Anyone interested in seabirds and penguins must do this tour once in their lifetime! This is definitely the ultimate Southern Ocean birding cruise and provides what must surely be one of the most outstanding seabird experiences possible anywhere on our planet. On the 2009 tour we recorded 122 bird species, of which 40 were tubenoses! We visited a succession of famous islands, whose names are but a distant dream for most: the Snares; the Auckland Islands; Macquarie Island; Campbell Island; the Antipodes Islands; the Bounty Islands and the Chatham Islands. Billed by Heritage Expeditions as ‘Birding Down under’, our 18-day voyage aboard the Russian oceanographic research vessel Professor Khromov (renamed Spirit of Enderby by our New Zealand tour operator) took us to a succession of tiny specks of land in the vast Southern Ocean and treated us to an extraordinary array of penguins, albatrosses, petrels, storm-petrels and shags, as well as some of the world’s rarest land birds. Throughout our voyage, there was a wonderful feeling of wilderness, so rare these days on our overcrowded planet. Most of the islands that we visited were uninhabited and we hardly saw another ship in all the time we were at sea. Our identification skills were constantly challenged by no less than 14 forms of albatrosses, 22 species of shearwaters, petrels and prions, and four species of storm-petrels. On land, we were treated to magical encounters with a variety of breeding penguins and albatrosses plus a selection of the rarest land birds in the World. The almost endless highlights of the tour included a superb trio of shorebirds: the rodent-like Subantarctic Snipe on Enderby Island; the exceedingly rare Chatham Island Oystercatchers and the Shore Plovers in the Chatham Islands; a magical time spent with the Royal Penguins and King Penguins on Macquarie Island; a rare Magenta Petrel on a sunny morning off the Chatham Islands; Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses in their beautiful display flight over a cliff face on Enderby Island; face-to-face contact with Southern Royal Albatrosses on the nest both at Enderby Island and on Campbell Island; encounters with flightless Auckland Island and Campbell Island Teals, which are surely the rarest ducks on our planet; large numbers of delightful Snares Crested and Erect-crested Penguins at their breeding colonies; a total of six species of restricted range shags; huge numbers of Salvin’s and Chatham Albatrosses squabbling for food off the stern of the ship; great views of the single island...
endemic Antipodean Island Parakeet and perhaps a World record total of 32 tubenoses in a single day! Mammalian highlights included some very fine New Zealand Sea-Lions in the Auckland Islands and on Campbell Island, two sightings of Subantarctic Sea-Lion and a selection of cetaceans including Great Sperm Whales, several schools of Long-finned Pilot Whales and a small pod of Killer Whales. The Southern Ocean lived up to its awesome reputation for violent storms and gave us a very real taste of the ‘roaring forties’ and ‘furious fifties’ during our first two weeks at sea. The weather was rather unseasonal (as we can expect anywhere in the world nowadays). It was the coldest spring for a long time on mainland New Zealand and we certainly felt this on our cruise too. We also encountered several icebergs, which are not normally seen on this voyage at all.

The table below shows the number of tubenose species seen on each of the 18-day cruise (only the full days at sea are included in the table):

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The tour started with a long journey to Invercargill, at the extreme south end of New Zealand’s South Island. Some of us had arrived in Invercargill a day early and were therefore able to enjoy some leisurely birding in the Invercargill area. We had a fine walk in the Queens Park, where we had lots of introduced birds like Lesser Redpoll, Song Thrush, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Chaffinch. We also got to see some native New Zealand birds including up to 12 New Zealand Pigeons, several very tame Bellbirds, noisy Tuis, a few Grey Warblers and a New Zealand Fantail. After lunch we decided to check out Sandy Point on the outskirts of town, where we found a nice assortment of waterbirds including Little Pied Cormorant, White-faced Heron, Royal Spoonbill, Paradise Shelduck, Grey Teal, South Island Oystercatcher, Masked Lapwing, Red-billed and Black-billed Gulls, Caspian Tern and an amazing total of 12 New Zealand Creepers, a write-in Shining Bronze-cuckoo and several South Island Tomtits. Back at our hotel that evening, we met up with the rest of the 48 passengers on our Subantarctic cruise over a hearty New Zealand meal.

Before leaving Invercargill the next morning, we were taken to Southland Museum, where there was an excellent exhibit on the Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand. By lunch we were back to the hotel and after a nice fish pie we made our way to Bluff Harbour to clear customs and with mounting excitement boarded the Professor Khromov. Just after arrival we got to know from our expedition leader Rodney Russ that we were not sailing out as planned as the sea was too rough. He told us he has been on about 100 trips to the Subantarctic Islands but never had to postpone the set departure time ever owing to weather conditions. So I guess we can say the Southern Ocean was pretty rough out there. We had a few interesting birds from the deck while waiting for departure and for the bar to open. Birds in the harbour including a number of Stewart Island Shags of both colour morphs, several attractive Spotted Shags and about 20 immaculate White-fronted Terns. We also had our obligate first briefing in the lecture room and a lifeboat drill. Most people got settled in the cabins and were wondering around to get used to the ‘birding places’ on the boat. Finally we untied from the jetty and headed out of the harbour just about one hour before dusk into the very rough sea. Eager to do some birding the Birdquesters were up on the deck fighting with the elements and we had a few Broad-billed Prions, Cape Petrels and an Australian Gannet. Shortly after departure we had an accident as one of us fell over on the bridge so Rodney decided to return to the harbour. It was well into darkness when we sailed out again into the choppy sea and then headed south across the Foveaux Strait that separates South Island from Stewart Island and onwards to the Snares, our first destination.
As we had lost some considerable time with the late departure we were still a fair distance from the Snares next morning. The sea was very rough and hardly anybody was on the deck for sea watching, in fact most people stayed in bed! Birding was great with a good selection of albatrosses like Southern Royal, Campbell, White-capped, Salvin’s and Buller’s Albatrosses. Also a few White-chinned and Mottled Petrels were seen and surprisingly up to four Antarctic Fulmars were counted towards the Snares. We had good looks at Broad-billed, Fairy and Antarctic Prions as well. Finally we got to the Snares, where we were supposed to do some zodiac cruises along the coast, weather permitting. Immediately after lunch Rodney decided to give it a go and we boarded the ship’s zodiaks for a close-up look at these islands, renowned for their huge breeding colonies of seabirds, notably Sooty Shearwaters. The Snares are a strict nature reserve and ordinary mortals are not allowed to land, but in the expert hands of our staff, we were able to explore the kelp-covered sheltered bays and coves of the main island from the zodiaks. We managed to spot several Tomtits of the all-black race unique to the Snares, and three Fernbirds, also of an endemic race which is sometimes split as Snares Island Fernbird. The star attractions, however, were the endemic Snares Crested Penguins, which were nesting in dense colonies on the steep hillsides. We were able to approach many of these closely as they came ashore on the rocks, or stood around wondering whether or not it was safe to get back into the water. Other common birds here included Cape Petrels of the relatively dark Subantarctic race, Subantarctic Skuas, Red-billed Gulls and Antarctic Terns. About ten New Zealand Fur Seals were hauled up on the rocks, and two impressive New Zealand (or Hooker’s) Sea-Lions emerged from one of the coves. Back around the boat we saw Gibson’s and Buller’s Albatross and a Short-tailed Shearwater. We left the Snares in the late afternoon and continued south towards the Auckland Islands. By now we were ploughing almost head-on into the teeth of a south-westerly gale. The last hour of birding produced the first Light-mantled Sooty Albatross and Black-bellied Storm Petrel, plus another three Antarctic Fulmars.

