



# **WILDLIFE TRAVEL NEW ZEALAND**

30<sup>th</sup> December 2010  
to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

## **LIST OF TRAVELLERS**

### **Leaders**

Mark Hanger: Dunedin, New Zealand

Philip Precey: Cambridge, UK

#	DATE	ITINERARY
1	30 <sup>th</sup> Dec	arrive. o/n Auckland.
2	31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	Tiri Tiri Matangi. o/n Auckland
3	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	Cascades Kauri Park, Waitakere Range. Muriwai. Mount Eden. o/n Auckland
4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Miranda. Rotoroa and Waipengo Valley. o/n Taupo
5	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	Pureora Forest. o/n Taupo
6	4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Travel from Lake Taupo to flanks of Mount Ruapehu, Tongariro National Park. Silica Rapids Walk. o/n Whakapapa
7	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Early morning trip to Manganui A Te Ao River. Morning walk to Taranaki Falls. Free afternoon. o/n Whakapapa
8	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Travel from Whakapapa to St Arnaud, including ferry from Wellington to Picton. o/n St Arnaud
9	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Lake Rotoiti Beech Forests, Nelson Lakes National Park. Free afternoon. o/n St Arnaud
10	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Mount Arthur, Kahurangi National Park. o/n St Arnaud
11	9 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Blackbirch Peak. Kekerengu. Ohau Point. o/n Kaikoura
12	10 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Kaikoura. Optional boat trips. o/n Kaikoura
13	11 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Travel from Kaikoura to Lake Ohau, including stop at Lake Tekapo. o/n Lake Ohau
14	12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Lake Pukaki. Hooker Valley Walk. o/n Lake Ohau
15	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Travel from Lake Ohau to Wanaka, via Lindis Pass and Old Man Range. o/n Wanaka
16	14 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Wanaka to Te Anau. Eglington and Hollyford Valleys, Homer Tunnel. o/n Te Anau
17	15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Milford Sound Hollyford and Eglington Valleys. o/n Te Anau
18	16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Te Anau to Oban, Stewart Island. Evening excursion to Ocean Beach. o/n Oban
19	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Stewart Island. Afternoon visit to Ulva Island. o/n Oban
20	18 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Stewart Island to Dunedin. Stops at Invercargill Museum; Tautuku Bay, Catlins; Nuggit's Point. Evening catamaran trip out to Tairoa Head from Port Chalmers. o/n Dunedin
21	19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Free morning in Dunedin. Lunch at Mark's Place, and then departure...

### **31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. Tiri Tiri Matangi.**

Our first 'proper' day of the trip saw us drive just to the north of Auckland to Gulf Harbour on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula, from where we caught our ferry to the predator-free island reserve of Tiri Tiri Matangi.

From the ferry to the island, we saw a handful of Australasian Gannets, the small black and white Fluttering Shearwaters with their low flap-flap-glide flight and the larger, all dark Flesh-footed Shearwater with their more towering flight.

On the island itself, and the birds soon started to appear. A family of Variable Oystercatchers were on the shore, while New Zealand Pigeons and the first of many (many!) Tui fed in the flowing Pohutukawa *Metrosideros excelsa* trees behind us. A Caspian Tern flew past, while a small group of Pied Shag mooched around on the rocks offshore.

Gradually, the many special birds of the island crossed our path. Red-crowned Parakeet, Whitehead, Bellbird, Stitchbird, North Island Robin and the stunning North Island Saddleback all showed well in the re-planted native forests on the island. Not all the birds on the island are New Zealand natives, though. We heard Blackbird singing in the forest, House Sparrows begged for crumbs around the lighthouse and shuffling about by the tracks were a couple of pairs of Brown Quail, an introduced bird from Australia.

Hugely impressive were the two pairs of Takahe we found, the pair by the lighthouse feeding a pair of well grown chicks. Described by Mark as 'like a swamp-hen on steroids', these four adults represented 2% of the entire world population of this giant flightless rail.

Similarly rare, but unfortunately not so showy is the North Island Kokako. Maybe 20 of these bizarre wattlebirds live on the island, but while we heard at least two calling, only Mark managed to glimpse one gliding away. One to come back for...

From the boat on the way back to the mainland we had good views of a Buller's Shearwater, as well as several more Flesh-footed Shearwaters.

Roadside birds on our way from and to the hotel included familiar birds such as Song Thrush, Starling, Skylark, Mallard and Canada Goose alongside more exotic introduced fare: Black Swan, Australian Magpie and Common Myna. There were some 'proper' birds though, including Sacred Kingfisher and Masked Lapwing.

The day/year finished with an impressive firework display from the Sky Tower and the harbour...

### **1<sup>st</sup> January 2011. Waitakere Range and Muriwai.**

After breakfast we headed north west out of Auckland, towards the Waitakere Range (passing our first White-faced Heron on the way) and the Kauri *Agathis australis* forests. These massive members of the Auracariaceae family, relatives of the Monkey Puzzle and Norfolk Island Pine, are the largest trees in the world, in terms of volume of timber. We saw some relative youngsters, at 'just' 600 years or so old...

Equally impressive were some of the tall Podocarps: the Rimu *Dacrydium cupressinum*, Totara *Podocarpus totara* and Kahikatea *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*, the latter the tallest tree in New Zealand. We also saw New Zealand's only native palm, the Nikau Palm *Rhopalostylis sapida*; climbers including the spiny Bush Lawyer *Rubus australis*, Kiekie *Freycinetia banksii*, the climbing Ratas *Metrosideros fulgens*, *M. perforata* and the massive half-collapsed Northern Rata tree *M. robusta*; two species of orchid, the Bamboo Orchid *Earina mucronata* and the Lady's Slipper Orchid *Dendrobium cunninghamii*; the nettle-like Parataniwha *Elatostema rugosum*; the bizarre long, black strap-like leaves of the young Horoeka *Pseudopanax crassifolius*; the delicate white flowers of the lobelia-relative *Pratia angulata* and of the New Zealand Iris *Dianella nigra*; and three species of Tree Fern, the Black Tree Fern *Cyathea medullaris*, Silver Tree Fern *C. dealbata* (the national symbol) and Hard Tree Fern *Dicksonia squarrosa*.

Birdwise, Tui were common in the forest, calling and flying overhead, alongside New Zealand Pigeon, New Zealand Fantail, Grey Gerygone and some very confiding Silvereye. Out in the open areas around the golf course, introduced birds seen included two or three Eastern Rosella flying overhead, Chaffinch, Goldfinch and a male Pheasant.

After lunch, we drove out to the west coast and the headland at Muriwai, home to a large breeding colony of Australasian Gannets, as well as smaller numbers of White-fronted Tern and Red-billed Gull.

Final stop of the day was the volcanic cone of Mount Eden, with its 360 degree views over the sprawling city of Auckland, and a passing Yellow Admiral butterfly.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> January 2011. heading south.**

A travelling day, with some very interesting stops along the way.

Our first stop was the Miranda Bird Reserve, on the Firth of Thames. Here, with the songs of many Skylarks in our ears, we were faced with a tide that had gone out, leaving a wide expanse of mudflats and shell banks, with a lot of fairly distant birds. Mostly White-headed Stilts and Bar-tailed Godwits (these latter of the eastern population which migrates non stop from Alaska to New Zealand, in one very long flight), with a scattering of White-faced Herons. But where were the smaller birds?

Luckily, they were out there: they just took some searching for. A single New Zealand Dotterel was the first, picking along the shell bank in the heat haze, but identifiable by the orangey wash on the underparts and the otherwise very plain plumage, with no dark bands on the chest. Next up were a small group of Banded Dotterel, much more strikingly patterned birds. Single Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint were picked out, before the real star of the Miranda show flew in right in front of us. First one, then three, then finally five Wrybills, running around together on the mud and feeding with their strange, horizontally bent bills: the only birds, other than the Crossbills, to have this asymmetry.

