

Singapore, Sydney, New Zealand and Hong Kong

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This is a summary of an approximate five weeks holiday trip, mainly with focus on New Zealand. In basic terms this was a nature trip but with many chances of birdwatching. Speaking retrospectively, I should say this is the way to see the islands, there is much more than only birds and a standard birding route will not include many of the very nice spots.

Many thanks to

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Day by day

27/10 (27th October) – The start of a long journey

The travel package was with My Travel in Sweden, which is also a friendship organization between Sweden and New Zealand-Australia, thus having quite good deals on flights. During the summer, we found a package with Qantas for 12500 SEK involving two stop-overs in each direction, one in Asia and one in Australia.

We chose to make Asian stop-overs in Singapore and Hong Kong and the Australian one in Sydney on both the outward and return journeys.

The price for all this flying was very moderate by Swedish standards, but then there must be some downsides? For us it was the eight hours stay at Heathrow. That wasn't pleasant! To us this represents a very noisy airport. Before flying out towards Singapore from terminal four, the only pleasant place to kill time was a silent room at one end of the terminal. We flew out on a BA 747 at around 9pm.

28/10 – Arrive Singapore

In contrast, Changi airport is by far one of the best, nicest, cleanest and most silent airports we've experienced. This would be the airport to spend eight hours in! Instead we took a minibus to the Phoenix Hotel, home for the next three nights. During the evening we went sightseeing to the old Raffles Hotel, and in the Long Bar had the classic Singapore Sling drink, together with the mandatory peanuts.

29/10 – Sentosa Island

A typical tourist trip to Singapore will probably include a day visit to Sentosa. We did this and took the cable-car from downtown over to the island for a relaxed day of swimming and sightseeing. Apart from swimming in approx. 25 Degrees Celsius water we looked at the Fort Siloso, a 20th century coastal artillery fort and museum, and also watched the Pink Dolphins at the Dolphin Lagoon. The most common bird was the abundant *Common Myna*, which from this day would follow us around on long parts of the trip.

30/10 – Palau Ubin

This is an island found to the northeast of the Singapore main island. It is host to some original fishing villages. After a subway trip, followed by a taxi trip to Changi village and Changi jetty, we took a water taxi over to the island. The trip itself was a worthwhile experience.

We hired bikes and cycled around the island for a few hours. Unfortunately the water on the northern beaches was not even 1% as clean as that on Sentosa, so we stayed on land. Here we came across the first calling *Collared Kingfishers*. On the way back Marie, in the front, encountered some species of leguan but it became as scared as Marie and fled into the jungle.

Back on the mainland we headed back to hotel and as evening came, we took subway and taxi to the Night Safari, close to the zoo. This appears to be the only night active zoo in the world and was a rather nice experience, even though I'm personally much more into seeing the species in the wild.

31/10 – To Sydney and Blue Mountains

Early flight out of Singapore on a Qantas 747 flight to Sydney. After a pleasant 8 hour flight we landed and got through immigration smoothly. Went to the car rental desks without any vehicle pre-booked and tried out the Red Spot Rentals. Due to our four big bags plus hand baggage we wanted either a station wagon or similar sized vehicle. We got a Toyota van for six people for AUS\$275 for two days. That was all right for us.

Thankfully we had a very good map covering Sydney and its surroundings but even with that we managed to find our way almost in to the city center before finding the right highway towards the west. Arrived Penrith around 10:30 pm and got a motel room for two nights.

1/11 – Blue Mountains

After an hour and a half drive up to the Blue Mountains we found ourselves at Echo Point without seeing anything of the views. Yesterday's rain had evolved into a mist that was hard to get away. As we were new to Australia all birds were also new and such new species were seen all the time, especially the *Sulphur-crested Cockatoo*. This species was abundant around Echo Point.

We walked the path towards the Three sisters and the weather started to clear enabling us to see most of the grand valley. I had read that this was a good place for the *Rock Warbler* and I searched the cliffs. After only a short while I found two individuals on the first sister.

Marie and I walked down the giant staircase – 900 steep steps – to the bottom and walked towards the tramp in the dense forest. Much harder to locate the birds but it produced both *Dusky Robin* and *Pied Currawong*. The ride up to the top was also a thrill in itself, the tramp is rated as one of the steepest in the world with a max of 52 degrees angle!!

Back at the top the weather had improved and the walk back to Echo point produced very nice views. After the return to Penrith Marie and I took the car out to a biological station as given on the map. It didn't produce much but a drive around in a nearby ranch area produced goodies like *Rainbow* and *Scaly-breasted Lorikeet*, *Galah* and the first of many *White-faced Herons*.

2/11 – New Zealand

Early start, back to the airport. In this direction the airport was signed very accurately and we arrived after 1½ hours. The flight to Auckland was the first stint on the LAN Chile flight to Santiago and therefore this rather short trip was in a Airbus A340 with more space in the cabin. Arrived Auckland and after the massive immigration formalities with checking of hiking boots etc. we were finally there – New Zealand.

After a phone call and 15 minutes later, Sigit from Easy Rental cars showed up with our car for the next 26 days. We drove to his house and signed the contracts. Then, headed into the city and found the Aspen House (pre-booked).

3/11 – Tiri Tiri Matangi

Left Auckland after a short sightseeing the evening before, and headed this morning for Tiri Tiri Matangi Wildlife Sanctuary. We also managed to find a voltage plug converter for all the electronics – this was neither the UK nor the Europe standard. Aussie and NZ have their very own special plug!

After an hour guided ferry service on a calm sea we entered TiriTiri and the first endemic species popped up from the vegetation. We got the baggage transported up to the bunkhouse and was able to bird ourselves along the road up to the lighthouse area, with both **Brown Teal** in a small pond close to the wharf and many **Takahe** observed. We spent the afternoon mainly on the Wattle track, and most of the endemic species appeared at point blank range but without finding the **Kokako**. From the Wharf and towards Hobbs beach there were a few Little Blue Penguin nest boxes. We found one chick in one box.

Had dinner and waited for the sunset. We set out at around 7pm, walked down to the wharf and looked at around 15 **Little Blue Penguins** that tried to get ashore in the heavy waves.

The whole day had been windy and it was not the best of nights for Kiwi listening. We had walked the Kawarau track during the day and it looked good. We had also some info from the researchers in the bunkhouse suggesting this was the best area on the island right now. Inside the forest the noise from the wind was reduced and we soon heard the first **Lesser Spotted Kiwi**. As we walked further we must have passed this Kiwi, and when we stopped, the sound of leaves being tossed around grew stronger and we sat down on the path and waited. Only after ½ minute our first Kiwi came into view in the red light of the torch and passed by within one metre of us. Pleased, we arrived back at the bunkhouse at 10pm.

4/11 – Hauraki gulf pelagic

A long day on the gulf. We had booked the pelagic with Kiwi Wildlife. Karen was already on TiriTiri with a group and together we took a water taxi in to Sandspit Wharf and changed boat. On the way out two **Common Dolphins** made a quick appearance. Headed out to an area southwest of Little Barrier Island where we drifted for quite a while before the birds approached us. When they arrived they were present in numbers! **Flesh-footed Shearwaters**, **White-faced Storm-Petrels** and three **New Zealand Storm-Petrels**, by far the best place in the world to see the latter species.

We went even further out in the gulf to have lunch (bring your own) in the safe waters of some massive rock formations, with nesting Gannets. We then took a loop back towards Sandspit, making one longer stop on the way that produced (among others) **Cook's Petrel**, **Fairy Prion** and **Brown Skua**.

We didn't arrive back until 7pm and Anders and Maud met us for a short drive to the motel.

