

# New Zealand's Natural History

Naturetrek Tour Report

3 - 24 November 2007

---



Takahe by Wynston Cooper



Australasian Gannet by Wynston Cooper



Mt Ngauruhoe, Tongariiri National Park by Wynston Cooper



Dusky Dolphins by Ken McCarthy

Report compiled by Wynston Cooper  
Photos by kind permission of Wynston Cooper, Ken McCarthy and Peter Golborn

---



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Photos by Peter Golborn



Young Tuatara



Variable Oystercatcher



Whitehead

Photo by Wynston Cooper



Rock Wren

Tour Leader:	Wynston Cooper (local guide)	Invercargill, N.Z
Co-leaders:	Anne Rimmer (local guide)	Auckland, N.Z
	Alice Hanger (local guide)	Dunedin, N.Z
Participants:	John Catterall	
	Patrick & Gillian Constable	
	Barry Corkindale	
	Peter & Andrea Golborn	
	Kenneth & Mary McCarthy	
	Stuart & Ellen Skeates	
	Colin & Margaret Wibberley	

## Day 1

Monday 5th November

### AUCKLAND – MURIWAI – CASCADE KAURI - AUCKLAND

Weather: am Wet; pm overcast

John, Ken, Mary, Stuart and Ellen's flight having been delayed until 02:40 until the following day, the rest of the party with the Nature Quest New Zealand leaders, Wynston and Anne headed off for an afternoon visit to the west coast of Auckland.

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.

Introduced species ones such as Common Myna, Starling, House Sparrow, Blackbird and Song Thrush (the latter in densities now seldom seen in their English homeland) along with the native Little Shag, Australasian Harrier, Pukeko (Purple Swamphen), Masked Lapwing (known as Spur-winged Plover in New Zealand), Welcome Swallow, and White-faced Heron were soon recorded.

After lunch at a bakery in Kumeu we headed to Muriwai (40 km NW of central Auckland), where we were greeted by the sight of some Variable Oystercatchers on the beach below the car park 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 numerous White-fronted Terns that were nesting on the cliffs near the gannets.

From Muriwai we headed to 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 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), the North Island subspecies of the Tomtit, Tui, and plump New Zealand Pigeon. Also seen were the introduced Eastern Rosella and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

Another short track took us to the foot of a huge Kauri tree with a 6.5 m girth and estimated as being c.1,000 years old – a mere youngster for a species known to reach at least 2,500 years of age. (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. We then returned to our hotel in downtown Auckland.

## Day 2

Tuesday 6th November

### AUCKLAND – MIRANDA - AUCKLAND

Weather: Steady light rain

Given their arrival in the “wee small hours”, we allowed the McCarthys, Skeates, and John a bit of a lie in while the rest of the party headed off after breakfast for a couple of hours birding at two sites on the Manukau Harbour. Here we added Black, Pied and Little Shag, Black Swan, Paradise Shelduck, Grey Duck, Mallard, Grey Teal, Australasian Shoveler, South Island Pied Oystercatcher, Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit, Knot, and Pied Stilt to our list.

Returning to the hotel we picked up the other five members and at 11:30 were on our way to Miranda on the Firth of Thames. Once we were off the Southern Motorway the drive took us through rolling green pasturelands similar to those seen the day before. Encounters with Australasian Harriers were quite frequent and some 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 in-filled 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 5,300, up to 40% of which flock to Miranda at the end of the breeding season. Another species of note that breeds in the region is the endemic New Zealand Dotterel.

Our first stop was the Shorebird Centre where we obtained an update on recent species recorded in the area, partook of our first picnic lunch of the trip, and appreciated a short talk by the warden (Keith Woodley) on the ecology of the area, 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), and the amazing travels of the female Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit, "E7", before heading for the main roosting sites at the "Limeworks" site just down the road.

Despite the tide being well out, on arriving at the hide we immediately added our two main target species for the day, the New Zealand Dotterel and Wrybill, to our list. Other new species recorded included Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (2), Banded Dotterel, Black-billed Gull, and Caspian Tern. Then there were the Eastern Bar-tailed Godwits, White-faced Heron, Pied Stilt, South Island and Variable Oystercatchers, and Lesser Knots.

After a short trip to Kaiāua where we unsuccessfully looked for the Whimbrel recently recorded there before returning to Auckland.

## Day 3

Wednesday 7th November

### AUCKLAND - TIRITIRI MATANGI

Weather: Variable with some light rain during the day but clearing by evening

After storing most of our luggage at the hotel in Auckland, we drove to 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 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 remnants, 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), brilliantly green Red-crowned Parakeets, and also viewed two Kokako at close quarters 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 (Gondwana), some 80 million years ago. It has colourful fleshy wattles (blue in the case of 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 understorey food plants by introduced browsing mammals such as deer and goats.

The Stitchbird is unique in that not only is it a rare New Zealand endemic, but it has recently had an entire new family established for it. This family, Notiomystidae, includes no species other than the Stitchbird (*Notiomystis cincta*). The species was formerly included in the honeyeater family Malophagidae, along with the Tui and Bellbird, towards which it shows superficial convergent evolution through shared behaviour such as nectar feeding. Molecular research has now revealed that the species is in fact more closely related to the Wattlebird family Callaeidae, which comprises the Saddleback, Kokako, and extinct Huia (*Heteralocha acutirostris*). Stitchbirds also have some very unusual unique features.

