

New Zealand's Natural History

Naturetrek Tour Report

31st October – 21st November 2025



Black-browed Albatross



New Zealand Fur Seal (*Kekeno*)



North Island Saddleback (*Tieke*)



Tui

Tour report by Richard Schofield
Photos by Phil Birch



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Tour participants: Richard Schofield and Michael Burton-Smith (leaders) with 14 Naturetrek clients

Note: where they exist, Māori species names are given in parentheses on the first occasion a species is mentioned, unless the English and Māori names are identical. The checklist uses English (common) and scientific names only, except in the case of plants.

Day 1

Friday 31st October

Clients departed the UK in the morning, with Singapore Airlines.

Day 2

Saturday 1st November

Clients arrived in Singapore early in the morning, departing promptly for the second leg of their journey, which arrived in Auckland close to midnight the same day.

Day 3

Sunday 2nd November

The clients were collected from Auckland Airport in the early afternoon, and we finally got underway about 1.30pm. We headed north-west, skirting Auckland's city centre, to the west coast at Muriwai. Being a sunny Sunday afternoon, it was teeming with visitors enjoying the beach and the surf. After lunch on the clifftops, we made our way to the Australasian Gannet (*Tākapu*) colony, where before long one client struck immediate gold and found a Sooty Tern, a very rare and unexpected visitor to New Zealand! We enjoyed the sight, noise and aroma of the colony up close and personal, before reluctantly leaving the birds and crossing over to the east coast and Whangaparāoa, where we were to stay for the next two nights. A very enjoyable dinner was had at an Italian restaurant in nearby Manly, before we retired for a good night's sleep.

Day 4

Monday 3rd November

The day dawned sunny and calm, which boded well for our trip to Tiritiri Matangi island. The regular ferry to the island does not operate on Mondays, so we had a special charter to take us on the twenty-five-minute crossing from Gulf Harbour. Seabird sightings on the crossing were few, but we did see both Flesh-footed (*Toanui*) and Fluttering Shearwaters (*Pakahā*). Naturally there were very few other visitors on the island, so it was very peaceful, apart from the birds. There was an almost constant accompaniment from Whiteheads (*Pōpokotea*) from the moment we stepped ashore, and we had early views of North Island Saddleback (*Tieke*) and Red-crowned Parakeet (*Kākāriki*).

After an introductory talk from Ranger Michael, we set off up the Wharf Road, stopping almost immediately at the muddy pond where a family of Brown Teal (*Pateke*) were dabbling. We carried on up the Wattle Track, learning about the trees and insects, and seeing North Island Robin (*Toutouwai*), and more North Island Saddlebacks. At the sugar water feeding station we watched Stitchbirds (*Hibi*) and Bellbirds (*Korimako*). An unexpected Spotless Crane (*Pūweto*) was seen briefly in a gully. On our arrival at the (closed) visitor centre, a North Island Kokako (*Kōkako*) was seen in an adjacent tree, giving everyone the chance to view this tricky endemic.

We returned to the wharf, where we had lunch, and then proceeded along the shoreline path to Hobbs Beach, where Michael found us a Tuatara sunning itself in the undergrowth, providing photographic opportunities for everyone. This species is the only surviving member of the reptile order Rhynchocephalia. We had all seen a bit of sun ourselves by this stage, so we headed back to the jetty for the return trip to the mainland. Before returning to the motel, we checked out the predator-proof fence at Shakespear Open Sanctuary, and briefly explored Okoromai Bay, where the tide was too high for shorebirds, but we did see Buff-banded Rail (*Moho pererū*) among the mangroves. Dinner in Manly gave us ample opportunity to talk about the day's activities.

Day 5

Tuesday 4th November

With Whangaparāoa being within commuting distance of Auckland, it was slow going as we hit the rush hour traffic heading south down SH1. After a quick detour to collect lunch, we made for Ambury Regional Park on the Manukau Harbour, where the high tide meant that the high tide roost on the shell bank was full. The majority of the birds were arctic migrants (Bar-tailed Godwits (Kuaka) and Red Knot (*Huabou*), but we also encountered Red-breasted Dotterel (*Tūturinhatu*) and Black-billed Gull (*Tarāpuka*). From here, it was a bit of a dash down SH1 to Horahora by Lake Karapiro, where we had lunch. Despite our best efforts, there were no New Zealand Grebes (*Weweia*) to be found.