5/11 – Northern island

Headed up to the Bay of Island area and had lunch there. A really nice area. Crossed the island on small roads towards Trounson Kauri forest where we had a Top 10 park booked from Sweden with the night walk for the **Northern Island Brown Kiwi**. At 8:30 pm some 12 persons were transported to the start of the trail. It had now started to rain, so the circumstances were not the best, but some in

the group were not ready when the first kiwi stepped out in the torchlight. As soon as we walked over a small bridge and out on a grass field, the guide heard a call and there it was! During the walk, the last part in rain, we also heard *Moreporks* and several more kiwis, as well as one more quick glance at one. Also, huge eels were present in the small creeks. Back around 10:30 pm.

6/11 – Miranda and Coromandel peninsula

Headed south again and stopped off for lunch in Waivera. Visited the thermal resort there. We had this planned for the 4th but as the pelagic got on so late we changed that to this day instead. In retrospect we would have skipped this completely. The pools here were much more for kids and families and not as nice as the ones coming up in Rotorua.

After an easy passing of Auckland we found ourselves at Miranda. As this wasn't a birding trip some things were not perfect from a birding perspective – one of those things being almost low tide at Miranda. This is not the best way to see *Wrybill* but I managed to come across one bird. We didn't stay for long after that and therefore our waders list not that big. The massive numbers of *Red Knot*, some up-close encounters of *New Zealand Dotterel* and the only *Buff-banded Rail* were other highlights.

I knew that it was going to be low tide, due to a windows program (see below) that also told that it was time to leave for the Coromandel peninsula and yet another natural wonder, the Hot Water Beach. We had one hour at this beach where you dig your own hole in the sand and feel the geothermal heat on your bum. Ended up at yet another Top 10 motel for the night.

7/11 – Rotorua

Headed along the coast and stopped for lunch at Kiwi 360 before turning south towards Rotorua. This is kiwi plantation with guided tours that will give you an insight into mankind's knowledge of the Kiwi.

Installed us at a Top 10 for two nights in Rotorua and finally headed to a true spa with hot pools in town. Here you can spend some time in 42 Degrees Celsius water looking at breeding *Red-billed Gulls* to be found on the even hotter surface just close to the lake.

Before dusk we took a walk along the shoreline and found both the *New Zealand Scaup* and the *New Zealand Grebe*.

8/11 – Thermal wonderland

A full day of sightseeing around Rotorua with the major time spend at Wai-A-Tapo thermal area. The Lady Know geyser erupts every day at 10:15. You should buy tickets at the main office and then head over to that place. It's nothing like Iceland's geyser's, this is a small hole that blows steam up to 20 meters. Walked around for a few hours in the thermal area and in a woodland area the first *Tomtits* were seen.

Had lunch at a creek close to the tourist area but the place was almost without the tourists. The Kerosene Creek, a creek with a small waterfall and a pond underneath with water of some 37-40 Degrees Celsius was mentioned in the Lonely Planet Guide. It was really nice to lay there and look at *Silvereyes* and *Tomtits*.

The evening was spent at Te Anui, a Maori cultural centre where you get to learn about their culture and end with a buffet dinner. You can also visit a breeding pair of Brown Kiwi, if you are not able to find them in the wild.

9/11 – Waitomo and Falcons

Headed west towards Waitomo and the cave system there. The landscape changed into hilly areas with large wooden expanses. En route we managed to spot the much sought after raptor, *New Zealand Falcon*, circling together with the very common *Australasian Harrier*. When we later drove just outside the Waitomo village we encountered the second falcon for the day, also in flight. This was to be our only sightings of this species.

Settled into a Hobbit hole at Woodlyn Park for one night. This is almost a must-do if you're a Lord of the Rings fan and even not you will find it to be a fun and a nice place. We had the company of two pigs, two cows and one cat. The afternoon was spent black-water rafting (<http://www.blackwater rafting.co.nz/>) in the cave systems with a combination of glow-worms and lot's of fun.

10/11 – Tongariro and Blue Ducks

A short drive down to Tongariro National Park. We phoned the evening before and booked a room at the youth-hostel in the National Park for two nights. After arriving we headed around the mountains for lunch in Okahane and hiked to the waterfalls en route to Mangawhero Falls. The first *Rifleman* appeared in the woodlands during the hike.

In the afternoon we headed to what was to be the stakeout of the trip, the search for the *Blue Duck*. It went extraordinary smoothly and even the photo opportunity was splendid.

11/11 – Tongariro crossing

A bus picked us up and drove us up the start of the Tongariro crossing. After a slow climb for approx. 1 hour we reached the start of the true climb from the Soda Springs and up to the yellow crater. After the pleasant walk in the crater the last climb starts, taking you up to 1900 meter and the start of the red crater and the emerald lakes. Here and there you can also see sceneries from Lord of the Rings, especially Mount Doom that always is seen in the background. It was said to be a 6 hours walk and that was almost accurate to the minute for us – we took quite a moderate pace, which included many pauses. The times set along the path were very accurate.

Birding was slow, during the first leg there were many singing *Skylarks* and at the emerald larks there was a *Kelp Gull*, to my surprise.

12/11 – Wellington

Long drive down to Wellington, with lunch in the very small town of Foxton. Found a hotel in the city and settled in on this very windy day before heading to the National Museum (Te Papa). This museum focuses upon the environment, flora and fauna. Also visited the botanical garden before dinner and preparation for the ferry trip the next day.

13/11 – Cook's straight and Marlborough Sounds

In Wellington the wind had dropped some during the night but I still hoped for some birding during the ferry crossing. As we had the car with us we just left everything inside and found some chairs (see more below on car hire). I first tried to bird from upper sun deck but as we moved into the straight this was impossible. I couldn't stand still due to the wind! Instead I found a small passage outside on deck 6 just in front of the chimney where I could see some *Shy albatrosses*, two *Diving petrels* and two migrating *Harriers* (!) to the south. Out on the open sea you will be almost alone on this passage but as you enter the sounds you will be joined by many more birds. The sounds are really beautiful and full of life, naturally I searched for the *King Shag* but with no luck. The first and only *Reef-Heron* came flying by just as we entered Picton, together with many *Fluttering Shearwaters*.

Lunch in Picton, I left the others to take part on the Dolphin Watch birding special at 1:30 pm. Being a mix of birds and mammals tour, sightings of the two types occur hand in hand. For instance when we found the first big gathering of Flutterings this is a hint that there are **Dusky Dolphins** around. The tour stops at Motuara Island, a open sanctuary on a small island. Most went up to the top but I stopped on the way up at the only water hole on the whole island. This produced many **South Island Saddlebacks and Robins, Bellbirds** at point blank range – I didn't need neither the 300 mm lens, nor the 70-200 mm lens and changed to the wide angle lens! A nearby nest box had two chicks of the **Cook Straight Little Blue Penguin**. On the way back we headed out to the islet where approx. 40 **King Shags** were nesting. Back at 6pm and headed down to the hotel in nearby Blenheim for dinner at a nearby wine yard.

14/11 – Kaikoura

It was raining and foggy when we approached Kaikoura. We made a pit stop a few miles before the city for some Fur Seal spotting before checking in at the Bay Cottages in South Bay. The owner was very friendly and as I was out on the first pelagic he took Anders on some 4x4 mud racing.