For example:

- it is the only bird known to mate face-to-face;
- while almost all honeyeaters are primarily nectar-feeders that possess a brush-tipped tongue (as do the Tui and Bellbird), the Stitchbird's tongue has the edge curled above to form a tube for most of its length. While the tongues of the Bellbird and Tui are furrowed, they are tubular for a much shorter part of their length than that of the Stitchbird;
- and, unlike the Tui and Bellbird, it has no Australian relatives.

Originally present throughout North Island, Stitchbird declined rapidly from the 1870s, and by 1885 had vanished from the mainland. From 1885 to 1980 it survived only on Little Barrier Island, since when birds have been successfully transferred to a number of other islands. The cause of the rapid decline in the late 1800s is most likely due to the spread of ship rats, stoats and feral cats, and the impact of collectors such as Andreas Reischek who alone shot a total of 150 on Little Barrier during three visits between October 1882 and April 1885. (This was at a time when the species was believed to probably exist only there!).

On reaching the open grassed area around the visitor centre and accommodation buildings we were greeted with the sight of two Takahe. One of two members of the rail family endemic to New Zealand, Takahe are large, slow-moving birds with a massive red beak (probably best described as 'Swampheens 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, face 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 settling into our accommodation and eating 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 viewing Stitchbirds as they visited sugar water feeders less than two metres distant, and viewing Blue Penguin in their artificial nesting chambers.

Anne returned to the mainland on the afternoon ferry.

After dark we set out again, this time armed with torches masked with red cellophane, in the hope of seeing Little Spotted Kiwi. Originally widespread throughout mainland New Zealand in pre-European times, Little Spotted Kiwi were still common in Westland at the start of the 20th, after which they declined dramatically so that now only a few may persist in forests between Fiordland and north-western Nelson. Fortunately a few survived on D'Urville Island in the Marlborough Sounds, and others had been introduced to Kapiti Island off the southwest coast of North Island probably in the 1920s from South Island. Birds have now been transferred to a number of other islands free of mustelids and cats, including Tiritiri Matangi. From a total of 16 birds introduced to the island from Kapiti in 1993 and 1995 the population on Tiritiri Matangi has now grown to more than 50.

Having heard at least five Little Spotted Kiwi call, one of which did so from no more than 5 to 10 metres distance but remained hidden in the long grass, and seen a Blue Penguin near the summit ridge during the two hour search, we headed for our bunks knowing that we had had a most rewarding day and gained some appreciation of what a predator-free New Zealand must have been like.

## Day 4

Thursday 8th November

### TIRITIRI MATANGI – ROTORUA - TAUPO

Weather: Cool winds, variable cloud, and periods of sunshine

All the party managed a view of Brown Teal on the pond near the wharf while the more patient amongst us obtained some great views of a Spotless Crake and its chick after an hours wait. Barry found a Fernbird nearby and another two were heard calling.

The ferry was on time and at 10:30 we were on our way back to the mainland. Once ashore we returned quickly to Auckland, where we met Alice Hanger who was taking over as co-leader for the next part of the trip, retrieved the trailer and the bulk of our luggage, and headed for Rotorua.

From the moment one enters 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, a number of which were nesting in trees close to the shore, numerous New Zealand Scaup and Black Swan, several Shining Cuckoo, and had great views of a pair of New Zealand Dabchick, one of which had two small chicks on its back.

Continuing on our southward journey our first stop we stopped at a boiling mud pool at Waiotapu and watched as it bubbled and gurgled much like a massive pot of porridge.

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

That night we stayed in Taupo.

## Day 5

Friday 9th November

### TAUPO - PUREORA FOREST – ORAKEI KORAKO – NATIONAL PARK

Weather: Fine and sunny

A pre-dawn departure saw us on our way to Pureora Forest, home to some of the last remaining Kokako on the mainland. Arriving at the forest edge we immediately heard the bird's distinctive song, a slow string of rich mournful organ-like notes, and soon located it high in a Rimu tree. A Long-tailed Cuckoo was also heard and Whiteheads, Robins, Yellow-crowned Parakeets and Grey Warblers seen.

Later we walked along a short all-weather loop track through some of the forest viewing huge podocarps many of which were hundreds of years old and drenched with moss, lichens and epiphyte. Then there were the wide range of ferns, including New Zealand's national emblem, the Silver Fern, and flowering native orchid (*Earina mucronata*) with its hanging clusters of flowers. Along the way we surprised two Kaka on the track and viewed another high in a Miro tree.

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 Orakei Korako. The thermal valley of Orakei Korako, reached by a short boat ride across the Waikato River, is renowned for its silica terraces, not least of which is 1.4 ha 'Artists Palette', a level silica terrace riddled with hot springs and small geysers and with the wide range of colours which gives it its name.

Then there is the Golden Fleece Terrace, a fault scarp dating from c.130AD and built up with centuries of siliceous growth. No less than 35 metres long, 4.6 metres high, and 100 mm thick, it is believed to be the largest of its kind in the world. Also 'Aladdin's Cave' with its hot pool, Waiwhakaata ('pool of mirrors'), also said to be a wishing pool in which visitors are invited to dip their left hand and make a secret wish.