We left Miranda happy, and moved on to the lakeside at Rotorua for lunch. On the water we quickly found a single New Zealand Dabchick, alongside plenty of New Zealand Scaup, Black Swan, Red-billed Gull and both Little Black Cormorant and Little Pied Cormorant, nesting side by side.

After a quick picnic, we moved on to the Waipengo Valley, where a walking trail took us past the hot water vents, fumaroles and other geo-thermal activity. On the small crater lake were five New Zealand Dabchicks, a family of New Zealand Scaup, a Sacred Kingfisher and a male Grey Duck with several other Mallard/Grey Duck hybrids. Plants of note included Five-Finger *Pseudopanax arboreus* with its big clumps of black berries and five-fingered leaves, as well as plenty of interesting ferns: the Thermal Ladder Fern *Nephrolepis*, the very primitive *Psilotum nudum* and the Drooping Spleenwort *Asplenium flaccidum*. Back around the visitor centre, Common Copper and New Zealand Red Admiral were feeding on the buddleia, and a very friendly Tui posed for photos feeding on the nectar of the flowering Flax *Phormium tenax*.

One last stop at some bubbling mud, and then on to our motel overlooking Lake Taupo.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> January 2011. Pureora Forest.**

An early start saw us on the edge of the forest where, alas, the resident Kokako chose not to put in an appearance. The other forest birds more than made up for Sundance's no-show, however, with some very noisy Long-tailed Cuckoos, a Shining Cuckoo that flew in for a look at us before flying off again, a party of very friendly and sociable Yellow-crowned Parakeets and several over-flying North Island Kaka.

In the forest itself, we had more Kaka flying around and showing themselves quite well as they fed in the canopy, as well as a family group of the tiny Rifleman, New Zealand's smallest bird. North Island Robin and North Island Tomtit also put in appearances, with the bird highlight of the afternoon being a roosting Morepork (New Zealand's endemic hawk owl) sat in a tree fern, watching the bizarre antics of the 16 humans beneath him.

Today was by no means a bird day, though. For some, the real highlight was a Peripatus, sometimes known as the Velvet Worm, a real living fossil that has barely changed appearance in 550 million years. Whether the 'missing link' between worms and arthropods, or just an evolutionary cul de sac, definitely a very charismatic little beastie, and great to find!

The forests themselves were kinda brilliant, full of four species of tree ferns (Silver Tree Fern with their flat tops, Fibrous Tree Fern *Dicksonia fibrosa* with their long shaggy 'skirts', Soft Tree Fern *Cyathea smithii* with their long, narrow skirts and Hard Tree Fern *D. squarrosa* with no skirt at all), towering Totara and Rimu *Dacrydium cupressinum* trees, some great ferns (including Hen-and-Chicken Fern *Asplenium bulbiferum*, Kidney Fern *Trichomanes reniforme*, Shining Spleenwort *A. oblongifolium*, Sickie Fern *A. polydon*, Crepe Fern *Leptopteris hymenophylloides*, Prince of Wales Feathers *L. superba* and a wide variety of filmy ferns) and *Dawsonia superba* the largest moss in the world.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Taupo to Tongariro National Park.**

We enjoyed a much deserved lie in this morning, followed by a brief spot of retail therapy in Taupo before finally heading off down the east side of Lake Taupo towards the volcanoes of Tongariro National Park.

Our first roadside stop enabled us to get excellent views of a pair of Fernbird and to hear a calling Shining Cuckoo, with another Fernbird at our next stop, which was supposed to be a photo opportunity for the volcanoes but quickly developed into some good subalpine botanising: Blue Sun Orchid *Thelymitra cyanea*, New Zealand Harebell *Wahlenbergia albomarginata*, the large flowered, branching sundew *Drosera binata* and the tiny round-leaved *Drosera spathulata* and two species of the showy Celmisia daisies, the broad-leaved *C. spectabilis* and narrow-leaved *C. gracilentia* all lined up to have their photos taken.

Dragonflies on the small pool here included New Zealand's second largest, the Mountain Giant *Uropetala chiltoni*, the small, bright Red Percher *Diplacodes bipunctata* and at least two species of damselfly. A New Zealand Pipit showed very well on the track, while Lesser Redpolls and a couple of Australasian Harriers flew overhead.

After the obligatory 'Kiwi Crossing' road sign photo, we arrived at Whakapapa 'village' in time for lunch in the café here. Bags dumped, and it was time to head up the mountain for some more alpine botanising at the end of the road: highlights here included the pretty pink speedwell-like *Parahebe decorata*, the Leek Orchid *Prasophyllum colenzoi*, the everlasting daisy *Helichrysum bellidioides*, an eyebright *Euphrasia cuneata* and two species of matt daisy *Raoulia*, a genus that also includes some of the famous 'vegetable sheep'.

Heading back down the mountain a bit, we set off on our walk along the Silica Rapids Trail. Apart from a family of North Island Tomtits, some Boulder Copper butterflies, a very colourful flatworm and a very long dead Stoat in a trap, the highlights of the afternoon were all botanical: Snow Totara *Podcarpus nivalis* with its red podocarp fruits, Mountain Cabbage Tree *Cordyline indivisa*, the Umbrella Fern *Sticherus cunninghamii*, the white flowers of *Forsteri bidwelli* named after the German botanists on Captain Cook's voyages, the white *Viola cunninghamii* and of course the Mountain Beech *Nothofagus solandri* var *cliffortioides*. A small area of bog contained a third sundew *Drosera arcturi* and the delicate purple and white flowers of the New Zealand Bladderwort *Utricularia novae-zelandiae*, while we also found some more, interesting orchids: early on the walk we found several spikes of the white sun orchid *Thelymitra longifolia*; and through the forest we found two species of Greenhood Orchid, the larger, showy *Pterostylis banksii* with its long, twisted back 'wings' and the smaller *Pterostylis montana*, with the 'wings' held upwards instead of back.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Blue Duck excursion and Taranaki Falls.**

For those of a birding bent, the day started (painfully) early with a pre-breakfast trip out to the west, to the Manganui A Te Ao River. This fast flowing, rocky river is home to several territories of Blue Duck, and we were lucky enough to find the birds at home in two of them. The first bird, spotted by the eagle eyes of Elizabeth, showed very well from our high vantage point on the road, resting on a rock before moving off slowly down river through the rapids. Elated, we moved further down river to a bridge where Peter quickly found a pair busy feeding in the shallows. Amazingly, they worked there way steadily up river towards us, giving us wonderful views. Definitely a special bird.

After our late breakfast we took advantage of the overcast conditions to walk out to the Taranaki Falls, through open tussocky habitat and patches of beech forest. Birds were very few and far between, but we did find some very nice flowers. Several of the same orchids as yesterday included some much more showy white sun orchids, fully out. A new orchid was the saprophytic *Gastrodia cunninghamii*, known as the Potato Orchid or Black Orchid, of which a single tall spike was growing next to the path. Another impressive plant was the Red Mistletoe *Peraxilla tetrapetala*, growing as a parasite on the beech trees. Impressive for a different reason was the aptly named Stinkwood *Coprosma foetidissima*, which smelled distinctly of bad feet...

A relaxing afternoon allowed those who'd been up early to catch up on a little sleep, and the National Park visitor centre had a few extra visitors too.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Crossing from North Island to South Island.**

A travelling day, setting off early from Whakapapa to make the 2pm sailing of the Wellington to Picton ferry.

The crossing was pretty calm, but amazingly windy at times for those foolhardy enough to be out on the bow. But the birds made up for it.