We had lunch at Albatross encounters and at 1pm I had my first pelagic. Quite a small boat and because a southern storm occurred the day before, the sea was really choppy. This well known boat and the chum soon produced what we wanted, both *antipodensis* and *gibsoni* **Wandering Albatrosses** as well as many individuals of both the races of **Shy Albatross**. Again, I could use the wide-angle lens to photo the albatrosses! This is also a very good place to have a good look at both **Hutton's Shearwater** and **Westland Petrel**. Moreover, this was also the only time that I saw the **Antarctic Giant-Petrel**. But the most unexpected was yet to come, a **Yellow-eyed Penguin** is seen from time to time when chumming and this fellow is a true hardhead. It attacks the wanderings with the beak to get the most of the food! The southern storm not only made me a little bit dizzy when photographing but also produced many flybys of an **Antarctic Fulmar**. Back at 3:45 pm and had a relaxed afternoon.

15/11 – more pelagic and Whales

Walked to the boat and the others joined at 6:10 am. Much calmer sea today and the captain headed much further out, riding the massive swells. The Fulmar was not seen today but both **Northern** and **Southern Royal Albatrosses** and the only **Grey-faced Petrel** circled the boat a few times. One that didn't circle and only came in and quickly disappeared was a lone **Buller's Albatross**. Back at 8:45 am for breakfast. Now the weather was great and the backdrop with snow-capped mountains was spectacular.

We walked out to a **Fur Seal** colony for some close encounters of those as well as with breeding **White-fronted Terns**. We had also booked a swimming encounter with Fur Seals in town but, to our big disappointment, the trip was cancelled. So we ended up with a few hours to kill before the booked Whale watch at 3:30pm.

Same kinds of birds as in the morning but fewer and only the **Cape Pigeons** and the **Wanderers** approached the ship. We soon spotted the first **Sperm Whale** but it dived just as we reached it. The sonar told about 2-3 more further in the bay and we soon found another one that stayed up for some 15-20 minutes. We then headed back to the first one that the instruments told were coming up after some 45 minutes below. This also was enjoyed for some 15 minutes before diving again. The ride back was quick and without any attempt to approach the high numbers of jumping **Dusky Dolphins** that we saw to the side of the boat.

16/11 – to the west coast

Early start to get all the way over the mountains to the west coast. Lewis Pass was not like a Pass in Europe, so nothing to stop for. We made a short detour to the ghost town of Waiuta. This was the place/thing visited that didn't make up to our expectations, as it was much more of a ruin than a ghost town. We soon headed towards the Pancake rocks at Punakaiki. Now the first bad luck started, we started to feel a cold and instead of trying for the Great Spotted Kiwi we headed to a Top 10 in Greymouth.

17/11 – Glaciers

Made a stop in Hokarito and the greenstone shops before heading down to Franz Josef glaciers and a new Top 10. Drove up to the glacier and in some mist and drizzly rain started to walk towards it. Took roughly one hour without seeing any Kea. Heading back to the car we again felt the cold and got to bed very quickly to try and get rid of it. Unfortunately, this got us to skip the only chance for the Okarito Brown Kiwi.

18/11 – Yellowhead and Queenstown

Finally, after a 12 hours sleep the cold was gone. A long drive to Queenstown via Haast and Haast Pass. First stop became the Monro beach where, according to The Lonely Planet Guide, you may observe some *Fjordland Crested Penguins*. We first asked the reception at a resort and yes, 2-3 had been seen the last days. We walked for 45 min to the beach through dense forests that didn't produce anything new. Just out on the beach we met two birders that had seen the penguins swimming out just 10 minutes ago. After some searching I managed to find 4-5 penguins in the water outside the beach. By elimination it must have been the **FC Penguins** but not very pleased with the views, we walked back to the car.

Lunch at Haast produced something that I thought would have to wait to the pass. All of a sudden a *Yellowhead* appeared out of the blue. I managed to look at it for some 30 sec before it left up towards the mountains again. This was must more Yellowhammer territory, but I have plenty of experience from Sweden to tell them apart, even though I doubted my eyes to start with! Did anyway a stop at Haast Pass and walked the start of the Bridled track. Also tried to tape lure the Yellowhead without any other luck other than bringing three *Riflemen* close. By playing that tape it was also possible to photograph them. Headed down to Queenstown on thrilling roads and spent the evening in town after checking in to our hotel.

19/11 – Queenstown and Te Anau

Walked along the shore of the lake to the TSS Earnslaw (<http://www.realjourneys.co.nz/Main/earnslawcruises/>) that would bring us to a farm on the other side of the lake. On the way both *New Zealand Scaups* and *Black-billed Gulls* were easy to get close to. The latter also followed the ship over and gave opportunity of flight photos.

The Walter Peak high country farm is an open farm that will show you both sheep sheering as well as sheep dogs rounding up the sheep. This will bring every believes that sheep's are stupid to hard fact – they really are!

On return to mainland we took a detour to look at the original bungee jumping site at Kawarau Bridge (<http://www.ajhackett.com/index.php?page=kawarau>). Drove to Te Anau on very good roads and installed us in a Top 10 camp.

20/11 – Fiordlands

Early start to be able to make many stops before getting to Milford Sound. But as the rainfall totals are some eight meters per year here, it started to rain as we got out of Te Anau downs. Made some stops anyhow and I heard a *Long-tailed Koel* from the parking area at Knobs Flat. Also walked the Cascade Creek track with some more *Riflemen*. As we approached the Homer Tunnel it had started to rain heavily and I didn't even make any attempt for the Wren – not even the Kea's were around. What were seen on the other hand were the growing numbers of waterfalls that came down the mountains. So for this the rain was an advantage – I will probably not walk any longer trips for any waterfalls after this, cause nothing will beat this experience. After descending through the Homer Tunnel we finally managed to see the first Kea before driving into Milford Sounds. Due to the rain we had to wait some hours for the boat to leave and we virtually noticed how the closest waterfall grew and grew all the time.

We had pre-booked an overnight cruise back home in Sweden and boarded the Milford Wanderer with clearing skies at 4:30 pm. She headed out and almost licked many of the waterfalls. We looked at some *Fur Seals*. The fiord is not that long, and it took just approx. 1 hour to get to the outlet. Then we anchored in a small Bay close to the underwater observatory and started with some water activities. As we now had spotted quite a few *Fiordland Crested Penguins* ashore close to the boat Marie and I went for the tender cruise. We did one approach and got some decent pictures, travelled around and on the return made one more attempt and got really close.

21/11 – Fiodlands and to the south

Rain again in the morning but colder than yesterday. The penguins were still on the beach. The last part of the breakfast was eaten en route towards the Tasman Sea. The skies cleared and revealed that it had been snowing at higher altitudes. On the way out we encountered a group of *Bottlenosed Dolphins* that played around with the food. Got out to the end of the fiord and the dunes got higher, here the depth of the fiord decreases from 300 to 30 meters producing the dunes. On the way back we once again passed under a vertical cliff that was over 700 meters high!

We were let off at the underwater observatory where you descend in a cylinder to some 10 meters below the surface to an artificial reef around the cylinder. Here both red and especially black coral thrives. As humans are kept inside and the marine life is free, almost anything can happen, just a few weeks ago they had both seals and dolphins coming close by.

Back ashore we drove up to the western ending of the Homer Tunnel. As this is the lower ending I figured it was a chance that the weather should be better. I walked up the right side of the tunnel (facing the tunnel) and literally walked on the roof of the tunnel. I heard a call that must have been the *South Island Wren* but could not find it. After a while I decided to try the other end as well, the classic place to see the Wren. Here it was a mix of snow and rain and three Kea's were actively feeding on the wipers of car. I walked the track leading up to the big blocks and soon met a group of birders that hadn't found anything. Their guide was nice and told me where to look in particular. The problem now was the snow but I walked, listened and played some tapes for 10-15 minutes around that site. During this time two smaller avalanches rolled down the higher mountains. All of a sudden the snow stopped, the skies cleared for 2 minutes and the sun got through. And in that minute a male *South Island Wren* popped up on the very rock formation with nesting material and flew away. Got both good looks at it perched and then flying away. Pleased, I walked back and we drove towards Te Anau again.