After visiting the thermal valley and lunching at the café, our route then took us down the eastern side of Lake Taupo. Lying in a caldera created some 26,500 years ago by a huge eruption, Lake Taupo covers an area of 619 km<sup>2</sup> and is the largest lake in New Zealand. According to geological records there have been 27 eruptions since then, the last about 1,800 years ago. Said to have been one of the most violent eruptions in the last 5,000 years, the last eruption buried some 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> of central North Island under pumice and ash.

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. While at least three birds were heard, only some of us managed some brief glimpses of one as it moved amongst the dense vegetation.

A search for Australasian Bittern at a raupo swamp to the west of Tokaanu proving unsuccessful we continued our journey south, making a brief stop to take photographs of Lake Taupo, now far below us. 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.

## Day 6

Saturday 10th November

### NATIONAL PARK – RUATITI – WHAKAPAPA – NATIONAL PARK

Weather: Fine and sunny

Our principal objective today was to find 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), 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 left but cleared as we circled round it on our way towards Raetahi from where we wound our way down through a succession of steep hills to a bridge over the Manganuioteao River. Where the road first met the river we observed a Blue Duck as it rested on a rock in the river. We then travelled on to the Ruatiti Bridge where we found a family of Paradise Shelduck, a Kingfisher, three Shining Cuckoo, Grey Warbler, Silvereye and Fantails.

Returning to the previous site we were rewarded with some wonderful views of a pair of Blue Duck as they fed amongst the rocks and pools.

We then returned to National Park and travelled on to the small ski-resort of Whakapapa perched on the side of Mt Ruapehu. After lunch ten of us set off on a three hour return walk to Taranaki Falls while the other four walked the short nature walk track and then down the Whakapapanui River track where they saw several Riflemen, one of New Zealand's unique family of wrens and, with an overall length of 8 cm, the country's smallest bird.

The Taranaki Falls track took the group 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 Whakapapa. Along the way the party obtained some fine views of New Zealand Pipit as well as finding Alpine Grasshoppers and a large green Puriri Moth.

## Day 7

Sunday 11th November

### NATIONAL PARK – WELLINGTON – PICTON

Weather: Fine and sunny after a foggy start to the day. Very cool wind in Cook Strait

Today was essentially one of travel as we headed towards Wellington and the ferry crossing to Picton in South Island.

We stopped at Bulls where we had some great views of Black-fronted and Banded Dotterel on the Rangitikei River, and then had lunch at a café.

A stop at Foxton Beach for a look at some waders gave us views of Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit, Knot, White-faced Heron, Caspian Tern and what is thought to be a new species for a Naturetrek party in New Zealand, a Whimbrel. Well spotted Barry!

Bird-wise the journey over the Cook Strait was very quiet, providing us with mainly distant views. We were however able to confirm two New Zealand White-capped and one Salvins Mollymawk (Albatross), two White-chinned Petrels, one Sooty Shearwater, three Snares and one Southern Cape Pigeon, and several Fairy Prions. Darkness was falling as we entered the Marlborough Sounds so we then headed below for a simple evening meal in the cafeteria.

## Day 8

Monday 12th November

### PICTON - QUEEN CHARLOTTE SOUND – KAIKOURA

Weather: Generally fine with a cool wind

After breakfast we headed to the nearby hamlet of Waikawa where we boarded the charter boat Playmate for a cruise on Queen Charlotte Sound. 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 previously nested on the isolated and exposed White Rocks near the entrance to the sound from Cook Strait, but this season there were some nesting on the southern end of Blumine Island and there we were able to get good views of five adult and five juvenile birds.

We then headed north-west across to the choppy waters off Cape Jackson where, despite the moderate chop making for awkward viewing, we recorded c.100 Fairy Prions, a Giant Petrel, several Flesh-footed Shearwaters, Fluttering Shearwaters, and a couple of whirring Common Diving Petrels.

On the outward journey we saw three Dusky Dolphins and on the way back we saw another eight feeding in association with numerous Australasian Gannets and Fluttering Shearwaters.

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 had expected to find our first Weka, a large flightless rail, patrolling the grassy area above the beach, but that was not to be. Some of the party did, however see a Bottle-nosed Dolphin just off the shore.

After lunch in Picton we continued southwards towards Kaikoura.

Extensive vineyards were a feature of the first part of the trip before we made a brief side trip to Lake Grassmere where we found Turnstone, Sharp-tailed sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, and Red-necked Stint.

Further south, we travelled along a spectacular coastline with a magnificent backdrop of snowy mountain peaks.