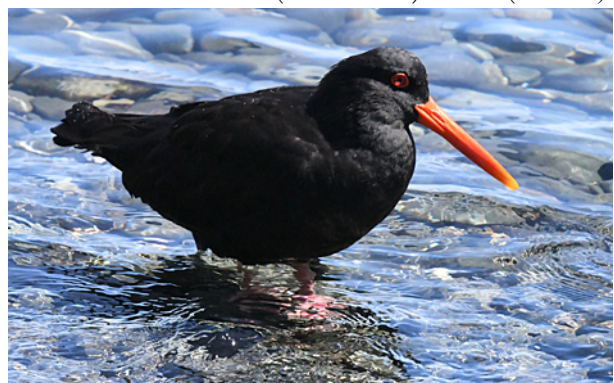
Kea



(South Island) Tomtit (*Miromiro*)



South Island Robin (*Kakarua*)



Variable Oystercatcher (*Torea-pango*)

We continued towards Rotorua, via a brief stop in Tirau, famous (in New Zealand) for its corrugated iron buildings and sculptures. And so we came to Rotorua and Sulphur Point, where again we enjoyed the aroma, while watching Little Pied (*Kawaupaka*) and Little Black Cormorants (*Kawau tū*) side-by-side, as well as New Zealand Grebe (*Weweia*), and NZ's only inland colony of Silver Gulls (*Tarāpunga*). We then had time to visit the bubbling mud pools at the Waiotapu geothermal area, and to learn some Māori history from Michael, before retracing our steps to Rotorua for dinner.

Day 6

Wednesday 5th November

An early start today, as we arrived at the Kaharoa Conservation Area just on sunrise. This is home to one of the remaining populations of North Island Kokako, and although we did not encounter any, we heard and saw a variety of native and introduced species, as well as enjoying the native bush. The day continued sunny again as we made our way to Waimangu Volcanic Valley, where an eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886 destroyed what was known as the eighth wonder of the world, the Pink and White Terraces.

We walked the first section of the track, past steaming lakes, and viewed the Inferno Crater, where the water level rises and falls on a regular cycle, before catching the shuttle bus to Lake Tarawera, where we made a quick dash to see Australasian Grebe (*Tokitokipio*), which breeds in very small numbers in the upper North Island. Lunch was had at Dunham Point domain, alongside the Waikato River, and then we made a quick stop at Whakamaru Dam for a variety of waterfowl, before continuing on to Pureora Forest, which was one of the last areas of native bush to be opened up for logging; protests in 1978 led to the end of deforestation.

We walked the Totara Track through podocarp forest, with good views of Kaka, and also North Island Robin (*Toutouwai*) and Yellow-crowned Parakeet (also *Kākāriki* – the Māori language does not distinguish the two ‘crowned’ parakeets). We then headed east to our accommodation on the shores of Lake Taupo, New Zealand’s largest lake, for a buffet dinner.

Day 7

Thursday 6th November

It was sunny again today as we drove southwards alongside Lake Taupo to Tokaanu, where a slow drive along Wharf Road produced views of Australasian Bittern (*Matuku-hūrepo*) and Pacific Black Duck (*Pāreru*), along with a heard-only Spotless Crake, before breakfast at Turangi. Then it was time to turn our attention to one of the major targets of the day: Blue Duck (*Whio*). Major Jones Bridge drew a blank, but our luck was in further upstream at Red Hut Bridge, where a family of five provided great views just below the car park. After an unsuccessful look for Long-tailed Cuckoo (*Koekoē*), we continued up towards Tongariro, where we were hoping for New Zealand Pipit (*Pīhoihoi*), which we found at the second attempt, along with the bonus of a New Zealand Fernbird (*Mātātā*).

We were ahead of schedule at this stage, so we drove up to the Whakapapa ski field at 1550m, where there were no birds, but a good selection of alpine plants. It was back down to Whakapapa Village for lunch, and then we embarked on the Taranaki Falls track, where there was plenty to engage the botanists among us. After dinner, we took a short walk through the village, where we were listening for a North Island Brown Kiwi (*Kiwi-nui*). We heard one in the distance, along with several Moreporks (*Ruru*) heard, and one seen at close range.

Day 8

Friday 7th November

We made a prompt departure today and skirted Tongariro, checking out the giant carrot at Ohakune, and made a brief stop at Taihape, gumboot capital of New Zealand, before reaching Foxton Beach on the Manawatū Estuary at high tide. The roost consisted mainly of Bar-tailed Godwits and Red Knots, without any of the hoped-for scarcer waders, so we continued south to Paraparaumu Beach for a café lunch.

Our next destination, Kapiti Island, is one of New Zealand's oldest nature reserves, and has been pest-free since 1999, so we were required to go through quarantine to ensure that no animals or seeds were unwittingly taken to the island. The boat trip began on a trailer on the beach, before we were towed to deeper water. After a quick drop off at Rangitira, we went ashore at Waiorua Bay, and took a short walk to the lodge we went through a final quarantine check. We had an introduction to the island from Manaaki, and were then free to enjoy the island.

The walk to north coast went through coastal scrub and alongside the lagoon, with a good range of plants and birds seen along the way. Then it was back to the lodge for drinks and nibbles, followed by dinner. We gathered again at dusk to search for Little Spotted Kiwi (*Kiwi pukupuku*); the bulk of the population of this species is on Kapiti, and the group heard them calling, several people actually saw it briefly and one keen member put in another hour and was rewarded with a good view. Numerous other birds were heard, including Morepork, Little Penguin (*Kororā*) and Weka.