After another stormy and bumpy night we were back on the deck early morning. As we cruised towards the Auckland Islands we had a similar selection of birds as the previous day with the exception of more Mottled Petrels, three ‘leader-only’ Soft-plumaged Petrels and a few Little Shearwaters. Also up to four Antarctic Fulmars and good numbers of both Black-bellied and Grey-backed Storm Petrels were seen this morning. We arrived at the Aucklands around lunchtime and dropped anchor in Tagua Bay of the Carnley Harbour. After lunch we took the zodiaks and had our first landing of the tour on the main island. The scenery was amazing and on the shore we had several New Zealand Pipits, Tomtits, Bellbirds, lots of Tuis and several Yellow-crowned Parakeets. With great consideration for our comfort, the Captain remained at anchor until we had finished dinner and also for a good part of the night.

During the early hours of the day we moved the short distance from Carnley Harbour to the shelter of Port Ross— the channel between Enderby Island and the main island in the Auckland group – just in time for breakfast. Our full day on lovely Enderby Island was a real delight, the wind had lightened a little and it was a great feeling to be on solid ground again. After landing at Sandy Bay we soon spotted a distant pair of the flightless Auckland Island Teal foraging in the kelp. We were also entertained by several attractive Yellow-eyed Penguins as they emerged from the sea and trundled up to their nests in the shrubbery. We made our way up through the Rata forest, with its ancient, moss-covered gnarled trees, onto the open grasslands in the interior of the island, where there was a loose colony of Southern Royal Albatrosses. One was actually nesting right by the path so we had to take a detour to get around it. At the end of the boardwalk, we found an almost rodent-like New Zealand Snipe creeping about in the grass, along with lots of extraordinarily tame Double-banded Plovers and New Zealand Pipits. Most of us Birdquesters opted for the longer walk all around the eastern shore of the island and we saw many more Subantarctic Snipes, several Red-crowned Parakeets, beautiful Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses on their nests on a cliff ledge and many Auckland Island Shags at their breeding cliffs. Close to Derry Castle Reef two more pairs of Auckland Island Teals gave
outstanding views to all of us. Unusual observations were a vagrant Swamp Harrier and a probable Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. In the last few hours of the walk it was raining and by the time we got back to the landing site we were wet and tired. While waiting for the zodiacs we had plenty of opportunity to admire several big New Zealand Sea-Lions from a safe distance. Late afternoon we started to cruise towards the distant Macquarie Island. We soon got close to an iceberg which had around 300 Antarctic Prions swirling around it. Just after leaving the tip of Adam Island of the Aucklands the weather changed and we had an hour of perfect late afternoon sunshine with an amazing number of seabirds! This very special afternoon gave us Gibson’s, Southern Royal, Campbell, White-capped, Light-mantled Sooty and two juvenile Grey-headed Albatrosses, more Antarctic Fulmars, several Black-bellied and Grey-backed Storm Petrels and up to 25 White-headed Petrels. An absolutely brilliant finish of this great day! Despite the difficult weather conditions in the morning, the walk on this predator free island is a real experience and everybody was smiling in the bar that evening!

After a good night’s sleep we were surprised to see a fairly calm sea. It was a pleasant change and we thought this is probably as flat as the Southern Ocean ever gets! We were all day at sea as we continued south-west towards Macquarie Island. The general bird activity was low throughout the day but there were constantly birds to look at. In the morning, still in New Zealand waters, we had a superb hour with ‘Snowy’, ‘Gibson’s and Southern Royal Albatrosses going around and around the boat. There were lots of Campbell Albatrosses but we lost all the White-capped Albatrosses by the afternoon when we entered Australian waters! Our daily counts included up to five Antarctic Fulmars, about 40 Mottled Petrels, 12 White-headed Petrels and many Wilson’s, Black-bellied and Grey-backed Storm Petrels. Despite being on deck all day only half the group got a brief view of a fly-away Blue Petrel. The much hoped for Kerguelen Petrel did not show but we had a good day sea watching and everybody was on deck!

We were up early morning on the deck in hope of some good sea watching and as soon as we climbed to the monkey deck we realized that we had arrived to the north end of Macquarie Island – the single Australian island on our itinerary – as it was already visible a few miles ahead. Before breakfast we had our first Southern Giant Petrels and both Royal and King Penguins on the sea. Pausing only briefly to take on board four local rangers, we proceeded further down the east coast of the island to Sandy Bay – the site of large colonies of King Penguins and Royal Penguins. Later in the day we did two different landings at this most memorable place and spent almost all day with the Royal and King Penguins. As we went ashore and threaded our way through the Elephant Seals there were little groups of Royal Penguins loafering about on the beach or waddling up a narrow trail to their colony on the hillside above us. Just sitting on the beach and being inspected by these fascinating little creatures was an incredible experience. We also experienced the way of life out here as a Southern Giant Petrel was disembowelling a dead Royal Penguin apart in a nearby streambed. Then we walked across to the edge of a King Penguin colony where there were hundreds of large, chocolate-coloured chicks. It was difficult to tear ourselves away from the penguins, but there were other interesting birds to be seen here, notably a few endemic Macquarie Island Shags, several pairs of Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses, a number of Southern Giant Petrels including several individuals of the white morph and lots of formidable Subantarctic Skuas. Unfortunately it was raining the entire day but even the weather could not get the big smile off our faces. The penguins were truly incredible and unforgettable!

By the next morning the weather changed again. It was a distinctly cold morning with sunshine and snow storms alternating. The nominate race of Black-browed Albatross was confirmed before breakfast with some photos where the eye was well visible. All morning King and Royal Penguins were circling around the boat, flock after flock as they headed out to sea to feed. The sea was very rough again and we had to abandon any idea of going for a cruise. This was putting our Gentoo Penguin in a grave danger! We stayed in the vicinity of Sandy Bay all day waiting for the weather to calm slightly so at least we were able to transfer the Australian wardens back to shore. While waiting we had a pod of ‘B Type’ Killer Whales (Orcas) around the boat about three times throughout the
day. Then somebody spotted a Gentoo Penguin on the water and everybody got to see it, which was a great relief. In the early afternoon we had up to seven Blue Petrels and several Soft-plumaged Petrels from the deck but the gale force wind made birding very difficult. Finally the zodiacs took the wardens back to the island in the late afternoon. We weighed anchor and, turning north-east, set off on the next leg of our journey to Campbell Island, over 36 hours away. The sea was rough but the visibility was good and the sea-watching was quite productive. During the course of the afternoon, we recorded a wide selection of tubenoses including two more Blue Petrels, a Short-tailed Shearwater plus several Mottled, White-headed and Soft-plumaged Petrels.

The next day was another full day at sea, with twenty-four species of tubenoses recorded from dawn to dusk. The first half of the day was still in Australian waters and then we moved back to New Zealand territory. We had the first Grey Petrel of the trip early in the morning but unfortunately only four of us saw it as it happened to be just before breakfast. We had many Southern Royal, very few Wandering, one Black-browed and up to ten Grey-headed Albatrosses. Also a few Little Shearwaters, Common Diving Petrels, Antarctic Fulmars and two Soft-plumaged Petrels. The weather was fine and we were all eagerly awaiting our arrival at the Campbell Islands, which was estimated to happen during the night.