At Oahu Point we stopped at a lookout 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 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

Tuesday 13th November

### KAIKOURA

Weather: Fine and sunny with some rain late in the afternoon

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

At 10:00 the party embarked on what has been billed as “arguably the best short pelagic tour in the world” – the Albatross Encounter with Ocean Wings. We were not to be disappointed! With the aid of some shark liver “chum” a wide selection of seabirds were viewed at a distance of just a few metres. The totals for the trip were: Wandering Albatross - 20 (all Gibson's), Shy Mollymawk – 16 (4 White-capped, 12 Salvins), Giant Petrel 23 (20 Northern and 3 Southern), Westland Petrel - 25, White-chinned Petrel – 5, Grey-faced Petrel – 1, Cape Pigeon (both races) - 50, Huttons Shearwater (a local speciality which breeds only high up in the Kaikoura mountains) - 500, Sooty Shearwater - 4. Then there were Pied Shag, Little Shag, White-fronted Tern, and Black-backed and Red-billed Gulls plus Dusky Dolphins and a very distant Sperm Whale. All too soon everyone was back on dry land.

In the afternoon most members of the party undertook the optional whale watching trip seeing three Sperm Whales and a number of Dusky Dolphins.

## Day 10

Wednesday 14th November

### KAIKOURA – ARTHUR'S PASS – HOKITIKA

Weather: Wet and windy to start; fine and sunny to finish

As the weather forecast for Canterbury and the Arthur's Pass was predicting snow to 700 metres we headed for Hokitika via the alternative Lewis Pass route. Slightly lower than Arthur's Pass, it is the northernmost of the three main passes across the Southern Alps.

The first c.80 kms took us along State Highway 70 through rolling farming countryside to the small village of Waiau where we stopped for surprisingly good coffees. We then joined State Highway 7 which took us along the Waiau and Hope River valleys, across the Boyle River, around high bluffs above the Lewis River, and into the extensive beech forest that makes up the Lewis Pass Scenic Reserve.

Just pass the summit of the 865 m pass we stopped at the Tarn Nature Walk which traverses a good example of a mountain tarn and alpine bog vegetation and affords some excellent views of the Spenser Range.

Our next stop was at the Marble Hill picnic area where everyone took the opportunity to first walk to The Sluice Box, a narrow slot cut by the Maruia River through a marble outcrop, before partaking of a picnic lunch. Birdlife was scarce but Stuart found some Eyelash and Bird-nest fungi, while Wynston found some examples of honeydew.

Honeydew is a sweet, sticky substance excreted by small scale insects that live on the trunks of southern beech (*Nothofagus*) trees. The insects suck the sap and excrete the portion of what sugar not used out through their fine, hair-like anal canals, the honeydew appearing as a very small droplet. The honeydew provides a vital food source for nectar-feeding birds such as Tui, Bellbirds, and Kaka, as well as native lizards and insects. Unfortunately, this food web has been hijacked by the introduced, aggressive Common Wasp which eats at least 90% of the honeydew during five months of the year. It also preys on insects, spiders and other invertebrates, further reducing the food of native animals.

After lunch we continued on our way passing through Springs Junction, the historic mining town of Reefton, and the highly scenic Buller Gorge, before travelling south down the quite spectacular Paparoa coast to Punakaiki. At Punakaiki we visited to the extraordinary “Pancake Rocks”, 30 million year old formations of weathered stratified limestone which resemble stacked pancakes. The short walk also afforded us with excellent views of blowholes, the impressive coast, and the inland ranges behind Punakaiki. We then continued on to our hotel in Hokitika.

## Day 11

Thursday 15th November

### HOKITIKA – FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER - LAKE MOERAKI

Weather: Showers until mid-afternoon, then fine and partly cloudy

The first stop for the day was at Lake Mahinapua, a pretty stretch of water surrounded by forest, where we quickly obtained our first views of the endemic Brown Creeper.

Our next stop was at Lake Ianthe where we found Australasian Crested Grebe. A threatened species in New Zealand, the Australasian Crested Grebe is a subspecies of the Great Crested Grebe of Europe and Britain.

Lunch was a picnic held in the shed at the Okarito wharf, from where we obtained some great views of a White Heron as it fed along the shore.

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. 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 though the Franz Josef was recorded as moving at the phenomenal rate of 7 metres a day.

Arriving at Wilderness Lodge at Lake Moeraki at 15:45 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 Fiordland Crested Penguin, one of the rarest in the world. Along the way we obtained some excellent views of a South Island Tomtit, with its yellowish underparts grading to orange on its upper breast - a much more colourful bird than its North Island relation.

After a walk of about 40 minutes we emerged onto a sandy cove bordered by low cliffs. A cool wind was blowing off the sea but the breakers were generally small. Shortly after we reached the beach two Fiordland Crested Penguins appeared in the surf at the far end of the beach, soon surfing ashore. Other birds then came and went at what seemed a quite rapid rate; at one stage there being seven on the shore and two in the water. One of the latter then seemingly decided to become the observer, rather than one of the observed, slowly swimming past us and then back again within a metre or two of the shore. Having had something of a surfeit of birds compared with the usual views obtained at the beach, we made our way back to the lodge for dinner.

After dinner some of the party joined a walk to view glow-worms.

## Day 12

Friday 16th November

### LAKE MOERAKI – TWIZEL

Weather: Fine, but partly cloudy

Our first stop was at the Knights Point viewpoint where we took in the scenery and had some very distant views of New Zealand Fur Seals.

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 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.