Day 9

Saturday 8th November

For some the day continued as Friday had finished, with a hunt for the Little Spotted Kiwi, with varying degrees of success. Before breakfast most of us got decent views of New Zealand Falcon (*Karearea*) circling over the lodge, as well as a South Island Takahe lurking in the garden. Our visit to Kapiti was over all too soon, and the boat whisked us back to the mainland.

Before heading south towards Wellington, we made a quick diversion to the nearby Waikanae Estuary, where we saw a pair of Black-fronted Dotterel, along with Australian Pied (*Kāruhiruhi*) and Little Black Cormorants (*Kawan tūi*). We arrived in good time for the Bluebridge Ferry, and headed out into Wellington Harbour ten minutes ahead of schedule. After an efficient lunch, we made for the top deck to start our seabird search for the tour. Three Arctic Skuas were seen in Wellington Harbour, and as we moved into open water, a couple of Westland Petrels (*Taike*) appeared, with both White-capped and Salvin's Albatross (*Toroa* – a generic name for all albatrosses) soon after. Also seen were numerous Fairy Prions (*Titi mainui*), Sooty, Hutton's and Fluttering Shearwaters (*Pakahā*), a Northern Giant Petrel (*Pangurunguru*), and a Feral Pigeon! The wind was significant, and it was a challenge finding shelter, but as the ship turned into Tory Channel conditions eased and we enjoyed a smooth sailing through to Queen Charlotte Sound and on to Picton.

Day 10

Sunday 9th November

For the second day in a row, our first transport of the day was by boat, and we boarded Miss Te Rawa for a morning in Queen Charlotte Sound. We soon spotted a Little Penguin in the smooth waters of the sound, which appeared unaffected by our presence. We also came across Dusky Dolphins and several groups of Fluttering Shearwaters. We continued to Pihaka Point, where we encountered our first New Zealand King Shag (*Kawan pāteketēke*) at close range. This species is found only in the Marlborough Sounds, and there were another forty-three at the southern end of Blumine Island, comprising approximately 7% of the world population.

We then went ashore on the island (without getting our feet wet) and went off in search of the endangered Orange-fronted Parakeet (*Kakariki karaka*). After a short walk, chattering calls were heard, and a bird was located in an overhead tree. More were heard, and one or two were seen in flight. Several Wekas were foraging alongside the path, and just before leaving the island we had excellent views of a South Island Saddleback (also *Tieke*) in the

understorey. On the return trip to Picton, we had more views of Dusky Dolphin, and also three Flesh-footed Shearwaters, among the more numerous Fluttering Shearwaters.

Then it was back on dry land, and into the bus for the short trip to Blenheim and a picnic lunch at Harling Park, and a selection of European birds. On the drive to Kaikoura we stopped first of all at Elterwater, where among the more usual ducks a very obliging Hoary-headed Grebe (*Taihoropi*) was added to the trip list, along with Australasian Crested Grebe (*Puteketeke*). Then on to the New Zealand Fur Seal (*Kekeno*) colony at Ohau Point, where the main birding topic was the possibility of a Southern Giant Petrel, which was resolved when the bird in question lifted its head to show the bill pattern of its Northern cousin. An early dinner was had at the Pier Hotel in Kaikoura, where we finally got to stay for two nights.

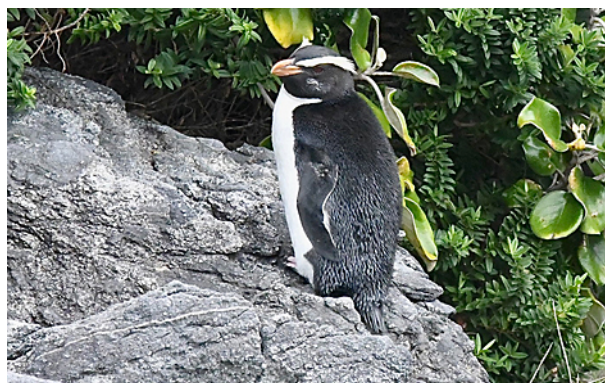
Day 11

Monday 10th November

A calm start to the day augured well for a smooth Albatross Encounter. After breakfast at the Encounter Café, we were on the water just after 9.00am, and motored out to the 1000m depth contour, where we stopped and put out the chum, and waited for the birds. They did not take long to arrive, with Northern Giant Petrels off the stern almost immediately, along with Pintado (Cape) Petrels and Salvin's Albatross. Over the next forty-five minutes, we were accompanied by five Antipodean and two Northern Royal Albatross, and enjoyed fly-bys from Buller's, Hutton's and Sooty Shearwaters, the vast majority giving excellent views and photographic opportunities off the back of the boat. We then relocated to The Hump, an undersea mountain some nine kilometres offshore. Here we had similar species to our first stop, with the addition of Snowy and Southern Royal Albatrosses, along with Shy (White-capped) and Black-browed Albatrosses, bringing our albatross count for the day to seven species!



