

New Zealand Birding & Nature Species List | January 7-23, 2025 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Kent Skaggs with local guides Michael Burton Smith and Richard Schofield. Our clients included Cyndi & Rick, Deb, Gail & Byron, Kathy, Monica & Jim, Nancy and Velma & Brent.

Bird and nature enthusiasts from Illinois, Indiana, Oregon, Virginia and Ontario, Canada, traveled to New Zealand to look for a multitude of endemic bird species on land, numerous seabird species on the water and to experience the country's diverse and beautiful landscapes. Starting in Auckland, we explored several areas on the North Island before crossing the Cook Strait to explore the South Island and Stewart Island. Known as the seabird capital of the world, we spent a fair amount of time on the water as well. For a list of what was seen and where, please keep reading.

BIRDS - 132 species were recorded of which 2 were heard only, 40 were endemic and 27 were introduced. Details are included below.

The eBird link below details the 132 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[New Zealand Birding and Nature | January 7-23, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

KIWIS: Apterygidae — (1)

Southern Brown Kiwi (E) *Apteryx australis* — Two were seen during our guided night walk at the Ryans Creek Aerodrome on Stewart Island.

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae — (9)

Graylag Goose (I) *Anser anser* — Domesticated Graylag Geese were seen at Rotorua and possible wild birds were seen on the 20th on our way to Te Anau.

Canada Goose (I) *Branta canadensis* — Seen at multiple locations throughout the country.

Black Swan (I) *Cygnus atratus* — Seen at multiple locations with high counts of 900 and 600 seen from the Tokaanu Wharf at Lake Taupo and at Tip Lagoon/Pleasure Bay near Invercargill respectively.

Paradise Shelduck (E) *Tadorna variegata* — Seen at multiple locations with a high count of 500 at the Otaki Sewage Ponds.

Australasian Shoveler *Spatula rhynchotis* — Seen at multiple locations.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa* — A few were seen from the Tokaanu Wharf and singles at a pond south of Twizel and the Te Anau WTP.

Mallard (I) *Anas platyrhynchos* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

Gray Teal *Anas gracilis* — Seen at multiple locations.

New Zealand Scaup (E) *Aythya novaeseelandiae* — Seen at multiple locations.

NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae — (1)

California Quail (I) *Callipepla californica* — At least two were seen along the road to Cascade Kauri Park.

PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae — (2)

Ring-necked Pheasant (I) *Phasianus colchicus* — One seen along the road to Cascade Kauri Park and individuals seen two other days while en route.

Brown Quail (I) *Synoicus ypsilophorus* — Two were seen on Tiritiri Matangi.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae — (4)

Rock Pigeon (I) *Columba livia* — Seen at multiple locations.

African Collared-Dove (I) *Streptopelia roseogrisea* — Several seen in the Auckland area.

Spotted Dove (I) *Spilopelia chinensis* — A few were seen in the Auckland area.

New Zealand Pigeon (E) *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae* — This impressive pigeon was first seen at Cascades Regional Park and was seen on all three islands visited (North, South and Stewart).

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae — (2)

Long-tailed Koel *Urodynamis taitensis* — Heard at Arthur's Pass Wilderness Lodge and briefly seen on two occasions along the Milford Sound Highway.

Shining Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus* — One seen along the Tokaanu Wharf Road and another while exiting the Big Tree Walk at the Peel Forest.

RAILS, CRAKES, AND ALLIES: Rallidae — (5)

Weka (E) *Gallirallus australis* — Four seen on Blumine Island and one heard at Mirror Lakes.

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis* — One seen crossing the road to Okoromai Bay.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra* — Seen at multiple locations with largest numbers at the ponds south of Twizel.

Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus* — Seen at multiple locations, often times while en route.

Spotless Crake *Zapornia tabuensis* — Seen on Tiritiri Matangi.

STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae — (2)

Pied Stilt *Himantopus leucocephalus* — Seen at multiple locations with high counts at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve and Tip Lagoon/Pleasure Bay.

Black Stilt (E) *Himantopus novaezelandiae* — Seen in the southeast corner of Lake Tekapo and at the Tasmin River Delta.

OYSTERCATCHERS: Haematopodidae — (2)

South Island Oystercatcher (E) *Haematopus finschi* — Seen at multiple locations with 2000+ present at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Variable Oystercatcher (E) *Haematopus unicolor* — Seen at multiple locations in small numbers.

