



Bellbird

BIRDING, WILDLIFE & PHOTO TOURS

Unique and unforgettable nature experiences!

Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd

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New Zealand 14-day birding tour

3 –17 March 2025

Join us on our special birding tour across beautiful New Zealand. Leaving from Auckland and ending in Christchurch, this 14-day tour covers both the North and South Islands and takes in all the best birding spots including such places as Tiritiri Matangi, Miranda, the Central Plateau and Pureora Forest, Manawatu Estuary, Kaikoura, the South Island mountains, Stewart and Ulva Islands, Twizel and Central Otago.

New Zealand has many unique bird species and we'll be looking for representatives of the endemic families – kiwis, parrots, wrens, wattlebirds, creepers, and the stitchbird; in addition, expect species such as Wrybill, New Zealand pigeon, Keas, Kakas, Shags, Wekas and Tuks, Penguins, and even Bellbirds and a variety of seabirds - including Albatrosses - during a special pelagic. Expect to see over 120 species: this trip is surely a treat that shouldn't be missed!

Tour starts: Auckland, NZ

Finishes: Invercargill, NZ

Scheduled departure & return dates:

• 3 – 17 March 2025

Price: AU\$8,999 per person (6 pax) / AU\$ 7,999 per person (8 pax).

Leader: Sav Saville or David Tomas, our expert local NZ guide

Trip reports and photos of previous tours:

<http://www.bellbirdtours.com/reports>

Questions? Contact BELLBIRD BIRDING TOURS :

- Freecall 1800-BIRDING
- email birds@bellbirdtours.com

READ ON FOR:

- Further tour details
- Daily itinerary
- Booking information



Tour details

Tour starts: Auckland, NZ **& Finishes:** Christchurch, NZ

Scheduled departure and return dates:

Tour commences with dinner on 3 March 2025. Please arrive in Auckland on or before 3 March. Tour finishes late morning in Invercargill Monday 17 March 2025. Take a domestic flight (not included) from Invercargill to Christchurch or Auckland and home from there. Itinerary contains further details.

Leader: Sav Saville, our expert NZ bird guide.

Difficulty: ~~Low~~/Medium/~~High~~/Excellent level of fitness required. The tour has a relaxed pace and walks are on varying surfaces, from paved roads to sandy or rocky walking trails with some short climbs. We generally walk slowly, with lots of stops. You can opt out of any challenging walks.

What to bring: Please travel light. Binoculars, camera, mobile phone, chargers, if you're an international guest, insect repellent, sunscreen, personal medications, sun hat, water bottle, hand sanitizer. Sturdy footwear recommended. Scopes, super-telephoto lenses with tripods, and heavy suitcases discouraged.

Clothing: NZ spans several climate "zones", with quickly changing weather, so pack lightweight long pants, t-shirt and long-sleeved shirt, over the top of which you can wear layers that can be taken off as necessary. Ensure to include a warm jumper, pants and a rain-proof jacket in case of rain. Neat casual attire for dinners. Be prepared for cool evenings and mornings with sunny days.

Group size: Minimum 6, maximum 8 participants.

Cost: AU\$8,999 per person (6 pax) / AU\$ 7,999 per person (8 pax) including accommodation and all meals, based on double or twin-share occupancy. Single occupancy surcharge of \$1200. Not included: drinks, tips, personal expenses. No earlybird or return-client discounts. You may use Bellbird credit vouchers as payment towards this tour.

Bookings: Online at <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings> - see the last page of this brochure.

ITINERARY

Day 0: Mon 3 Mar '25. Make your own way to Auckland, NZ (own arrangements) and take a taxi from the airport (own arrangements) to our hotel near the airport (included) for dinner and introductions. Overnight **Auckland** (private en-suite room; meals included: D).