New Zealand King Shag (Kawau pāteketeki)



Fiordland Penguin (*Tawaki*)



Shy (White-capped) Albatross



Salvin's Albatross

Then it was time to return to shore and enjoy lunch, ready for most of us to join the afternoon whale watching trip. This was a totally different experience from the morning albatross tour, as everyone was confined to the cabin for a high-speed dash when a whale was spotted, before being allowed out on deck to view a Sperm Whale (*Parāoa*) surfacing and then diving.

Day 12

Tuesday 11th November

After over a week of almost non-stop sunshine, we encountered a bit of drizzle on our drive over the Hundalees from Kaikoura to North Canterbury. The high tide at the Ashley River Mouth was a bit too high, so we relocated a few kilometres upriver, where a scan of the gravel banks revealed both Wrybill (*Ngutu pare*) and Double-banded Plover (*Pobouera*) with chicks. After lunch, we had a slow drive up to Arthur's Pass, and stopped in the village to find South Island Robin (*Kakarua*), followed by another short walk at Temple Basin, where Mount Cook Lily (a buttercup) was in flower. We also found Pipipi and Rifleman (*Tititipounamu*) here. Then it was time to head for the west coast at Hokitika, and our hotel for the night.

Day 13

Wednesday 12th November

We left Hokitika following the coast in a south-westerly direction, and had not gone far when three Eastern Cattle Egrets (*Kotuku*) were seen in a field of cows, along with a Bar-tailed Godwit for good measure. Despite the best attempts of a slow-moving campervan, we arrived at Pakihi in good time, and took the track up to the viewpoint overlooking Okarito Lagoon. Yellow-crowned Parakeets were seen here, along with Pipipi, and we had good views of Tomtit (*Miomiro*) of the South Island form and various other bush birds.

The next stop was the briefing for tonight's Okarito Brown Kiwi (*Rom*) expedition, and Ian explained the protocols for the evening. We then visited the boardwalk, where most of us had excellent if brief views of a New Zealand Fernbird, before lunch by the lagoon. In preparation for a late night, we made our way to Franz Josef, for a bit of downtime, via an entertaining stop at road works, where a very pale Welcome Swallow (*Waron*) showed some characteristics of a Barn Swallow! After dinner at Alice May, it was back on the bus for the trip back to Okarito, where we met Ian again, and were split into two groups in order to maximise our chances of seeing the Okarito Brown Kiwi. Our target bird was Moss, a male, and while the second group waited patiently along the road, listening, the first group went down a narrow track, led by Ian, and within an hour everyone had had good views. So, the pressure was now on for the second group as we swapped places. But Ian worked his magic again and Moss reappeared on the path for a prolonged period. So, it was a late night, but everyone was satisfied!

Day 14

Thursday 13th November

Everybody was full of beans after breakfast and ready for a long day's drive to Twizel, along windy roads and with slow traffic. The first stop at Knights Point provided an introduction to the West Coast Sandfly, with more at Ship Creek a short while later, along with a Fiordland Penguin (*Tawaki*) on the beach. We then headed inland over Haast Pass, with views of Rifleman and Pipipi at the summit. The drive became a bit more straightforward from here as we passed Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, through Tarras for an ice cream, over the Lindis Pass and back into Canterbury. We took a quick diversion along Lake Ohau Road in a vain hunt for Black Stilt (*Kaki*), before arriving at Twizel in time for a buffet dinner at the hotel.

Day 15

Friday 14th November

The weather forecast for the day was for strong winds from late morning, but it dawned fine with little wind, so straight after breakfast we drove north to Lake Pukaki, part of a large hydroelectric scheme. There was a quick stop at Peter's Lookout for photos of Aoraki (Mount Cook), New Zealand's highest mountain, and then we drove on to Glentanner, at the top of the lake on the Tasman Delta. It was still quite calm, so we walked down the track towards the lake. It was fairly quiet, apart from a few Black-fronted Terns (*Tarapirohe*), but then two waders flew in; they were all black, and closer inspection revealed that they were banded (ringed), confirming their identity as pure Black Stilts! We watched them for a while until the breeze picked up.

The next stop was at the Hermitage car park. We were hoping for Kea, but had to make do with Rifleman. Then it was on to the White Horse car park, from where we set off on the (busy) Hooker Valley Track, with the wind picking up all the while. There were few birds, and no butterflies in the wind, but plenty of alpine flora. Some of us continued to the second swing (suspension) bridge, while the remainder enjoyed the mountain views from the first.

Then we returned to the shelter at the car park for a pick and mix lunch, and retraced our steps to Twizel. At Ohau C power station, fifteen minutes south of Twizel, there is a small rewilding wetland area, and though the conditions were not good for birds, we saw a few butterflies, including some Canterbury Alpine Boulder Coppers, and some of us also saw a skink. We took the opportunity for an early return to Twizel, with the daily log and then live music at dinner rounding off the day.