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae — (6)

Pacific Golden-Plover *Pluvialis fulva* — Forty seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* — One seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Black-fronted Dotterel *Elsayornis melanops* — First seen at Blenheim Wastewater Treatment Wetlands and again along the Oreti River.

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles* — Seen most days at multiple locations and often en route.

Double-banded Plover *Anarhynchus bicinctus*— Seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve, the Kaikoura Peninsula and along the southern shore of Lake Te Anau.

Wrybill (E) *Anarhynchus frontalis* — Seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae — (7)

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* — Seen at multiple locations with largest numbers seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* — Two seen on the tidal flats adjacent to the Puketutu Canal.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* — Three seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* — Seen on the tidal flats adjacent to the Puketutu Canal and at the Taramaire Creek mouth near the Miranda Shorebird Center.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* — One seen on the tidal flats adjacent to the Puketutu Canal and another at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* — One seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* — One seen at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

SKUAS AND JAEGER: Stercorariidae — (3)

Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus* — Singles seen on the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi, Cook Strait and on the Queen Charlotte Sound cruise.

Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus* — Singles seen on the Cook Strait crossing and the crossing to Stewart Island.

Brown Skua *Stercorarius antarcticus* — Seen on the pelagic to Bench Island.

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae — (6)

Silver Gull *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* — Seen at multiple locations.

Black-billed Gull (E) *Chroicocephalus bulleri* — Seen at multiple locations.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* — Seen at the holding pond at the Puketutu Canal, Taramaire Creek mouth, Tokaanu Wharf and Tip Lagoon/Pleasure Bay.

Black-fronted Tern (E) *Chlidonias albostratus* — Seen on the South Island at multiple locations.

White-fronted Tern *Sterna striata* — Seen at multiple locations.

GREBES: Podicipedidae — (3)

Hoary-headed Grebe *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus* — Two seen at Lake Elterwater.

New Zealand Grebe (E) *Poliiocephalus rufopectus* — Seen at multiple locations with high counts seen from the Tokaanu Wharf.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* — Seen at multiple locations on the South Island with high counts seen at the Wanaka Marina.

PENGUINS: Spheniscidae — (1)

Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor* — One seen on the pelagic to Bench Island.

ALBATROSSES: Diomedidae — (6)

Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi* — First seen on the Cook Strait crossing, again on the Kaikoura pelagic, the pelagic to Bench Island and at Taiaroa Head on the Otago Peninsula.

Southern Royal Albatross *Diomedea epomophora*— First seen at the Ohau seal colony north of Kaikoura, again on the

Kaikoura pelagic, the crossing to Stewart Island, the pelagic to Bench Island and at Taiaroa Head just off of the Otago Peninsula.

Antipodean Albatross *Diomedea antipodensis*— Seen on the Cook Strait crossing and the Kaikoura pelagic.

Buller's Albatross *Thalassarche bulleri* — Seen on the crossing to Stewart Island and on the pelagic to Bench Island.

White-capped Albatross *Thalassarche cauta* — Most numerous albatross seen, starting on the Cook Strait crossing, at Kaikoura, the pelagic to Bench Island and from the Stewart Island ferry.

Salvin's Albatross *Thalassarche salvini* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing, at Kaikoura and the pelagic to Bench Island.

SOUTHERN STORM-PETRELS: Oceanitidae — (1)

Black-bellied Storm-Petrel *Fregetta tropica* — Seen on the second Kaikoura pelagic.

PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS: Procellariidae — (13)

Northern Giant-Petrel *Macronectes halli* — One seen on the Cook Strait crossing, the Kaikoura pelagic and the pelagic to Bench Island.

Pintado Petrel *Daption capense* — Seen on the Kaikoura pelagic, the crossing to Stewart Island and the pelagic to Bench Island.

Mottled Petrel *Pterodroma inexpectata* — One seen on the crossing to Stewart Island.

Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing and the crossing to Stewart Island.

Fairy Prion *Pachyptila turtur* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing.

White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis* — Seen on the Kaikoura pelagic.

Westland Petrel *Procellaria westlandica* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing and the Kaikoura pelagic.

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Ardenna carneipes* — Seen on the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi, the Cook Strait crossing and the Kaikoura pelagic.

Buller's Shearwater *Ardenna bulleri* — Seen on the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi, the Cook Strait crossing and the Kaikoura pelagic.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing, the Kaikoura pelagic, the pelagic to Bench Island and the Stewart Island ferry crossings, with approximately 1,000 seen on the second crossing.

Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris* — One seen on the Kaikoura pelagic and one on the ferry crossing to Stewart Island.