The weather around Knobs flat was now much better and I managed to do some birding, 3 *New Zealand Pipits* were easily seen.

Lunch in Te Anau before continuing to Invercargill where we found a hotel with both a small spa and a sauna. Had dinner in town after checking out the backyard of the Southland Museum and Art Gallery, where you can get a glimpse of some Tuataras.

22/11 – To Stewart Island

Left Invercargill at 8am and arrived Bluff after smashing a Starling with the car, the only road kill for the entire trip. The ferry left at 9:30 am, the first 10 minutes being very bumpy as we had tail wind together with the tide going in. As soon as we got out on open sea it got much better and I was able to stand on deck for birding. I had a single *Buller's albatross* keeping company on the way out. But the true highlight of the crossing was the high numbers of *Diving-Petrels* that were everywhere.

After installation at 'Room with a view' we walked an approx 4 hour track around the village with many of the more common species but nothing extraordinary observed. When back in the village the first *Kakas* flew around. Met Chris from Kiwi Wildlife in the village and he could arrange a Kiwi trip tonight instead of tomorrow that we originally were booked on. This will get us two opportunities if the first try wasn't successful. Phillip Smith arrived at 8:45 pm and we headed east towards Ocean beach. After arriving at the small Wharf he went through some info on the *Stewart Island Brown Kiwis* and how to behave tonight. After some tea the night had become dark enough for the walk to start. With small torches we walked tight together and tried to listen for sounds. Phillip also had other tricks, as he is here almost every night he knows which footprints are new and which are older in the mud. So, after finding some new we stopped and he searched with his torch. To my and the one near to me this was frustrating as we had the first Kiwi just at our feet but couldn't yell. This young male joined us for smashing views but retreated after sniffing on a pair of shoes. We walked down to the beach and found more footprints, that hadn't been there the night before but without seeing any more Kiwis. Two *Opossums* were seen from the beach and on the return a male Kiwi appeared, followed further up by a adult female. Pleased, we arrived back in Halfmoon Bay around 11:30pm.

23/11 – Pelagic, Ulva and birthday

How about celebrating a birthday on Stewart Island doing a half-day pelagic, followed with a few hours on Ulva Island!

We left the wharf at 9am, with the rain as forecasted. Had to take shelter inside or under the roof on the catamaran. Birding started good with two *Fiordland Crested Penguins* inside the harbour area. Headed north to the small islands you see in the distance when you arrive at the ferry. Here *Brown Skua* nests were seen, and one did many fly past when fish was thrown out. On other islands in the same area we also found *Yellow-eyed Penguins*. This was followed by a long journey down to islets southeast of Halfmoon Bay. *Albatrosses* started to follow us and when the trip seemed a little bit dull, the only *Mottled Petrel* was encountered in the distance.

When staring to throw out fish *Shy Albatrosses* started to arrive, soon followed by one *Southern Royal Albatross*. The weather cleared up more and more, and on the way back we had albatrosses flying with blue skies in the background.

In the vicinity of Ulva island the boat approached breeding colonies of both *Stewart Island* and *Pied Shag*. We had lunch in one of Ulvas bays. Most of the group disembarked for a few hours on Ulva. We walked one of the longer tracks of the island with both dense forests and sandy beaches. The "charming" Weka is as nice and thrilling as you probably have heard. I took out my wide-angle lens and deliberately left the bag open. Within 15 seconds the Weka was inside! After some search the

first party of *Brown Creepers* appeared and at the same time the call of *Yellowhammer*, but only a shadow could be seen in the canopy. Took a watertaxi back to Stewart Island.

24/11 – Back to mainland and Fernbirds

Left Stewart Island on a half full ferry at 8am. After a calm and not so bird thrilling crossing we left for *Fernbird* search just outside Invercargill, in Otatara. Here is a private reserve that is the easiest site to see these elusive birds. After a short walk out to the mash area our guide Jenny started to call the birds and we got some answers and also saw a bird in the far distance. She got back to the house for some coffee and got back with her dog, a notorious Fernbird finder. As the time went by the birds called higher and higher, that is coming closer, and all of a sudden the dog barked and the closest *Fernbird* was just at the path. I even got decent shots of one bird with nesting material.

Headed through the Catlins in nice weather with Nugget Point as our goal. Even there I had heard about good sites for Yellowhead in this area. I now thought I had had good views of that species. Very nice views at this lighthouse, that apart from the common *Fur Seals* also had 10 *Sea Lions*. Headed into Dunedin for a hotel that we easily found, and then spent the evening in the city centre.

25/11 – Otago peninsula and Moeraki Boulders

Drove out on the Otago towards Taiaroa Head after having a tour of Cadbury's chocolate factory. Even though knowing this was the first day it was possible to have guided tour of the albatross colony I didn't book anything, making the first trip fully booked. I thought that I had had good enough views of them and we moved onwards after some Shag photographing.

Drove another winding road back towards town and headed north on SH1, just making a short detour to Baldwin Street in one of the suburbs to drive the steepest street in the world – 1 in 1.266 was very much for a car. After a few hours drive we looked at Moeraki Boulders along the coast before heading inland towards Twizel. Stayed overnight in Otematata in the Waitaki valley and looked at the huge Benmore Dam before dinner.

26/11 – Twizel and Christchurch

Finally, this was the day for the very rare Black Stilt. I thought that I had prepared this site with info from trip reports but I was mistaken. First tried some riverbeds on the way towards Twizel without any sightings. When getting to the river crossing and heading down following three trip reports it became clear that they were ambiguous. We tried for a few hours without finding any sights of the stilts and even asking a staff on the Stilt project without getting any straight answers! So, for you wanting to tick this species, don't rely on this report ☺

After a nice and calm drive we entered Christchurch in the late afternoon and found a motel close to city centre.

27/11 – Christchurch and Sydney

A calm morning with some last packing and getting rid of stuff before contacting the car rental company and setting up a time to return the car, that would be at 2pm. Headed out for some hours at the Antarctic Centre that gave a good and interesting picture of the continent.

After being transported to the airport we said goodbye to the car after some 4400 km and boarded the plane towards Sydney. On arrival we got a taxi-van into Sydney and the Aaron Hotel in the outskirts of China town. Walked and started to get a feeling for the city during the evening.

28/11 – Sydney

Sightseeing started in rain when we headed down to the harbour area, and the Maritime Museum and the Sydney Aquarium. For a birdwatcher this was to get back to old grounds again, with loads of *Rock Doves* and *Mynahs* but also many many *Australian Ibis*. Before taking a ferry to Manly beach we off course took a swing around the opera house. The ride in the old ferry type to Manly is a nice experience, especially on a swelly day like this. It produced sightings of an *Arctic Skua* and an *Australian Pelican*.

29/11 – Sydney and Hong Kong

Early morning start for a walk in the Centennial Park. I had read a little bit about this park and even though we didn't have maps that covered the area we took a train and got it fairly right. Walked in the park for a few hours and sightings produced loads of *Mynahs* and around the waterholes *Dusky Moorhens*, *Darters*, and *Wood Ducks* were present.

Back at the hotel around 2pm and took one of the shuttle busses out to the airport where a long checking waited for us, as the main cargo-belt had a malfunction. Off to Hong Kong on time and landed just around midnight local time. Took a taxi in to Hong Kong island and the pre-booked hotel and went straight to bed.

30/11 – Hong Kong

Tried to manage this big city on our own up to lunch but it wasn't easy to find the interesting parts for shopping etc. In the afternoon we had the help of a Swedish lady and it became much easier. Visited quite a few markets etc. Not much birding was done, almost only down to the abundant *Brown Kites* above.