Day 16

Saturday 15th November

Most of us left Twizel in the pre-dawn gloom at 5.30am to return to Ohau C, from where we could see fresh snow on the Southern Alps. The wind of yesterday was replaced by calm conditions, ideal for searching for our target bird of the morning: Baillon's Crake (*Kotoreke*). A couple of White-faced Herons (*Matuku moana*) flew over, and various (mainly introduced) birds were singing. Soon after our arrival, a possible crake call was heard, so we moved closer to the source and were rewarded with brief views of a bird carrying nesting material. Patient waiting and watching ensured that everyone got good views of at least one crake.

Then it was back to base for breakfast, before saying a final farewell to Michael, and hitting the road south. After a quick photo stop at Lindis Pass, and another break at Tarras, where we heard the tale of Shrek the Sheep, we continued on to Queenstown, where Claire took over the driving.

Lunch was had at Kingston, where the eponymous Flyer steam train is based, but is only in operation on Sundays. There was a little bit of down time in Te Anau, before most of us spent an hour or so birding at the oxidation ponds and the Upukerora Estuary. High water levels meant that we had to walk further than intended, but the same conditions contributed to good numbers of birds, including an inland Bar-tailed Godwit, feeding in flooded meadows.

Day 17

Sunday 16th November

The morning dawned fine, with little wind, and a relatively efficient start saw us away by 8.00am, heading north and parallel to, but generally out of sight of, Lake Te Anau, the largest lake in the South Island. Our first stop was Mirror Lakes, in the Eglinton Valley, where only the New Zealand Scaup (*Pāpango*) marred the reflections of the mountains. We moved on to Cascade Creek, where we embarked on the Lake Gunn Nature Walk, a 1.5km trek through ancient *Nothofagus* forest. Rifleman and South Island Robin provided good views, but the hoped-for Yellowhead (Mohua) was audible, but not visible.

As we continued into the Upper Hollyford Valley, both Blue Duck and Kea failed to show, so we made for the Homer Tunnel, where conditions allowed us to spend the best part of an hour in a search for Rock Wren (*Pīwauwau*), while we ate our lunch in the continuing sunshine. Unfortunately, we were out of luck, and the birds remained hidden, so we reluctantly returned to the bus for the spectacular descent through the Homer Tunnel and down into Milford Sound. Milford Sound is actually a misnomer, as it is a fiord, carved by ice, rather than a sound, which is a submerged river valley (or ria). Fine conditions continued as we spent the best part of two hours exploring the fiord, with the views making up for lack of birds. Then it was time for the long drive back to Te Anau.

Day 18

Monday 17th November

This was a travelling day, but we made a couple of stops after leaving Te Anau. We drove past Lake Manapouri, the scene of environmental protests in the 1960s, when there was a proposal to build a hydroelectric power station, which raised concerns over elevated lake levels. The power station was built, but the lake level rise did not eventuate, thankfully. The first stop was at Rakatu Wetlands, on the Waiau River, where we walked to the viewpoint overlooking the wetlands. We continued past Clifden suspension bridge, and after a brief stop in Tuatapere (the sausage capital of New Zealand) we reached Invercargill around midday.

We had lunch overlooking the Tip Lagoon, before spending a couple of hours checking out the wildfowl and a few waders as the tide receded; New Zealand Fernbird was also seen by some. We went to the end of the road at Stirling Point, before returning to Bluff to catch the ferry across Foveaux Strait. The one-hour crossing was relatively smooth, and thus not ideal for birds, but Common Diving-Petrel (*Kuaka*) was added to the trip list, along with Stewart Island (Foveaux) Shag (*Mapo*), and a few other seabirds were seen. Dinner was had at the South Sea Hotel, where we were staying, and afterwards some of the group went on independent searches for the Stewart Island Brown Kiwi (treated as a subspecies of Southern Brown Kiwi: *Tokoeka*).

Day 19

Tuesday 18th November

The first exercise of the day involved walking over the hill to Golden Bay wharf, where we caught a water taxi to Ulva Island, in two groups. After our arrival at Post Office Wharf, where descendants of the original settlers still have a home, we made our way through the unspoiled rainforest, and soon started hearing our main target bird for the day: Yellowhead. Most saw them, and we also found Red-crowned Parakeet. We continued the walk towards West End Beach, with the various calls of the Yellowheads audible almost continuously. There were also a few South Island Saddlebacks, with some of the birds being 'Jackbirds', the name given to the immatures, which differ from North Island immatures in not having the chestnut saddle.

Most of us made it as far as West End Beach (and the associated sandflies), while some completed the loop via Boulder Beach, complete with New Zealand Sea Lions. On our return to the wharf, we had a quick picnic lunch, and returned via the water taxi to Golden Bay, to await the bigger boat to take us out to sea. Due to the wind, we spent the first hour or so within the confines of Paterson Inlet and Big Glory Bay, where we cruised alongside the salmon farm, looking for penguins in particular. Yellow-eyed Penguin (*Hoiho*) was hoped for, but we had to make do with Little, and some likely Fiordland Penguins. Once we hit more open waters, there was the constant accompaniment of Shy (White-capped) Albatross, with a few Salvin's, numerous Common Diving-Petrels, a couple of Brown Skuas (*Hākoakoa*), and a distant fly-by from three Sooty Shearwaters (*Titi*). On our return to Half Moon Bay, we all got good views of a Fiordland Penguin standing on the shore.