From the beach we watched some Hector's Dolphins swim back and forth out about the breaker line. Hector's Dolphin, the smallest marine dolphin in the world is found in New Zealand inshore waters only. With an estimated population of 7,400, of which about 5,400 reside on the west coast of South Island, it is one of the rarest dolphins in the world.

After crossing the Haast River we set off inland along the Haast Pass Highway, passing through extensive Kamahi and then Silver Beech dominated forest and some impressive mountain scenery.

At Thunder Creek Falls we took a short walk through the 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 walked along another forest track in search of the endangered Yellowhead. Once widespread throughout South Island, this insectivorous species has declined because of forest destruction and predation by stoats and rats. That day we were out of luck, the forest being all but silent and with nothing but some Riflemen to be seen.

After lunch in a café at Makarora, we continued our way down the Makarora River valley, around the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, into Central Otago, and over the Lindis Pass into the Mackenzie Country of inland Canterbury where 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.

Before checking in to our hotel in Twizel we travelled to Lake Poaka in the hope of finding Black Stilt, probably the world's rarest wader. Unfortunately today was not to be the day, there being only one hybrid bird and some Pied Stilts to be seen. That evening Anne rejoined us and we swapped our vehicle for another.

## Day 13

Saturday 17th November

### TWIZEL - AORAKI/MOUNT COOK NATIONAL PARK - TWIZEL

Weather: Fine, sunny, warm

Alice, our local guide, left this morning to join another tour. Our first stop of the day was at the Ohau Delta on the shores of a hydro-electric lake (Lake Benmore), another area where Black Stilt is often seen ...but not today! Still there were enough other species to keep us interested for some time – Australasian Crested Grebe, the endemic Black-fronted Tern, Banded Dotterel, New Zealand Scaup, Caspian Tern, and Australasian Shoveler to mention but a few. Then there was the secretive Marsh Crake of which everyone obtained at least a brief view.

We then headed for Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. As we drove up the side of the turquoise waters of Lake Pukaki Aoraki/Mount Cook (at 3,750 m [12,313 ft], the highest mountain in New Zealand) dominated the view.

At the Glentanner airstrip at the head of the lake we visited the bed of the Tasman River where we were immediately presented with some great viewing of five immature Black Stilts.

Further up the road the view was dominated by the Tasman Glacier (at 28 km the longest in the country) with its surrounding peaks, most over 3,050 m (10,000 ft) high. Then, at the village, there was the precipitous rock and ice face of Mount Sefton (3,157 m – 10,359 ft).

From the road end at White Horse Hill 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. Six of the party went to the second bridge, while John sprinted on as far as the terminal lake.

We then returned hotel in Twizel.

## Day 14

Sunday 18th November

### TWIZEL – TE ANAU DOWNS

Weather: Mainly fine and sunny

Throughout the day's 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.

Beyond Lake Wakatipu the countryside was much greener and mainly occupied by sheep, dairy and deer farms. Later we passed 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), an extensive reserve of Red Tussock, and then more deer farms.

Everyone enjoyed a break at the Fiordland National Park Information Centre in Te Anau while Anne 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 15

Monday 19th November

### MILFORD ROAD - MILFORD SOUND

Weather: Fine and sunny

After breakfast we set off at 08:15 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.

Few parts of Fiordland are as easily accessible as Milford Sound. 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 we also had excellent views of New Zealand Scaup.

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 four to six years. When they do, the increased supply of seeds results in a massive increase in mice numbers, which in turn leads to similar increases in the rat and then stoat populations. When the food runs out rats and stoats turn their attentions 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. 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 gaining an impression of a forest as it shouldn't be – the impact of rats and stoats being very much evidenced by the general lack of birdsong. We did however manage to hear two Parakeets and a passing New Zealand Falcon as well as see five Rifleman and the much more colourful South Island subspecies of the New Zealand Robin.

From Cascade Creek the road climbed up and over The Divide (531 metres), the lowest east-west pass in the Southern Alps, where there were three Kea, and then dropped down into the upper Hollyford valley.

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. We saw two birds, both males, at two different sites.

There were two Kea in the car park entertaining those that stopped 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 mountain valley slopes within an altitudinal range of about 500 metres either side of the timberline rather than in the true alpine zone. While mostly herbivorous (70 to 96 per cent according to different researchers), Kea are opportunistic and omnivorous also eating insects, grubs, worms and eggs. 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! It has been estimated that, in their natural environment, Kea spend up to at least 70 per cent of their active time searching for food.

Unfortunately many birds have found that fat and protein can be more effectively and quickly obtained humans – be it from a rubbish dump, a meat pie at a ski-field canteen, or someone who attracts them by offering sandwiches or biscuits. 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 – a situation exacerbated by the extra time that they find themselves with as a result of the easy food sources so readily made available by humans.

After our picnic lunch we drove through the 1.2 km Homer Tunnel and descended through a series of hairpin bends before stopping and undertaking 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 – before continuing on to Milford Sound.

On arrival we were greeted by the sight of 40 or so 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, high peaks and, because of the recent lack of rain, a few tumbling waterfalls. Then there were the views of three Fiordland Crested Penguins and some recumbent seals.

After dinner that night we travelled back up the Milford Road to a site where we able to view a Morepork.