By the time we awoke the next day we were very close to the Campbell Island but could hardly see it in the rain. While slowly cruising into Perseverance Harbour we saw a sizeable flock of Yellow-eyed Penguins, Andy had a Rockhopper Penguin, Antarctic Terns and up to 80 Campbell Island Shags lining up on both side of the harbour. In the very heart of Campbell Island we anchored and enjoyed another very wet landing day! After a quick briefing we were swiftly put ashore and while most of the people headed up the Beeman Col-boardwalk immediately, most of the Birdquesters stayed behind to look for the very shy and rare Campbell Island Teal. Sitting and waiting in the heavy rain is not much fun but to our surprise a teal finally made a brief appearance and most of us managed to get some reasonable views. This was a first for Birdquest and a ‘write-in’ to our checklist in the evening. Needless to say those who saw it were very pleased! Some of us walked up along the boardwalk to see the breeding Southern Royal Albatrosses and the many splendid ‘megaherbs’ that are doing well since the eradication of rats on the island. However, the weather worsened. The rain pelted down horizontally and the strong wind made our initial zodiac landing place inaccessible. After a quick change of plan we all had to walk to Garden Cove, where we could get into our zodiacs and we were back on the Spirit of Enderby soon enough. Actually the unfortunate last zodiac had a small problem but eventually we all got back safely. We left the Campbell Islands and started a rollercoaster ride towards the Antipodes. The rest of the afternoon did not yield many seabirds as sea watching was very difficult even from the bridge and we opted for a very early dinner and settled in for another bumpy night.

After a highly unpleasant (but memorable!) night in a very rough sea we eventually woke up to sunshine and a gradually calming sea. The weather was fantastic all day and we had a magical day of seawatching with 25 tubenose species tallied! Interestingly we had up to nine sightings of Grey Petrels (a scarce bird at this season) and Antarctic Fulmars were still present. ‘Great’ albatrosses were constantly in view, mainly Southern Royals and our first Antipodeans but also a few ‘Snowy’ wanderers too. The highlights included nine forms of albatrosses (including two forms of wanderers), Little Shearwaters, up to 40 Mottled Petrels and 35 White-headed Petrels, a few Soft-plumaged Petrels and three species of Storm Petrels. As we sat down for dinner after this memorable day we saw some grey clouds arriving and we all started to worry about the weather conditions in the Antipodeans next day! Nevertheless the sea was calm and we all enjoyed a good night’s sleep.

By the time it was light we were on the ‘monkeydeck’ and the Antipodes were in sight. Unfortunately the weather turned rainy and foggy again and our zodiac cruise was in jeopardy. After breakfast things got better and the decision was made by Rodney that we would go ahead with the zodiac
cruises. Our only chance was to get as close to the shore in Ringdove Bay as possible so we could launch the zodiacs in the lee of the island. Some of us were on the first cruise, which was nice and sunny, but we were lucky that a second cruise could be completed (with less sun however). The birding was great and everybody got to see the endemic Antipodean Island Parakeet alongside the endemic hochstetteri race of Red-crowned Parakeet. Magical Erect-crested Penguins were numerous and finally we managed to catch up with the filholi race of the Rockhopper Penguin too. It was a great relief to see this rapidly declining bird as we missed them in the Macquarie Island because we were not able to land and also at Campbell Island, owing to another weather-enforced early departure. Recent taxonomical studies suggest that the Rockhopper Penguin complex actually constitutes three different species, making this one a separate species: Eastern Rockhopper Penguin. We also had a Subantarctic Fur-Sea! by the rocks and most of the afternoon was spent anchored off the Antipodes. There were lots of seabirds around us and we had a relaxed spell of birding and photography. Particular highlights were the many Soft-plumaged Petrels, the Antipodean Albatrosses and once again Southern Fulmar was seen. In late afternoon we left for the Bounty Islands, which was a relatively short voyage.

By dawn the next morning we had already arrived at these isolated granitic rocks, the smallest of New Zealand’s subantarctic islands. The scene that awaited us was quite spectacular – a group of low-lying rocky islands seemingly devoid of vegetation and entirely covered in breeding sea-birds and fur seals. Unfortunately the strong wind made it impossible to do any zodiac cruises around these very exposed small islands but nevertheless we managed to get superb views of the endemic Bounty Shag, which flew around our boat sometimes just a few meters away! The entire population of only around 500-600 pairs is on these islands. We also spent a substantial time sorting out prions and finally we managed to nail several Fulmar Prions. They breed on the Bounties and it is one of the most reliable sites to see them, owing to their diurnal visits to breeding cliffs. The identification is not easy but usually the stubby bill and the very indistinct supercilium separate it from the very similar Fairy Prion. We rounded off our short visit to the Bounty Islands with a session of ‘chumming’ as we moved slowly away from the islands. The rotting squid that we tossed overboard was clearly irresistible to the Salvin’s Albatrosses, and within minutes we had hundreds of these gorgeous beasts squabbling in our wake, only a few feet away. As the Bounty Islands slipped away behind us, we settled down to a great afternoon of sea-watching towards the Chatham Islands. We spent most of the afternoon on the ‘monkeydeck’ once again as rare Pterodroma petrels have been recorded in these waters before. We were still in the very deep water of the Bounty trench. We did not see many new birds although up to 55 Subantarctic Little Shearwaters and 35 Mottled Petrels were seen and Southern Fulmar showed again. Just before dusk a ‘Cookilaria’ petrel made a brief appearance but went unidentified. It was promising however for the ‘big day’!

Just as we expected, this was the best day of seawatching of the trip. And frankly this has to be the best ever tubenose list anybody ever can get anywhere in the World! Knowing the potential birds on this day we were on the ‘monkeydeck’ from the very first light and were pouring fish-oil onto the sea in an attempt to lure in gaudily petrels. We managed to see 32 species of tubenoses during this action-packed day. This amazing number must be a World Record and included 11 forms of Albatrosses and seven species of Pterodroma petrels, including superb views of the critically endangered and very rarely seen Magenta Petrel or Chatham Islands Taiko! Fortunately all the Birdquesters were on the deck when it turned up and we all saw this ‘once in a lifetime’ bird. Some of us managed to see the other rarity, the Chatham Island Petrel as well but unfortunately it just made a brief appearance. A chumming session delivered hundreds of albatrosses and after lunch we arrived at Pyramid Rock, the southernmost of the Chatham Islands and the only breeding site for the entire world population of Chatham Albatrosses. We slowly circled the rock, and enjoyed wonderful views of thousands of these much coveted albatrosses sitting on their nests, circling over the top of the island and flying around us only a few feet away off the stern of the ship. A truly magical experience! Later we moved a short distance to South East Island, where we dropped anchor. After this fantastic sea watching we took
advantage of the good weather conditions and made a zodiac cruise around the coastline of South East Island. Here we got to see Pitt Island Shags and two of the rarest waders of the World: Shore Plover and Chatham Island Oystercatcher. Within just a few hours we saw one of the rarest seabird and shorebird species of the World. A truly magical day and one of those we will always remember!

A rather leisurely day followed as we were still anchored at South East Island in the morning. The conditions were perfect so we repeated the zodiac cruises and it was a far better photography opportunity than in the fading light the previous evening. We all saw the Chatham Islands Oystercatchers very well this time and even recorded Subantarctic Fur Seal, which is a very rare vagrant on the Chathams. Later we made our way towards the main island seeing many Chatham Islands Shags en route and some of them were in excellent breeding plumage sporting the sky-blue eye ring as they flew past our boat at very close range. The afternoon was mainly spent cruising across the Pitt Straight but we also sailed close by Mangere and Little Mangere where we heard the Story of the Chatham Black Robin once again from Rodney, who was part of the team saving and transferring the last seven birds from Mangere to Little Mangere. We also learnt that it took them 43 minutes to transfer the birds from the cliff tops of Little Mangere to the allocated new ‘home’ on Mangere. The afternoon did not produce much but thousands of Sooty Shearwaters and a few Soft-plumaged Petrels kept us busy and even a pod of Bottle-nosed Dolphins showed well at the entrance of the bay of Waitangi.

