

New Zealand's Natural History

Naturetrek Tour Report

6-24 November 2006



Mount Cook

Steve Wakeham



Wandering Albatross

Steve Wakeham



Blue Duck

Ron Marshall



New Zealand Dotterel

Steve Wakeham



Salvins Albatross

Steve Wakeham



Rock Wren

Ron Marshall

Report compiled by Wynston Cooper



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Maggie Holland
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Day 1

Monday 6th November

Auckland – Muriwai – Cascade Kauri

Weather: Mild and partly cloudy.

Ann and Alan were met on their 05:45 arrival at Auckland International Airport by the tour leader, Wynston Cooper of Nature Quest New Zealand, and transferred to the Hotel Grand Chancellor in downtown Auckland where the other members of the party who had arrived earlier, and co-leader Geoff Henderson were waiting. After introductions all round, a shower, and a coffee or two, we were off to begin our explorations.

Auckland, the largest urban area in New Zealand, contains more than a third of the country's total population and thereby suffers from the same traffic congestion problems as many other major cities around the world – most noticeably crawling lines of vehicles on motorways! Centred on an ancient volcanic field on a neck of land bounded in the west by the Manukau harbour and in the east by the waters of the Hauraki Gulf, it extends far to the north and south.

We soon began to see a wide range of species, albeit mainly introduced ones such as Common Myna, Starlings, House Sparrows, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes, often in densities now seldom seen in their English homeland. Other roadside species included Pukeko (Purple Swamphens), Masked Lapwings (known as Spur-winged Plovers here in New Zealand), Welcome Swallows, and the occasional White-faced Heron.

At Muriwai (40 km NW of central Auckland), we were greeted by a New Zealand Pipit and then viewed some Variable Oystercatchers and a large male New Zealand Fur Seal on the beach below before visiting the colony of Australasian Gannets.

Originally occupying a distant offshore island the gannets soon spread to closer stacks and then the mainland, where they can now be viewed at close range from two lookout points. The colony was at all stages in its breeding cycle - some birds displaying or prospecting for nest sites whilst others had eggs or downy chicks. We were also able to appreciate the Red-billed Gulls and White-fronted Terns that were nesting on the cliffs near the gannets.

After purchasing our lunch from a roadside café in Kumeu we headed for Cascade/Kauri in the 18,000 hectare Waitakere Ranges Regional Park – a remnant of the previously much logged Kauri forest that once dominated

the area. Here we ate our lunch on a grassy bank, as we watched Welcome Swallows swoop to and fro, spotted a Bellbird, a few Tui, and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

After our lunch we wandered along a walking track that followed a stream through part of the forest, enjoying the many species of unfamiliar trees, tree ferns, and palms and being introduced to a number of native New Zealand birds – Fantails, tiny Grey Warblers (*Gerygone*), and plump New Zealand Pigeon to mention but some. Another short track took us to the foot of a huge Kauri tree with a 6.5 m girth. (Second only to the Sequoias in size on a world scale, Kauri are characterised by a massive non-tapering trunk free of limbs to a considerable height before branches spread out into a great crown. While the species averages about 30 m in height, some exceed 50 m. Originally spread over some 1.2 million hectares, today less than 150 ha of pristine Kauri forest remains.

Day 2

Tuesday 7th November

Miranda

Weather: Fine, partly cloudy, “breezy”.

Waders were our target today and we were soon leaving Auckland behind as we headed over the Bombay Hills on our way to Miranda on the Firth of Thames.

The drive took us through rolling green pasturelands similar to those seen the day before. Encounters with Australasian Harriers were quite frequent and a few Wild Turkeys were seen in the fields.

The Firth of Thames which extends north from the Hauraki Plains is flanked by the bush clad hills of the Hunua Ranges to the west and the Coromandel Ranges to the east, and is renowned for its rare 'Chenier' plain geology of shell ridges and infilled mud. Its 8,500 hectares of flats attract thousands of migratory wading birds from home and abroad. Listed as a wetland of international significance under the Ramsar Convention, it is also an officially designated site on the East Asia-Australasia Shorebird Site Network which seeks to identify and protect key stopover sites used by migratory birds on the journey between their Arctic breeding grounds and wintering sites in Australia and New Zealand .

The Miranda coast is the most important wintering ground for Wrybill Plover, an endemic species which is unique among birds in having a bill curved to the side. The estimated total species population is only 5300, up to 40% of which flock to Miranda at the end of the breeding season. Another species of note that breeds here is the New Zealand Dotterel.

First stop was the Shorebird Centre where we obtained an update on the species recorded in the area recently before we headed for the main roosting sites at the “Limeworks” site just down the road.

White-faced Heron, Pied Stilt, Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (6), Lesser Knot, White Heron (Great Egret), South Island and Variable Oystercatchers, Banded Dotterel, Red-necked Stint (3), Black-billed Gull, and Caspian Tern were soon added to our list. We also soon had the first of a number of excellent views of Wrybill Plover. However, of our other target species, the New Zealand Dotterel, there was no sign.

Similarly, despite our best endeavours we were unable to sight the lone Black-tailed Godwit that was said to be amongst the several thousand Eastern Bar-tailed Godwits.

We returned to the centre for lunch and the warden (Keith Woodley) gave us a short talk on the ecology of the area and the work of the Miranda Naturalists' Trust – not least of which has been the establishment of a “sister site” relationship with the Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve in the Republic of China.

Then it was off to the mouth of the Taramaire Creek followed by another stop at the Stilt Ponds in a further unsuccessful search for New Zealand dotterel before returning to Auckland.

Day 3

Thursday 8th November

Tiritiri Matangi

Weather: Variable with occasional showers (some heavy) and moderate winds.

After storing most of our luggage at the hotel in Auckland, we were away by 08:30. Just an hour later we arrived at the marina at Gulf Harbour on the Whangaparoa Peninsula where we boarded the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi, a 220 hectare island sanctuary that lies 4 km off the coast.

Tiritiri Matangi (“looking to the wind” or “wind tossing about”) was first inhabited by Maori. Europeans who arrived in the mid 1850s and the island was then farmed continuously until the 1970s. A 20.5 metre lighthouse has operated there since 1865. The island is now managed by the Department of Conservation as an open sanctuary, where the public are free to visit and enjoy some of New Zealand's more unusual and rare fauna. A huge amount of work has been undertaken, mainly by volunteers, to re-plant the island with some 150,000 native trees, both to accelerate the natural regeneration of the coastal forest, and to provide suitable habitat for bird species. A number of rarer species including Saddleback, Robin, Little Spotted Kiwi, Takahe, Kokako and Stitchbird have been introduced to the island.

We, and the other ferry passengers, were met by one of the resident Rangers who outlined the background to the island and the simple rules that applied to visitors. Our overnight bags and food supply being transported to the bunkhouse for us, we set off ahead of the bulk of the visitors making our way along Wattle Track.