## Day 16

Sunday 20th November

### TE ANAU DOWNS – INVERCARGILL – STEWART ISLAND

Weather: Fine and sunny but with a cool wind

From Te Anau we travelled past Lake Manapouri, down the Waiau Valley to Tuatapere, around the coast of Tewaewae Bay, through Riverton (the second eldest town in Southland), and across the Southland Plains to Invercargill. Stops were made near the Rakatu Wetlands where some managed a distant view of New Zealand Falcon, at Otahu Flat where a Little Owl was seen sitting on the old schoolhouse, and at a point overlooking Tewaewae Bay.

After lunch at the café in the Southland Museum in Invercargill we viewed the Tuatara display and had an informative talk by Lindsay Hazley, the curator of Tuatara. 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!

At Invercargill Airport we were split between two 9-passenger Brittan Norman Islander aircraft for our 20 minute flight to Stewart Island. Oban, Stewart Island’s only settlement, is picturesquely situated around the shores of the Halfmoon 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.

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.

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 Halfmoon Bay we saw our first Stewart Island Shags roosting on an offshore rock

After anchoring in Little Glory Bay, and an informative short talk by Philip about on the Stewart Island Brown Kiwi, we were ferried ashore in a rubber dinghy and made our way as silently as possible along a track through low forest. Just as we reached the top of the first rise those at the rear of the party had a glimpse of a large female kiwi that had followed the party up the hill.

After making our way across the neck of the peninsula to Ocean Beach, all torches apart from Philip’s spotlight were switched off and we made our way along the beach, first southwards 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 young 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 15 minutes later we left the bird and made our way north along the beach where we watched an adult male bird feeding.

Back in Halfmoon Bay after 01:00, we were soon in our beds knowing that we had seen a sight most New Zealander’s (who pride themselves in being known as Kiwis) had never seen.

## Day 17

Monday 21st November

### STEWART ISLAND

Weather: Fine and sunny but with a strong cool breeze

After our late night we enjoyed the luxury of a short lie-in and at 09:30 hrs were back on board Wildfire again, this time for a visit to Ulva Island and then a short pelagic trip into Foveaux Strait in search of Yellow-eyed Penguin.

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 is now undisturbed.

During our time ashore we strolled along several well-maintained hard surface tracks and, seeing a good range of birds. Weka met us when we landed; Robins were absurdly tame, approaching to within inches; several flocks of Brown Creepers worked their way through the trees; Bellbirds, Tui Fantails, Tomtits, Red-crowned Parakeets, and Grey Warblers were both seen and heard. Then, along the track to Boulder Beach we at last found two Yellowhead which were readily seen by all all but those who had dallied photographing flowering Spider Orchids.

For the botanically minded were a couple of flowering Green Hood Orchids and several patches of Tmesipteris and Lanternberry (*Luzuriaga parviflora*). The latter two have ancient origins, the former being a spore-producing plant believed to have descended from a group of primitive early land plants known only from fossils dating back about 400 million years in the fossil record, while Lanternberry is a mere youngster with a history of only about 100 million years.

As the sea was too rough to journey out around the islands in Foveaux Strait we first concentrated our search for Yellow-eyed Penguin around the Bravo Islands in Paterson Inlet/Whaka a Te Wera. Here we heard two birds calling but were unable to view either. We then headed around top the sheltered seaward side of The Neck where we managed to see both Yellow-eyed and Fiordland Crested Penguin. The former was a particularly satisfying sighting as it is, like the Fiordland Crested Penguin, an endangered endemic species. While still in decline on South and Stewart Islands, it is believed to be holding its own in its main population on Auckland Islands. On Stewart Island however there have been a series of poor breeding years with up to all chicks in monitored nests dying in some seasons. This year is not looking good either. All too soon it was time to head back to Halfmoon Bay.

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. This year lamb cutlets and lamb shanks were the order of the day.

## Day 18

Tuesday 22nd November

### STEWART ISLAND – DUNEDIN via THE CATLINS

Weather: Showers on Stewart Island. Mainly cloudy with a strong cool wind elsewhere

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

Our route to Dunedin took us through the The Catlins an area noted for containing the largest remaining area of native forest on eastern South Island and its spectacular coastal scenery.

Our first stop was at Niagara Falls (the lilliputian size of which proves that some C19th surveyors did have a sense of humour) followed by a delicious coffee break at the Niagara Café. Then it was on to Curio Bay where we visited the Jurassic Age (160 – 180 million years old) fossil forest which is said by geologists to be the finest of its age in the world.

We then had lunch at the picnic area overlooking the adjoining Porpoise Bay. Apart from having a striking, wide beach of golden sand, Porpoise Bay is renowned for the small group of Hector's dolphins that take up residence here each summer and autumn and which regularly enter the surf zone, often coming within 10 m of the shore.

This makes the bay unique in that nowhere else are dolphins known to spend so much time so close to shore without having been attracted by being fed by people. Unfortunately no dolphins were to be seen there that day.

From Curio Bay we headed north passing through parts of the Catlins Coastal Rainforest Park and before rejoining State Highway 1 at Balclutha and travelling on to Dunedin. Along the way we stopped at Lake Wilkie (where we walked the short track through an impressive stand of native podocarp forest to the dune lake), and then at the Florence Hill lookout for the impressive view of the sweeping golden sand beach of Tautuku Bay backed by an extensive stand of native forest.

