptation of old scientific illustration.

Analysing Timorous Beasties work provides a precedent to my own designs in terms of colour, tone and line treatment. Looking at *Birds n Bees* as a precedent to my finch design emphasises the importance of colour. Particularly as the theme of my finch wallpaper design is the addition of colour to the landscape after as a result of acclimatisation.

Figure 33.

Timorous Beasties. *Birds n Bees*
Wallpaper in Frost.

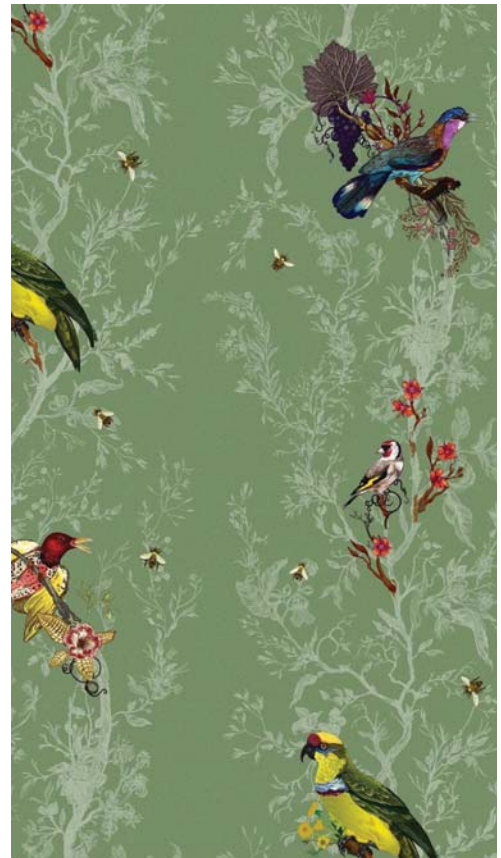


Figure 34.

Timorous Beasties. *Birds n Bees*
Wallpaper in Garden Green.

Ben Masters

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

My final case study analysis looks at the work of New Zealand wallpaper designer Ben Masters, owner of PaperHands, a Martinborough based wallpaper company. Ben and his wife Helen saw a gap in the market for handcrafted New Zealand designed wallpaper while searching for something for their own home in 2009. The company offers a diverse range of designs that are distinctively contemporary without the typical kiwiana motifs.

Masters' favourite design *Native* exemplifies this. He refused to feature the stereotypical emblems of 'Kiwiana'; the Buzzy Bee, Pavlova or jandals, but focused instead on the native plants and animals he considers symbolic of New Zealand but used less frequently in design. *Native* consequently features the kowhai flower rather than the pohutakawa, the tui rather than the kiwi and crayfish rather than the paua as symbols of Aotearoa.



Figure 35.

PaperHands. 2010. *Native* wallpaper design in mid grey-light grey. Ben Masters.

OH DEER

In addition to featuring well known but less represented New Zealand motifs, PaperHands also employs motifs in design that demonstrate how the country has changed with the introduction of European animals and people.

While designs like *Native* pays respect to the native New Zealand, Masters has created a design called *Oh Deer* which is a modern twist on the mounted trophy deer head. First introduced by acclimatisation societies in the 1860s, wild deer now inhabit many parts of New Zealand's forests and hill country. Considered a pest by the Department of Conservation, it is nevertheless undeniable that deer bring tourism to the remote parts of the country. Hunted for sport, their trophy heads and antlers adorn many a living room wall. *Oh Deer* is a design that acknowledges this. Masters says the original idea behind the design was to create a more masculine wallpaper to add to the range, adding that deer are often part of interiors but rarely used in wallpaper (B.Masters, personal communication, Feb 12, 2015). Both the head and hide repeat as a length, the deer head sits within the negative space between the motif of the hide. The design is available in lighter pastel prints (Figure 36) and provides a whimsical take on the seriousness that surrounds the sport and the animal itself.

Figure 37.

PaperHands. 2010. *Oh Deer wallpaper design* in Grey/Blue, Mint/Silver



Figure 36.

PaperHands. 2010. *Oh Deer wallpaper design* in silver 30% / Chocolate. Ben Masters.