1/12 – Hong Kong and flight home

Last day was spent on the Kowloon side with some attempts on shopping for camera equipment but without finding any real cheap prices that could make such purchases worth while. Had the opportunity to go back to the hotel for a shower and packing before taking a shuttle bus out to the airport for the last stretch of the trip.

2/12 – Snow in Sweden

After 2 hours on from Heathrow we finally landed in Sweden again, just in time to prepare for a white Christmas after seeing all the artificial snow and Santa in Sydney and Hong Kong. At this time I knew that I would only be home for 8 days before heading to India on a business trip – but that's completely another story.

Stakeouts for certain species

Stewart Island Brown Kiwi

Bravo Adventure Cruises

Phillip & Diane Smith

philldismith@xtra.co.nz

Probably almost the only chance to see this species is to follow on the guided tours to Ocean Beach. When I found out about the pelagic trip on the 23rd I tried to book a Kiwi trip around that date, without any luck when communicating with Phillip. Everything was fully booked. But, as I also had contact with Kiwi Wildlife they could help me with two places on one night.

North Island Brown Kiwi

The Top 10 holiday park just outside the Trounson Forest arranges guided tours, which is also a very good place to spend the night.

We booked both the stay and the kiwi tour from Sweden, just to be sure.

We had one Kiwi in the torchlight just 1 minute after getting out of the car, on the lawn at the entrance to the park and one further in close to the pathway. Two or three more calling throughout the rainy night walk.

Web: www.doc.govt.nz/Conservation/Showcase-Areas/Trounson-Kauri-Park.asp

Web: <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Kauri%20Coast/KauriCoast.html>

Little Spotted Kiwi

Tiritiri Matangi Island.

See explanation on the 3rd November.

Kaikoura pelagics

Albatross encounters

Web: www.oceanwings.co.nz

I booked two trips from Sweden, the 1pm trips on 14th and the 15th. When we later found that this would collide with the whale watch I changed the 15th to the 9am trip instead. This was done just before leaving and I had no chance to look at e-mails for some days. To my big disappointment the booking service at Oceanwings must have thought that I only wanted one trip and totally cancelled the 15th trip instead of changing it!!! When I finally understood this I phoned and then the 9am trip was fully booked and only the 6am was available. So birders wanting multiple trips shall be aware that the booking personnel are probable not aware of this and think that you only want one trip.

When you go on a 6am tour you need to pay in advance and get a "boarding pass". The girl helping me wrote 6:15am on mine and if I hadn't asked the captain and sorted it out myself I might have missed the trip. It should be 6am!

When I got home I found out that Oceanwings have a policy of 10% discount on a second trip. This was not made on my bill, so I paid the full amount for both trips.

Apart from these three negative things the trips and the captains on the boat was great and very helpful in pointing out birds.

Whale Watch Kaikoura

Web: <http://www.whalewatch.co.nz/>

Also departs from South Bay but here you must go to the centre for briefing and to spend ½ hour in the shops before you depart. In big catamarans and doing some 30 knots you patrol a huge area for the whales. That together with sonar equipment will produce some whales.

Hauraki Gulf Pelagic and Stewart Island Pelagic

Kiwi Wildlife Tours NZ

Web: www.kiwi-wildlife.co.nz

Chris and Karen are dedicated birders that can and will try and include you in bigger groups for pelagics. We were two and for both of these trips we went together with the same group of birders. See the web page for info on dates and start to talk to them well in advance.

We were lucky that the Hauraki Pelagic and our flight to NZ were close in time. For the SI Pelagic we planned the visit to SI according to that date.

King Shag

Dolphin Watch Marlborough

Web: www.dolphinwatchmarlborough.co.nz

Dan & Amy are Americans that have a long history of research on marine mammals. Together with the other crew on the catamaran they did a good job with finding the mammals and birds.

A recommended cruise even if you should be able to find the Shag from the ferry.

Blue Duck

Ruatiti west of Ohakune.

Just north of Raetihi on SH4 there is a sign for "Ruatiti 22" towards the west. Drive that winding road that gets smaller and smaller for 12,2 km and take left over a small bridge and directly after turn right. After 1km you will start to see the Manganui A Te Ao river on your right. I stopped at the first available parking place and found the family right away.

I read about this place from a December 2004 report. I also gave the site to another birder that got there two weeks after me and that group also found them.

Shore Plover

One of the big disappointments of the trip. According to Chris at Kiwi Wildlife, some NZ wildlife organization moved the two birds from the Sandspit area and they are no longer twitchable.

Wrybill

Miranda.

Web: www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz

Check with the shorebird centre for best locations. We walked out to the southernmost hide and had one single bird there.

South Island Wren

Eastern parking of the Homer tunnel.

Follow the path north up to the big blocks of rock that is a few minutes walk from the parking. I encountered the wren as I had big blocks to the right of the path, just as the path almost does a 180-degree turn to the left.

Fernbird

Easy to see the birds in a friendly environment, some 15 minutes detour from the Bluff-Invercargill road.

Web: www.fernbirds.co.nz

Kokako

Tiritiri Matangi Island.

Only heard in the morning along the Wattle Track, even though it was walked 2-3 times during the day before.

Misc. addresses

Singapore

Hotel Phoenix - <http://www.hotelphoenixsingapore.com>

Sentosa - <http://sentosa.com.sg>

New Zealand

Car rental

I did quite extensive work before the trip to find a good rental agent, with the priority being the price and enough room for four people and lots of baggage.

After some efforts I found station wagons for under NZ\$50 per day and finally settled for EASY Car Rental New Zealand, with base just outside the Auckland airport.

I had thought of both the opportunity to change car at the Wellington ferry or having the same car throughout the trip. With EASY Car only having the option of returning the car in Christchurch we also booked the ferry ticket. In retrospect, I would recommend this option. Perhaps a little more expensive but it is worth having the same car and not have to drag everything onboard the ferry and afterwards finding a new car in Picton.

We drove some 4400 km on the 26 days without having any problems with the car.

Web: <http://www.car-rental-new-zealand.co.nz>

Accommodation

Top 10 Holiday park

We used this chain of holiday parks quite a few times, from the start in the Trounson Kauri forest. After paying a entrance fee of NZ\$30 this gives you a 10% discount on every bill – and also some discount on local entrance fees like the Thermal wonderland in Rotorua.

Web: <http://www.top10.co.nz/>

Trounson: <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Kauri%20Coast/KauriCoast.html>

Whangamata - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Whangamata/Whangamata.html>

Rotorua - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Rotorua/Rotorua.html>

Blenheim - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Blenheim%20Bridge/BlenheimBridge.html>

Greymouth - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Greymouth/Greymouth.html>

Franz Josef - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Franz%20Josef/FranzJosef.html>

Te Anau - <http://www.top10.co.nz/parks/Te%20Anau/TeAnau.html>

Auckland – Aspen House

A budget bed and breakfast with a safe car parking close to city center. We got an Executive Apartment for all four that was HUGE. A good buffet breakfast as well.

Web: <http://www.aspenhouse.co.nz/>

TiriTiri Matangi

To be able to see/hear the *Lesser Spotted Kiwi* you need a overnight stay on this lovely open sanctuary. I arranged both the ferry crossing and the overnight stay from Sweden, with the later being mandatory well in advance to have a chance.

The bunkhouse is equipped with four beds room, a kitchen and toilets/showers.

Kawau Kat has since 2005 taken over the ferry services from Fullers and our booked trip was fully booked. We took the trip from downtown Auckland 9 am and docked Gulf Harbor 9:50 am before arriving TiriTiri just after 10 am. A longer ferry trip that didn't produce much except *Gannets* but the scenic views of Auckland was enough to recommend this trip.