Day 1: Tue 4 Mar '25. In the morning we'll visit a couple of wader sites near Auckland with chances of New Zealand Pipit, Paradise Shelduck, Black-billed Gull, New Zealand Plover and our 1st chance of Wrybill, before heading north. Along the way we'll take a look at the Australian Gannet colony at Muriwai, and a bit further along, at Mangawhai heads, we'll look for Fernbird, Tui, New Zealand Dotterel and Fairy Tern Variable and South Island Oystercatcher and other waders. We'll end today in the town of KeriKeri located in the scenic Bay of Islands, a subtropical micro-region encompassing more than 140 subtropical islands, known for its stunning beauty and history. After dinner we'll undertake a night outing to look for North Island Brown Kiwi and Morepork. Overnight **KeriKeri** (private en-suite room; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 2: Wed 5 Mar '25. A leisurely start after a previous late night-spotting, we take a pelagic trip like you've never experienced before. Unlike Australian pelagics, we start mid-morning, and return mid-afternoon, as this trip only takes an hour to the shelf, with birds passing by the boat right from the start. NZ and White-faced Storm-petrel, Black, Cook's, Pycroft's Petrel, Common Diving Petrel, Fairy Prion, Fluttering, Buller's, Flesh-footed Shearwater, Grey Ternlet and more. Thousands of seabirds – New Zealand Storm-petrel has never been missed in 20 years. It's not unusual to have 50+ storm-petrels at any time, hundreds if not thousands of Cook's Petrel, large rafts of Buller's Shearwater, and also a reasonable chance of Bryde's Whale. Overnight **Whangarei** (private en-suite room; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 3: Thu 6 Mar '25. A day trip to TiriTiri Matangi Island is sure to be a highlight. Tiritiri Island, now a wildlife sanctuary noted for its birdlife, including Takahē, North Island Kōkako and Kiwi, is one of New Zealand's most important and exciting conservation projects. We'll look for Little Blue Penguin, the rare Kōkako, the large swamphen-like Takahē, the near-extinct Stitchbird, New Zealand Bellbird, Whitehead, Red-crowned Parakeet, Fernbird, Whitehead, Brown Teal and with much luck, Rifleman. At the end of the afternoon we return, with lots of great birds 'ticked off'! We'll drive to Miranda for the night. Overnight **Miranda** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 4: Fri 7 Mar '5 Miranda is renowned for its mudflats with thousands of migratory waders and local residents, especially the unique Wrybill. We should see a number of these unusual birds, and there is always the chance of rarities such as Hudsonian Godwit which has been around the last few years. We'll spend



Bellbird, Australasian Gannet, Kea,
 NZ Pigeon, Tomtit © P Waanders &
 H Kieskamp

the morning here and then drive to Taupo for a NZ Grebe, NZ Scaup and a chance of NZ Falcon. Overnight **Taupo** (private en-suite room; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 5: Sat 8 Mar '25. An early departure to visit the ancient Pureora Forest, a hidden wonderland of ancient, tall trees, clear rivers and rare birds. We will look for Kaka, Yellow-crowned Parakeet, Tomtit, New Zealand Bellbird, Whitehead, New Zealand Fantail, Long-tailed Cuckoo, and with luck, Rifleman and New-Zealand Falcon. Our final destination for today is Turangi, where we'll have a look for Blue Duck and New Zealand Falcon. Overnight **Turangi** (private en-suite room; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 6: Sun 9 Mar '25. The morning is spent picking up anything we may have missed before heading south, ending up in Wellington to get an afternoon ferry to Picton on the South Island. From the ferry there are chances of sea-birds such as albatrosses, shearwaters, Fairy Prion, Common Diving Petrel, White-fronted Tern, Red-billed Gull, Spotted Shag and more. Overnight **Picton** (private en-suite room; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 7: Mon 10 Mar '25. This morning we'll take a boat trip on the Marlborough Sounds, an awe inspiring collection of ancient sunken river valleys filled with the waters of the Pacific Ocean. We head to Blumine Island to see King Shag, Orange-fronted Parakeet, and with much luck, South Island Saddle-back, South Island Robin, and Hector's Dolphin. This trip is on calm, inshore waters – there is even a "no sea-sickness guarantee"! After lunch in Picton we drive to Kaikoura. Overnight **Kaikoura** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 8: Tue 11 Mar '25. This morning we'll do the famous Kaikoura pelagic, taking us out to the pelagic shelf which is only a 15 minute boat-ride away! During this half day pelagic we'll observe a large variety of pelagic birds including Northern & Southern Royal Albatross, Wandering, Black-browed & Salvin's Albatross, Northern & Southern Giant Petrel, Westland, White-chinned & Cape Petrel, Hutton's & Buller's Shearwaters, White-fronted Tern, Red-billed Gull and more. The birds are up close and personal to the boat, providing an intimate and special experience with great photographic opportunities, that brings you as close to the wildlife as possible. NZ Wandering, Southern Royal, White-capped and Salvin's Albatross are expected. After returning to land we have lunch and the afternoon can be spent relaxing and doing your laundry or swimming with Dusky Dolphins or doing a short whale-watching trip for Sperm Whales. These afternoon activities are not included in the cost. We find that many people like to take a breather at the effective mid-point of the tour. Overnight **Kaikoura** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).