In contrast to a majority of New Zealand art and design, *Ob Deer* is a design that acknowledges an introduced species. Therefore this design is an appropriate case study precedent in terms of its subjective matter. In relation to my own design it celebrates a species in New Zealand that is sometimes overlooked, similar to introduced passerine birds. While native species make New Zealand unique, Masters says there is something about the form of a deer which provides a distinct visual and graphic image, and does well to market the variety of species in our landscape internationally.

Figure 38.

PaperHands. 2010. *Ob Deer*
wallpaper print in Mid Grey/Light
Grey. Ben Masters.

The Design Process

The archival research and analysis of work undertaken in the early stages of my thesis gave me a great amount of information on the topic of acclimatisation and wallpaper design. My next challenge was synthesising this information into a design solution that brought the archival findings and research out into the open.

The findings from the research resulted in a set of three themes, each one a representation of a different effect of passerine bird acclimatisation and behaviour of each group of birds. To successfully show this within the wallpaper designs I illustrated the birds as symbolic motifs of the themes. These motifs were supported by illustrative patterns and linework of plants which specified each design to the region of Nelson. These three themes were colour, seed dispersal and flight pattern.



Figure 39.
Early iteration of Finch design

ILLUSTRATION AS WALLPAPER

Using wallpaper as the medium proposed a new set of challenges throughout the design thinking and subsequent design process. I had to learn to adapt my illustrated images into repeating motifs. It was imperative I understood repeat networks and how they were created, motif placement and size, negative space and colour distribution across a composition. These were all new design components I had to synthesise into my design thinking in order to create a successful wallpaper series.

Motif

William Morris' *Strawberry Thief* design demonstrated a complex repeat network that employed reflective pattern. My own designs did not employ a reflective or symmetrical pattern, however I looked to William Morris for treatment of motif, particularly the thrushes in the *Strawberry Thief*. The birds in this design are the focus of the composition due to the distribution of colour and the size. Throughout my own designs it was important that I placed emphasis on colour and motif placement to ensure the birds were the focus of the pattern.

Repeat pattern

A second challenge of wallpaper design was understanding repeat networks. As an illustrator I'm accustomed to drawing images that work to a margin. Wallpaper by contrast is a continuous repetition of images. Therefore I had to alter my design thinking to ensure my design process and image making worked across an expanse of space. In my initial experiments I trialled different methods of pattern making to understand repeats. This included symmetrical repeat patterns and swiss repeat, which is a method used to create seamless repeats. In addition I had to understand how each repeat functioned as to create patterned wallpaper, repeating both side to side and top to bottom. One of my design works as a repeat, side to side and up and down, the other two work side to side, but need to be adjusted for specific ceiling heights, which the advent of digital wallpaper printing allows for.

FINCH DESIGN

The main theme of the finch design was colour. These birds were some of the first to be introduced and therefore the design had to represent the idea of colour being a supplement to the landscape. This first design became the most complex of the three designs as I wanted to place six different species of birds within the composition. Each species has different coloured and patterned plumage; Green, red, yellow, ochre, blue, grey and black different in shades and tones. Thus it was important I balanced the composition through their placement

This design represented introduction of colour to the landscape as the birds moved from flight to rest down the length of the design, eventually settling amongst native foliage. To achieve this idea successfully I trialled a number of mock up designs. These mock ups allowed me to work with the colour distribution and shapes of the birds on a smaller scale, before beginning large test prints on lengths. This ensured I created a balanced design showing the bird's descent (Figures 40, 41).

To keep the design specific to Nelson, the next process was adding illustrations of native foliage from the region into the composition. This foliage is found in the valleys, hill country and sub-alpine habitats of the birds. I referred to my photographic evidence and resources for specific plant information.

In addition I visited native garden nurseries for information on where each plant grew or was found commonly through the area. This included Hebes, mountain daisy and flax (Figure 42)



Figure 40.
Early iteration of Finch design



Figure 41.
Later iteration, finalising the design.