Due to the long daylight hours, the evening Kiwi trip did not start until nearly 10.30 pm, when two minibuses headed out of town to the airfield. Conditions were calm and clear, so as well as seeing three or four Stewart Island Brown Kiwis, there was also the fantastic starlit southern sky to enjoy.

Day 20

Wednesday 19th November

We had an early start today (without breakfast) so as to be down at the wharf at 7.30am, to catch the catamaran back to the mainland. Breakfast was had at Batch Café in Invercargill, and then we continued up State Highway 1 towards Dunedin. We paused briefly in Gore, New Zealand's capital of country music, and world capital of Brown Trout fishing, to admire the plastic trout, before travelling along the Presidential Highway from Gore to Clinton, through Balclutha, to our lunch stop beside Lake Waihola. The keen-eyed birders among us soon picked out (at a great distance) a Mute Swan (*Wāna*) among the numerous Black Swans (*Kakīānanu*), and two Long-finned Eels were seen by the shore, lurking among the Mallard (*Rakiraki*), waiting for scraps. We also had the opportunity to view Silver and Black-billed Gulls side-by-side.

There was then time for a break at the hotel in Dunedin, before setting out again for the final activity of the tour. It was a meandering drive along the shore of Otago Harbour, and out to Wellers Rock, where the Monarch was waiting to take us out to view the wildlife of Taiaroa Head. After cruising along the shore to view nesting Spotted (*Kawan tikitiki*) and nominate subspecies (Otago) Stewart Island Shags (*Matapo*), and Northern Royal Albatross, we spotted a small fishing boat returning from sea. A large number of Black-billed Gulls were in attendance, along with White-capped, Salvin's and Southern Royal Albatrosses, plus Pintado Petrel, Fluttering and Sooty Shearwaters. An obliging Little Penguin was seen as we returned to base. And so we went to our final dinner in Dunedin, ready for an early departure to the airport on Thursday morning.

Day 21

Thursday 20th November

The clients' flight left Dunedin at 9.30am, for the short hop to Auckland, where they connected with the onward flight to Singapore, arriving in the evening. The UK-bound flight departed Singapore close to midnight.

Day 22

Friday 21st November

Clients arrived safely home in the UK early in the morning.

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Species lists

Birds (H = heard)

E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Southern Brown Kiwi - E	<i>Apteryx australis</i>																	✓	✓
North Island Brown Kiwi - E	<i>Apteryx mantelli</i>					H													
Okarito Kiwi - E	<i>Apteryx rowi</i>											✓							
Little Spotted Kiwi - E	<i>Apteryx owenii</i>						✓												
Canada Goose - I	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Greylag Goose - I	<i>Anser anser</i>			✓					✓						✓				
Black Swan - I	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Blue Duck - E	<i>Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos</i>					✓										✓			
Paradise Shelduck - E	<i>Tadorna variegata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Australasian Shoveler	<i>Spatula rhynchotis</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		
Pacific Black Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>					✓						✓							
Mallard - I	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grey Teal	<i>Anas gracilis</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		
Brown Teal - E	<i>Anas chlorotis</i>		✓																
New Zealand Scaup - E	<i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>			✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
California Quail - I	<i>Callipepla californica</i>		✓		H	✓	✓				✓				✓				
Wild Turkey - I	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>						✓												
Common Pheasant - I	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	✓	H	H	✓	✓	H	H			✓								
Brown Quail - I	<i>Synoicus ypsilophorus</i>		✓																
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	<i>Chalcites lucidus</i>	✓		H	✓	H	H												
Feral Rock Dove - I	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
African Collared Dove - I	<i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i>	✓		✓															
Spotted Dove - I	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	✓		✓															
New Zealand Pigeon - E	<i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weka - E	<i>Gallirallus australis</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓			
Buff-banded Rail	<i>Hypotaenidia philippensis</i>		✓																
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				✓			✓	✓										
Australasian Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
South Island Takahe - E	<i>Porphyrio hochstetteri</i>						✓	✓											
Baillon's Crake	<i>Zapornia pusilla</i>														✓				