Although two of us should stay over and not taking a return with Kawau we had to pay a return ticket.

Web: <http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz/>

Web: <http://www.kawaukat.co.nz/>

Waitomo – Woodlyn Park

A special place, where you can either spend the night in a Hobbit hole, a freighter plane or on a train. This night was booked from Sweden.

Web: <http://www.woodlynpark.co.nz/>

Tongariro National Park

We found this place and used it mostly due to the shuttle transport to the crossing and some good reviews in travel guides. We had a room w/ toilet and shower for all four and the Schnapps restaurant close by had everything you want.

Web: <http://www.yha.org.nz/hostels-ind.asp?id=97>

Wellington – Halswell Lodge

Small but pleasant hotel rooms on good walking distance to central town and Te Papa. Secure parking.

Web: <http://www.halswell.co.nz/>

Kaikoura – Bay Cottages

Tourist flats in South Bay, very close to both the city and especially the boats for the Albatross encounters. I both walk to and from the boat and didn't have to drive into Kaikoura.

Web: <http://www.virtual-kaikoura.com/baycottages/baycottages.html>

Queenstown – Thomas's Hotel

Didn't pre-book anything here either and that was probably a chance. Tried one motel that didn't have any rooms left before phoning the Authors choice in Lonely Planet and got the last two double rooms.

A nice and comfortable hotel downtown. Take a look at the photos in the reception of how high the lake can get with a flood – they were canoeing in heights level with the upper part of the door!

Web: <http://www.thomashotel.co.nz>

Milford Sounds – Milford Wanderer

Web: <http://www.realjourneys.co.nz/Main/OvernightCruises/>

A nice way to explore the fiord with a three course dinner and breakfast included. Four beds bunks below to sleep in and plenty to do in the afternoon before sunset.

Invercargill

Didn't pre-book anything here either. Found on second try around the Motel along the SH1 just east of city centre.

Stewart Island

The crossing:

I booked this crossing a few days before.

Close to the terminal there is an office that will store your car indoors or outdoors but always under surveillance.

Web: info@stewartislandexperience.co.nz

Stay:

We had booked a 'Room with a view' from Sweden well ahead. This was one of the places that still had places left, probably due to the lack of webpage, only e-mail access. We were picked up at the Wharf and driven the short ride to the house. Well equipped house for up to 6 people with a great view over the harbour.

E-mail: topship@xtra.co.nz

Dunedin – Leviathan Heritage Hotel

Nice and old hotel close to downtown Dunedin. Parking across the street.

Web: <http://www.dunedinhotel.co.nz/>

Otematara – Otematara Country Inn

Had a whole house for ourselves with the local (and only?) restaurant just around the corner, managed by the same people.

Christchurch

Didn't pre-book anything here either. Found after some fully booked just outside city centre.

The tide

Tide is something that as a Swede you're not used to except on travels. I have on several birding trips used a shareware program called WXTide32. From this program it's easy to print out a schematic for the day you will visit a certain area +/- several days and it will give you the time for both high and low tide.

Web: <http://www.wxtide32.com/>

Birdlist Australia

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

Penrith, NSW 1/11-05, Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Magpie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata*

Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Hardhead *Aythya australis*

Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Dusky Moorhens *Gallinula tenebrosa*

Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Australian Darter *Anhinga novaehollandiae*

Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*

Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Scaly-breasted Lorikeet *Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*

Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Galah *Eolophus roseicapillus*

Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

Penrith, NSW 30/10-05

Crimson Rosella *Platycercus elegans*

Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

Crested Pigeon *Geophaps lophotes*

Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Rock Doves *Columbia Livia*
Common in Sydney

Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

White-faced Heron *Egretta novaehollandiae*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Australian Ibis *Threskiornis molucca*
Sydney 2/11-05

Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*
Sydney 28/11-05

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*
Sydney harbour 28/11-05

Satin Bowerbird *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*
Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*
Echo Point, NSW 1/11-05

Noisy Miner *Manorina melanocephala*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05, Centeniell Park, Sydney 29/11-05

Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata*
Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

Rock warbler *Origma solitaria*
2 seen at the three sisters, Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

Spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus*
Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

Striated Thornbill *Acanthiza lineate*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina*
Blue Mountains, NSW 1/11-05

Magpie-lark *Grallina cyanoleuca*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Rufous Songlark *Cincloramphus mathewsi*
Penrith, NSW 1/11-05

Birdlist New Zealand

Listed in order as in the fieldguide.

1. **Southern Brown Kiwi** *Apteryx australis*

Stewart Island Brown Kiwi *Apteryx australis lawryi*

1 juvenile male, 1 adult male and female seen and heard at Ocean Beach, Stewart Island 22/11

2. **North Island Brown Kiwi** *Apteryx mantelli*

2 seen and 2-3 more heard, Trounson Kauri forest 5/11.

3. **Little Spotted Kiwi** *Apteryx owenii*

1 seen Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11

4. **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Australasian Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus australis*

3 in small lake along the west coast between Franz Josef and Haast 18/11.

5. **New Zealand Grebe** *Poliiocephalus rufopectus*

1 pair Lake Rutorua 7/11

6. **Royal Albatross** *Diomedea epomophora*

Southern Royal Albatross *Diomedea (epomophora) epomophora*

2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

1 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea (epomophora) sanfordi*

1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

1 Whale Watch 15/11.

7. **Wandering Albatross** *Diomedea exulans*

Gibson's Albatross *Diomedea (exulans) gibsoni*

10 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

9 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

3 Whale Watch 15/11.

Antipodean Albatross *Diomedea (exulans) antipodensis*

10 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

8. **Shy Albatross** *Diomedea cauta*

White-capped Albatross *Diomedea (cauta) stadi*

3 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

60 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

3 Stewart Island – Bluff ferry 24/11

Salvin's Albatross *Diomedea (cauta) salvini*

25 Cook Strait ferry 13/11

25 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

14 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

4 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

9. **Buller's Albatross** *Diomedea bulleri*

1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

1 Bluff - Stewart Island ferry 22/11

10. **Antarctic Giant-Petrel** *Macronectes giganteus*

2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

11. **Hall's Giant-Petrel** *Macronectes halli*
1 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
30 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
7 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
2 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.
12. **Buller's Shearwater** *Puffinus bulleri*
20 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
3 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
13. **Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*
Probably overlooked in search of other species.
2 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
10 Bluff - Stewart Island ferry 22/11
20 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.
10 Stewart Island – Bluff ferry 24/11
14. **Short-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus tenuirostris*
10 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
10 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
6 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
15. **Flesh-footed Shearwater** *Puffinus carneipes*
500 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
75 Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
16. **Fluttering Shearwater** *Puffinus gavia*
100 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
300 Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
17. **Hutton's Shearwater** *Puffinus huttoni*
500 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
Probably missed on the 15th due to that we headed much further out to sea.
18. **Little Shearwater** *Puffinus assimilis*
Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis assimilis*
1 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
North Island Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis haurakiensis*
5 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
19. **Common Diving-Petrel** *Pelecanoides urinatrix*
Southern Diving-Petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix chathamensis*
ca. 150 ex. från Bluff-Stewart Island färjan 17/12
ca. 200 ex. Stewart Island 19/12
Richdale's Diving-Petrel *Pelecanoides urinatrix urinatrix*
5 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
20. **White-chinned Petrel** *Procellaria aequinoctialis*
10 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
2 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
21. **Westland Petrel** *Procellaria westlandica*
50 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
40 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
40 lookout points along the west coast 18/11.
22. **Black (Parkinson's) Petrel** *Procellaria parkinsoni*
15 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.