Leaving Wellington, we had a couple of Spotted Shags flying past, greyish cormorants with a black and white striped neck and bright yellow feet. The first Fluttering Shearwaters and White-fronted Terns also appeared, including a large group having a feeding frenzy.

Out of the harbour we encountered large numbers of the beautiful Fairy Prion, a small grey and white relative of the shearwaters and petrels, plus a Blue Penguin on the water, which dived out of the way of the boat as we passed.

As we reached open water, the wind really got up and the viewing conditions were quite difficult. However, there were still birds to be seen. Several medium sized, all dark seabirds included at least a couple of Sooty Shearwaters, with their silver wing lining, and a couple of Westland Petrels. The majority, however, had to go down as 'not sure'... as there were probably Flesh-footed Shearwaters out there too. A couple of Northern Giant Petrels were a bit more easy to identify: the first a dark individual, followed by a paler grey bird, both were very large, with a relatively long front half and a big heavy beak.

The big bird we really wanted to see, however, waited until quite late in the voyage. Just before we turned into Queen Charlotte Sound, a White-capped Albatross came in close across the bow, towering up giving great views even to those sat inside in the warm!

Turning into the shelter of Queen Charlotte Sound, we were back in the domain of Fluttering Shearwater, White-fronted Tern and Kelp Gull, with a handful of Pied Shags on the rocky shores. At about 5pm we disembarked, and drove on to St Arnaud and our home for the next three nights, passing the now familiar roadside birds along the way, including good numbers of Swamp Harrier and Masked Lapwing.

### **7<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Nelson Lakes National Park.**

After the long travel day yesterday, we had a relaxed day around St Arnaud today.

After a close examination of a dead juvenile Dunnock that had hit Elizabeth and David's window earlier in the morning, we headed off for a walk through the beech forests surrounding Lake Rotoiti. Along the way we learned how to differentiate the three beech species here: the tiny, smooth-margined leaves of Mountain Beech *Nothofagus solandri* var. *cliffortioides*, the medium sized, toothed-margined leaves and silver trunk of Silver Beech *N. menziesii* and the large leaves and generally bigger tree of Red Beech *N. fusca*. We also examined the honeydew-producing scale insects, with their associated black fungus coating many of the trees and anywhere else that the honeydew had splashed!

The forest was much more open than the previous forest types we'd visited, without any tree ferns and many other understorey plants. We did find New Zealand Fuchsia *Fuchsia excorticata* in flower, Marbleleaf *Carpodetus serratus* with its crinkly leaves and small white flowers and Lacebark *Hoheria glabrata* with much bigger, white 'apple blossom' flowers.

After the Red Mistletoe of earlier in the week, today we found two more species of showy New Zealand mistletoe: the Yellow Mistletoe *Alepis flavida*, on a tree in the grounds of our hotel and a great patch of Large Red Mistletoe *Peraxilla colensoi* in the forest: both were parasitizing beech trees.

On the forest floor were a good variety of orchids, although at this low elevation we were hard pushed to find any that hadn't finished flowering: Odd-leaved Orchid *Aporostylis bifolia*, Potato Orchid *Gastrodia cunninghamii*, Spider Orchid *Corybas trilobus*, Few-flowered Sun Orchid *Thelymitra pauciflora*, Bird Orchid *Chiloglottis cornuta* and a Greenhood *Pterostylis* sp were all found, but all but a couple of Potato Orchids were over already. With luck, we should find them in flower at higher elevations tomorrow... In the flowerbeds around the carpark, some Onion Orchid were flowering, albeit with a very small, green flower.

Birdwise, the forests held some surprises for us, none less surprising than the Weka that Mark heard calling near the start of the trail. This big flightless rail was watched stalking slowly across the path, complete with a radio aerial on his back and yellow colour ring. It transpires that he arrived of his own accord in the 'inland island' and has been radio-tagged since his arrival. On the lake we saw our first Black-billed Gulls, together with a pretty convincing Grey Duck amongst the Mallards and a couple of Black Swans. In forest itself we heard and saw Bellbirds, Tui, New Zealand Fantail and a brief over-flying South Island Kaka.

An after dinner walk in the woods failed to reveal any calling Kiwis, although we did get a good view of the night sky, complete with upside down Orion, the Southern Cross, Taurus, Jupiter and a shooting star or two.



## 8<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Kaharungi National Park.

Like the Grand Old Duke of York, Mark marched us up Mount Arthur and then marched us back down again. Not that we minded!

Under a clear blue sky, we passed through beech forest, onto a ridge covered in a weird forest of the pineapple-like *Dracophyllum traversii*, giving a real feeling of the exotic, before heading back into beech forest again. A small patch of greenhood orchids were probably *Pterostylis humilis*, but unfortunately none of the Bird Orchids along the path were in flower. We did pass two species of New Zealand Foxgloves in flower (as well as the big pink spikes of 'our' invasive *Digitalis*): the large leaved *Ourisia macrophylla* by a small waterfall early on, and the smaller *Ourisia glandulosa*.

After reaching the Mount Arthur Hut in time for our packed lunch, we ventured up above the treeline onto an area of limestone rocks and subalpine tussocky habitat and enjoyed the plants, including:

*Aciphylla squarrosa*, the common, large 'spaniard' with blue-green leaves  
*A. colensoi*, the smaller 'spaniard' near the top  
*Astelia nervosa*, the large spikes of silvery-haired leaves  
*Bulbinella hookeri*, the yellow Maori Onion  
*Celmisia dallii*, by the hut  
*Celmisia monroi*, the large silvery-leaved daisy  
*Celmisia traversii*, the daisy with the rusty-fringed leaves  
*Colobanthus ?canaliculatus*, the tight green cushiony Caryophyllaceae  
*Muehlenbeckia axillaria*, the tiny creeping plant with strange jelly-like 'fruits' (actually a seed surrounded by swollen petals!), a member of the Polygonaceae  
*Gingidia montana*, the aniseed-smelling Apiaceae in a crack in the rocks  
*Ranunculus insignis*, the broad-leaved giant buttercup that had gone to seed  
*Epilobium ?glabellum*, the very showy willowherb with pale pink and white flowers

Birdwise, we were greeted in the car park by a very friendly female Weka who was far too interested in our packed lunches. Another Weka was waiting for us at the hut at the top of the climb, with a smaller young bird by the path on the way back. Finally, on returning to the minibus, a fourth bird, this time a male with a broken bill decided to try his luck, only to be joined by his (in much better shape) mate before scuttling off into the undergrowth. Excellent birds!

On the way up a surprise Kea was found, sat preening in a trackside tree. Plenty of Bellbirds were in the forest, as well as a few South Island Tomtits, the males brighter than their North Island relatives, with a yellow belly. All along the way we enjoyed wonderfully confiding family parties of Rifleman seemingly at every step, the noisy streaky juveniles begging for food from the adults, picking their up the trunks, through the lichen and even across the leaf litter around the beech trees. At the top, Lesser Redpolls were flying over and around, and a pair of New Zealand Pipits were display flighting around the bare rocks.

Butterflies at the top included plenty of tiny Boulder Coppers flitting about in the sheltered sunny spots, at least one larger New Zealand Copper and a couple of Harris's Tussock, a Gatekeeper-like butterfly of the high alpine habitats restricted to this corner of the country.

## 9<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Blackbirch Peak.

Leaving St Arnaud early, we headed back up to Blenheim (via a group of Black-fronted Terns hawking over the irrigated pastures, some roadside South Island Pied Oystercatchers and a surprise Little Owl that flew across the road in front of the bus) and then through the vineyards of Marlborough and up to Blackbirch Peak.

This fantastic mountain top we had entirely to ourselves. Just 16 happy travellers, a New Zealand Pipit or two and a whole lot of alpine plants...