Birds were plentiful with Tui and Bellbirds predominating, and we soon found our first Saddlebacks, Stitchbirds, Whiteheads, North Island Robin (really a flycatcher), and brilliantly green Red-crowned Parakeets. As we neared the end of the track, five Kokako, all young from the previous year, were observed at close quarters while they fed in trees beside the track. One of New Zealand's endemic wattlebirds, the Kokako belongs to a group whose ancestors became isolated at the time of the first fragmentation of the southern super-continent, some 80 million years ago. It has colourful fleshy wattles (blue in the case of these, the North Island sub-species, and orange on the probably extinct South Island sub-species) and while its short, rounded wings enable only limited flight (more like a downhill glide), their relatively long strong legs enable them to move freely through trees in leaps and bounds – rather monkey like. They are renowned for their rather mournful organ-like song, most often heard about dawn. Its threatened species status is the result of loss of habitat through forest clearance, predation

by introduced mammals such as ship rats and possums, and the destruction of under storey food plants by introduced browsing mammals such as deer and goats.

After having settled into our accommodation and eaten our picnic lunch we headed off on a longer walk along Ridge Track, down Kawerau Track through some of the remaining original forest, around Hobbs Beach, and back up Wharf Road. Highlights on this included Stitchbirds visiting sugar water feeders less than 2 metres distant completely oblivious to our presence, viewing Blue Penguin in their artificial nesting chambers, New Zealand Kingfisher, a Spotless Crake at the pond near the Wharf, a Brown Teal and rather unexpectedly a New Zealand Dotterel on Hobbs Beach.

Shortly after we got back to the bunkhouse a couple of Takahe worked their way down the slope past the bunkhouse. One of two endemic members of the rail family in New Zealand, Takahe are large, slow-moving birds with a massive red beak (probably best described as ‘Swamp hens on anabolic steroids’). Known from just four specimens, they were thought to be extinct until in 1948 they were discovered living in the Murchison Mountains on the western shore of Lake Te Anau. Not prolific breeders at the best of times, they seldom raise more than one of their two chicks to fledging, facing competition for food from introduced red deer, and predation by stoats. Current conservation management efforts are aimed at raising breeding success, expanding the population in Fiordland, and consolidating breeding populations on several offshore islands.

After dark we set out again, this time armed with torches masked with red cellophane, in the hope of seeing Little Spotted Kiwi. The night was very cool and windy, with the occasional shower, and we searched to no avail. Having heard three birds during the two hour search, we called it a day and headed for our bunks for a rather abbreviated night’s sleep, knowing that we had otherwise had a most rewarding day and gained some appreciation of what a predator-free New Zealand must have been like.

Day 4

Friday 9th November

Tiritiri Matangi – Rotorua

Weather: Strong winds and heavy showers in the morning; showers and moderating wind in the afternoon.

Having been pre-warned that the forecast (50 knot westerlies by midday) was such that the ferry may well not be able to run, Wynston had put a Water Taxi on standby for our morning pick-up. A 06:15 check confirmed that it would be needed! Our 09:15 departure was something of an experience, requiring everyone to board a heaving boat on the leaside of the jetty, while the crossing back to Gulf Harbour was even more so – not least when we “took a big grey one” over the bow!

Once ashore we returned quickly to Auckland, retrieved the trailer and the bulk of our luggage, and headed for Rotorua. It was a long journey and the weather closed in with strong winds and some heavy rain showers. As the rain fell we reflected that at least the weather had held through the main part of our all-important stay on Tiritiri.

Having stopped only for lunch in Cambridge (nothing like its namesake in England, but with a distinct English feel to it), we arrived in Rotorua before the rain.

From the moment you enter Rotorua, you know you are somewhere quite different. Sneaky threads of steam rise from parks and bush areas and the scent of sulphur wafts through the air. Thermal activity is at the heart of much of Rotorua's tourist appeal. Geysers, bubbling mud pools, hot thermal springs, and even a Māori village buried by a major volcanic eruption, are all within easy reach of the city. One area noted for its particularly pungent smell of sulphur is known as "Sulphur Point", and it was there that we headed. Here we found large numbers of Little and Black Shags nesting in trees close to the shore, numerous New Zealand Scaup and Black Swan, and eventually managed to obtain somewhat distant views of the scarce New Zealand Dabchick.

At dinner that night a major talking point was the evening news report on the major storm with wind gusts of up to 130 kph that had hit Auckland not long after we had left.

Day 5

Saturday 10th November

Pureora Forest – Waimangu – Rotorua

Weather: Mainly sunny with light to moderate winds.

Given the great views that everyone had obtained of Kokako on Tiritiri Matangi and the distinct lack of sleep experienced over the past couple of days everyone had agreed that we should forgo the pre-dawn departure programmed. Instead breakfast was enjoyed at a "reasonable" hour, and in the comfort of our motel rooms. Even so, we were still on our way to Pureora Forest by 08:00.

Before long we passed through some of the many extensive planted forests which consisted mainly of *Pinus radiata*. A native of the USA where it is known as Monterey Pine and considered a threatened species, here it grows almost twice as fast as in its natural home and is considered a weed where it has spread from plantations. First introduced to New Zealand in the 1850s it now comprises something like 80+% of the country's plantation forests.

Pureora Forest is the home of some of the last remaining Kokako on the mainland. Arriving at the forest edge we listened for the bird's distinctive song. Today though, we were to hear nothing of its evocative call. Several very vocal Kaka were seen flying high over the trees, as were a few much smaller Yellow-crowned Parakeets. A Long-tailed Cuckoo was also seen, albeit briefly, but from close quarters. Then there were Whiteheads, Robins, and Grey Warblers.

Later we walked a short all-weather loop track through some of the forest viewing huge podocarps, many of which were hundreds of years old, drenched with moss, lichens and epiphytes, and a wide range of ferns, including New Zealand's national emblem, the Silver Fern.

A stop at the Whakamaru Ponds produced Grey Duck, Grey Teal, Australian Coot, Australasian Shoveler, New Zealand Scaup, Black Swan, and the ubiquitous Mallard before we headed for Waimangu.

Waimangu is said to be the only hydrothermal system in the world for which the actual date of the commencement of its surface activities are known – viz. 10 June 1886. On that day Mount Tarawera, a

previously thought dormant volcano, erupted killing more than 150 people and devastating the surrounding landscape including the famous Pink and White Terraces, which were quickly becoming known as the 'Eighth Wonder of the World'. The violent explosions excavated a line of craters from the northern end of Tarawera all the way to the Waimangu Valley. All plant, and most animal and birdlife, was also destroyed, the vegetation now present being the result of re-colonisation since that date.

After a late lunch in the café, we walked the route downhill past bubbling lakes, hot springs with strange algae flourishing in the steaming water, fumaroles, rocks covered in multi-coloured chemical deposits, and Inferno Crater Lake - a steaming pale blue lake with a complicated rhythmic cycle of oscillating levels. We then made our way back to Rotorua for the night.