Dunedin, the second largest city on South Island, was originally a Scots settlement and this is reflected in its name (Dunedin being the ancient Gaelic name for Edinburgh), as well as 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 checking in to our hotel we travelled to Deborah Bay near Port Chalmers (the main port of Otago) where we embarked on the 12.2 m (40 ft) twin-hulled yacht Caprice for a 3 hour cruise. This took first past a sandy beach where a large male New Zealand (Hooker's) Sea Lion was resting, and then close to the steep cliffs of Taiaeroa Head where we were able to obtain views of flying Northern Royal Albatross as well as nesting Stewart Island and Spotted Shags. For part of the way we were accompanied by a pod of Dusky Dolphins, two of which proved to be in a very "amorous" state. Unfortunately the sea conditions were such that we were unable to journey out into the open sea in search of other pelagic species. During the trip we were treated to a selection of local cheeses followed by a meal of local seafood delicacies – Paua (New Zealand abalone), white-fleshed Rig, and Crayfish (Rock Lobster).

On returning to our hotel in Dunedin, we said farewell to Margaret and Colin who were leaving on a very early flight the following morning.

## Day 19

Wednesday 23rd November

### HOMEWARD BOUND

Weather: Fine

In the morning people took the opportunity to look around the city centre, visit the magnificent 100 year old Gothic revival railway station (one of the 200 "must see" buildings in the world), or support the local economy through some last minute "retail therapy", before we all met for lunch.

After lunch Wynston drove the party to the airport where he informed us that during the trip we had travelled just over 4,200 kms by coach, undertaken two flights in light aircraft and ten boat trips (if one includes those at Orakei Korako), and seen 122 species of birds and six species of marine mammals.

The 'Bird of the Trip', as decided by popular vote, was the Rock Wren followed by the Fantail, Takahe, and Yellowhead.

Photos by Wynston Cooper



Pancake Rocks, Punakaiki



'Henry'

## Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) to sign up.



## Species Lists

## Birds

	Common name	Scientific name	November																	
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1	Stewart Island Brown Kiwi	<i>Apteryx australis lawryi</i>																X		
2	Little Spotted Kiwi	<i>Apteryx owenii</i>			H															
3	Australasian Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus australis</i>											X	X		X				
4	New Zealand Dabchick	<i>Podiceps rufopectus</i>				X														
5	Gibson's (Wandering) Albatross	<i>Diomedea gibsoni</i>									X									
6	Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>																	X	
7	Black-browed Albatross	<i>Diomedea melanophrys</i>									X									
8	White-capped (Shy) Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta steadi</i>								X	X								X	
9	Salvin's (Shy) Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta salvini</i>								X	X									
10	Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes</i> sp.									X									
11	Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>									X									
12	Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>									X									
13	Cape Pigeon	<i>Daption capense</i>								X	X									
14	Snares Cape Pigeon	<i>Daption capense australe</i>								X										
15	Grey-faced Petrel	<i>Pterodroma macroptera</i>									X									
16	Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>								X	X									
17	White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>								X	X									
18	Westland Black Petrel	<i>Procellaria westlandica</i>									X									
19	Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>									X									
20	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>								X	X									
21	Fluttering Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gavia</i>									X									
22	Hutton's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus huttoni</i>									X									
23	Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>									X									
24	Yellow Eyed Penguin	<i>Megadyptes antipodes</i>																	X	
25	Blue Penguin	<i>Eudyptula minor iredalei</i>									X								X X	
26	Fiordland Crested Penguin	<i>E. pachyrhynchus</i>											X			X		X		
27	Australasian Gannet	<i>Morus serrator</i>	X		X	X					X									
28	Black Shag (Great Cormorant)	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		X		X							X	X	X	X		X	X	
29	Pied Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	X	X	X	X	X				X	X							X	

	Common name	Scientific name	November																			
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
30	Little Black Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>				X							X		X							
31	Little Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		
32	King Shag	<i>Leucocarbo carunculatus</i>									X											
33	Spotted Shag	<i>Punctatus punctatus</i>									X	X							X	X		
34	Stewart Island Shag	<i>Leucocarbo chalconotus</i>																	X	X	X	
35	White-faced Heron	<i>Ardea novaehollandiae</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X		X		X		X	
36	White Heron (Great Egret)	<i>Egretta alba</i>											X									
37	Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>		X															X		X	
38	Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>	X	X		X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
39	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>												X	X	X	H					
40	Paradise Shelduck	<i>Tadorna variegata</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
41	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
42	Grey Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>		X		X								X								
43	Grey Teal	<i>Anas gibberifrons</i>		X			X										X					
44	Brown Teal	<i>Anas. aucklandica</i>				X																
45	Australasian Shoveler	<i>Anas rhynchotis</i>		X				X		X	X			X		X						
46	Blue Duck	<i>Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos</i>						X														
47	New Zealand Scaup	<i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>				X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X					X
48	Australasian Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
49	New Zealand Falcon	<i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i>																		X		
50	Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopava</i>		X										X		X						
51	Brown Quail	<i>Synoicus ypsilophorus</i>			X	X																
52	California Quail	<i>Lophortyx californica</i>					X									H						
53	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	X				X		X													
54	Weka	<i>Gallinulus australis</i>										X									X	
55	Spotless Crake	<i>Porzana tabuensis</i>				X																
56	Marsh Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>													X							
57	Pukeko (Purple Swamphen)	<i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X	
58	Takahe	<i>Porphyrio mantelli</i>			X	X																
59	Australian Coot	<i>Fulica atra australis</i>					X															
60	South Island Pied Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		X	X						X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
61	Variable Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X						X	X	X