*Celmisia spectabilis*, the Cotton Daisy, a mass of flowers half way up the hill  
*C. sessilifolia*, the cushion-forming daisy  
*Helichrysum parviflora*, the yellow-flowering shrubby daisy near the first stop on our way up  
*Aciphylla glaucescens*, the track-side 'spaniard' on our way up  
*Epilobium pycnostachyum*, the dark pink-leaved willowherb by our picnic site



*E. melanochorum*, the smaller, pale pink-leaved willowherb by our picnic site  
*Pentachondra pumila*, a tiny creeping shrub with red berries  
*Raoulia bryoides*, the blue vegetable sheep  
*Haastia pulvinaris*, the giant yellow vegetable sheep  
*Myosotis pygmaea*, the smallest forget-me-not in the world!  
*Aciphylla monroi*, the tiny 'spaniard'  
*Hebe lycopodioides*, the whipcord hebe seen on our way back down the mountain.

For those who were foolhardy enough to venture onto the scree (tricky underfoot but not nearly so steep as it looked from the top), some special plants were the reward:

*Leucogenes neglecta* (was *L. leontopodium*), the North Island Edelweiss, which just sneaks into the north end of South Island  
*Leptinella dendyi*, the black-flowered scree daisy  
*Notothlaspi rosulatum*, the Penwiper. This bizarre, almost black plant had gone to seed, but still looked pretty cool!  
*Celmisia vespertina*, the narrow-leaved *Celmisia* growing on the rocky crag.

After our scree scrambling and a windswept lunch, we were back on our way, heading south along the coast. A coffee stop at the little lagoon at Kekerengu revealed a handful of Banded Dotterel and White-headed Stilts, while a massive Caspian Tern dwarfed the Red-billed Gulls and White-fronted Terns. A little further south we stopped again, at Ohau Point, where the lookout point looks over a small colony of New Zealand Fur Seals, as well as a few Spotted Shags on the cliffs. Finally, after yet another long but wildlife-full day, we arrived at our motel on the outskirts of Kaikoura.

### **10<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Kaikoura.**

Nominally, a free day, for most it was spent, at least in part, out on the Southern Ocean. Both the Albatross Experience groups had exactly that, with six species of Albatross around the boat during the morning, including the real giants: Gibson's and the two Royal Albatrosses. The supporting cast came in the form of Cape, Westland, White-chinned and Northern Giant Petrels, Hutton's, Fluttering, Buller's and Sooty Shearwaters, a couple of Arctic Skuas and a Little Blue Penguin.

In the afternoon, those who ventured out a second time for the whale watching trip enjoyed close views of two massive adolescent male Sperm Whales.

A real feature of the day, and perhaps the highlight, was the massive pod of around 300 Dusky Dolphins. To be in the middle of this pod of energetic animals was one of those moments to just put the camera away and grin...

### **11<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Kaikoura to Lake Ohau.**

A travel day, much of it through the drizzle and rain across the less-than-thrilling Canterbury Plains. As we crossed over the pass into the mountains, the skies miraculously cleared and it was back to the clear blue skies we've become used to. For some, the day was topped off with a flight up over the lakes and mountains, around Aoraki (Mount Cook) and back again. For the rest of us, a short stop by the side of Lake Tekapo revealed a small group of Grey Teal amongst the Mallards, a handful each of Coot and (Southern) Great Crested Grebes, a couple of White-faced Heron and several Southern Blue butterflies flitting about in a little roadside suntrap.

We ended the day with the spectacular view out along Lake Ohau, with Aoraki poking its head up above the rest of the mountains. A pretty stunning location for our next two nights.

### **12<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Aoraki.**

The Maori weather gods certainly seem to be smiling on us...

The day dawned overcast, with low cloud hanging on the mountains. At Lake Pukaki, what could so easily have been a case of staring into the sun turned out to be perfect conditions for scanning the shores of the river delta... and picking out not one, but seven Black Stilts. That's seven of the last 100 Black Stilts in the wild, gracefully wading through the shallows and picking at invertebrates, on their long pinky red legs. We also found a couple of White-headed Stilts and a single hybrid, a dark bird with a white face and white belly. And some of the Grey Duck looked pretty good too!

And so to the Hooker Valley, running up to the base of Mount Cook, more properly known as Aoraki. The skies cleared, the sun came out and our walk was overlooked by the snowy peak pretty much the entire time. A spectacular backdrop to some pretty good wildlife. Butterflies were flitting about everywhere: the tiny, purple-shot Boulder Copper on the bare gravel paths, the medium sized orange New Zealand Copper feeding on flowers, and the subtle brown Common Tussock in the longer grass. All three eventually gave themselves up to the patient photographers amongst us! Interesting plants found included the large, showy daisy *Celmisia semicordata*, the tall, lemon yellow *Aciphylla scott-thomsonii*, South Island Edelweiss *Leucogenes grandiceps* on some of the rocky outcrops and a single white bloom of the Mount Cook Lily *Ranunculus lyallii*.

A new mammal for the trip came in the form of a family group of Weasels running across the path, just one of the many introduced predators that the native wildlife has to deal with. More welcome were the two Mountain Stone Wetas that were found by some judicious stone-turning, impressive looking beasts and another of those 'must see' New Zealand specialities safely under the belt...

### **13<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Old Man Range.**

This morning we left the Mackenzie Basin and headed down into Central Otago.

On the road out from the hotel, a Stoat ran across in front of the bus, with a handful of South Island Pied Oystercatchers and Black-fronted Terns in the roadside fields. Later, as we crossed the Lindis Pass, Mark spotted a bird sat at the top of a roadside cliff, which on closer inspection turned out to be our first New Zealand Falcon: a big, dark bird with pale trousers.

After a coffee stop in the village of Terras, famous as the birthplace of Mark's mother and the home town of Shrek the sheep, we were back on the road and finally reached the Old Man Range just before lunch.

Heading up the hill, it was good to pass through natural vegetation all the way, from the Wild Irishman scrub, through various tussock vegetations to the cushion tundra on the top. On the way up, some more stone turning revealed a couple of Schist Geckos, an as-yet-undescribed species no less! Some of the group also glimpsed a Common Skink on the rocks, while Skylarks and New Zealand Pipits flitted about. At the top, a surprise was a post-breeding gathering of Banded Dotterels, preparing for their migration to Australia! One family in particular showed really well, with the adults running across the road very close in front of the bus.

At the top, amongst the tundra, some more rock-turning revealed little family groups of the Otago Alpine Cockroach and a single male Weta sp.

But the real reason for visiting the Old Man was to enjoy the plants, and enjoy them we did...

#### Lunch stop

*Celmisia viscosa*, the clump-forming *Celmisia* with stiff, dark, strap-shaped leaves

*C. sessiliflora*, the cushion-forming *Celmisia* we've seen previously on Blackbirch

*Aciphylla aurea*, the large golden spaniard

*A. hectori*, the tiny spaniard

*Gentianella amabilis*, the white gentian

*Raoulia hectori*, the grey-green cushion plant with creamy flowers

#### The tundra at the top

*Neopaxia australasica*, the low growing plant with papery white flowers, in the hollow by where we left the bus

*Celmisia brevifolia*, the short-leaved *Celmisia*

*C. prorepens*, the crinkly-leaved *Celmisia* near the stream

*C. argentea*, the tiny cushion-forming *Celmisia*

*Anisotome imbricata*, the grey-leaved 'carrot'

*Ranunculus royi*, the buttercup with normal buttercup leaves and 'buried' yellow flowers

*R. pachyrhizus*, the Celandine-like flowers with black centres

*Psychrophylla obtusa*, the bizarre, boat-like leaves in the swampy area

*Craspidia incana*, the very woolly leaved woolly-head!