Day 6

Sunday 11th November

Rotorua – Whakapapa

Weather: Partly cloudy with a cool breeze, strong at times.

Continuing on our southerly journey our first stop was at a boiling mud pool at Waiotapu. Sulphurous fumes hung around the scene while the mud bubbled and gurgled much like a massive pot of porridge. Next stop was at Huka Falls near Taupo where the Waikato River is spectacularly forced through a narrow rock chute before hurtling over an 11 metre bluff. We then took a short coffee break in Taupo, where we also witnessed a small service commemorating Remembrance Day.

Our route then took us down the eastern side of Lake Taupo. Formed by a volcanic eruption in 186 AD and covering an area of 619 km² it is the largest lake in New Zealand. Near the southern end of the lake we stopped beside an area of wetland not far from the lakeshore to look for the endemic Fernbird, a usually secretive skulker.

Mission accomplished, we headed on to Turangi where we stopped for lunch before travelling on to a raupo swamp to the west of Tokaanu where, from the comfort of the coach, we enjoyed magnificent views of an Australasian Bittern as it worked itself along the side of the road.

Continuing our journey south we made a brief stop to take photographs of Lake Taupo, now far below us. Then, at a roadside lay-by a short distance further on, we made an unsuccessful attempt to attract Shining Cuckoo. Beyond the hills the road emerged onto a seemingly endless expanse of moorland, covered in introduced heather and native tussock grasses. The scenery was unlike any we had so far encountered and was dominated by the snow-capped, and cloud-covered peaks of Mounts Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu, both active volcanoes. The former, an almost perfect cone, was the setting of Mount Doom in the film trilogy Lord of the Rings, while the second was the setting for the realms of Mordor.

After checking into our hotel, which was located in the small ski-resort of Whakapapa perched on the side of Mt Ruapehu, we set off on a 3 return walk to Taranaki Falls. This took us across undulating tussock country and through patches of Southern Beech (*Nothofagus*) forest to the falls which tumble 20 metres over the edge of a large lava flow, into a boulder-ringed pool. From there we made our way past the water-worn gorges of the

Wairere Stream and through more beech forest and tussock grassland back to the hotel. That night we enjoyed a splendid meal before retiring to the sound of steady rain.

Day 7

Monday 12th November

Whakapapa – Wellington – Picton

Weather: Showers, some heavy overnight. Low mist and rain at Whakapapa. Strong wind and showers (some very heavy) on way to Wellington. Strong wind in Cook Strait.

Today was essentially one of travel as we headed towards Wellington and the ferry crossing to South Island but first, we had to find the Blue Duck. A nationally endangered endemic, the Blue Duck is the only member of its genus and has no close relative anywhere in the world. Believed to have appeared at a very early stage in evolutionary history, its isolation in New Zealand has resulted in it acquiring a number of unique anatomical and behavioural features. A river species, it is mostly confined to fast flowing unmodified headwater catchments with high water quality, stable banks and a wide diversity and abundance of aquatic insects. The range and numbers of Blue Ducks have declined since European settlement, mainly it is believed because of the loss of suitable habitat (through vegetation clearance, water diversion, poor water quality, damming for hydro-electric and irrigation schemes) and increased mortality by introduced predators (especially stoats) and human disturbance. Nationally there are probably only about 2,500 birds remaining. The Manganuioteao River has one of the highest and most stable populations in the country.

Mount Ruapehu was shrouded in cloud as we circled round it as we headed south towards Raetahi from where we wound our way down through a succession of steep hills to a bridge over the Manganuioteao River. Although the river was discoloured and running higher than usual as a result of the overnight rain, we were able to obtain some excellent, though distant, views of a Blue Duck resting on a rock downstream of the bridge. A Shining Cuckoo heard calling from nearby was quickly attracted to us with the aid of a taped call, all of the party obtaining excellent views of this colourful species that parasitizes the nests of the much smaller Grey Warbler.

A number of small towns we passed through had adopted the practice of erecting large statues of what had been chosen as their community's symbol. These ranged from a sheepdog to an enormous orange carrot, both of which were later surpassed by a giant gum-boot made out of sheets of corrugated iron!

The weather deteriorated as we travelled further south and we experienced strong winds and heavy rain showers; the rain at least stopping before we reached Wellington.

The journey over the Cook Strait was remarkably smooth considering the strength of the westerly wind. Bird-wise it was very quiet, although when we were well into the Cook Strait we saw some New Zealand White-capped Mollymawks (Albatross), a Sooty Shearwater, and some distant views of several Shearwaters (most likely Flesh-footed). As we neared South Island a number of Fairy Prions appeared, at times flying alongside the boat.

Darkness was falling as we entered the Marlborough Sounds so we then headed below for a simple evening meal in the cafeteria. It was only a few minutes drive from the dock to our accommodation in Picton.

Day 8

Tuesday 13th November

Queen Charlotte Sound – Kaikoura

Weather: Generally fine with a cool wind.

Dawn broke to reveal a sunny, albeit breezy, day.

After breakfast we headed to the nearby hamlet of Waikawa where we boarded the charter boat Playmate for a cruise on Queen Charlotte Sound. Shortly after we left the marina a Reef Heron was spotted flying across the sound. Next we saw some Blue Penguins, soon after which we began seeing Fluttering Shearwaters.

Our main objective for the trip was to see King Shags, a very rare (estimated population 650) that is found only in the Marlborough Sounds. In the Queen Charlotte Sound area they nest on the isolated and exposed White Rocks near the entrance to the sound from Cook Strait. Here we found 120 birds (adults and juveniles/chicks).

We then headed north-west across to the choppy waters off Cape Jackson where we were rewarded with views of Fairy Prions in the hundreds, Fluttering Shearwaters, a couple of Westland Petrels, two or three Cape Pigeons (all Snares Islands race), whirring Common Diving Petrels, and at least one Flesh-footed Shearwater.

Having made good time, we took the opportunity to stop off at Ship Cove, a pleasant bay visited on several occasions by Captain James Cook. Here we found our first Weka, large and flightless rails that were patrolling the grassy area above the beach. We arrived back at Waikawa at 12:45 and adjourned to nearby Picton for lunch, before continuing southwards towards Kaikoura. Extensive vineyards were a feature of the first part of the trip, and a spectacular coastline with a backdrop of snowy mountain peaks in the latter part.

We made a stop at Oahu Point where a lookout point had been built above a colony of New Zealand Fur Seals. Once hunted almost to extinction, seal numbers have recovered well and are continuing to increase. Most of the individuals we could see were young males; adult bulls and females not yet having returned. Nearby was a colony of Spotted Shags, nesting on a cliff face. The small settlement of Kaikoura has as a backdrop the Seaward Kaikoura Range which rises from the sea to heights of over 2,600 metres (8,500 feet), and our accommodation (Alpine View Motel) was aptly named.