23. **Antarctic Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialisoides*
1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.

24. **Cape Petrel** *Daption capense*
Southern Cape Petrel *Daption capense capense*
200 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
75 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.
50 Bluff - Stewart Island ferry 22/11
75 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.
20 Stewart Island – Bluff ferry 24/11

Snares Cape Pigeon *Daption capense australe*
2 confirmed Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
A few confirmed Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

25. **Fairy Prion** *Pachyptila turtur (ssp)*
15 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.

26. **Cook's Petrel** *Pterodroma cookii*
15 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.

27. **Pycroft's Petrel** *Pterodroma pycrofti*
1 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.

28. **Mottled Petrel** *Pterodroma inexpectata*
1 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

29. **Great-winged Petrel** *Pterodroma macroptera*
New Zealand Grey-faced Petrel *Pterodroma macroptera gouldi*
1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 15/11.

33. **White-faced Storm-Petrel** *Pelagodroma marina*
New Zealand White-faced Storm-Petrel *Pelagodroma marina maoriana*
15 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
1 Bluff - Stewart Island ferry 22/11

34. **New Zealand Storm-Petrel** *Oceanites maorianus*
3 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.

35. **Yellow-eyed Penguin** *Megadyptes antipodes*
1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
5 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

36. **Little Penguin** *Eudyptula minor*
Southern Blue Penguin *Eudyptula minor minor*
50 Kiwi night trip, Stewart Island 22/11.
10 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

Northern Blue Penguin *Eudyptula minor iredalei*
1 box Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11
7+8 getting ashore Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11

Cook Strait Blue Penguin *Eudyptula minor variabilis*
2 pull, box Motuara Island, Marlborough Sounds 13/11

37. **Fiordland Crested Penguin** *Eudyptes pachyrhynchus*
4-5 Monro beach 18/11.
12 Milford Sounds overnight cruise 20/11
14 Milford Sounds overnight cruise 20/11
2 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

38. **Australasian Gannet** *Morus serrator*

Observed 6 days, especially on the northern island with abundance on Hauraki pelagic trip and Cook Strait crossing.

39. **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo steadi*

Only seen on two days, probably overlooked for other cormorant species.

40. **Pied Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax varius*

Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax varius varius*

Observed 11 days, that makes it the most seen Cormorant species.

41. **Little Black Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*

10 Lake Rotorua 7/11

5 Lake Rotorua 8/11

1 en route Invercargill 21/11

10 en route Dunedin 24/11

41. **Little Pied Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*

Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos brevicauda*

5 Lake Rotorua 8/11

42. **Spotted Shag** *Phalacrocorax punctatus*

Spotted Shag *Phalacrocorax punctatus punctatus*

50 Marlborough Sounds 13/11

5 Kaikoura 14/11

150 Taiora Head 25/11

Blue Shag *Phalacrocorax punctatus oliveri*

10 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.

43. **King Shag** *Phalacrocorax carunculatus*

50 Marlborough Sounds 13/11

44. **Stewart Island Shag** *Phalacrocorax chalconotus*

10 Bluff-Stewart Island ferry 22/11

100 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11

150 Taiora Head 25/11

45. **White-faced Heron** *Egretta novaehollandiae*

Observed 12 days, most common on northern island.

46. **Eastern Reef Egret** *Egretta sacra sacra*

1 from ferry Marlborough Sounds 13/11

47. **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Observed three days, in Queenstown and in Dunedin.

48. **Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

Common, totally observed on 7 days, with a max of approx. 100 in Lake Rotoaira 7/11

49. **Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis ssp*

Only two sightings, at Te Anau downs 21/11 and in Christchurch on 26/11.

50. **Paradise Shelduck** *Tadorna variegata*

Abundant in family groups all around the country, sighted on 18 days.

51. **Blue Duck** *Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus*

North Island Blue Duck *Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus hymenolaimus*

2 adult and 2 juv, Manganui A Te Ao River, Ruatiti 10/11.

52. **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos ssp*
Abundant, seen on 17 days.

53. **Pacific Black Duck** *Anas superciliosa*
Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa superciliosa*
Only recorded on 3 occasions but probably heavily overlooked.

54. **Australian Shoveler** *Anas rhynchotis*
New Zealand Shoveler *Anas rhynchotis variegata*
1 Bay of Island 5/11
1 female Dunedin – Taiora head 25/11

55. **Brown Teal** *Anas chlorotis*
1+1 two small ponds on Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11

56. **New Zealand Scaup** *Aythya novaeseelandiae*
5 Lake Rotoaira, Rotorua 7/11
5 Lake Rotoaira, Rotorua 8/11
10+2 Queenstown 18/11
3 Queenstown 19/11

57. **Swamp Harrier** *Circus approximans (gouldi)*
Very common, seen every day that wasn't spent on the sea.
Most notable were 2 migrating from north to south over the Cook Strait on 13/11.

58. **New Zealand Falcon** *Falco novaeseelandiae*
1 flying en route to Waitomo 9/11
1 flying in Waitomo village 9/11
One unsure sighting 20/11 en route Te Anau – Milford Sound.

60. **Common Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*
Seen on five days on the north island.

61. **Wild Turkey** *Meleagris gallopavo ssp*
Seen on three days on the north island.

62. **California Quail** *Callipepla californica ssp*
One pair on parking lot at Trounson Kauri forest 6/11.
One male Bay of Islands 5/11.

65. **Brown Quail** *Coturnix ypsilophora*
8 Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11
4 Tiritiri Matangi Island 4/11

66. **Weka** *Gallirallus australis*
Western Weka *Gallirallus australis australis*
1 dead and one eating on the corpse, en route Punakaiki 16/11
5 around ghost town 16/11

Stewart Island Weka *Gallirallus australis scotti*
1+8 adults and 2 chicks, Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11

67. **Buff-banded Rail** *Gallirallus philippensis*
Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis assimilis*
1. Miranda 6/11

68. **Spotless Crake** *Porzana tabuensis tabuensis*
1 Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11

69. **Takahe** *Porphyrio mantelli*
South Island Takahe *Porphyrio mantelli hochstetteri*
30+ Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11
20+ Tiritiri Matangi Island 4/11
Most of them unringed.
70. **Purple Swamphen** *Porphyrio porphyrio melanotus*
Seen with up to 30 one day. Widespread in farmed landscaped on north island and on northern south island.
71. **Common Coot** *Fulica atra*
Australian Coot *Fulica atra australis*
2 Queenstown 18/11
1 Queenstown 19/11
72. **South Island Oystercatcher** *Haematopus finschi*
Probably overlooked to begin with for the variable oystercatcher. More common on southern island.
73. **Variable Oystercatcher** *Haematopus unicolor*
Seen on 11 days with the top on 25/11 with 70 sightings.
74. **Masked Lapwing** *Vanellus miles novaehollandiae*
Seen on 12 days with the top on 25/11 with 25 sightings.
75. **White-headed Stilt** *Himantopus leucocephalus*
Seen on 7 days with the top on 6/11 in Miranda with 20 sightings.
76. **Double-banded Plover** *Charadrius bicinctus bicinctus*
2 Kaikoura 15/11
77. **New Zealand Dotterel** *Charadrius obscurus*
North Island Dotterel *Charadrius obscurus aguilonius*
1 TiriTiri Matangi 3/11
20 Miranda 6/11
78. **Black-fronted Dotterel** *Eelseyornis melanops*
2 TiriTiri Matangi 4/11
79. **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*
1000 Miranda 6/11
80. **Wrybill** *Anarhynchus frontalis*
1 Miranda 6/11
81. **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres ssp*
9 Kaikoura 14/11
4 Kaikoura 15/11
82. **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica ssp*
500 Miranda 6/11
83. **Arctic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus*
1 Albatross encounter, Kaikoura 14/11.
87. **Brown Skua** *Catharacta antarctica lonnbergi*
1 Hauraki pelagic 4/11.
5 Stewart Island pelagic 23/11.
88. **Kelp Gull** *Larus dominicanus dominicanus*
Observed on 15 days.