And some wonderful (in miniature) cushion-forming plants:  
*Raoulia grandiflora*, with large (comparatively!) white, star-shaped flowers  
*Chionohebe* sp., the green cushion 'like flying over a rainforest'  
*Phyllachne colenzoi*, the rock cushion with white flowers  
*P. rubra*, the small rock cushion with tiny red flowers  
*Hectorella caespitosa*, the hexagonal rosettes, the only species in its genus

#### **14<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Travelling to Fiordland.**

After a walk along the shores of Lake Wanaka, we headed off to Fiordland. Crossing the Crown Range Pass, we stopped for a photo opportunity and had a New Zealand Falcon fly overhead. Towards Te Anau, we travelled through a landscape of Red Tussock, the last native home of the Takahe. Due to the low-quality food available in this last upland refuge, there is only room for a population of around 100 birds in these mountains, with the only other birds on offshore, predator-free islands such as Tiri Tiri Matangi.

We arrived in Te Anau, gateway to Fiordland, in time for lunch. With clear blue skies overhead but a forecast of foul weather to come, we made the decision to push on, to enjoy the spectacular scenery in the best possible light.

Through the beech-clad Eglington Valley, we stopped several times around Knobbs Flat, an area where the Yellowhead has recently been reintroduced after its local extinction in the last few years. We did find a family group of Pipipi (otherwise known as Brown Creeper, a particularly inappropriate name!), but alas the only yellow head to be found belonged to a male Yellowhammer which briefly got pulses racing. South Island Kaka, South Island Tomtit and South Island Robin all put in (brief) appearances, along with several Riflemen and singing Bellbirds.

Moving on, we arrived at the spectacular cirque at Homer Tunnel. This is one of the wettest places on earth, so the opportunity to see it in blazing sunshine was pretty fantastic!

#### **15<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Milford Sound.**

It seems the weather has finally caught up with us... We made it out along the road to Milford Sound in time for the 11am sailing of the *Pride of Milford*, which took us out along the Sound (or more accurately, along the fiord) to the Tasman Sea at the far end. Apart from the jaw dropping scenery, the highlight of the trip was a small pod of 6 Bottle-nosed Dolphins which played around the boat, giving everyone good views. We also saw Australasian Gannets, White-fronted Tern, a Buller's Shearwater (with other distant shearwaters probably Sooty) out in the Tasman Sea, and a small group of New Zealand Fur Seals.

Back on dry land we found a couple of trees festooned with Lady's Slipper Orchids and a surprise walk-past by a Weka! Heading back to Te Anau, we had a couple of stops. The first, for lunch, was at The Chasm, where we had a bus-bound picnic and a quick wander to the deep gulch, which a pair of New Zealand Pigeons got frisky in the trees. We then had a wander through the beech forest, home to Yellow-crowned Parakeet, South Island Tomtit and some amazingly confiding South Island Robins. Riflemen picked through the tree tops, but again we couldn't catch up with the Yellowheads.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Travelling to Stewart Island.**

We made an early start from Te Anau, travelling southwards towards Invercargill and our onwards journeys to Stewart Island.

With the weather not looking great, for those of us who had opted for the ferry it was quite an exciting (!! ) journey across, with some very big waves and plenty of wind and rain. It was also pretty exciting for seabirds too, with the wind obviously having blown good numbers into the channel. Amongst the thousands (and thousands and thousands) of Sooty Shearwaters were Buller's and Fluttering Shearwaters, Broad-billed Prion, at least one Mottled Petrel with its dark belly, and both White-capped and Buller's Albatrosses. Whirring low over the water were the auk-like Common Diving Petrels, another new bird for our trip.

Similar birds were seen later that afternoon by those of us who had hoped to fly to Stewart Island... with the low cloud closing the airport, they had to catch the last ferry over too!

A rather damp walk along the Fuchsia Trail and up to Observation Rock passed by some wonderful ferns, looking at their dampest best. New Zealand Pigeons, Tui, Bellbirds and a Red-crowned Parakeet all put in an appearance around the village.

But the real highlight of the day wasn't until after dinner... 9pm saw us all gathered down at the wharf, for our trip across to Ocean Beach and the famous sandhopper-chomping kiwis. A 30 minute boat ride (with Little Blue Penguins and a fur seal in the waves and a couple of Stewart Island Shags on the rocks) saw us disembarking in the dark, to walk through the bush by torch light over to the sandy beach. Where, right on cue, we found a Stewart Island Brown Kiwi, a large furry rugby ball with two strong legs and a bizarrely long pale beak, probing busily in the sand at the back of the beach. And then another. And then the two together. And then a kiwi fight, as the bigger female gave a swift, powerful kick to the smaller male, sending him running off back into the bush.

A mother and youngster couple of Brush-tailed Possums browsing up on the cliff top behind the beach reminded us that there are still many problems facing New Zealand's wildlife.

And then back across the water, to a much later bed than we've become used to...

### **17<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Ulva Island.**

After a well deserved lie in and relaxing morning, we set off at lunch for the predator-free island of Ulva, just off from Golden Bay.

The top predator on Ulva is the Weka, a wonderfully characterful flightless rail which patrols the beaches and forest looking for any and everything it can eat. Including cakes. On the beach, we had a replay of last night's flightless bird fight, only this time with Wekas, and a Weka does not back down quite as readily as a Kiwi! These two birds really got into it, jumping quite high into the air at times: very impressive, for a flightless bird!

In the forest, the Stewart Island Robins were amazingly tame again, each with its own colour-combination of plastic rings. Similarly be-jewelled were the South Island Saddlebacks, picking through the tree ferns and other undergrowth. Red-crowned Parakeets and a Kaka all gave good views. Higher up in the canopy we found a family group of Pipipi, before Mark finally heard the call he had been listening out for.

In a tree fern-ed gully, we all finally caught up with a family group of Yellowhead: at least 3 youngsters, at times begging for food from their busy parents. The male in particular was a stunningly bright yellow, shining out in the dappled light of the understorey. Brilliant, and well worth the wait!

Sadly all is not well in paradise, as rats have recently been found around the wharf. Whether they arrived of their own volition, or were liberated by someone with a grudge, the urgent priority is to 'control' them before they spread.

### **18<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Stewart Island to Dunedin.**

The day started with a wonderful flight back to the mainland from Stewart Island in a nine-seater plane.

Driving through the hidden valleys of the Catlins, we arrived at Nuggets Point in time for lunch. The now-usual hundreds/thousands of Sooty Shearwaters were milling about off shore, with a colony of 20 pairs or so of Royal Spoonbills on a rocky crag. Then it was down to the hide, to wait...

And then, as if on cue, an early Yellow-eyed Penguin jumped out of the surf and onto the beach, an adult returning from its daily fishing trip to feed a youngster hidden somewhere on the scrubby slopes behind us. Oohs and aahs ensued...

'Excellent', says I, 'just the two marine mammals left... oh, there's one of them!'. A young male Hooker's Sealion appeared out of the bushes a bit further up the beach and made his way down into the surf!

And so our last full day of the Wildlife Travel tour finished with 16 very happy travellers dining on freshly caught Blue Cod onboard a catamaran off Taoroa Head, while Northern Royal Albatrosses and Stewart Island Shags flew overhead... We never did catch up with that last marine mammal (Hector's Dolphin, a New Zealand endemic and perhaps the rarest marine dolphin). But all in all, an amazingly successful trip: I'm not sure we could have hoped for anything more!