When we awoke the next morning, we were close to Waitangi, the capital of the Chatham Islands. Unfortunately once again the weather conditions were not ideal as we had big swells from the northeast so despite the superb clear sky and sunny weather the zodiac landing was doubtful until the last moment. Then as usual and very positive of Rodney the last landing operation of the tour was launched and we all safely made it to shore. We had a wonderful visit to the Awatoara Valley, where we had a nice walk and saw many colourful Chatham Island Pigeons, diminutive Chatham Islands Warblers and some Chatham Islands Red-crowned Parakeets. After a little bit of sightseeing in town we were all transferred back to the Spirit of Enderby. In fact it was Sunday so everything, even the pubs, was closed at Waitangi. In the afternoon we started our 530 nautical mile journey back towards Dunedin on the east coast of South Island. The seabird activity was not big but we still had seven forms of albatrosses, many great views of White-faced Storm Petrels and a few Broad-billed Prions and our regular encounters with Southern Fulmars continued this afternoon.

This was the first of our two full days at sea en route to New Zealand. The weather was getting better, we still had wind but it was getting weaker by the hour. The best birds were the Pterodroma petrels as we had a constant flow of them throughout the day. Early morning there were two unconfirmed Black-winged Petrels by our group but both were just not close enough to be sure. They did show black on the under wing unlike Cook’s petrel but we were all hoping for better views. In fact Adam and Ian saw one Black-winged Petrel from the bridge on that morning but none of the Birdquesters saw those. We had several Cook’s Petrels and by far the biggest numbers of both Grey-faced and Soft-plumaged Petrels with a few terrific very close views. We estimated 50 Grey-faced and 60 Soft-plumaged Petrels for the day. Unfortunately the hoped for Buller’s Shearwater and Westland Petrels did not show.

On the last full day at sea we were up on the ‘monkeydeck’ early in the morning with much anticipation. It was a glorious morning with bright blue sky, sunshine and a calm sea. Having been through on pretty rough sea it was interesting to sea that the Southern Ocean can actually be as flat as this! The day kicked off well with an amazing 22 species of tubenoses before breakfast! It was great, birds were flying everywhere and we managed to see four species of Storm petrels and five species of Pterodroma Petrels. Even a pod of Great Sperm Whales showed briefly in the distance. After breakfast we spent most of the day on the deck waiting for the Buller’s Shearwaters to start to show up as we were getting closer to mainland. But it never happened and actually the afternoon was the quietest
seawatching we had on the whole tour. I guess the windless conditions meant a lot of birds simply sat on the water. We did not give up and stayed on the deck until dinner and then we had a nice farewell dinner courtesy of Niki and Brad, our two excellent chefs and a good recap of the tour highlights from Adam and Alex.

We arrived off Taiaroa Head at the entrance to Otago Harbour in the early hours next day, and then at first light, welcomed the pilots aboard for the highly scenic cruise up the narrow harbour into Dunedin. There were still plenty of birds about, including Paradise Shelducks and a few Variable Oystercatchers, but all those wonderful albatrosses and penguins of the subantarctic islands were now just a memory far away in the Southern Ocean – something precious to take home with us at the end of a truly remarkable voyage. All in all it was an excellent trip that certainly met our expectations!
SYSTEMATIC LIST

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

DIOMEDEIDAE

Wandering Albatross (Snowy Albatross) *Diomedea [exulans] exulans*: We picked out the first full adult bird between Auckland Islands and Macquarie Island. Later several older immatures and a few adults were seen on the journey back from Macquarie Island. The total of positively identified birds was 11 individuals on the entire cruise. Just one was seen in Australian waters. Identification of the great albatrosses of the Wandering group is almost impossible on the field. The latest references (including the second edition of Hadoram Shirihai’s Antarctic wildlife book) all conclude that the only sure way of identification is on the birds sitting on the nest. Only with very close views and preferably good photos can one attempt to identify them at sea. The two commonest forms, Gibson’s and Antipodean, closely resemble early immature stages of the nominate form (Snowy Albatross), while full adult Snowy Albatrosses are difficult to separate from adult South Royal Albatrosses except at close range. This form, which breeds in very small numbers near the south end of Macquarie Island, is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ in the 2000 edition of BirdLife International’s *Threatened Birds of the World*. The total population is estimated to be 8,500 pairs or 28,000 mature individuals. As with most albatrosses, the greatest threat is from accidental catch by long line trawlers, with some populations decreasing at a frightening rate of 10% per annum.

Gibson’s Albatross *Diomedea [exulans] gibsoni*: We first encountered birds showing characters of this form at sea south of the Snares and later around the Auckland Islands. The best looking birds were just south of Adam Island and were probably beginning to move into the breeding grounds there. It was a magical sunny afternoon with seabirds everywhere! We estimated that around 16 birds were seen on the cruise. Just two were seen in Australian waters. This form is restricted as a breeding species to the Auckland Islands where it breeds mostly on Adams Island, with just a few on Disappointment and Auckland Island. The total population was estimated at about 5,800 pairs in the 1990s. The taxonomic treatment of this form and Antipodean Albatross remains in some doubt. Several authors have treated them as separate species or ‘allospecies’, but according to BirdLife International (2000), recent molecular work suggests that the two forms should be treated as a single species. Certainly we had problems with some individuals, which could have been either Gibson’s or adult male Antipodean.

Antipodean Albatross *Diomedea [exulans] antipodensis*: We first encountered the classic black-capped males and wholly dark-backed females of this form as we approached the Antipodes Islands on the rainy morning. Later we had more good views around these islands and also on our way to the Chathams. We estimated that around 22 birds were seen on the cruise. We did not record it in Australian waters. Apart from a few pairs on Campbell Island, the entire population breeds on the Antipodes Islands, where there were between 4,635 and 5,757 pairs during the 1990s. BirdLife International treats Antipodean and Gibson’s Albatrosses as conspecific under the name *D. antipodensis*, and lists the species as a whole as ‘Vulnerable’.

Southern Royal Albatross *Diomedea [epomophora] epomophora*: This was by far the commonest of the great albatrosses during our oceanic adventure, recorded on virtually every day at sea, except on our stand-by day at Macquarie Island. We estimated that around 207 birds were seen on the cruise, with up to 40 individuals in a day. We also had some birds at their breeding colonies on Enderby Island and Campbell Island, where we had an opportunity to sit and watch these magnificent birds at very close quarters. Although the
weather was not very cooperative at the latter site! We also recorded it in Australian waters. The total population of this species is estimated at 8,200-8,600 pairs, most of which breed on Campbell Island with just small numbers on Enderby, Auckland and Adams islands in the Auckland group. It is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of the high mortality associated with long line fisheries, degradation of the nesting habitat and introduced predators.

Northern Royal Albatross Diomedea [epomophora] sanfordi: We only encountered these very striking albatrosses when we were approaching the Chatham Islands. Around the Chathams they were fairly numerous. We estimated that around 73 birds were seen on the cruise. We did not record it in Australian waters. Most of the population of 6,500-7,000 pairs breeds on islands in the Chatham group, including Forty-Fours and Big and Little Sister Islands, but there is also a small colony (27 pairs in 1995) on the mainland of New Zealand at Taiaroa Heads, which we passed on our last morning. This species is listed as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International.