Day 9

Wednesday 14th November

Kaikoura

Weather: Fine but with a strong NW wind.

Off Kaikoura the continental shelf drops abruptly very close to shore, the resultant up-wellings of nutrients from the sea's depths attracting whales, seals, dolphins, and a prolific seabird population. The latter was our target for the morning.

There being space for ten only on the boat, Wynston stayed behind and tended to some vehicle maintenance while the rest of the party embarked on what has been billed as “arguably the best short pelagic tour in the world” – the Albatross Encounter with Ocean Wings. The party was not to be disappointed!

With the aid of some “chum” a wide selection of seabirds were viewed at a distance of just a few metres. The totals for the trip were: Northern Royal Albatross - 2, Wandering Albatross - 20 (1 Snowy, 18 Gibson's, 1 Antipodean), Shy Mollymawk – 17 (3 White-capped, 14 Salvins), Giant Petrel 28 (25 Northern and 3 Southern), Westland Petrel - 40+, Cape Pigeon (both races) - 60+, Huttons Shearwater (a local speciality which breeds only high up in the Kaikoura mountains) - 2, and Short-tailed Shearwater - 2. Then there were the Pied Shags, Little Shags, White-fronted Terns, and Black-backed and Red-billed Gulls. All too soon everyone was back on dry land.

Unfortunately the whale watching trip that several of the party had wished to go on had been cancelled because of rough sea conditions so, after lunch at the Encounter Café, we headed first to the end of Kaikoura Peninsula, and then to the Hinau Track below Mt Fyffe. At the latter we had a pleasant stroll around the loop track. While not finding the Morepork that some previous groups had managed to view we did find our first Brown Creeper and got some good views of our first Rifleman. The latter is one of New Zealand's unique families of wrens which have ancient origins and no close affinity to other groups of birds. With an overall length of 8 cm it is New Zealand's smallest bird.

Day 10

Thursday 15 November

Kaikoura – Arthur's Pass – Hokitika

Weather: Sunny in the morning, cooler in the mountains; heavy showers in the afternoon.

A long day driving to the west coast. First stop was at the South Bay Recreation Reserve on the south side of Kaikoura Peninsula where we obtained good views of a male Cirl Bunting. Next, near Cheviot we stopped at St. Anne's Lagoon, a small wildfowl refuge containing a lake and pleasant woodland. Here we found Cape Barren Geese, Grey Teal and Australasian Shoveler.

From Cheviot the route took us through the rolling pastoral countryside and vineyards of North Canterbury and then out on to the Canterbury Plains where we passed through towns with familiar names such as Amberley and Oxford. Lunch was a picnic overlooking the Waimakariri River near where it emerges from its gorge. Then it was on into the mountains.

The road through Arthur's Pass is the highest and most spectacular of the roads through the Southern Alps. Once we had passed over Porter's Pass (945 metres), the road ran through tussock-covered basins hemmed by snow-capped mountains and past dramatic limestone outcrops.

Lake Pearson proved to be too choppy for us to spot any Australasian Crested Grebes, but a bit further on we managed a distant view of some endemic Black-fronted Terns as they hawked over a field beside the braided Waimakariri River. At the eastern edge of Arthur's Pass National Park (at c.100, 000 hectares, the sixth largest in New Zealand) the road entered mountain beech dominant forest.

There was a bitter wind but no Kea (the world's only mountain parrot) awaiting us in Arthur's Pass village and a similar situation when we paused briefly at a viewpoint past the summit of Arthur's Pass (924 metres). We then commenced the downhill plunge through mainly podocarp forest to the Tasman coast and our hotel for the night in Hokitika.

Day 11

Friday 16th November

Hokitika – Lake Moeraki

Weather: Cloudy with a cool wind in morning. Wet and windy, south of Fox Glacier.

Heading south from Hokitika we had a distant view of New Zealand's two highest peaks Aoraki/Mt Cook (3,753 m – 12,313 ft) and Mt Tasman (3,498 m – 11,476 ft) clear of cloud. Unfortunately this was to be the only time that we did.

Just north of Mahinapua some of the party saw a White Heron (Great Egret) fly down a stream and cross the road behind us. The first stop for the day was at Lake Mahinapua, a pretty stretch of water surrounded by forest, but rather unproductive for birds other than for a few Grey Ducks and a Weka. Further on another stop was made at Lake Ianthe where we found Grey Ducks and Australasian Crested Grebe.

At Franz Josef we walked to Sentinel Rock for a view of the Franz Josef Glacier. While not the largest in the country, it and the nearby Fox Glacier are considered by many to be the most spectacular. Although the top of surrounding peaks were shrouded in mist we could see much of the extensive high névé and all of the tongue which plunged steeply down to penetrate the rainforest. Like all glaciers around the world it has receded dramatically since the middle of the 19th century. Over the last twenty or so years though it has had several periods where it has advanced as a result of large snowfalls in its high basin. Mainly because of their steepness, both the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers have a rapid (for a glacier) average velocity of 2-3 metres per day. In 1966 the Franz Josef was recorded as moving at the phenomenal rate of 7 metres a day. Several Tomtits were seen beside the track and a Kea was heard calling in the distance. It started to rain as we left.

At the township of Fox Glacier we turned right, heading for a picnic site with the name Peak View. As we travelled down the road we came into sunshine and it continued to shine throughout our picnic which we ate with Fox Glacier as a backdrop.

Arriving at Wilderness Lodge at Lake Moeraki at 15:15 we checked in, deposited our bags in our rooms, and were very soon off walking through luxuriant coastal forest to Monro Beach where we hoped we might see a Fiordland Crested Penguin, one of the rarest in the world.

After a walk of about 40 minutes we emerged onto a sandy cove bordered by low cliffs. A strong wind was blowing off the sea and breakers were pounding onto the shore. Just as we emerged a single Fiordland Crested Penguin appeared in the surf at the far end of the beach and, after several attempts to land, finally surfed right onto the sand. After a short pause it waddled off to its nest somewhere in the boulders. Before we had to leave to make the dinner deadline, we watched a further two penguins come ashore.

By the time we had finished dinner it was raining again thereby putting an end to our plans to go for a walk to see the night sky (the Southern Cross in particular) and glow-worms as well as look for freshwater crayfish and Morepork.

Day 12

Saturday 17th November

Lake Moeraki – Twizel

Weather: Wet, wet, wet!

It rained heavily overnight and was showery as we prepared to depart. While the showers had stopped by the time we made our first stop at the Knights Point viewpoint the low cloud and mist rather spoilt the view.