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<b>E</b>	<b>Family Apterygidae (Kiwis)</b>																						
E	Stewart Island Brown Kiwi	<i>Apteryx australis lawryi</i>																	X				
	<b>Family Podicipedidae (Grebes)</b>																						
	(Southern) Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus australis</i>												X									
E	New Zealand Dabchick	<i>Poliiocephalus rufpectus</i>				X	X																
	<b>Family Diomedidae (Albatrosses)</b>																						
	Gibson's (Wandering) Albatross	<i>Diomedea (exulans) gibsoni</i>												X									
E	Southern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea (epomorpha) epomorpha</i>												X									
E	Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea (epomorpha) sanfordi</i>												X					X		X		
	Campbell Albatross	<i>Thalassarche (melanophrys) imparvida</i>												X									
	White-capped (Shy) Albatross	<i>Thalassarche (cauta) steadi</i>							X					X					X		X		
	Salvin's (Shy) Albatross	<i>Thalassarche (cauta) salvini</i>												X									
E	Buller's Albatross	<i>Thalassarche bulleri</i>																	X				
	<b>Family Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)</b>																						
	Flesh-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>		X					?														
E	Buller's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus bulleri</i>		X										X				X	X				
	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>							X					X				X	X	X	X		
E	Fluttering Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gavi</i>		X					X					X					X				
E	Hutton's Shearwater	<i>Puffinus huttoni</i>												X	X						X		
E	Westland Petrel	<i>Procellaria westlandica</i>							X					X									
	White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>												X									
	Cape Petrel	<i>Daption capense</i>												X									
	Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>							X					X							X		
	Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>							X														
	Broad-billed Prion	<i>Pachyptila vittata</i>																	X				
E	Mottled Petrel	<i>Pterodroma inexpectata</i>																	X				
	<b>Family Pelecanoididae (Diving Petrels)</b>																						
	Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>																	X				
	<b>Family Spheniscidae (Penguins)</b>																						
E	Yellow-eyed Penguin	<i>Megadyptes antipodes</i>																			X		
	Little Blue Penguin	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>							X					X					X	X	X		
	<b>Family Sulidae (Gannets)</b>																						
	Australasian Gannet	<i>Morus serrator</i>		X	X				X					X				X			X		
	<b>Family Phalacrocoridae (Cormorants)</b>																						
	Great Cormorant (=Black Shag)	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		X		X					X			X		X	X	X	X				
	Pied Cormorant (=Pied Shag)	<i>Phalacrocorax varia</i>		X	X				X			X	X	X					X	X			
	Little Black Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>				X																	

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	Little Pied Cormorant (= Little Shag)	<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i>		X		X		X		X				X		X	X			X		X	X
E	Stewart Island Shag	<i>Leucocarbo chalconotus</i>																		X	X	X	
E	Spotted Shag	<i>Stictocarbo punctatus</i>							X				X	X	X					X	X	X	
<b>Family Ardeidae (Heron)</b>																							
	White-faced Heron	<i>Ardea novaehollandiae</i>			X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
	Pacific Reef Egret (=Reef Egret)	<i>Egretta sacra</i>		X										X	X								
<b>Family Threskiornithidae (Spoonbills and Ibises)</b>																							
	Royal Spoonbill	<i>Platalea regia</i>				X																X	
<b>Family Anatidae (Swans, Geese and Ducks)</b>																							
I	Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>		X	X	X	X	X			X		X		X					X		X	
I	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		X									X		X	X		X		X			
E	Paradise Shelduck	<i>Tadorna variegata</i>		X		X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
E	Blue Duck	<i>Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus</i>							X														
I	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Grey Duck	<i>Anas superciliosa</i>				X			X		X					X							
	Grey Teal	<i>Anas gracilis</i>													X								
E	New Zealand Scaup	<i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>				X	X	X							X	X	X	X				X	
<b>Family Accipitridae (Hawks)</b>																							
	Swamp Harrier (=Australasian Harrier)	<i>Circus approximans</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
<b>Family Falconidae (Falcons)</b>																							
E	New Zealand Falcon	<i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i>															X	X					
<b>Family Odontophoridae (New World Quails)</b>																							
I	California Quail	<i>Lophortyx californica</i>			X	X	X	X				X	X				X						
<b>Family Phasianidae (Pheasants)</b>																							
I	Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>			X																		
I	Brown Quail	<i>Synoicus ypsilophorus</i>		X																			
<b>Family Meleagridae (Turkeys)</b>																							
I	Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopava</i>				X											X						
<b>Family Rallidae (Rails and Crakes)</b>																							
E	Weka	<i>Gallirallus australis</i>									X	X							X		X		
	Australasian Swampphen (=Pukeko)	<i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>		X	X	X		X		X		X	X		X								
E	Takahe	<i>Notornis mantelli</i>		X																			
	Australian Coot	<i>Fulica atra australis</i>				X									X	X	X						
<b>Family Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)</b>																							
E	South Island Pied Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus finschi</i>											X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
E	Variable Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>		X									X	X	X				X	X	X	X	

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	<b>Family Recurvirostridae (Stilts)</b>																						
	White-headed Stilt	<i>Himantopus leucocephalus</i>				X							X			X				X		X	
E	Black Stilt	<i>Himantopus novaezelandiae</i>														X							
	<b>Family Charadriidae (Plovers)</b>																						
E	New Zealand Dotterel	<i>Charadrius obscurus</i>				X																	
E	Banded Dotterel	<i>Charadrius bicinctus</i>				X							X				X						
E	Wrybill	<i>Anarhynchus frontalis</i>				X																	
	Masked Lapwing (=Spur-winged Plover)	<i>Vanellus miles</i>		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	<b>Family Scolopacidae (Sandpipers)</b>																						
	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>												X									
	Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>				X																	
	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>				X																	
	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>				X																X	
	<b>Family Stercorariidae (Skuas)</b>																						
	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasitica</i>												X								X	
	<b>Family Laridae (Gulls)</b>																						
	Kelp Gull (= Southern Black-backed Gull)	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E	Red-billed Gull	<i>Larus scopulinus</i>		X	X	X		X		X			X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
E	Black-billed Gull	<i>Larus bulleri</i>									X				X		X	X	X	X		X	
	<b>Family Sternidae (Terns)</b>																						
E	Black-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna albobristata</i>											X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>		X		X							X	X									
E	White-fronted Tern	<i>Sterna striata</i>		X	X					X			X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
	<b>Family Columbidae (Pigeons)</b>																						
E	New Zealand Pigeon	<i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i>		X	X	X	X		X	X		X			X				X	X	X	X	X
I	Rock Dove (=Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>		X	X	X				X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	<b>Family Psittacidae (Parrots)</b>																						
E	North Island Kaka	<i>Nestor meridionalis septentrionalis</i>					X																
E	South Island Kaka	<i>Nestor meridionalis meridionalis</i>									X							X	X	X	X	X	
E	Kea	<i>Nestor notabilis</i>										X							X				
I	Eastern Rosella	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>			X		X		X														
	Red-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i>		X																X	X		
E	Yellow-crowned Parakeet	<i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>					X												X				
	<b>Family Cuculidae (Cuckoos)</b>																						
	Shining Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx lucidus</i>					X	H	H														H
E	Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Eudynamys taitensis</i>					X		X														