Hutton's Shearwater *Puffinus huttoni* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing and along the Kaikoura Peninsula.

Fluttering Shearwater *Puffinus gavia* — Seen on the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi, the Cook Strait crossing and on the Milford Sound cruise.

Common Diving-Petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix* — Seen on the pelagic to Bench Island and the Stewart Island ferry crossings.

GANNETS AND BOOBIES: Sulidae — (1)

Australasian Gannet *Morus serrator* — Approximately 1,000 present at the Muriwai Gannet colony, with small numbers seen at multiple locations on both the North and South Islands.

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae — (7)

Little Pied Cormorant *Microcarbo melanoleucos* — Seen most days at multiple locations.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* — Seen at multiple locations.

Spotted Shag (E) *Phalacrocorax punctatus* — Seen at multiple locations, including at a small colony in the Milford Sound.

Little Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris* — Seen at multiple locations with a high count of 20 at Lake Rotorua.

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius* — Seen at multiple locations.

New Zealand King Shag (E) *Leucocarbo carunculatus* — Seen on the Milford Sound cruise.

Stewart Island Shag (E) *Leucocarbo chalconotus* — The Foveaux subspecies was seen on the Stewart Island ferry crossings and a colony was visited during the pelagic to Bench Island. The Otago subspecies was seen during the cruise to Taiaroa Head on the Otago Peninsula.

IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae — (1)

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia* — Seen at multiple locations with a high count of 55 at Miranda/Robert Findlay Wildlife Reserve.

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae — (2)

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae* — Seen most days at multiple locations.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* — A single bird was seen at the Ashley Estuary.

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae — (1)

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans* — Very common and seen most days all around the country, except Stewart Island.

OWLS: Strigidae — (2)

Little Owl (I) *Athene noctua* — One heard at a location alongside the highway south of Twizel.

Morepork *Ninox novaeseelandiae* — Heard at Whakapapa Village, three seen at the Hawdon Shelter and another heard at the Ryans Creek Aerodrome on Stewart Island.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae — (1)

Sacred Kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus* — Seen at multiple locations.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae — (1)

New Zealand Falcon (E) *Falco novaeseelandiae* — One seen on the Otira Valley hike in Arthur's Pass National Park and another at the Castle Hill Conservation Area.

NEW ZEALAND PARROTS: Strigopidae — (2)

Kea (E) *Nestor notabilis* — Two were seen in Arthur's Pass Village.

New Zealand Kaka (E) *Nestor meridionalis* — Seen at Pureora Forest, heard at Hawdons Shelter and seen again on Ulva Island and on the Lake Gunn Nature Walk.

COCKATOOS: Cacatuidae — (1)

Sulfur-crested Cockatoo (I) *Cacatua galerita* — Two were seen in flight at Cascade Kauri Park.

PARROTS: Psittaculidae — (4)

Red-crowned Parakeet (E) *Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae* — Seen at Tiritiri Matangi and on Ulva Island.

Yellow-crowned Parakeet (E) *Cyanoramphus auriceps* — Seen at Pureora Forest and heard at Mirror Lakes in Fiordland National Park.

Malherbe's Parakeet (E) *Cyanoramphus malherbi* — Two were seen on Blumine Island.

Eastern Rosella (I) *Platycercus eximius* — Seen at Cascade Kauri Park, Shakespear Regional Park and Pureora Forest.

NEW ZEALAND WRENS: Acanthisittidae — (2)

Rifleman (E) *Acanthisitta chloris* — Seen at Tiritiri Matangi, Pureora Forest, Peel Forest, Ulva Island, Mirror Lakes and on the Lake Gunn Nature Walk.

South Island Wren (E) *Xenicus gilviventris* — A single bird was seen on the east side of the Homer Tunnel in Fiordland

National Park.

HONEYEATERS: Meliphagidae — (2)

Tui (E) *Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae* — Seen most days and at multiple locations.

New Zealand Bellbird (E) *Anthornis melanura* — Frequently heard, but also seen at multiple locations.

THORNBILLS AND ALLIES: Acanthizidae — (1)

Gray Gerygone (E) *Gerygone igata* — Frequently heard, but also seen at multiple locations.

WHITEHEADS: Mohouidae — (3)

Whitehead (E) *Mohoua albicilla* — Seen at Tiritiri Matangi and Pureora Forest.

Yellowhead (E) *Mohoua ochrocephala* — Seen on Ulva Island.