Hebe Topiaria



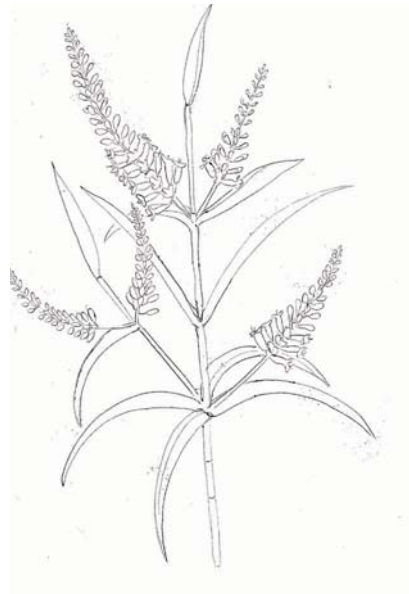
Miniature Toe Toe
Chionocbla Flavicans



Nelson Hebe
Hebe Albicans



Mountain Daisy
Celmisia semicordata



Hebe White Lady
Hebe stenophylla

Figure 42
Nelson plants, linework

Adding elements together

The first rough composition mock ups served as a basic layout for the birds. The layout was further strengthened as the final copy paintings were created and foliage rendered into the design. The birds were brought forward from the background and the environment represented as 'inadequate' through linework and grey tones . Figure 43 shows the initial illustrated birds at settled within their environment of native plant foliage.

Colour, line and tone.

Figure 42 shows the inclusion of the background foliage with line treatment. The use of line drawn foliage allows the gouache rendered birds to remain the focus of the design. Changing the contrast created more depth to the composition. In Figure 44, I altered where the birds were placed by using shapes of foliage in the foreground in grey tones. The birds were rearranged to distribute colour evenly. The colour distribution created balance between the bright yellows, green, warm reds and oranges of different plumage.

Figure 43.

Working out bird motif placement and distribution of colour



Figure 44.

Design developments with final paintings and foliage



Figure 45.

Design developments with final paintings and foliage



Figure 46.



Figure 47.