South Island Robin, Variable Oystercatcher, Royal Albatross, female Stitchbird, breathtaking mountain views © P Waanders & H Kieskamp

Day 9: Wed 12 Mar '25. After yesterday's exhilarating experiences we drive to Arthurs Pass in the NZ Alps: its high mountains of large scree slopes, steep gorges and wide braided rivers straddle the main divide, and are the 'back bone' of the South Island. We will look for Kea, Brown Creeper, Tomti, South Island Robin, Rifleman and with luck, the elusive Yellowhead. Tonight, we'll have a listen for Great Spotted Kiwi although seeing them would be a very rare occasion. Overnight **Arthur's Pass** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 10: Thu 13 Mar '25. Morning birding in the woods around Arthur's Pass before we head downhill to the braided riverbeds at Twizel where one of the rarest birds of the world can be found: Black Stilt. While New Zealand's highest mountain, Mount Cook, towers above the landscape, we search for this bird that was brought back from the brink of extinction through a captive breeding program. Black fronted Tern and NZ Falcon are also possibilities to-day. Overnight **Twizel** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 11: Fri 14 Mar '25. Today we'll head down to the east coast, leaving the New Zealand Alps in the rear-view mirror, where two of the highlights of the trip await us: the cute Yellow-eyed Penguin and the rare Otago Shag. Endemic to New Zealand, Yellow-eyed Penguin numbers have dropped by 75% since the mid-1990s on the South Island. We will visit a small colony of these magnificent creatures, while we'll also stop at a few places on the rocky coastline to have a look for Otago Shag and South Island Pied Oystercatcher. Overnight **Oamaru** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 12: Sat 15 Mar '25. We start with a visit to the Northern Royal Albatross colony at Dunedin and nearby, we look for the rare Foveaux Shag. We then travel through the beautiful Catlins, a world of leafy hill country, where land rises sharply from the coast to the inland ranges, and where rivers and waterfalls abound, picking up any forest birds we still need, as we head to the Bluff on the south coast at Invercargill to take the ferry to Stewart Island. This unique island is hilly and densely forested. Flightless birds thrive because there are few introduced predators. Over 80 % of the island is set aside as National Park. Tonight, we'll look for Southern Brown Kiwi. Overnight **Stewart Island** (private en-suite rooms; meals included: B, L, D).

Day 13: Sun 16 Mar '25. Today will no doubt be the highlight of the trip. We'll take a short boatripe to nearby Ulva Island a beautiful predator-free island sanctuary. In this unspoiled temperate rainforest rare birds and plants thrive in a safe environment mostly unchanged by human activity, with healthy populations of kiwi, saddleback and yellowhead. Here we look for Weka, Kaka, Red- and Yellow-crowned Parakeet, Yellowhead, SI Saddleback, Brown Creeper and with much luck, Fiordland Penguin. Overnight **Stewart Island** (private en-suite rooms; meals included B, L, D).