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Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Spotless Crake	<i>Zapornia tabuensis</i>		✓			H													
Australasian Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus novaehollandiae</i>				✓														
Hoary-headed Grebe	<i>Poliocephalus poliocephalus</i>								✓										
New Zealand Grebe - E	<i>Poliocephalus rufopectus</i>			✓		✓													
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>								✓					✓	✓				
South Island Oystercatcher - E	<i>Haematopus finschi</i>			✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Variable Oystercatcher - E	<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Pied Stilt	<i>Himantopus leucocephalus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Black Stilt - E	<i>Himantopus novaezelandiae</i>													✓					
Black-fronted Dotterel - N	<i>Charadrius melanops</i>							✓			✓								
Masked Lapwing	<i>Vanellus miles</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Double-banded Plover	<i>Anarhynchus bicinctus</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Wrybill - E	<i>Anarhynchus frontalis</i>										✓								
New Zealand Plover - E	<i>Anarhynchus obscurus</i>		✓	✓															
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>			✓			✓	✓				✓			✓		✓		
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>			✓			✓												
Sooty Tern	<i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i>	✓																	
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons sinensis</i>						✓												
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓							✓		
Black-fronted Tern - E	<i>Chlidonias albostratus</i>										✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
White-fronted Tern - E	<i>Sterna striata</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Silver Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Black-billed Gull - E	<i>Chroicocephalus bulleri</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Arctic Skua (Parasitic Jaeger)	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>		✓					✓	✓										
Brown Skua	<i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i>																	✓	
Little Penguin - N	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>						✓	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓
Yellow-eyed Penguin - E	<i>Megadyptes antipodes</i>																✓		
Fiordland Penguin	<i>Eudyptes pachyrhynchus</i>												✓					✓	✓
Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea sanfordi</i>									✓									✓
Southern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>									✓									✓
Snowy Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>									✓									
Antipodean Albatross	<i>Diomedea antipodensis</i>									✓									
Shy Albatross - N	<i>Thalassarche cauta</i>							✓		✓							✓	✓	✓

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Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
Salvin's Albatross	<i>Thalassarche salvini</i>							✓		✓								✓	✓	
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>									✓										
Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>							✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	
Pintado Petrel	<i>Daption capense</i>									✓							✓	✓	✓	
Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>							✓	✓	✓										
White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>																		✓	
Westland Petrel	<i>Procellaria westlandica</i>							✓		✓										
Buller's Shearwater	<i>Ardenna bulleri</i>									✓										
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>							✓		✓								✓	✓	
Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna carneipes</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓											
Fluttering Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gavia</i>		✓					✓	✓										✓	
Hutton's Shearwater - N	<i>Puffinus huttoni</i>							✓	✓	✓										
Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>																✓	✓	✓	
Australasian Gannet - N	<i>Morus serrator</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	
Little Pied Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo melanoleucos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Spotted Shag - E	<i>Phalacrocorax punctatus</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	
Australian Pied Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	
Little Black Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓		✓	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
New Zealand King Shag - E	<i>Leucocarbo carunculatus</i>								✓											
Stewart Island Shag - E	<i>Leucocarbo chalconotus chalconotus</i>																		✓	
Stewart Island Shag - E	<i>Leucocarbo chalconotus stewarti</i>																✓	✓	✓	
Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓		✓	
Australasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>					✓														
White-faced Heron	<i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>											✓								
Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea coromanda</i>											✓								
Swamp Harrier	<i>Circus approximans</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Morepork - N	<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>					✓	✓					H					✓	✓	✓	
Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus sanctus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓								✓	
New Zealand Falcon - E	<i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i>						✓	✓							✓	✓				
Kea - E	<i>Nestor notabilis</i>											✓	✓			✓				
New Zealand Kaka - E	<i>Nestor meridionalis</i>				✓		✓	✓								✓		✓	✓	
Eastern Rosella - I	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>		✓	✓	✓															

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Malherbe's Parakeet - E	<i>Cyanoramphus malherbi</i>								✓											
Yellow-crowned Parakeet - E	<i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>				✓							✓				H				
Red-crowned Parakeet - E	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezealandiae</i>		✓				✓	✓										✓		
Rifleman - E	<i>Acanthisitta chloris</i>										✓		✓	✓		✓				
Tui - E	<i>Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New Zealand Bellbird - E	<i>Anthornis melanura</i>		✓		✓	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Grey Gerygone - E	<i>Gerygone igata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
North Island Kokako - E	<i>Callaeas wilsoni</i>		✓																	
North Island Saddleback - E	<i>Philesturnus rufusater</i>		✓				H	✓												
South Island Saddleback - E	<i>Philesturnus carunculatus</i>								✓									✓		
Stitchbird - E	<i>Notiomystis cincta</i>		✓																	
Australian Magpie - I	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Yellowhead - E	<i>Mohoua ochrocephala</i>															H		✓		
Whitehead - E	<i>Mohoua albicilla</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓												
Pipipi - E	<i>Mohoua novaeseelandiae</i>										✓	✓	✓					✓		
New Zealand Fantail - E	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Tomtit - E	<i>Petroica macrocephala</i>			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓			✓				
North Island Robin	<i>Petroica longipes</i>		✓		✓	H	✓													
South Island Robin - E	<i>Petroica australis</i>										✓	✓				✓		✓		
Eurasian Skylark - I	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New Zealand Fernbird - E	<i>Poodytes punctatus</i>		H			✓						✓					✓			
Silvereye	<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Common Myna - I	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓														
Common Starling - I	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Song Thrush - I	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Blackbird - I	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
House Sparrow - I	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dunnock - I	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New Zealand Pipit - E	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>				✓	✓								✓						
Eurasian Chaffinch - I	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
European Greenfinch - I	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Redpoll - I	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
European Goldfinch - I	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				