89. **Red-billed Gull** *Larus scopulinus*
Observed on 13 days.

90. **Black-billed Gull** *Larus bulleri*
Observed on 8 days.

91. **Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*
3 TiriTiri Matangi 3/11
1 Bay of Islands 5/11.

92. **White-fronted Tern** *Sterna striata (striata)*
Locally very common, observed on 8 days.

93. **Black-fronted Tern** *Sterna albostratus*
Locally in the inland of the southern island, highest sum 15 being en route to Milford 19/11.

94. **New Zealand Pigeon** *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae*
Observed on 9 days, highest sum 10 along west coast and Haast area.

95. **Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia ssp*
Abundant in and around cities, seen on 15 days.

96. **Kea** *Nestor notabilis*
1 West Homer Tunnel, Fiordland National Park 20/11
7 East Homer Tunnel, Fiordland National Park 21/11

97. **New Zealand Kaka** *Nestor meridionalis*
South Island Kaka *Nestor meridionalis meridionalis*
4 Stewart Island 22/11
10 Stewart Island 23/11
2 Stewart Island 24/11

98. **Eastern Rosella** *Platycercus eximius eximius*
Seen on 5/11 and 6/11 on northern island.

99. **Yellow-fronted Parakeet** *Cyanoramphus auriceps (auriceps)*
2 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11

100. **Red-fronted Parakeet** *Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae*
Red-fronted Parakeet *Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae novaezelandiae*
15 TiriTiri Matangi 3/11
2+2 TiriTiri Matangi 4/11
4 Trounson Kauri forest 6/11
4 Coromandel peninsula 6/11
7 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11

101. **Long-tailed Koel** *Eudynamys taitensis*
1 heard Knobs Flat, Fiordland National Park 18/11

102. **Morepork** *Ninox novaeseelandia*
Morepork *Ninox novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae*
Heard TiriTiri Matangi 3/11
Heard Trounson Kauri forest 5/11
1 seen and more heard Waitomo 9/11

103. **Sacred Kingfisher** *Todirhamphus sanctus*
New Zealand Kingfisher *Todirhamphus sanctus vagans*
Seen on 6 days, with highest number 10 on 6/11 and 12/11.

104. **Welcome Swallow** *Hirundo neoxena neoxena*
Very common, seen on 12 days.

105. **Rifleman** *Acanthisitta chloris*
North Island Rifleman *Acanthisitta chloris chloris*
1 male Mangawhero Falls, north Ohakune 10/11.

South Island Rifleman *Acanthisitta chloris granti*
3 Cascade creek track 18/11.
3 Haast pass 20/11.

106. **South Island Wren** *Xenicus gilviventris*
1 heard western ending of Homer tunnel 21/11.
1 male eastern Homer tunnel 21/11.

107. **Silvereye** *Zosterops lateralis lateralis*
3 TiriTiri Matangi 4/11.
3 Kerosene Creek, Roturoa 8/11.
3 male Mangawhero Falls, north Ohakune 10/11.
3 Stewart Island tracks 22/11.
3 Dunedin area 25/11.

108. **Grey Warbler** *Gerygone igata*
Common in woodland areas, recorded on 9 days.

109. **Eurasian Blackbird** *Turdus merula ssp*
Extremely common, recorded in large numbers every day.

110. **Song Trush** *Turdus philomelos ssp*
Extremely common, recorded in large numbers every day.

111. **Dunnock** *Prunella modularis occidentalis*
Probably overlooked, only seen on 3 days.

112. **Skylark** *Alauda arvensis ssp*
Common in open areas, seen on 9 days.

113. **Australasian Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
South Island Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae (novaeseelandiae)*
2 Knobs flat, Fiodland National Park 21/11.

114. **Fernbird** *Megalurus punctatus*
South Island Fernbird *Megalurus punctatus punctatus*
15 Otatara, Invercargill 24/11.
1-2 heard Nugget Point 24/11.

115. **Brown Creeper** *Mohoua novaeseelandiae*
25 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11.

116. **Whitehead** *Mohoua albicilla*
25 TiriTiri Matangi 4/11.
10 TiriTiri Matangi 5/11.
1 Franz Josef glacier 17/11.
5 Haast pass 18/11.

117. **Yellowhead** *Mohoua ochrocephala*
1 Haast – Haast pass 18/11
Heard on Ulva island, Stwert Island 23/11.

118. **Grey Fantail** *Rhipidura fuliginosa*
North Island Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa placabilis*
3 TiriTiri Matangi 3/11.
5 Bay of Islands 5/11.
3 Waitomo 9/11.
1 Tongariro crossing 11/11.

South Island Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa fuliginosa*
2 Motuara Island, Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
2 Dunedin area 25/11.

119. **Tomtit** *Petroica macrocephala*
Pied Tit *Petroica macrocephala toitoi*
5 Kerosene Creek, Roturoa 8/11.

Yellow-breasted Tit *Petroica macrocephala macrocephala*
1 male Waiuta 16/11.
4 Haast pass 18/11.
4 Stewart Island 22/11.
4 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 22/11.

120. **New Zealand Robin** *Petroica australis*
North Island Robin *Petroica australis longipes*
1+2 TiriTiri Island 3/11.
2 TiriTiri Island 4/11.

South Island Robin *Petroica australis australis*
2 Motuara Island, Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
3 Haast pass 18/11.

Stewart Island Robin *Petroica australis rakiura*
2 Stewart Island 22/11.
3 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11.

121. **Kokako** *Callaeas cinerea*
North Island Kokako *Callaeas cinerea wilsoni*
1 heard TiriTiri Matangi 4/11.

122. **Tui** *Prothemadera novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae*
Common, seen on 12 days.

123. **Stitchbird** *Notiomystis cincta hautura*
15 Tiritiri Matangi Island 3/11.

124. **New Zealand Bellbird** *Anthornis melanura*
North Island Bellbird *Anthornis melanura dumerilii*
Common on TiriTiri 4/11.

South Island Bellbird *Anthornis melanura melanura*
Locally common on Motuara Island, Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
Also seen 5 more days.

125. **Saddleback** *Philesturnus carunculatus*
North Island Saddleback *Philesturnus carunculatus carunculatus*
Very common on Tiritiri Matangi 3-4/11.

South Island Saddleback *Philesturnus carunculatus rufusater*
3 Motuara Island, Marlborough Sounds 13/11.
5 Ulva Island, Stewart Island 23/11.

126. **House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus ssp*

Extremely common, recorded in large numbers every day.

127. **Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs ssp*

Seen on every day except on TiriTiri, during Tongariro crossing and last days on southern northern island.

128. **Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea cabaret*

Only seen on Stewart Island, 5 on 22/11 and 10 on 23/11.

129. **European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis ssp*

Common, seen on 7 days.

130. **European Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris ssp*

Recorded on 2 days.

131. **Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella ssp*

Common, seen on 10 days.

132. **European Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris ssp*

Extremely common, recorded in large numbers every day.

133. **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis tristis*

Very common on northern island, is not found on southern island.

134. **Australian Magpie** *Gymnorhina tibicen*

Widespread through out the islands, recorded on 12 days with the top on 12/11 with minimum of 100 individuals.

135. **Rook** *Corvus frugilegus ssp*

1 to Waitomo 9/11.

1 Greymouth 16/11.