Next stop was at Ship Creek where a hard surface track and boardwalk allowed us to walk through part of a swamp forest in which we saw New Zealand's tallest native tree, the magnificent Kahikatea (White Pine), which can reach a height of more than 60 metres and live for more than 500 years. A member of the ancient Podocarp family, (characterised by seed suspended on a fleshy "foot"), Kahikatea trees date back to the time of dinosaurs in the Jurassic Age of some 160-180 million years ago. As a consequence they are sometimes referred to as "the dinosaur tree". Once spread across most fertile lowlands throughout the country they were extensively logged for their odourless, resin-free timber which made ideal butter and cheese boxes and also cleared for to make way for dairy farming. Today extensive stands are found only in south Westland, where some 9.800 hectares are protected as part of the South-West New Zealand Te Waipounamu World Heritage Area.

We then set off inland along the Haast Pass Highway, passing through extensive Kamahi and then Silver Beech dominated forest and some impressive mountain scenery. As we did so the rain started and then continued to increase in intensity the closer we got to Haast Pass.

A stop at Thunder Creek Falls enable us to take a short walk in the rain through Kamahi and Silver Beech forest to view an impressive 28 metre high waterfall.

At Haast Pass (563 m above sea level, and the lowest of the three road passes linking Westland with the eastern side of South Island) we stopped to walk along another forest track in search of another endangered species, the Yellowhead. Once widespread throughout South Island, this insectivorous species has declined because of forest destruction and predation by stoats and rats. After some time we found two Yellowheads. Unfortunately they were feeding high in the beech trees and viewing was difficult being both a strain on the neck muscles and straight into the rain that was falling steadily. Other birds seen here were Yellow-crowned Parakeet (also feeding high in the canopy), Rifleman, Brown Creeper and New Zealand Pigeon.

After lunch in a café at Makarora, we continued our way down the Makarora River valley, around the shores of Lake Wanaka and Lake Hawea, into Central Otago, and over the Lindis Pass into the Mackenzie Country of inland Canterbury. The further we went the more the rain decreased and the mountains and forests were replaced by open hills covered in tussocks and low (mostly introduced) shrubs. Brightly coloured Russell lupins became more and more common along the roadside and on the riverbeds. While much enjoyed by visitors, they

are in fact a very serious threat to the sustainability of the braided river habitat on which many native birds depend.

Near Twizel we turned off the main road and travelled down a road beside a canal taking water to a series of hydro-electric power stations, and on to the Ohau River delta on the shores of a hydro-electric lake (Lake Benmore). This is an area where the rare Black Stilt (probably the world's rarest wader) is often seen ...but not today! Still there were enough other species to keep us interested – Banded Dotterels, Black-fronted Terns, New Zealand Scaup, Caspian Terns, Australasian Shoveler...

Day 12

Sunday 18th November

Twizel - Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park - Twizel

Weather: Wet, wet, wet!

From Twizel we travelled first to Lake Poaka beside the Pukaki – Ohau Canal where we found firstly 2 hybrid Black/Pied Stilts with two chicks, and then three yearling Black Stilts. Despite the rain and wind excellent views were had of all the birds.

We then headed for our main objective for the day, Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. As we drove up the side of the turquoise waters of Lake Pukaki we hoped that the cloud covering the distant peaks of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, and Aoraki/Mount Cook itself in particular, might lift. This it did, but only partially, most of the tops remaining shrouded in cloud. We managed a glimpse of the Tasman Glacier (at 28 km the longest in the country), followed by one of most of the precipitous rock and ice face of Mount Sefton (3,157 m – 10,359 ft) that dominates the view from the village.

After a visit to the National Park Headquarters to orientate ourselves from the relief model displayed there, we drove to the road end at White Horse Hill from where we commenced walking up the Hooker Valley Track. One of the most popular walks in the national park, this track leads up the Hooker Valley towards Aoraki/Mount Cook first to a viewpoint over the lake formed at the receding face of the Mueller Glacier, then over a suspension bridge across the Hooker River, round a bluff, across another suspension bridge and then beside the river to its source at the Hooker Glacier terminal lake. The spectacular “Mount Cook lily” (more accurately *Ranunculus lyalli*, the largest buttercup in the world) and a number of other plants were flowering and this added to the interest. Just after we reached the second bridge the rain started in earnest – straight down and heavy – and the upper half of Aoraki/Mount Cook remained sheathed in the cloud. We therefore decided to return to the bus.

As the rain had not let up by the time we had finished our late lunch in the café at The Hermitage, we decided to forgo any further exploration and returned to our hotel in Twizel.

Day 13

Monday 19th November

Twizel – Invercargill – Oban

Weather: Mainly overcast and windy.

First we drove back to Peters Lookout on the shore of Lake Pukaki in the hope of a better view of Aoraki/Mount Cook than we had been able to obtain the previous day, only to find that there was little difference. We then headed southwards towards Invercargill from where we were to fly to Stewart Island. Throughout the journey we were rarely out of sight of mountains, many of which had a good cover of fresh snow.

Lunch was in a café in the historic gold mining town of Arrowtown after which we travelled down the side of Lake Wakatipu with its impressive backdrop of the Remarkables., a truly impressive range of Mountains that rise almost sheer from close to the lake edge. At the south end of the lake we made a short diversion into Kingston to view and photograph the “Kingston Flyer”, a restored steam engine that takes tourists on short trips down the short section of remaining railway track.

The further south of Lake Wakatipu we travelled the greener the countryside and whiter the sheep appeared (both because of the regular rain according to Wynston and Geoff). There were also a large number of dairy farms and captive Red Deer.

At Invercargill Airport we were split between two 9-passenger Brittan Norman Islander aircraft for the 20 minute flight to Stewart Island. Despite the strong wind with gusts of up to 45 knots blowing from the west, the flight across Foveaux Strait was, with the exception of a “large pothole or two” as we crossed the coast of Stewart Island, less bumpy than expected, and the pilots handled the landings with ease.

Oban, Stewart Island’s only settlement, is picturesquely situated around the shores of the Half Moon Bay. The waters of the bays are clear and green, and most houses are tucked away amongst the native forest. Tui, Bellbirds and Kaka were a feature around the town and a number of brightly coloured Redpolls were seen feeding on the lawns.

We were quickly installed in the motels attached to the century old South Seas Hotel where we later ate an excellent meal - delicious locally caught Blue Cod being the choice of most.

That evening we were booked on a trip to search for Brown Kiwi which would involve a boat journey. Because of the strong wind the trip was in some doubt until just after 20:00 when the wind dropped away. Just after 21:00 hrs we were aboard Wildfire, a sturdy 16.5 metre vessel skippered by Philip Smith who is licensed to conduct commercial kiwi viewing trips to a peninsula on the eastern side of Paterson Inlet. As we sailed out of Half Moon Bay we saw our first Stewart Island Shags roosting on an offshore rock

After tying up alongside a small jetty in Little Glory Bay, and a very informative short talk by Philip about the Stewart Island Brown Kiwi, we disembarked and made our way as silently as possible along a hard surfaced track through the low forest and across the neck of the peninsula to Ocean Beach. All torches apart from Philip’s spotlight were then switched off and we made our way along the beach, first northwards and then back to the south. Towards the southern end Philip located a bird feeding amongst some seaweed on the beach and a few minutes later we were watching a male Brown Kiwi by diffused torchlight from a distance of 10-15 metres. The bird appeared to be completely oblivious to us and kept feeding voraciously, probing deeply into the sand with

its long, ivory-coloured bill. Some 10 minutes later we left the bird and made our way further along the beach, only to then have the kiwi come the same way and drink from a small stream near to us. While making our way back over the peninsula we came across an adult female kiwi right on the track edge. Back in Half Moon Bay about 00:45, we were soon in our beds.