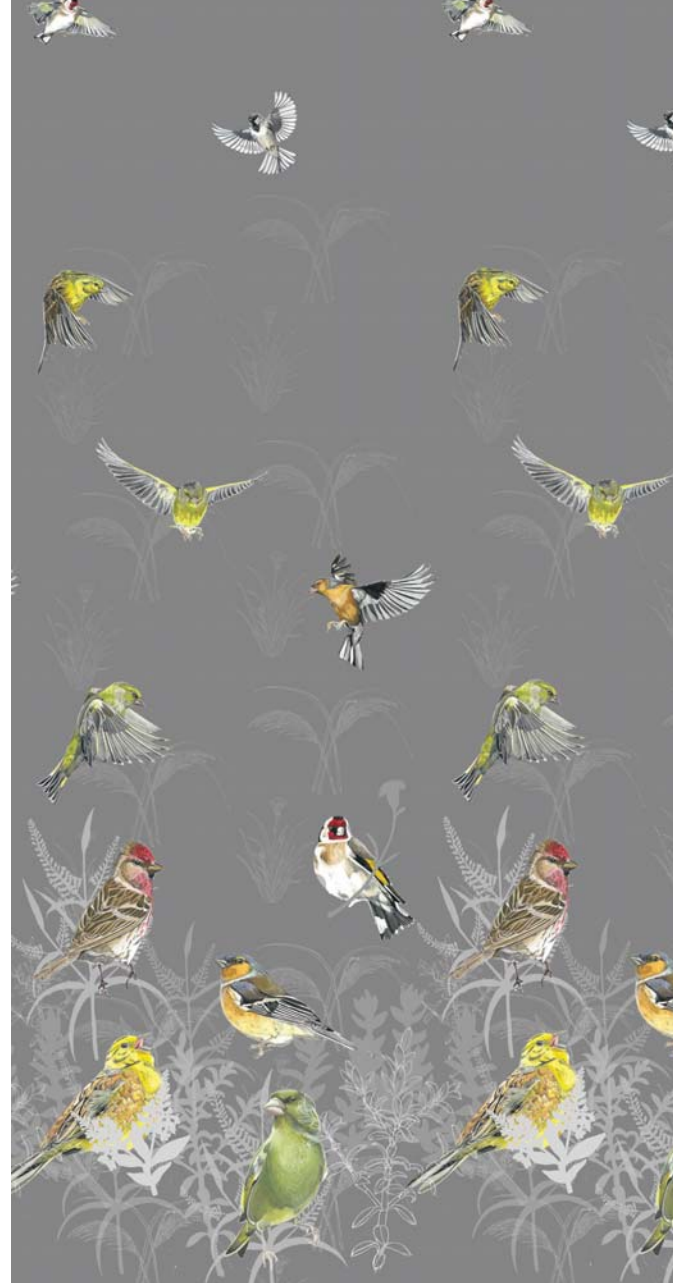


Figure 48.

Progression of design

Figure 46 shows the first rough layout of the birds. In figure 47 a repeat background design of grass and Mountain Daisy motifs was created. These background plant motifs are commonly found in Nelson gave the design more context while also adding another layer of depth. Furthermore they give the design a system of repeat pattern, a tool in wallpaper design I wanted to trial and understand through the design process. The background motif balances the shapes of the birds and draws the eye down the length of the design.



Figure 49.
Design development



BLACKBIRD AND THRUSH DESIGN

Both these species added bird song to Nelson, adapting well into the bush and now contribute to bush regeneration through seed dispersal. This design incorporated the birds, fruits and seeds from native plants. This included matai, totara, karamu and flax.

The repeat for this design was a drop repeat pattern, the repeats works across as well as down the wall and can be hung as a half drop. I chose this pattern as a contrast to the length repeat of the finch design and to broaden my understanding of repeat patterns. Therefore the birds sit on alternating branches of a stepped design (figure 51) and repeat down the length in columns. The birds are placed in stationary positions on each branch as a reference to their acclimatisation to the native bush, and a contrast to the other two designs which incorporate flight.

Colour, line and tone.

During the iteration process of the first mock ups for this design I experimented with more coloured foliage. However this detracted from the birds and I returned to a simpler design that allowed the birds to come forward from the linear foliage drawings and a neutral background. The birds of this design are the metaphors for the decoration of the bush.



Figure 50.

Illustration native plants



Figure 51.
Colour development



Figure 52.
Design developments with
final paintings and foliage



Figure 53.
Adding background colour.

Furthermore the design acknowledges my analysis of William Morris' case study. The small colour addition of a Karamu seed in one of the thrush's beaks in my own design is a small a refernce to Morris' thrush and strawberry.

In contrast to Morris' design which employs a vast number of vivid colour, my own design remained neutral, aside form the birds. The only addition of bright colour was the red berry, which draws the eye directly to the thrush.



Figure 54.
Illustration of Karamu seed



Figure 55.
Design finalising.



STARLING AND SKYLARK DESIGN

This design was based on the movement skylarks and starlings added to the landscape and topography of Nelson after acclimatisation. Therefore it employed flocks and larger individual starlings and skylarks in flight to create movement.

In the first iterations of this design experimented with flock movement across the page. Starling flocks or murmurations move in synchronised flight as a unison. I analysed starling murmurations during visits to Nelson and from video recordings to gain an understanding of their formation and how they move over the landscape. From this analysis I developed drawings and sketches of different flight patterns and found they created a textural effect. These textural shapes became symbolic of both flight and the topography of Nelson. The configuration of the starling flocks mimicked the shape of the hills of the landscape. I balanced these shapes this with larger motifs of both species in flight to further emphasis the theme of this design. Skylarks were equally important to the design due to the sentimental value and birdsong they provided to Nelson after acclimatisation.

Repeat Pattern

In contrast to my previous designs, this wallpaper employed bird motifs that were all in flight. Furthermore the design utilized a composition that was more top heavy. I balanced the negative space of background the flocks with the larger motifs. As I was using birds of three different scales, the design needed to utilize negative space, as a break from the textured pattern of the flocks. These areas of negative space also create a sense of calm to the design.