Weka, Tui, Kea, Yellow-eyed Penguin, Canada Geese © P Waanders & H Kieskamp

Day 14: Mon 17 Mar '25. On this final day we do some morning birding on Stewart Island before we take the ferry back to the Bluff and then drive on to Invercargill. From here you can take a flight (not included) back to Christchurch and then home. Meals included: B. TOUR ENDS

Pre- and post-tour options:

If you wish to **arrive early** in Auckland, for one or more days before the tour and want to stay in the same hotel that we use there, please tick the relevant box on the booking form. We can book this for you and add the cost to your tour price – this way you can stay in the same room and don't have to change rooms.

Price inclusions and exclusions:

Included: All meals commencing with Dinner on Day 0 and finishing with Breakfast on Day 14, morning tea/coffee, some snacks, some fruit, some drinks, unlimited drinking water refills. Accommodation in private en-suite rooms. Transport using comfortable and reliable vehicle, expert local guiding, 2 pelagics, ferry trips, NP entry fees, taxes.

Excluded: Travel to & from departure and finish points, pre- & post trip accommodation, optional excursions (eg in Kaikoura), any meals before dinner on Day 0, any meals after breakfast on Day 14, drinks except where provided, snacks, personal expenses, tips, insurance.

Bookings: Please book online: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings> - see last page of this brochure.

Reports of previous tours: Bellbird tours can be found on: <http://www.bellbirdtours.com/reports/>

Disclaimers: (1) itinerary may be modified slightly due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors; (2) until we've received your final payment, tour price may be subject to adjustment in the event of significant cost increases in ground arrangements. See our [terms and conditions](#).



New Zealand 14-day birding tour 2025

Possible species list

Birds:

Okarito Brown Kiwi
 Northern Brown Kiwi
 Great Spotted Kiwi
 Little Spotted Kiwi
 Wild Turkey
 Indian Peafowl
 Common Pheasant
 Brown Quail
 California Quail
 Black Swan
 Greylag (Feral) Goose
 Canada Goose
 Paradise Shelduck
 Blue Duck
 Grey Teal
 Brown Teal
 Mallard
 Pacific Black Duck
 Australasian Shoveler
 New Zealand Scaup
 Great Crested Grebe
 New Zealand Grebe
 Australasian Grebe
 Fiordland Crested Penguin
 Yellow-eyed Penguin
 Little Penguin
 Southern Royal Albatross
 Northern Royal Albatross
 Wandering Albatross
 Campbell Albatross
 Black-browed Albatross
 White-capped Albatross
 Salvin's Albatross
 Buller's Albatross
 Southern Giant-petrel
 Northern Giant-petrel
 Cape Petrel
 Grey-faced Petrel (P)
 Cook's Petrel (P)
 Pycroft's Petrel (P)
 Fairy Prion
 White-chinned Petrel
 Westland Petrel
 Black Petrel (P)
 Buller's Shearwater
 Flesh-footed Shearwater (P)
 Sooty Shearwater
 Short-tailed Shearwater
 Fluttering Shearwater
 Hutton's Shearwater
 Little Shearwater (P)
 White-faced Storm-petrel
 New Zealand Storm-petrel (P)
 Common Diving-petrel