Day 14

Tuesday 20th November

Ulva Island – Paterson Inlet – Foveaux Strait

Weather: Showers, cool southerly wind, and a “sloppy” sea.

After our late night we enjoyed the luxury of a very short lie-in and at 09:30 hrs were back on board Wildfire again, this time for a short pelagic trip into Foveaux Strait and then to Ulva Island. The principal target species for the pelagic part of the trip were the three penguin species that breed on and about Stewart Island (Yellow-eyed, Fiordland Crested and Blue).

We began the trip by cruising along a section of coast where Fiordland Crested are known to breed – unfortunately without success. Then it was out into the open sea and past Herekopere Island, Bunker Islets, Bench Island, and Whero Rock, before heading into Paterson Inlet to the Bravo Islands and then to Ulva Island.

New Zealand Fur Seals were plentiful on the rocky beaches; at one point a pair of Brown Skua flew and hovered over the boat as if attached to a string; White-capped Mollymawks and Common Diving Petrels were numerous; several Cape Pigeons provided us with excellent views; and two Giant Petrels (most likely the Northern subspecies) flew past. Around the Bravo Islands we saw several rafts of Blue Penguins and then, at last, two Yellow-eyed Penguins were spotted in the water. This was a particularly satisfying sighting as the Yellow-eyed Penguin is an endangered endemic species. While still in decline on South and Stewart Islands, it is possibly holding its own in its main population on Auckland Islands. This season 31 out of 32 chicks monitored on Stewart Island had died of as yet unknown causes.

Ulva Island is, like Tiritiri Matangi, an open sanctuary. Introduced rats and Brush-tail Possums having been cleared from the island, and a number of birds transferred to it since 2000. The removal of rats and mice has also meant that the natural regeneration of the forest can continue undisturbed.

During our time ashore we strolled along several well-maintained hard surface tracks and, in despite the increasing wind, saw a surprisingly good range of birds. Weka met us when we landed and were very quick to appear when we stopped for lunch; Robins were absurdly tame, approaching to within inches of us; several flocks of Brown Creepers worked their way through the trees; Bellbirds, Tui and Grey Warblers were both seen and heard; Busy Fantails followed us along some of the tracks; Red-crowned Parakeets chattered in the tree tops and, in one case flew low past us; and Kaka provided us with some excellent views. We also found flowering Spider Orchids. All too soon it was time to leave and we returned to the boat for the short journey back. Just short of the wharf at Half Moon Bay two Fiordland Crested Penguins were seen in the water.

That evening we enjoyed a splendid meal at the Church hill Café situated which, as its name suggests, is situated on a hill above the bay. “Stonegrills” (served on a slab of very hot stone and self-cooked) were a particular

favourite. On the way back to our accommodation, several members watched some Blue Penguins as they came ashore by the wharf below.

Day 15

Wednesday 21st November

Oban – Te Anau Downs

Weather: Mainly cloudy and cool.

A relatively early start was needed this morning to catch our 08:30 flight back to Invercargill.

In Invercargill we visited the Southland Museum to see the Tuatara display. The museum is part of a Tuatara breeding programme which aims to re-introduce these unusual reptiles to some offshore islands. Tuatara have a lineage that dates back 200 million years, and while superficially like lizards are unique in the world of reptiles as the sole survivors of this ancient order. A number of specimens are on display, the most impressive being “Henry” who is believed to have been hatched about 1880! From the museum we headed westwards towards Fiordland National Park.

We made two detours, first to the Aparima River near Otautau where we were able to obtain some excellent views of a very smart looking Black-fronted Dotterel, and then to Wakapatu beach in an unsuccessful attempt to locate the Shore Plover that had been seen there recently. This bird was one of a group that had been released on Centre Island in Foveaux Strait as part of the species’ national recovery programme, but had promptly decamped to the mainland. We also made a stop at Tewaewae Bay where Hector’s Dolphins are often seen but the rough sea and cold wind did not encourage us to linger long.

After lunch at Tuatapere we headed north, stopping along the way for a required photograph of a typical New Zealand scene – sheep in a green grass paddock with a snow-capped mountain backdrop. It was quite sunny by the time we arrived at Te Anau so everyone enjoyed a break at the Te Anau Wildlife Park before walking to the nearby Fiordland National Park Information Centre while Geoff and Wynston refuelled the bus and did some essential shopping for the following day’s lunch. We then headed to our accommodation at Te Anau Downs c.30 km to the North .

Day 16

Thursday 22nd November

Milford Road - Milford Sound

Weather: Fine and cool becoming cloudy and then misty in the late afternoon.

After an early breakfast we set off from Te Anau Downs at 08:00 for our journey through part of Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound.

With an area of 1.2 million hectares, Fiordland is New Zealand’s largest national park. It forms part the South-West New Zealand Te Waipounamu World Heritage Area and is noted for its spectacular scenery that features glacially gouged valleys, snowy mountains, magnificent forests, lakes, and hundreds of waterfalls. Its western coast consists of fourteen fiords carved by glaciers during successive ice ages.

Relatively few parts of Fiordland are easily accessible, the road to Milford Sound providing the most ready access. As a result it attracts some 400,000 visitors each year, most of whom travel in the many coaches that thunder down the road in a seemingly mad rush to get to Milford Sound in time for their scheduled cruises and lunch. Our journey, on the other hand, was quite leisurely.

Our first stop was at the aptly named Mirror Lakes which provide wonderful reflective views of the adjacent Earl Mountains. Here also the clear water provided us with excellent views of New Zealand Scaup as they dived and swam underwater.

At Knobs Flat we used the facilities and looked at the interpretation panels explaining some of the ecological dynamics of the beech forest and the history of the construction of the road to Milford Sound. The former proved rather gloomy in that it was yet another example of an ecological tragedy caused by the ill-considered introduction of alien species. Southern beeches naturally seed (mast) prolifically every few years. The increased supply of seed results in a massive increase in mice numbers, which in turn leads to similar increases in the rat and stoat population. When the food runs out rats and stoats turn their attention to native birds, especially Yellowheads and Yellow-crowned parakeets, both of which are particularly vulnerable in that they nest in holes with only one entrance/exit. Further, in the case of Yellowheads only the females incubate the eggs, with the result that more females are lost. More recently the situation has worsened in that the beech masts have occurred more frequently (sometimes even in consecutive years) with the result that the rat and stoat populations have remained high and the birds have had no respite from predation. In some areas the Yellowhead has been completely eliminated – notably at our next stop, Cascade Creek.