Black-browed Albatross (Black-browed Mollymawk) Diomedea [melanophrys] melanophrys: First encountered as we were approaching the Macquarie Island where there is a breeding colony of about 100 pairs. Later it was recorded in small numbers almost daily until we left the Bounty Islands. It was difficult to separate from Campbell Albatross at sea and we possibly overlooked it on a number of occasions. The dark eye was really easy to see on the photos but the under wing pattern of the wing was the best feature to pick them up on the sea. We estimated that around 20 birds were seen on the cruise. This species still remains locally abundant with a world population estimated at 680,000 pairs, 90% of which breed in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. Nevertheless, the species is listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International because of the high mortality caused by long line fisheries. The smaller species of albatross are often called mollymawk, a name derived from the old Dutch name ‘Malle Mok’ (stupid gull), and are often placed in the genus Thalassarche.

Campbell Albatross (Campbell Mollymawk) Diomedea [melanophrys] impavida: As far as we could judge, this was the commoner of the two ‘Black-browed Albatrosses’ at sea. The only exception was only around the Macquarie Island. We did record it in Australian waters in small numbers. The straw-coloured eye was reasonably easy to pick out in birds passing close alongside the ship, while the greater extent of the black on the under wing was a useful feature in birds weaving back and forth in the ship’s wake. We estimated that around 87 birds were seen on the cruise. The largest numbers were recorded in the region of Campbell Island where the entire population of some 19,000-26,000 pairs breeds. This species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ because of its tiny breeding range and the high mortality caused by long line fishing for tuna.

White-capped Albatross (White-capped Mollymawk) Diomedea [cauta] steadi: This was the commonest albatross on our first few days at sea, with up to 40 being recorded in a day around the Auckland Islands. We estimated that around 143 birds were seen on the cruise. However just 6 were seen in Australian waters. The great bulk of the population breeds in the Auckland Islands, where there are 70,000-80,000 pairs on Disappointment, 3,000 pairs on the main island and 100 pairs on Adams. Owing to delays caused by the weather at the start we were unable to land on the main island and hike up to the breeding colony at Southwest Cape. About 100 pairs also breed on Bollon’s Island in the Antipodes group. BirdLife International treats this form as conspecific with the very similar nominate form (Shy Albatross) which breeds on islands off Tasmania. Together the two forms are listed as ‘Near threatened’ because of the high mortality caused by long line and squid fisheries.
Salvin’s Albatross (Salvin’s Mollymawk) *Diomedea [cauta] salvini*: We saw our first eight birds on our first day at sea. We saw about 400 birds around the Bounty Islands, where they have their main breeding colony. ‘Chumming’ from the stern of the ship as we left the Bounties gave us some incredible views. We also found lots of birds as we cruised south-west from the Chatham Islands towards Dunedin. We estimated that around 727 birds were seen on the cruise. We did not record any in Australian waters. The breeding population in the Bounty Islands was estimated at 76,000 pairs in 1978 and 30,750 pairs in 1998, but different techniques were employed in the two surveys and the results may not be comparable. The species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of its tiny breeding range and possible decline in numbers since the 1970s.

Chatham Albatross (Chatham Mollymawk) *Diomedea [cauta] eremita*: Probably the most colourful and most attractive albatross of the World! The first birds were seen while ‘chumming’ towards the Chathams and later in the same day we had brilliant views of thousands of birds as we circumnavigated the breeding colony on Pyramid Rock. It was abundant around the Chatham Islands but surprisingly scarce away from these islands. We did not record it in Australian waters. This species is listed as ‘Critical’ by BirdLife International because the entire population of 5,300 pairs nests on Pyramid Rock and is thus susceptible to natural disasters such as severe storms.

Grey-headed Albatross (Grey-headed Mollymawk) *Diomedea chrysostoma*: The first two juvenile birds were seen south of Adam Island when we started to sail towards the Macquarie islands. Later we had many good views during our oceanic adventure all the way to the Antipodes Islands. We estimated that around 26 birds were seen on the cruise and about 7 in Australian waters. This species, of which about 100 pairs breed on Macquarie, is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International. The world population is estimated at around 250,000 adults and is declining rapidly owing to accidental mortality associated with commercial fishing.

Buller’s Albatross (Buller’s Mollymawk) *Diomedea[bulleri] bulleri*: A total of five birds were seen in the immediate vicinity of the Snares. These southern form birds are winter breeders there and generally very scarce in these waters at this season. The estimated population in the Snares and Solander Islands is about 11,500 pairs. We probably saw a few of the early returning birds to the breeding sites. BirdLife International treats this and the next form as a single species and lists it as ‘Vulnerable’ because of its very restricted breeding distribution.

Pacific Albatross (Pacific Mollymawk) *Diomedea [bulleri] sp.*: Fairly common in and around the Chatham Islands, where we recorded up to 100 in a day and had some exceptionally close views. We estimated that around 220 birds were seen on the cruise. We did not record it in Australian waters. These northern form birds have been proposed as a separate species, the Pacific Albatross *D. nov. sp.* but as yet to date it is still considered a race of Buller’s Albatross. BirdLife International treats the two forms as a single species and lists this as ‘Vulnerable’ because of its very restricted breeding distribution. There are about 18,000 pairs of this northern form in the Chatham Islands.

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross *Phoebetria palpebrata*: Small numbers daily from the Auckland Islands until leaving the Antipodes. A very elegant albatross and a much sought-after seabird. We had great views of birds in display flight and on the nest on Enderby Island. We estimated that around 63 birds were seen on the cruise with about 21 in Australian waters. This species is currently listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International. It took the fifth place in the ‘Bird of the trip’ competition this year!
PROCELLARIIDAE

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*: One of the most abundant seabirds on the cruise and one of those few, which was seen on every single day of the tour. We had several thousands around the Snares, at the Auckland and amongst the Chatham group. It was fairly common throughout the rest of our voyage too. Most impressive were the many thousands gathering in Carnley Harbour in the Auckland islands during a stormy afternoon.

Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris*: We only had two sightings of single birds but several others were claimed but not confirmed. The first one was seen at the Snares and the other one near Macquarie Island.

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*: Another likely split as the ‘Subantarctic’ form *elegans* does not show a pale face and recent studies of the Little and Audubon’s Shearwater complex have indicated that the northern and southern hemisphere forms of the Little Shearwater are not closely related at all! Fair numbers were seen on the tour at various locations. We estimated that around 85 birds were seen on the cruise but only 2 were in Australian waters. Our highest daily total was 55 birds from the Bounty Islands to the Chathams.

Grey Petrel *Procellaria cinerea*: Good views of 10 of these very attractive petrels on this year’s tour. We had one in Australian waters as well towards the Campbell Island. Later a total of nine was seen from Campbell Island to the Antipodes Islands. This is another winter breeder on Macquarie, Campbell and Antipodes islands, and generally very scarce in these waters at this season. It is currently listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International because of high incidental mortality associated with commercial fisheries and threats from introduced predators.

White-chinned Petrel (Shoemaker) *Procellaria aequinoctialis*: Fairly common and widespread except in the far south. We estimated that around 307 birds were seen on the cruise but only 2 in Australian waters. Our largest numbers were between the Bounty Islands and the Chatham Islands. Although the world population is still estimated at about 5,000,000 individuals, the species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of a rapid decline in numbers linked to the by-catch in commercial fisheries.

Cape Petrel (Cape Pigeon, Pintado Petrel) *Daption capensis*: One of the most abundant seabirds on the cruise and one of those few, which were seen on every single day of the tour. It is always a superb bird to watch and an inevitable sight alongside the boat. Most of those seen were of the Subantarctic form *australe* which shows reduced white in the upperparts, but we also had several observations of birds of the much paler nominate form from the south.