Australasian Gannet
 Little Pied Cormorant
 Great Cormorant
 Pied Cormorant
 Little Black Cormorant
 New Zealand King Shag
 Otago Shag
 Foveaux Shag
 Spotted Shag
 Great Egret
 White-faced Heron
 Eastern Reef Egret
 Royal Spoonbill
 Swamp Harrier
 New Zealand Falcon
 Buff-banded Rail
 Weka
 Spotless Crake
 Purple Swamphen
 South Island Takahe
 Eurasian Coot
 Red Knot
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
 Pectoral Sandpiper
 Red-necked Stint
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Ruddy Turnstone
 Variable Oystercatcher
 South Island Pied Oystercatcher
 Pied Stilt
 Black Stilt
 Pacific Golden Plover
 New Zealand Dotterel
 Double-banded Plover
 Wrybill
 Black-fronted Dotterel
 Masked Lapwing
 Southern (Brown) Skua
 Parasitic Jaeger
 Kelp Gull
 Red-billed Gull
 Black-billed Gull
 Little Tern
 Fairy Tern
 Caspian Tern
 Black-fronted Tern
 White-fronted Tern
 Rock (Feral) Pigeon
 Barbary (African Collared) Dove
 Spotted Turtle-dove
 New Zealand Pigeon
 New Zealand Kaka
 Kea
 Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Eastern Rosella
 Red-crowned Parakeet
 Yellow-crowned Parakeet
 Orange-fronted Parakeet
 Shining Bronze-cuckoo
 Long-tailed Cuckoo
 New-Zealand Morepork
 Little Owl
 Laughing Kookaburra
 Sacred Kingfisher
 Rifleman
 South Island Rock Wren
 North Island Kokako
 North Island Saddleback
 South Island Saddleback
 Stitchbird
 Grey Gerygone
 New Zealand Bellbird
 Tui
 Whitehead
 Yellowhead
 Brown Creeper
 Australian Magpie
 New Zealand Fantail
 New Zealand Tomtit
 North Island Robin
 South Island Robin
 Eurasian Skylark
 Fernbird
 Silvereye
 Welcome Swallow
 Eurasian Blackbird
 Song Thrush
 Common Starling
 Common Myna
 House Sparrow
 New Zealand Pipit
 Dunnock
 Common Chaffinch
 European Goldfinch
 European Greenfinch
 Common Redpoll
 Yellowhammer
 Cirl Bunting

Mammals:

New Zealand (Hooker's) Sealion
 New Zealand Fur Seal
 European Rabbit
 European Hare
 Bottlenose Dolphin
 Short-beaked Common Dolphin
 Hector's Dolphin
 Dusky Dolphin

Steps to book this tour:

Step 1: Essential reading

- Download, save and read the itinerary (this document)
- Read our [terms and conditions](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions) and the [release of liability waiver](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions) (both can be found on <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/terms-and-conditions>).
- Read our [covid-19 information](https://www.bellbirdtours.com/coronavirus-latest-information/) page (<https://www.bellbirdtours.com/coronavirus-latest-information/>)

Step 2: Online booking

Head over to our secure online booking page: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/bookings>.

(Should you prefer a paper booking form, this can be downloaded from there).

Step 3: Pay the deposit

To secure your seat, a deposit of 20% of the tour price is required at the time of booking. Full payment is due 60 days prior to the departure date. Until full payment has been received, Bellbird Tours reserves the right to change the tour price (eg due to changing fuel prices). Payment options:

☐ *Domestic electronic funds transfer:* please send funds to the following bank account:

- bank: Australia & New Zealand Bank (ANZ), 112 Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000
- account name: Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd
- Branch No. (BSB) 015-140 Account No. 206136528
 - Please use your *surname* as the booking reference.

☐ *Visa, Mastercard & Google Pay:* through Pin Payments (an easy, secure online payment system). They charge us a fee of ~3%, which we pass on to you. Please contact us to use this option, and we'll email you a secure payment link.

☐ *International electronic funds transfer:* please send funds in Australian Dollars (+ bank charges or AU\$20 bank transaction fee, see notes below) to the following bank account:

- international swift code: anzbau3m (no IBAN codes are used in Australia)
- bank: Australia & New Zealand Bank (ANZ), 112 Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000
- account name: Bellbird Tours Pty Ltd
- Branch No. (BSB) 015-140 Account No. 206136528
 - If possible, please use your *surname* as the booking reference.
 - If you are asked to provide our physical address, this is: 101 Chilton Road, Berri, SA 5343, Australia.
 - Please specify AU\$ as the recipient's currency, and the correct amount. Select the option for you to incur any charges at *both* ends; if no such option exists, please add AU\$20 to cover the bank fee at the recipient's end.

Any discrepancy between the amount payable and amount received will be added to the final balance, or payable in cash at the start of the tour. Prices and fees are not negotiable.

Step 4: You're done!

Sit back and wait for your booking confirmation to arrive (24-48 hrs). Meanwhile, should you have any questions, please contact us via: <https://www.bellbirdtours.com/about-us/>.