At Cascade Creek we wandered around the track through some impressive tall Red Beech forest. We were able to obtain some wonderful views of Yellow-crowned Parakeets (including one at a nest hole), a family Rifleman family, the much more colourful South Island subspecies of the New Zealand Robin and Tomtit, Fantails, and Grey Warblers. A Kaka also flew by. After Cascade Creek we climbed up and over The Divide (531 metres), the lowest east-west pass in the Southern Alps, and dropped down into the upper Hollyford valley, making a couple of photo stops along the way.

At the Homer Tunnel, we walked along the Nature Trail in search of Rock Wren, the only true alpine-dwelling bird in New Zealand and, like the Rifleman, of ancient origins and having no close affinity to any other group of birds. Weak fliers, they spend their time amongst scree or rock falls interspersed with areas of low shrubs. They remain on their territory all year, either feeding under the snow-cover or secreting themselves in a crevice and entering a state of torpor during the winter.

Having spread ourselves along the track we scoured the adjoining areas without success until another group indicated that they had spotted one close to the start of the track. Moving back to there everyone eventually managed a sighting. While we were looking at the Rock Wren, two Kea flew into the car park and commenced to entertain those present by sitting on the roofs of coaches, inspecting cars and camper vans for any removable items such as rubber seal and windscreen wiper blades, and being generally on the lookout for any food.

Usually described as the only mountain parrot in the world, Kea actually prefer to live at the timberline rather than in the true alpine zone. Mostly herbivorous, feeding on berries and shoots, many have learnt to fossick through refuse dumps and eat carrion and scraps. Some have also been recorded as having a preference for fat – be it around sheep kidneys or the stomach oil and subcutaneous fat of Hutton's Shearwater chicks! A gregarious species, it is usually seen in family groups although flocks of mainly juvenile and sub-adult males are often seen about ski-field car parks and refuse dumps. Playful and inquisitive (often the sign of a superior intelligence in animals), they can quickly become destructive, soon making themselves unwelcome especially around tents, cars and ski-fields.

After a picnic lunch we drove through the 1.2 km Homer tunnel and descended through a series of hairpin bends and past some spectacular scenery to Milford Sound. On arrival we were greeted by the sight of 40-50 coaches awaiting the arrival of their passengers back from early afternoon boat cruises. Our arrival had been timed to perfection, as we merely waited for the multitudes to disembark and disappear into their vehicles and then boarded our boat with very few others.

The cruise provided an excellent appreciation of the size and grandeur of Milford Sound (more accurately a fiord) with wonderful views of towering vertical cliffs, snow-capped peaks and tumbling waterfalls. From a species aspect though it was quite uneventful apart from some Black-backed and Red-billed Gulls and a close look at a few recumbent seals. On the return journey we stopped to do the short walk to "The Chasm" – an impressive series of waterfalls in a rock chasm formed by the rushing waters of the Cleddau River and adorned with water-sculpted shapes and basins in the rock. At the carpark we were greeted by an adult Kea, doing "its rounds" and along the track we had good views of Brown Creeper.

After dinner we tried our hand at calling in Morepork at two sites without success – most likely because of the increasingly strong wind.

Day 17

Friday 3 November

Te Anau Downs – Dunedin – Taiaroa Head

Weather: NW wind and threatening rain in Fiordland. Fine, with a cool westerly wind further east in Southland and Otago.

We awoke to the sound of distant thunder from the western side of Lake Te Anau, but apart from a few spots the rain remained on that side. Driving east from Te Anau we passed coach after coach full of people heading for Milford Sound for the lunch time sailings. In our direction though, the road was all but empty and we made good time past deer farms, an extensive Red Tussock reserve, the Takahe Rearing Unit at Burwood Bush (site of a captive rearing programme involving the incubation of eggs taken from the wild, the hand rearing of chicks using a puppet glove resembling a Takahe, and the eventual release of the birds into the wild when they reach 1 year of age), much green pastureland, more towns with "mascot statues" (a Red Deer, a giant Brown Trout, and three Shire Horses), and along the "Presidential Highway" (between the towns of Clinton and Gore), to Dunedin..

Dunedin, the second largest city on South Island, was originally a Scots settlement and this shows in its name (Dunedin being the ancient Gaelic name for Edinburgh), street and suburb names familiar to all who have visited Edinburgh (e.g. Princes, George, Frederick, Hanover, St Andrew, Waverley, Corstorphine), and a large statue of Robert Burns in the centre of the town.

After lunch at a café in the Botanic Gardens, we dropped our bags and the trailer at the hotel and then drove down the Otago Peninsula to Taiaroa Head, the site of the only mainland colony of the Northern Royal Albatross. When we arrived in the car park, the wind was quite strong, and we could see a couple of albatross flying about the headland. We then went back down the road a short distance to Wellers Rock where we boarded the M.V. Monarch.

The 1½ hour cruise took us first past a sandy beach where an immature male New Zealand Sea Lion was resting, close to the steep cliffs of Taiaroa Head, and some distance offshore before returning to Wellers Rock. We had some wonderful views of flying Royal Albatross and distant views of nesting and displaying (“gamming”) birds. Other species seen, included nesting Royal Spoonbills, Stewart Island and Spotted Shags, Northern Giant Petrel, Snares, Cape Pigeon, and Sooty Shearwaters.

On the return journey we followed the road that ran alongside the harbour where White-faced Herons, gulls, ducks and oystercatchers were feeding on the exposed mudflats, and little shags were perched on boatsheds.

Day 18

Saturday 24th November

Homeward bound

Weather: Sunny spells but with a strong wind.

In the morning most took the opportunity to look around the city centre, visit the magnificent Gothic revival railway station, or support the local economy through some last minute “retail therapy”, before we all met for lunch. After lunch, those that were returning home were driven to the airport by Wynston (Geoff having left earlier to drive a bus to Auckland for use on another tour).

As we waited for the boarding call on this, our last day of the tour, Wynston informed us that during the trip we had travelled 4,252 kms by coach, undertaken two flights in light aircraft, had nine boat trips, and had seen 120 species of birds – a particularly good total given the often less than desirable weather conditions caused by the prevailing El Niño-Southern Oscillation event! A very successful and enjoyable trip!