	Common name	Scientific name	November																	
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
62	Spur-winged Plover	<i>Vanellus miles</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
63	New Zealand Dotterel	<i>Charadrius obscurus</i>		X																
64	Banded Dotterel	<i>Charadrius bicinctus</i>		X						X	X	X			X			X	X	
65	Black-fronted Dotterel	<i>Charadrius melanops</i>								X										
66	Wrybill	<i>Anarhynchus frontalis</i>		X																
67	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>								X										
68	Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		X						X									X	
69	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>									X									
70	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		X						X										
71	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>		X							X									
72	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>									X									
73	Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>									X									
74	Pied Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	X	X			X			X	X		X		X	X	X		X	
75	Black Stilt	<i>Himantopus novaezealandiae</i>													X					
76	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	
77	Red-billed Gull	<i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
78	Black-billed Gull	<i>Larus bulleri</i>		X		X	X			X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
79	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>		X						X	X									
80	Black-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna albobriata</i>										X		X	X	X	X	X		
81	White-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna striata</i>	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X				X	X	
82	New Zealand Pigeon	<i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i>	X				X	X				X	X	X		X		X	X	
83	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	X	X	X	X				X	X				X	X			X	
84	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>		X																
85	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua galerita</i>		X																
86	Kaka	<i>Nestor meridionalis</i>					X											X	X	
87	Kea	<i>Nestor notabilis</i>																X		
88	Eastern Rosella	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>	X				X													
89	Red-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezealandiae</i>			X	X													X	
90	Yellow-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>					X										H			
91	Shining Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx lucidus</i>				X		X												
92	Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Eudynamis taitensis</i>					H										H			
93	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>																X		

	Common name	Scientific name	November																	
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
94	Morepork	<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>			H									H				X		
95	New Zealand Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon sancta</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X										
96	Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo tahitica</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X		X	
97	Rifleman	<i>Acanthisitta chloris</i>												X	X					
98	Rock Wren	<i>Xenicus gilviventris</i>																X		
99	Silvereye	<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>		X		X	X	X					X	X		X		X		
100	Grey Warbler	<i>Gerygone igata</i>	X				X	X		H			H	H	H	X	X		X	X
101	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
102	New Zealand Pipit	<i>Anthus novaseelandiae</i>						X		X			X			X	X	X	X	
103	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
104	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
105	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>			X		X		X		X			X	X	X				X
106	Fernbird	<i>Bowdleria punctata</i>				X	X													
107	Brown Creeper	<i>Mohoua novaseelandiae</i>												X						X
108	Whitehead	<i>Mohoua albicilla</i>			X	X	X													
109	Yellowhead	<i>Mohoua ochrocephala</i>																		X
110	Fantail	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	X				X	X							X					X
111	Tomtit	<i>Petroica macrocephala</i>	X				X	X					X	X	X			X	X	X
112	New Zealand Robin	<i>Petroica australis</i>			X		X						H					X		X
113	Kokako	<i>Callaeas cinerea</i>			X	X														
114	Stitchbird	<i>Notiomystis cincta</i>			X	X														
115	Bellbird	<i>Melanura melanura</i>			X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X
116	Tui	<i>Prosthemadura novaseelandiae</i>	X		X	X	X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
117	Saddleback	<i>Philesturnus carunculatus</i>			X	X														
118	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
119	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
120	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>			X															
121	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
122	Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X		
123	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
124	Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>					X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	
125	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

			November																	
	Common name	Scientific name	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
126	Indian Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	X	X	X	X	X													
127	Australian Magpie	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

Other Species

	New Zealand Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus forsteri</i>									X				X			X		X
	New Zealand (Hooker's) Sea Lion	<i>Phocarcartos hookeri</i>																		X

	Dusky Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>								X	X									
	Bottle-nose Dolphin	<i>Tusiops truncatus</i>								X										
	Hector's Dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus hectori</i>												X						
	Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>								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		X			X				X	X			X

	Blue Damselfly	<i>Austrolestes colensonis</i>					X													
	Red Admiral Butterfly	<i>Vanessa gonerilla</i>					X													
	Common Blue Butterfly	<i>Zizina labradus</i>												X						
	Monarch Butterfly	<i>Donaus plexippus</i>			X						X									
	Common Copper Butterfly	<i>Lycaena salustius</i>												X	X					
	Magpie Moth	<i>Nyctemera annulata</i>									X	X								
	Puriri Moth	<i>Aenetus virescens</i>							X											
	Alpine Grasshopper	<i>Phaulacridium sp</i>							X											

	Carpet Shark	<i>Cephaloscyllium isabellum</i>									X									
--	--------------	----------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--