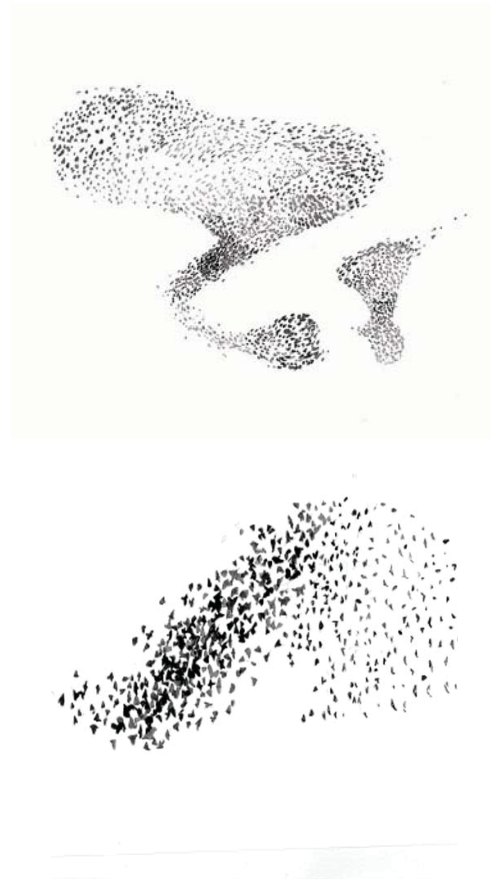


Figure 56.

Illustration of flight patterns



Figure 57.
First iteration draft



Figure 58.
Mock up with colour .



Figure 59.
Design iteration

Colour, line and tone

To emphasise the design as more 'top heavy' I illustrated the flocks to change in tone from dark to light. This draws the eye down the length. The birds rendered in gouache provide a slight variation of colour. The starlings patterned plumage reflects the dotted texture of the flocks, while the skylarks provide warm tones to the blue backdrop. The foliage of the region is represented through the line drawings of tussock grasses, commonly found in the hill country. Rather than settling amongst the foliage, the birds remain in flight, as a contrast to the formations of the birds in other two designs.

The final design solution is a series of three wallpaper designs that display the decoration of the landscape as a result of acclimatisation. Each design is printed digitally and allows for ceiling height and pattern adjustment.



Figure 60.
Design finalising



Conclusion

This thesis was inspired by my fascination with the introduced birds of New Zealand, and in particular the passerine birds introduced during the period of New Zealand's settlement and now common throughout the country. My fascination led me to question how they came to be here, what the reasons were for introducing them and how they became acclimatised. In doing so I uncovered archival information from Nelson and an understanding of early settlers' need for familiarity in the form of introduced passerine birds.

It also led me to question how I, an illustrator with an interest in botanical illustration could represent their stories through the language of illustration and through the design medium of wallpaper.

Representing this information via the design medium of wallpaper required expanding my illustration practice and working outside the parameters of visual communication design. In addition to serving as a format to exhibit archival information, wallpaper served as a metaphorical device for symbolically conveying the decoration of the New Zealand landscape. It also presented me with a challenge as I crossed over into a new area of design. Designing for a wallpaper medium

required I understand the discourse of textile design and the technicalities of repetitive pattern, motif, scale, colour distribution and drop repeats. In addition I had to learn to visually communicate a set of themes through these rules.

The themes of colour, flight patterns and bush regeneration are represented through the illustrative style as pattern repeats. The designs show these elements have been added to the landscape with the introduction of finches, blackbird, thrushes, skylarks and starlings. The final designs consequently work together as a series to bring archival research from inside books and onto the wall, creating a dialogue about the birds frequently overlooked and rarely featured in New Zealand art and design, but are nonetheless an important part of our country's history.

I propose that the illustrated wallpaper designs could be displayed in archival museum spaces. One such space is the Nelson Provincial Museum research facility. The research curator has expressed interest in exhibiting the work within the space. The project could also be taken further by displaying at bird sanctuary centres in the region that are partnered with the research facility.

To do this I would further develop the designs and explore a variety of introduced bird species, aiming to experiment with more of my new found skills in wallpaper design.

I believe that my thesis design work successfully synthesises my investigation and research analysis and meets my design aim. It demonstrates my ability to apply my illustration skills in a cross disciplinary realm and create spatial illustration representative of bird acclimatisation.

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