Species lists

Birds

Common name	Scientific name	November 2006																	
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Brown Kiwi	<i>Apteryx australis</i>																		
Stewart Island Brown Kiwi	<i>Apteryx australis lawryi</i>														X				
Little Spotted Kiwi	<i>Apteryx owenii</i>			H															
Australasian Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus australis</i>											X			X				
New Zealand Dabchick	<i>Podiceps rufopectus</i>				X														
Snowy (Wandering) Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>										X								
Gibson's (Wandering) Albatross	<i>Diomedea gibsoni</i>										X								
Antipodean (Wandering) Albatross	<i>Diomedea antipodensis</i>										X								
Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>										X								X
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Diomedea melanophrys</i>																		
Buller's Albatross	<i>Diomedea bulleri</i>																		
White-capped (Shy) Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta steadi</i>								X		X						X		
Salvin's (Shy) Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta salvini</i>										X								
Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>										X					X			X
Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>										X								
Snares Cape Pigeon	<i>Daption capense australe</i>									X	X					X			
Cape Pigeon	<i>Daption capense</i>										X								
Grey-faced Petrel	<i>Pterodroma macroptera</i>																		
Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>								X	X									
White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>																		
Westland Black Petrel	<i>Procellaria westlandica</i>										X								
Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>										X								
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>									X									X

Common name	Scientific name	November 2006																			
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
Short-tailed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus tenuirostris</i>																				
Fluttering Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gavia</i>									X	X										
Hutton's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus huttoni</i>										X										
Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>									X								X			
Yellow Eyed Penguin	<i>Megadyptes antipodes</i>																	X			
Blue Penguin	<i>Eudyptula. minor iredalei</i>				X						X							X			
Fiordland Crested Penguin	<i>E. pachyrhynchus</i>												X					X			
Australasian Gannet	<i>Morus serrator</i>	X			X	X				X	X	X						X			
Black Shag (Great Cormorant)	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>					X								X	X	X	X		X	X	
Pied Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X				X			
Little Black Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>					X				X											
Little Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i>				X	X		X			X			X			X	X		X	
King Shag	<i>Leucocarbo carunculatus</i>										X										
Spotted Shag	<i>Punctatus punctatus</i>										X							X		X	
Stewart Island Shag	<i>Leucocarbo chalconotus</i>																		X	X	X
White-faced Heron	<i>Ardea novaehollandiae</i>	X	X	X							X	X	X	X					X		X
White Heron (Great Egret)	<i>Egretta alba</i>			X										X							
Reef Heron	<i>Egretta sacra</i>										X										
Australasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>								X												
Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>																				X
Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>				X	X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X				X
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>												X		X	X					
Cape Barren Goose	<i>Cereopsis novaehollandiae</i>												X								
Paradise Shelduck	<i>Tadorna variegata</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Common name	Scientific name	November 2006																		
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
Grey Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>			X						X		X								
Grey Teal	<i>Anas gibberifrons</i>					X					X			X						
Brown Teal	<i>Anas. aucklandica</i>			X																
Australasian Shoveler	<i>Anas rhynchotis</i>										X		X					X		
Blue Duck	<i>Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos</i>								X											
New Zealand Scaup	<i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>				X	X			X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
Australasian Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
New Zealand Falcon	<i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i>																			
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopava</i>		X					X							X					
Brown Quail	<i>Synoicus ypsilophorus</i>				X	X														
California Quail	<i>Lophortyx californica</i>						X			X	X									
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	H		X				X												
Weka	<i>Gallirallus australis</i>								X							X				
Spotless Crake	<i>Porzana tabuensis</i>			X																
Pukeko (Purple Swamphen)	<i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>	X		X	X	X		X				X	X	X					X	
Takahe	<i>Porphyrio mantelli</i>			X	X															
Australian Coot	<i>Fulica atra australis</i>					X					X									
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		X							X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
Variable Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>	X	X					X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	
Spur Winged Plover	<i>Vanellus miles</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>																			
New Zealand Dotterel	<i>Charadrius obscurus</i>			X																
Banded Dotterel	<i>Charadrius bicinctus</i>		X							X			X							
Black-fronted Dotterel	<i>Charadrius melanops</i>																	X		
Wrybill	<i>Anarhynchus frontalis</i>			X																

Common name	Scientific name	November 2006																	
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Far-eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>																		
Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>			X															
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Tringa terek</i>																		
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>																		
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			X															
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>			X															
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>			X															
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>																		
Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>			X															
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>																		
Pied Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			X	X														
Black Stilt	<i>Himantopus novaezelandiae</i>													X					
Southern Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Red-billed Gull	<i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X
Black-billed Gull	<i>Larus bulleri</i>		X						X						X		X	X	X
Brown Skua	<i>Catharacta skua</i>															X			
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>		X						X				X						
Black-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna albobristata</i>										X		X	X	X		X		X
White-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna striata</i>	X	X						X	X		X				X	X		X
New Zealand Pigeon	<i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i>	X		X		X					X	X	X			X		X	X
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	X							X		X	X	X		X		X		X
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>	X																	
Kaka	<i>Nestor meridionalis</i>					X									X	X	X		
Kea	<i>Nestor notabilis</i>																	X	
Eastern Rosella	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>	X				X													

Common name	Scientific name	November 2006																		
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
Red-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i>			X	X											X				
Yellow-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>					X							X					X		
Shining Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx lucidus</i>	H						X		X										
Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Eudynamys taitensis</i>					X												H	H	H
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>																			
Morepork	<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>																	H		
New Zealand Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon sancta</i>	X	X	X							X									
Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X						X		X
Rifleman	<i>Acanthisitta chloris</i>									X			X	X					X	
Rock Wren	<i>Xenicus gilviventris</i>																		X	
Silvereye	<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Grey Warbler	<i>Gerygone igata</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	H		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
New Zealand Pipit	<i>Anthus novaseelandiae</i>	X										X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	X							X	X			X	X				X		X
Fernbird	<i>Bowdleria Punctata</i>						X													
Brown Creeper	<i>Mohoua novaseelandiae</i>									X	X	X	X			X			X	
Whitehead	<i>Mohoua albicilla</i>			X	X	X														
Yellowhead	<i>Mohoua ochrocephala</i>												X							
Fantail	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	X		X									X					X	X	
Tomtit	<i>Petroica macrocephala</i>	X				X	H				X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
New Zealand Robin	<i>Petroica australis</i>			X		X										X			X	
Kokako	<i>Callaeas cinerea</i>			X																

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		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Stitchbird	<i>Notiomystis cincta</i>			X	X														
Bellbird	<i>Melanura melanura</i>	X		X	X	X	X		H	X	X	X	X	H		X	X	X	X
Tui	<i>Prosthemadura novaseelandiae</i>	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Saddleback	<i>Philesturnus carunculatus</i>			X	X														
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>										X								
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		X	X				X	X		X								X
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	X						X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Indian Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	X	X	X	X	X													
Australian Magpie	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	X	X		H	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>																		

Other species

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		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
New Zealand Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus forsteri</i>	X							X	X						X		X	X
New Zealand (Hooker's) Sea Lion	<i>Phocarcartos hookerei</i>																		X
Ship Rat	<i>Rattus rattus</i>																	X	X
Brush-tailed Possum	<i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>														X				
Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>										X			X			X	X	
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>								X					X				X	
Manuka Chafer	<i>Pyronota festiva</i>																	X	
Nurseryweb Spider	<i>Dolomedes minor</i>	X																	
Tunnelling Mud Crab	<i>Helice crassa</i>		X																