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<b>Family Strigidae (Owls)</b>																							
E	Morepork	<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>					X																
I	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>											X				X						
<b>Family Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)</b>																							
	Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon sancta</i>		X	X	X	X		X			X	X										
<b>E Family Acanthisittidae (New Zealand Wrens)</b>																							
E	Rifleman	<i>Acanthisitta chloris</i>					X	X				X				X		X	X				
<b>Family Alaudidae (Larks)</b>																							
I	Skylark	<i>Alda arvensis</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
<b>Family Hirundinidae (Swallows)</b>																							
	Welcome Swallow	<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Family Motacillidae (Pipits and Wagtails)</b>																							
E	New Zealand Pipit	<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>						X				X	X			X	X						
<b>Family Prunellidae (Accentors)</b>																							
I	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>				X					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Family Turdidae (Thrushes)</b>																							
I	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Family Megaluridae (Grassbirds)</b>																							
E	Fernbird	<i>Bowdleria punctata</i>						X															
<b>E Family Mohouidae (Whiteheads)</b>																							
E	Whitehead	<i>Mohoua albigilla</i>		X			X																
E	Yellowhead	<i>Mohoua ochrocephala</i>																			X		
E	Pipipi (= Brown Creeper)	<i>Mohoua novaeseelandiae</i>																X			X		
<b>Family Acanthizidae (Gerygones)</b>																							
E	Grey Gerygone (= Grey Warbler)	<i>Gerygone igata</i>			X	X	X	X	X			X					X	X		X		X	
<b>Family Rhipiduridae (Fantails)</b>																							
E	New Zealand Fantail	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>		X	X		X		X		X	X									X		
<b>Family Petroicidae (Australasian Robins)</b>																							
E	North Island Tomtit	<i>Petroica (macrocephala) toito</i>					X	X															
E	South Island Tomtit	<i>Petroica (m.) macrocephala</i>										X					X	X	X	X			
E	North Island Robin	<i>Petroica (australis) longipes</i>		X			X																
E	South Island Robin	<i>Petroica (a.) australis</i>																X					
E	Stewart Island Robin	<i>Petroica (a.) rakiura</i>																		X			
<b>Family Zosteropidae (White-eyes)</b>																							
	Silvereye	<i>Zosterops lateralis</i>			X		X	X	X			X						X	X	X		X	

	ENGLISH NAME	LATIN NAME	30 <sup>th</sup>	31 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
<b>E</b>	<b>Family Notiomystidae (Stitchbird)</b>																						
E	Stitchbird	<i>Notiomystis cincta</i>		X																			
<b>E</b>	<b>Family Calleidae (New Zealand Wattlebirds)</b>																						
E	North Island Kokako	<i>Callaeas cinerea wilsoni</i>		H																			
E	North Island Saddleback	<i>Philesturnus (carunculatus) rufusater</i>		X																			
E	South Island Saddleback	<i>Philesturnus (c.) carunculatus</i>																			X		
	<b>Family Meliphagidae (Honeyeaters)</b>																						
E	Bellbird	<i>Anthornis melanura</i>		X				X			X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X
E	Tui	<i>Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae</i>		X	X	X	X	X			X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Family Emberizidae (Buntings)</b>																						
I	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citronella</i>			X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	<b>Family Fringillidae (Finches)</b>																						
I	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>				X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X
I	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>			X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
I	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>						X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Family Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)</b>																						
I	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Family Sturnidae (Starlings)</b>																						
I	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X														
	<b>Family Cractidae (Bell-Magpies)</b>																						
I	Australian Magpie	<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>		X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	

**Total: 113 species, plus Kokako calling and both North & South Island forms/species of Kaka, Saddleback, Tomtit and New Zealand Robin.**

	ENGLISH NAME	LATIN NAME	30 <sup>th</sup>	31 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
<b>MAMMALS</b>																							
I	Brush-tailed Possum	<i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>			D	D	D	D	D	D							D	D	D	X		D	D
I	Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>				D	D		D	D			D		D		D	X		D		D	D
I	Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>				X	X	X	X	X	X		D		D	X	X	X	X	X		D	D
I	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>							X			X			D	X		X		X		D	
I	Stoat	<i>Mustela erminea</i>				D		D									X	X					
I	Weasel	<i>Mustela nivalis</i>														X							
I	Polecat/Ferret	<i>Mustela putorius</i>					D			D					D								
I	Wild Pig	<i>Sus domestica</i>					X																
	New Zealand Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus forsteri</i>											X	X					X	X		X	
	Hooker's Sea Lion	<i>Neophoca hookeri</i>																				X	
	Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>												X									
	Dusky Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>												X									
	Bottle-nosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>																	X				

<b>BUTTERFLIES</b>																							
	Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>		X	X	X	X							X									
E	New Zealand Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa gonerilla</i>				X	X	X														X	
	Yellow Admiral	<i>Vanessa (Bassaritis) itea</i>			X	X																	
	Common Tussock	<i>Agyrophegna antipodum</i>														X	X	X					
	Harris' Tussock	<i>Agyrophegna harrisi</i>										X											
I	Long-tailed Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>						X															
	Common Blue	<i>Zizina labradus</i>				X	X																
	Southern Blue	<i>Zizina oxyleyi</i>													X		X						
	New Zealand Copper	<i>Lycaena salustius agg.</i>		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X		X					X
	Boulder Copper	<i>Lycaena boldenarum</i>						X	X			X	X			X		X					
I	Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		X	X	X	X	X				X		X	X		X	X				X	X

## OTHER ANIMALS

Whistling (Brown Tree) Frog *Litoria ewingii*: noisy in the evenings at St Arnaud. Large tadpoles at the Whistling Frog café, Catlins, 18<sup>th</sup> Jan. An introduced species, originally from Australia.  
Schist Gecko *Woodworthia sp.*: two found under rocks on the Old Man, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan. An as-yet undescribed species of dark gecko, endemic to the schist mountains of central Otago.  
Common Skink *Oligosoma polychroma*: singles glimpsed in the Hooker Valley on 12<sup>th</sup>, on the Old Man 13<sup>th</sup> and in Mark's garden on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Peripatus: one of these wonderful creatures found under a rotting log in Pureora Forest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan (**below left**), a rarely seen 'living fossil'.  
Superb Giant Land Snail *Powelliphanta superba*: one very shiny shell of this endangered, carnivorous snail found on the way down from Mount Arthur, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. Another rarely-seen speciality.

Huhu Beetle *Prionoplus reticularis*: NZ's largest beetle, we found one dead and one alive, as well as plenty of larval burrows that had been attacked by Kaka in Pureora Forest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan  
Burnt Pine Longhorn *Arhopalus tristis*: two of these large longhorns were found dead at the 'interesting' roadside café, on the way back from Pureora, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. An introduced species.  
Tanguru Chafer *Stethaspis suturalis*: the bright green chafer in the Kaori Forest, 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. Told from the similar Mumu Chafer by the yellow striped down the yellow stripe down the back.  
Manuka Chafer *Pyronota festiva*: a tiny bright green chafer, found dead near the picnic lunch, Skotel, 5<sup>th</sup> Jan and seen on several other occasions  
Common Tiger Beetle *Cicindela tuberculata*: a common beetle on hot sandy tracks. First noted at Waipengu Valley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan.  
Red-winged Lycid Beetle *Porrostoma rufipenne*: a bright red beetle with feathery antennae, an introduction from Australia. Seen near the Kaori Forest, 1<sup>st</sup> Jan.

Three-lined Hoverfly *Helophilus trilineatus*: one dead on the window at the visitor centre, Tiri Tiri Matangi, 31<sup>st</sup> Dec.