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Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Yellowhammer - I	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Cirl Bunting - I	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>										✓								

Mammals

E=Endemic, I=Introduced, D = dead		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
European Hare - I	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>				✓		✓				✓				✓				
European Rabbit - I	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
House Mouse - I	<i>Mus musculus</i>	D																	
New Zealand Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus forsteri</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			✓
New Zealand Sea Lion - E	<i>Phocarcus hookeri</i>																	✓	✓
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>									✓									
(Long-beaked) Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>							✓											
Hector's Dolphin - E	<i>Cephalorhynchus hectori</i>									✓			✓						✓
Dusky Dolphin	<i>Sagmatias obscurus</i>							✓	✓	✓							✓		
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>									✓									
Feral Goat - I	<i>Capra hircus</i>			✓											✓				

Amphibians & reptiles

E = endemic, I = introduced	
Common name	Scientific name
Southern Bell Frog - I	<i>Ranoidea raniformis</i>
Brown (Whistling) Tree Frog - I	<i>Rawlinsonia ewingi</i>
Green-and-gold Bell Frog - I	<i>Ranoidea aurea</i>
Tuatara - E	<i>Sphenodon punctatus</i>
Forest Gecko - E	<i>Mokopirakau granulatus</i>
Raukawa Gecko - E	<i>Woodworthia maculata</i>
Southern Alps Gecko - E	<i>Woodworthia</i> sp.

Butterflies

E=Endemic, I=Introduced		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Small White - I	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
Common Copper - E	<i>Lycaena salustius</i>						✓				✓								
Rauparaha's Copper - E	<i>Lycaena rauparaha</i>						✓	✓											
Canterbury Alpine Boulder Copper - E	<i>Lycaena tama</i>													✓					
Monarch - I	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓										
Yellow Admiral	<i>Vanessa itea</i>									✓									
New Zealand Red Admiral - E	<i>Vanessa gonerilla</i>					✓							✓	✓					
Australian Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa kershawi</i>						✓					✓							
Southern Blue - E	<i>Zizina oxleyi</i>													✓					
Common Tussock - E	<i>Argyrophenga antipodum</i>												✓						

Damselflies & dragonflies

E = endemic		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Common Redcoat - E	<i>Xanthocnemis zealandica</i>							✓				✓		✓					✓
Blue Damselfly - E	<i>Austrolestes colensonis</i>											✓							
Yellow-spotted Dragonfly - E	<i>Procordulia grayi</i>													✓					
Smith's Dragonfly - E	<i>Procordulia smithii</i>				✓									✓					
New Zealand Bush Giant Dragonfly - E	<i>Uropetala carovei</i>								✓										

Other invertebrates

O = ova, E = endemic, I = introduced		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Moths																			
Kawakawa Looper Moth - E	<i>Cleora scriptaria</i>		O																
Pūriri Moth - E	<i>Aenetus virescens</i>		O																
Flightless crickets																			
Auckland Tree Wētā - E	<i>Hemideina thoracica</i>		✓																
Black flies																			
West Coast Blackfly - E	<i>Austrosimulium unguatum</i>												✓						

O = ova, E = endemic, I = introduced		November 2025																	
Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
a New Zealand sandfly - E	<i>Simuliidae</i> sp.																	✓	✓
Bees & wasps																			
Buff-tailed Bumblebee - I	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Honey Bee - I	<i>Apis mellifera</i>				✓									✓					
German Wasp - I	<i>Vespula germanica</i>		✓	✓					✓										
Spiders																			
a white-tailed spider	<i>Lampona</i> sp.											✓							

Selected plants

Common name	Scientific name
Weeping Kōwhai	<i>Sophora microphylla</i>
Kahikatea	<i>Dacrycarpus dacrydiodes</i>
Pōhutukawa	<i>Metrosideros excelsa</i>
Kawakawa	<i>Piper excelsum</i>
Pūriri	<i>Vitex leucens</i>
Karaka	<i>Corynocarpus laevigatus</i>
Nīkau	<i>Rhopalostylis sapida</i>
Mamaku	<i>Sphaeropteris medullaris</i>
Ti (Cabbage Tree)	<i>Cordyline australis</i>
Mānuka	<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>
Kānuka	<i>Kunzea ericoides</i>
Rewarewa	<i>Knightia excelsa</i>
New Zealand Seagrass	<i>Zostera muelleri</i>
Manawu (Grey Mangrove)	<i>Avicennia marina</i>
an endemic Primulaceae shrub	<i>Elingamita johnsonii</i>
Pōhuehue	<i>Meulenbeckia complexa</i>
Harakeke (New Zealand Flax)	<i>Phormium tenax</i>