Pipipi (E) *Mohoua novaeseelandiae* — Seen at Arthur's Pass Wilderness Lodge, Peel Forest and on Ulva Island.

WOODSWALLOWS AND ALLIES: Artamidae — (1)

Australian Magpie (I) *Gymnorhina tibicen* — Seen most days and at multiple locations.

FANTAILS: Rhipiduridae — (1)

New Zealand Fantail (E) *Rhipidura fuliginosa* — Seen at multiple locations.

WATTLEBIRDS: Callaeidae — (3)

North Island Kokako (E) *Callaeas wilsoni* — Heard clearly multiple times on Tiritiri Matangi.

North Island Saddleback (E) *Philesturnus rufusater* — Seen on Tiritiri Matangi.

South Island Saddleback (E) *Philesturnus carunculatus* — Seen on Blumine Island and Ulva Island.

STITCHBIRDS: Notiomystidae — (1)

Stitchbird (E) *Notiomystis cincta* — Seen at Tiritiri Matangi.

AUSTRALASIAN ROBINS: Petroicidae — (3)

Tomtit (E) *Petroica macrocephala* — Seen at Blumine Island, Otira Valley, Peel Forest, Mirror Lakes and on the Lake Gunn Nature Walk.

North Island Robin (E) *Petroica longipes* — Seen and heard at Tiritiri Matangi and Pureora Forest.

South Island Robin (E) *Petroica australis* — Seen and heard at Ulva Island, Mirror Lakes and on the Lake Gunn Nature Walk.

LARKS: Alaudidae — (1)

Eurasian Skylark (I) *Alauda arvensis* — Seen most days and at multiple locations.

BUSH WARBLERS: Locustellidae — (1)

New Zealand Fernbird *Poodytes punctatus* — Seen at Tiritiri Matangi, heard along the Tokaanu Wharf Road, seen at Tip Lagoon and heard again at Mirror Lakes.

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae — (1)

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

WHITE-EYES: Zosteropidae — (1)

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis* — Seen most days and at multiple locations.

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae — (2)

European Starling (I) *Sturnus vulgaris* — Seen most days and at multiple locations.

Common Myna (I) *Acridotheres tristis* — Seen only on the North Island, primarily around Auckland.

THRUSHES: Turdidae — (2)

Song Thrush (I) *Turdus philomelas* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

Eurasian Blackbird (I) *Turdus merula* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

ACCENTORS: Prunellidae — (1)

Dunnock (I) *Prunella modularis* — Seen or heard most days at multiple locations.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae — (1)

House Sparrow (I) *Passer domesticus* — Seen everyday at multiple locations.

PIPITS AND WAGTAILS: Motacillidae — (1)

New Zealand Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae* — One seen while en route on the 10th and at least one seen on the road to the Hawdon Shelter.

FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae — (4)

Common Chaffinch (I) *Fringilla coelebs* — Seen most days at multiple locations.

European Greenfinch (I) *Chloris chloris* — Seen and heard most days at multiple locations.

Lesser Redpoll (I) *Acanthis cabaret* — Seen and heard most days at multiple locations.

European Goldfinch (I) *Carduelis carduelis* — Seen and heard most days at multiple locations.

OLD WORLD BUNTINGS: Emberizidae — (2)

Cirl Bunting (I) *Emberiza cirlus* — Two seen on the Kaikoura Peninsula.

Yellowhammer (I) *Emberiza citrinella* — Seen and heard at multiple locations

MAMMALS: — (9)

Native:

Dusky Dolphin *Sagmatias obscurus* — Seen on the Kaikoura pelagic.

New Zealand Fur Seal *Arctocephalus forsteri* — Seen on the Cook Strait crossing, the Queen Charlotte Sound cruise, Ohau Point north of Kaikoura, the Kaikoura Peninsula, Stewart Island, Milford Sound and the Otago Peninsula.

New Zealand Sea Lion *Phocarctos hookeri* — Seen on Stewart Island and Ulva Island.

Introduced:

Common Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* — One seen along the highway near the Hawdon Shelter.

European Hare *Lepus europaeus* — Seen at multiple locations.

European Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* — Two seen on the Kaikoura Peninsula.

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* — Seen at multiple locations.

House Mouse *Mus musculus* — One seen at Lake Pukaki.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* — One seen on Stewart Island.

ADDITIONAL SPECIES OF INTEREST:

Weta

Longfin Eel

Shortfin Eel

New Zealand Short-tailed Stingray

Butterflies - Common Blue, Common Copper, Common Tussock, Monarch, White

New Zealand Giant Bush Dragonfly