Southern Fulmar (Antarctic Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialisoides*: A most surprising outcome for this species as we saw them almost every day of the tour! A total of 27 birds were seen and 5 of these were in Australian waters. Obviously the very cold and late spring kept them in the Subantarctic waters and, as we later learnt, it was one of the best ever winters for this species off mainland New Zealand as well.

Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus*: Our best encounters with this species were right around and on Macquarie Island. Here we found a good number of smart white-morph birds, which reach their highest percentage in the population on Macquarie. It was amazing to see them as they were feasting on a dead Royal Penguin. The estimated breeding population is about 2,500 pairs on Macquarie Island. We also picked out a few Southern Giant Petrels at sea, even almost as far north as the Chathams. We estimated that around 63 birds were seen on the cruise. This species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International. The world population is estimated at about 62,000 individuals and is thought to be declining rapidly due to the accidental mortality associated with commercial fishing.
Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes halli*: This was another species of seabird which was seen on every day of the tour. This is the commoner of the two giant petrels, except at Macquarie where there are about 1,800 pairs of Northern. This species is listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International. Some recent genetic studies suggest that the two giant petrels should be re-lumped as the genetic divergence is not great enough to merit specific separation.

Fairy Prion *Pachyptila turtur*: Identification of prions was a great challenge on the cruise and we photographed many individuals for further study. This species was probably the commonest prion except in the southernmost areas (Macquarie Island), with up to 200 hundred being recorded in a day. The very similar Fulmar Prions could not always be ruled out.

Fulmar Prion *Pachyptila crassirostris*: Probably the most tricky of all prions to identify. Our most convincing views were right around the Bounty Islands, where we had several birds while chumming. This is a classic place to see this tricky species as they breed here in good numbers. These birds looked decidedly bluer that the Fairy Prions that we were usually seeing at sea, but that may have been partly a trick of the light.

Antarctic Prion *Pachyptila desolata*: The common prion in the south, first encountered on our way to the Auckland Islands. Later it become progressively more common towards the south. It was numerous around our first close iceberg too. The breeding population on Macquarie Island is thought to be over 100,000 pairs. Noticeably bulkier than Fairy Prion, with a heavier bill, darker breast patches and more clearly marked head pattern. We also had an individual on our way to Macquarie Island, which had a significantly thicker bill than all the other Antarctic Prions. We took some images but Salvin’s Prion is a very difficult bird to identify for sure.

Broad-billed Prion *Pachyptila vittata*: We had about four birds in the Foveaux Strait on our first afternoon at sea. Despite the late start and very rough conditions we didn’t see much after we left Bluff harbour. Later we had another 10 around the Snares, and then a few more around the Chatham Islands. A very distinctive prion with a bold head pattern, huge bill and somewhat ‘frog-like’ appearance. We estimated that around 31 birds were seen on the cruise and none in Australian waters.

Blue Petrel *Halobaena caerulea*: Like Southern Fulmar we had many more birds on this year’s tour than usual. We had many good views around Macquarie Island, especially on the stand-by day while we were waiting for the weather to improve. We encountered 15 birds on the cruise and all except one were in Australian waters. The white tip to the tail of this otherwise prion-like bird is easily seen and is diagnostic. The small breeding population on Macquarie is thought to number less than 500 pairs.

Cook’s Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*: The first two ‘Cookilaria’ petrels (the collective name for Cook’s Petrel, Pycroft’s Petrel *P. pycrofti* and several other very similar small *Pterodroma* petrels) were recorded on the way to the Chathams but were not positively identified. Later we had 14 more birds during our two days while we were heading back towards Dunedin. Most of these came close enough for us to be sure that they were Cook’s Petrels (by far the most likely species in these waters). Despite having an estimated world population of 100,000 individuals, this species is listed as ‘Endangered’ because of its small breeding range and vulnerability to introduced predators. The species is, of course, named after Captain James Cook (1718-1779), the English explorer and navigator.

Mottled Petrel *Pterodroma inexpectata*: One of the commoner and more distinctive *Pterodroma* (gadfly) petrels, seen regularly throughout the cruise, with up to 35 in a day. It seemed, however, that most birds were positively avoiding the ship, and very few came really close (it was the case with most gadfly petrels). We estimated that around 234 birds were seen on the cruise and about 44 of these were in Australian waters. This species, which
breeds in large numbers on Stewart Island and the Snares, is listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International.

Grey-faced Petrel (Great-winged Petrel) *Pterodroma macroptera*: Not encountered until we were approaching the Chatham Islands on our ‘magical’ day when we had seven species of *Pterodroma* petrels. Then it was fairly common around the Chaths and on the voyage back to Dunedin. We estimated that around 90 birds were seen on the cruise. None were seen in Australian waters. The subspecies concerned, *gouldi*, breeds only around the North Island of New Zealand and is sometimes treated as a separate species, Grey-faced Petrel. The nominate form (Great-winged Petrel) lacks the grey face and breeds in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans east to south-western Australia.

White-headed Petrel *Pterodroma lessonii*: The second most common Pterodroma petrel on the voyage. This striking gadfly petrel was first seen just after the Snares as we were heading towards the Auckland Islands. We got several close views as it came in to investigate our boat. We estimated that around 167 birds were seen on the cruise and about 28 of these were in Australian waters.

Magenta Petrel (Chatham Island Taiko) *Pterodroma magentae*: We knew exactly when we would have the best chance to see this very rare seabird. It had been seen on the last two voyages, in 2007 and 2008, so our hopes were high. Still it was a magical moment as one flew past the boat on our full day at sea heading towards the Chaths. It has never been seen so far north on this tour and it was also great weather with plenty of sunshine and every Birdquester was on the ‘monkeydeck’ for this very important moment! Well aware of our best chance for this bird we were up on deck from the very first light on that day although the Taiko was not seen until 11:00. This was apparently only the sixth or seventh time that the species has ever been seen at sea, and only the fourth time that it has been photographed. First described from a single specimen collected in the South Pacific in 1867, this species remained an enigma until 1978 when it was rediscovered breeding in a wooded valley on the main Chatham Island. Since then, it has been the subject of a major conservation effort, but the population remains tiny. The estimated number of birds is 100-150 and only about 9 breeding holes known. Not surprisingly, it is listed as critically endangered by BirdLife International. ‘The Bird of the Trip’!

Chatham Petrel *Pterodroma axillaris* (NL): A single bird was seen fairly distantly by Alan, Andy and Richard on our magical day towards the Chaths. Unfortunately nobody else picked it up and it then disappeared. This was the first time on this tour for Birdquest to see this other rare gadfly petrel.

Soft-plumaged Petrel *Pterodroma mollis*: Another attractive and rather fast flying *Pterodroma* that gave us several excellent views. We encountered our first birds right after the Snares and then it got progressively more common towards Macquarie Island and on the return journey. We estimated that around 161 birds were seen on the cruise and eight of these were in Australian waters. We had up to 50 a day on the way back to Dunedin.

**HYDROBATIDAE**

Wilson’s Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*: The least numerous of the four storm-petrels but it was still regularly seen from the Aucklands all the way back to Dunedin. We estimated that around 23 birds were seen on the cruise and about 10 of these were in Australian waters. One of the most common seabirds of the World with an estimated population of several million pairs. Nevertheless always a pleasant sight.

Grey-backed Storm-petrel *Oceanites nereis*: This tiny storm-petrel was fairly common on the voyage. It was not always easy to spot, but it was often seen flitting over bits of floating kelp. We estimated that around 82 birds were seen on the cruise and 9 of these in Australian waters. This elegant bird is fairly localised and the estimated World population is less
then 100,000 pairs. This is probably the best tour to see good numbers anywhere around the World.