Astelia Zig-Zag Moth *Charixena iridoxa*: we didn't actually see the moth, but the characteristic zig zag leaf mines in Astelia leaves were a common sight!  
Magpie Moth *Nyctemera annulata*: one at the top of the cliff after we saw the Yellow-eyed Penguin, Nuggits Point, 18<sup>th</sup> Jan

Sentry Dragonfly *Hemicordulia australiae*: the medium sized black dragonfly, common in the North Island, a recent arrival from Australia.  
Red Percher *Diplacodes bipunctata*: the small, bright red 'skimmer' dragonfly, first seen near Tongariro National Park, 4<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Bush Giant *Uropetala carovei*: the large black hawker dragonfly with white bands, seen on the Silica Rapids Trail, 4<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Blue Damselfly *Austrolestes colenonis*: the largest damselfly, first noted at Pureora Forest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan  
Red Damselfly *Xanthocnemis zealandica*: another common little damselfly, noted first at Pureora Forest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan

Chorus Cicada *Amphipsalta zealandica*: an amazingly loud cicada, heard throughout the trip, especially near the coast  
Chirping Cicada *Amphipsalta strepitans*: one seen and plenty heard on Blackbirch, 9<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Little Grass Cicada *Kikihia muta*: the bright green cicada that we saw at Pureora Forest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. Call a 'zeee zit zit zit'  
Nival Cicada *Maoricicada nigra*: one or two of these weak-flying cicadas at the top of the Old Man, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan

North Island Grasshopper *Sigaus piliferus*: the large flightless grasshopper near the top of the Ruahepu road, 4<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Scree Grasshopper *Brachaspis nivalis*: the squat, grey grasshopper on Blackbirch, 9<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Mountain Stone Weta *Hemiandrus maori*: two males found under stones on the Hooker Valley walk, 12<sup>th</sup> Jan (**below centre**)  
a ground weta *Hemiandrus sp.*: a male found under a stone on the top of the Old Man, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan  
Otago Alpine Cockroach *Celatoblatta quinquemaculata*: common under rocks on the top of the Old Man, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan (**below right**)



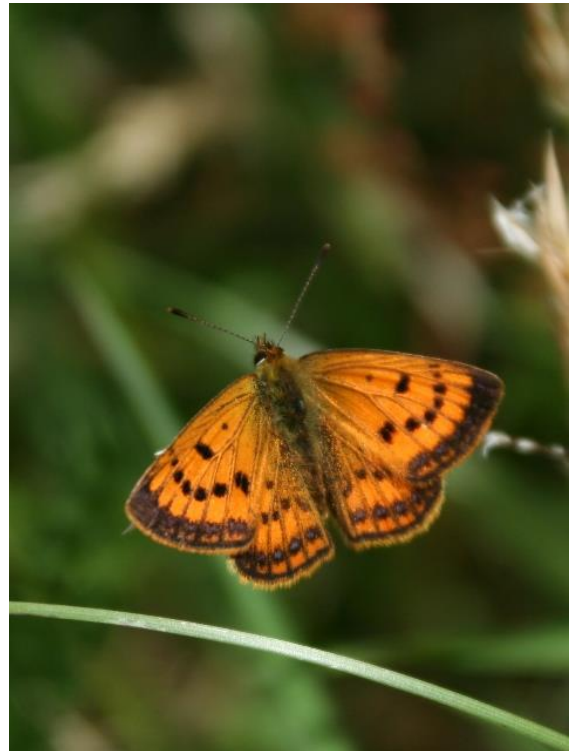
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<b>ORCHIDS</b>																							
	Lady's Slipper Orchid	<i>Winika cunninghamii</i>			X													X	X	X			
	Bamboo Orchid	<i>Earina mucronata</i>			X	X																X	
	Blue Sun Orchid	<i>Thelymitra cyanea</i>						X	X														
	White Sun Orchid	<i>Thelymitra longifolia</i>						X	X														
	Few-flowered Sun Orchid	<i>Thelymitra pauciflora</i>									X												
	Leek Orchid	<i>Prasophyllum colensoi</i>						X	X				X			X							
	Onion Orchid	<i>Microtis unifolia</i>									X	X							X	X	X	X	
	Potato or Black Orchid	<i>Gastrodia cunninghamii</i>							X		X	X						X					
	a greenhood orchid	<i>Pterostylis banksii</i>							X														
	a greenhood orchid	<i>Pterostylis montana</i>							X														
	a greenhood orchid	<i>Pterostylis humilis</i>										X											
	a greenhood orchid	<i>Pterostylis australis</i>																X					
	a greenhood orchid	<i>Pterostylis sp. (flowers gone to seed)</i>									X									X	X		
	Odd-leaved Orchid	<i>Aporostylis bifolia</i>									X								X				
	Bird Orchid	<i>Chiloglottis cornuta</i>									X	X						X					
	a spider orchid	<i>Corybas trilobus</i>							X		X												



Left to right: *Thelymitra cyanea*, *Thelymitra longifolia*, *Gastrodia cunninghamii*, *Pterostylis montana*, *Earina mucronata*, *Winika cunninghamii*



New Zealand isn't famous for its butterflies, but most of those that are here (with the exception of the Monarch, Australian Painted Lady and the introduced Small White and Common Blue) are found nowhere else. Ignoring the complexities of the New Zealand Copper (which may involve 30 or more different species!), we eventually managed to get good views of most species.



Clockwise, from top left: Boulder Copper, New Zealand Copper, Common Tussock, Southern Blue





Just some of the impressive *Celmisia* daisies that are such a feature of the alpine and subalpine flora.

Clockwise, from top left: *Celmisia semicordata*, *C. sessilifolia*, *C. vespertina* and *C. prorepens*



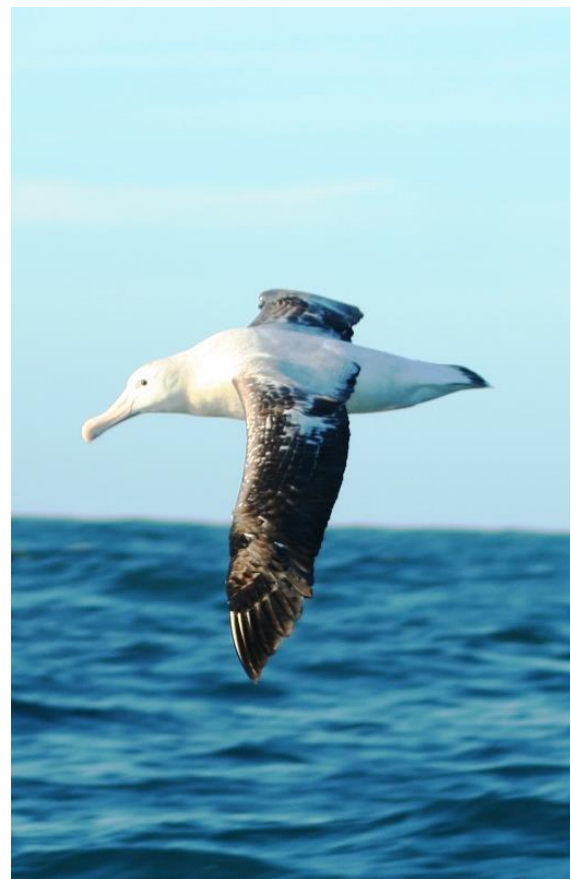


Just some of New Zealand's stand out endemic birds (almost everything here is endemic!). We had a very successful trip, bird wise, only missing out on Rock Wren, Brown Teal and Kokako of the 'do-able', mainland, non-seabird endemics!

Clockwise, from top left: Takahe, South Island Robin, Blue Duck, Kaka



Highlight of the Albatross Experience at Kaikoura was the 'great' albatrosses. What used to be just two species, the Wandering Albatross (famous as having the longest wingspan of any bird) and the Royal Albatross, there are now 8 species of great albatross recognised, of which we enjoyed excellent views of three.



The commonest, and the 'queen bee' at the food, was the largest: Gibson's Albatross (above right), one of the 'Wandering' Albatross group. Note the black tail and the white patch near the base of the mottled black wings.

We also saw both Royal species, both of which have the black line along the cutting edge of the mandibles and no black in the tail.

The Northern Royal has very black wings, which contrast strongly with the bright white body (above left).

The Southern Royal has a broad white leading edge to the mottled black wings (top).





Kaikoura's star cetaceans: acrobatic Dusky Dolphins, and a massive Sperm Whale