White-faced Storm-petrel _Pelagodroma marina_: It was not encountered until our magical day towards the Chatham Islands. Then it was fairly numerous around the Chathams and on the way back towards the New Zealand mainland. We estimated that around 160 birds were seen on the cruise but none were in Australian waters. A very attractive storm-petrel with extraordinary yellow webbing between the toes and an amazing bouncy flight.

Black-bellied Storm-petrel _Fregetta tropica_: First recorded in small numbers after we had left the Snares and then it was fairly commonly encountered becoming more common after Campbell Island. Some individuals often approached close to the ship and gave excellent views from the bow or the stern. We estimated that around 97 birds were seen on the cruise but only 7 of these were in Australian waters.

**PELECANOIDIDAE**

Common Diving Petrel _Pelecanoides urinatrix_: Small numbers seen in the vicinity of most island groups, but only encountered commonly around the Snares where we saw hundreds. We only had about 6 birds in Australian waters. A few birds were showing paler under wings and neck patches like South Georgian Diving Petrel and although they breed in very low numbers around Auckland Islands, without photographs they cannot be separated for certain.

**SPHENISCIDAE**

King Penguin _Aptenodytes patagonicus_: An absolute highlight of the tour to have close encounters with many hundreds of these superb penguins and their adorable ‘teddy bear’ chicks at the colony in Sandy Bay on Macquarie Island. Despite the rain the landing on this magical place provided us with some of the most memorable moments of the trip. The total population on Macquarie is estimated at about 300,000 individuals and is thought to be increasing.

Yellow-eyed Penguin _Megadyptes antipodes_: We had about 30 in Carnley Harbour in the Auckland Islands. Our best views however were next day on Enderby Island where we had excellent looks at a total of 50 individuals as they were walking up and down between the beach and their burrows in the shrubbery. This New Zealand endemic is classified as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International. The total population is estimated at only about 4,000 individuals, including 520-570 pairs in the Auckland Islands and 490-600 pairs on Campbell Island. It is under threat from introduced species, climate change and degradation of nesting habitat, and is vulnerable to natural disasters such as avian flu and natural fires.

Gentoo Penguin _Pygoscelis papua_: We were very close to missing this species this year as the weather was not permitting any landings near the colony at Macquarie Island. Luckily we picked up three different individuals on the sea close to Sandy Bay. Forster, who described this species in 1781, was mistakenly under the impression that the bird occurred in New Guinea, hence the misnomer _papua_. The subspecies concerned is the nominate form. It is classified as ‘Near Threatened’ by BirdLife International.

Blue Penguin (Little Blue Penguin) _Eudyptula minor_: Rather brief views of about nine birds in the Chatham Islands, mostly during our naiad cruise off South East Island.

Rockhopper Penguin _Eudyptes chrysocome_: We were getting worried when we missed our chances at Macquarie and Campbell Islands but then we had excellent views of about eight birds ‘rock hopping’ with much larger numbers of Erect-crested Penguins on the rocks in the Antipodes Islands. The subspecies concerned, _filholi_, shows bare pink skin at the base of the bill and has sometimes been considered a separate species, the Eastern Rockhopper.
Penguin. It occurs in the southern Indian Ocean and Subantarctic regions of New Zealand and Australia. This species still has a world population of over 7,000,000, but is declining for a number of reasons, the most devastating of which is likely to be the effect of climate change on food supply. For this reason, it is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International. The filholi race has the smallest and fastest declining population so it would certainly deserve ‘Endangered’ status.

Royal Penguin  *Eudyptes schlegeli*: It was a similar magical experience to King Penguin. Despite the rain those few hours ashore with the several hundred Royal Penguins at Sandy Bay on Macquarie were definitely one of the highlights of the trip. The estimated population size is over one million pairs and this is the only breeding place of the species, however, and like the Rockhopper Penguin, the Royal Penguin is also listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of the potential effects of climate change on food supply. It took the third place in the ‘Bird of the trip’ competition this year!

Snares Crested Penguin (Snares Island Penguin)  *Eudyptes robustus*: Excellent views of about 400 of these superb birds during our naiad cruise in the Snares. This was our first of the eight penguins on this amazing cruise and we enjoyed close views in sunny weather of the birds coming ashore and scrambling up steep rocky slopes to their breeding colonies on the hillside above. This species is restricted to the Snares, where the population is thought to be stable at about 46,500 birds. It is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of the possible effects of climate change on food supply and the possibility that introduced predators might one day reach the islands.

Erect-crested Penguin  *Eudyptes sclateri*: This was our last species of penguin on the tour. We enjoyed some superb views of this aptly-named penguin in the Antipodes Islands and Bounty Islands. Our best views were in the Antipodes, where we were able to approach to within a few feet of a rocky ledge in a sheltered inlet where the penguins were coming ashore. The views on the Bounty islands were distant. This species is confined to the Antipodes and Bounty groups, and is thought to number about 154,000 individuals. It is listed as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International because the population appears to be declining rapidly, possibly owing to a shortage of food.

**SULIDAE**

Australasian Gannet  *Morus serrator*: Just two birds were seen on our very first rough evening out of Bluff Harbour. This fairly common species with an estimated population of 110,000 birds is only possibly to see close to the New Zealand mainland on this tour.

**PHALACROCORACIDAE**

Great Cormorant (Black Shag)  *Phalacrocorax carbo*: We had three birds on the main Chatham Island and another two in Otago Bay on our last morning in Dunedin.

Little Pied Cormorant (Little Shag)  *Phalacrocorax melanoleucus*: Good views of five birds near Sandy Point in the Invercargill area and a few more in Bluff Harbour and in Otago Bay at Dunedin.

Macquarie Shag (Macquarie Island Shag)  *Phalacrocorax purpurascens*: We had good views of eight at Sandy bay on Macquarie Island. Mostly in flight but also on the rocks. This species is confined to Macquarie Island. Unlike the black and white shags that we encountered in New Zealand’s Subantarctic islands, this species is closely related to the Imperial Shag  *P. atriceps* of southern South America and is often lumped in that species. The total population of Macquarie Shags is currently estimated at only 600 pairs, which would justify its listing as ‘Endangered’ were it to be recognised as a separate species by BirdLife International.

Stewart Island Shag  *Leucocarbo chalconotus*: The first one was seen at Sandy Point near Invercargill. Later we had good views of about 11 birds in Bluff Harbour while waiting for our
departure. Some of the birds seen were of the dark morph known as Bronze Shag. This species has a very restricted breeding range in southern South Island and Stewart Island, and has a total population of only about 5,000-8,000 individuals. It is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International.

Chatham Island Shag  *Leucocarbo onslowi*: One of the tricky shags of the tour. We only had flight views. We saw about 25 birds as we cruised north from South East Island along the east side of Pitt Island, and several of these obliged nicely by circling the ship at upper-deck height. Another one was seen at Waitangi next day. This species is confined to the Chatham Islands and is listed as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International. Until recently, the population was thought to number about 1,700 individuals, but a census in 2003 found only 270 breeding pairs. The various threats include human disturbance, illegal shooting, introduced predators and accidental mortality in fishing nets.

Bounty Island Shag  *Leucocarbo ranfurlyi*: Although the sea conditions were not permitting a naiad cruise in the Bounty Islands we had up to 100 birds around the Professor Khromov and some came very close. Another New Zealand endemic, found only in the Bounty Islands, where the population is thought to number about 1,140 individuals. The species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of its small population size and restricted distribution, and the chance that predators such as rats might one day get to the islands.

Auckland Island Shag  *Leucocarbo colensoi*: Outstanding views of over 200 birds or so around Enderby Island and about 25 in Carnley Harbour in the Auckland Islands. Our best views were at some breeding birds on Enderby Island. These birds showed some variation in breast colour, with a few individuals having almost as black breast band like the Campbell Island Shag. The total population is estimated at only about 2,000 individuals, and it is considered to be at risk from further introductions of predators. For this reason it is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International.

Campbell Island Shag  *Leucocarbo campbelli*: Good views of about 80 in Perseverance Harbour on Campbell Island. Some of them were very close and despite the heavy rain we enjoyed these localised birds. The total population is estimated at about 8,000 individuals and thought to be at risk from further introductions of predators. This is also listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International.

Spotted Shag  *Stictocarbo punctatus*: Our first birds were near Sandy Point in the Invercargill area and then we had excellent views of four in Bluff Harbour before we set sail. A few more were seen in Otago Bay at Dunedin on our last day too.

Pitt Island Shag  *Stictocarbo featherstoni*: Another superb cormorant species to complete our set of seven restricted range species. We got excellent views of about 35, including several on their nesting ledges, during our naiad cruise off South East Island. We also had one in Waitangi Harbour on the main Chatham Island the next day. This species is a duller version of the Spotted Shag with which it forms a super-species. It is restricted to the Chatham Islands and, with a total population of only about 1,400-1,600 individuals, is yet another species of shag listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International.

**ARDEIDAE**

White-faced Heron  *Ardea novaehollandiae*: Common in the Invercargill area, and also seen on the main Chatham Island.

**THRESKIORNITHIDAE**

Royal Spoonbill  *Platalea regia*: Excellent views of five birds at Sandy Point near Invercargill on our first day. Next day another was seen briefly on the way to Bluff harbour.
ANATIDAE

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus* (introduced): We had some in Bluff Harbour and then it was common on the main Chatham Island and also on our way into Otago Harbour.

Paradise Shelduck *Tadorna variegata*: A lovely pair on our first day at Sandy Point near Invercargill, another pair on the drive to Bluff Harbour and two more in Otago Harbour as we were approaching Dunedin.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (introduced): Common in the Invercargill area and in Otago Harbour. We also recorded a few on Enderby Island in the Auckland Islands, two on Macquarie Island, two on the Antipodes and several on the main Chatham Island.

Grey Duck (Pacific Black Duck) *Anas superciliosa*: The only pure Grey Ducks that we recorded were several at Sandy Point near Invercargill and a pair on the main Chatham Island.

Grey Teal *Anas gibberifrons*: A small flock of six birds were seen at Sandy Point near Invercargill.

Auckland Island Teal *Anas aucklandica*: First we had distant views of a rather secretive pair in the kelp opposite our landing site on Enderby Island in the Aucklands. Later several excellent views on our walk on the island with a total of 15 were counted by the end of the day. This flightless form, which is confined to seven of the smaller islands in the Aucklands group, is now usually considered a full species. The total population is estimated at between 600 and 2,000 individuals. It is classified as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because of the constant risk of introduced predators getting to the islands.

Campbell Island Teal *Anas nesiotis*: Some of us managed to see one of these very secretive and rare ducks on Campbell Island. At one time believed to be extinct, the Campbell Island Teal was rediscovered on tiny Dent Island in 1975 by our expedition leader Rodney Russ. The species has bred well in captivity, and a number have been released on the main island since the eradication of rats in 2001. Like the Auckland Island Teal, this flightless form is now usually considered a full species. It is classified as ‘Critically endangered’ by BirdLife International.

ACCIPITRIDAE

Australasian Harrier (Swamp Harrier) *Circus approximans*: We saw two in the Invercargill area and also quite common in the Chatham Islands, where we recorded about half a dozen on South East Island and the main island. We also had a vagrant individual on Enderby Island in the Aucklands.

RALLIDAE

Weka *Gallirallus australis* (introduced): Some of us had good views on the main Chatham Island. The form concerned, *hectori* (‘Buff Weka’), is now extinct in its natural range in eastern South Island, but has been introduced in a number of areas including the Chatham Islands where it is regarded almost as a pest. The species is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International because most populations are declining as a result of mortality on the roads, habitat loss and degradation, and introduced predators.

HAEMATOPODIDAE

South Island Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus finschi*: We had about 36 birds at Sandy Point in the Invercargill area and then had a roosting flock of 177 birds in Otago Harbour.

Variable Oystercatcher *Haematopus unicolor*: We had two birds in Bluff Harbour before the cruise and then five dark morph birds in Otago Bay as we were approaching Dunedin at the end of the cruise.

Chatham Islands Oystercatcher *Haematopus chathamensis*: On the first zodiac cruise only half of Birdquesters saw the two ‘well decorated’ birds but next day everybody got good views on South East Island. With a world population of only about 310-325 individuals, this is...
one of the rarest shorebirds in the world. Although the population has been increasing in recent years, it is still listed as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International because of the continuing threats from introduced predators, habitat degradation and human disturbance.

CHARADRIIDAE
Double-banded Plover (Banded Dotterel) *Charadrius bicinctus*: Superb views of at least 50 on Enderby Island in the Aucklands, where the birds were delightfully tame. The form concerned, *exilis*, is confined to the Auckland Islands.

New Zealand Dotterel *Charadrius obscurus*: Just a single bird was seen by Dave and János at Auckland airport.

Shore Plover *Thinornis novaeseelandiae*: Good views of about 16 on the wave-platforms of South East Island in the Chatham Islands. Once widespread on the New Zealand mainland (at least on South Island), the Shore Plover is now largely confined to South East Island and one small reef in the Chathams, having been eradicated from most of its former haunts by introduced predators. A few birds have recently been released on Mangere too. With a total population of only about 160 individuals, this really is one of the rarest shorebirds in the world! Not surprisingly, it is listed as ‘Endangered’ by BirdLife International. Of the many threats which the species faces, introduced predators top the list. A new population was also established on Mana Island off the west coast of Wellington. A pair from among 41 juveniles introduced to the island in 2007 hatched and fledged a chick during 2008, and five more young Shore Plovers have fledged in 2009. It took the fourth place in the ‘Bird of the trip’ competition this year!

Masked Lapwing (Spur-winged Plover) *Vanellus miles*: We saw a few on agricultural land around Invercargill and Dunedin. We also saw up to 45 in farmland on the main Chatham Island.

SCOLOPACIDAE
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*: We had about ten near Sandy Point in the Invercargill area, three on Derry Castle Reef on Enderby Island in the Aucklands, one bird on South East Island in the Chathams and a surprising observation of two birds flying over the sea on our way back to Dunedin. These birds were about 200 miles from any land.

Subantarctic Snipe (New Zealand Snipe) *Coenocorypha aucklandica*: Great views of about 11 birds on Enderby Island in the Aucklands. These wonderfully rodent-like shorebirds prefer to scuttle through the grass rather than fly, often crouching low with their bills stretched forwards. The form that we saw was the nominate form and there is a distinct subspecies in the Antipodes Islands (*meinertzhagenae*). Several former races were split now as distinctive species such as Snares Island Snipe *C. huegeli*, South Island Snipe *C. iredalei* (extinct in 1964), Forbes’s Snipe *C. chathamica* (extinct), North Island Snipe *C. barreriensis* (extinct in 1870) and the still undescribed Campbell Island Snipe *C. sp* (caught in 1997). In addition to these there is also the Chatham Island Snipe which belongs to the same genus. The Subantarctic Snipe is listed as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International, with the principal threat being introduced predators. It took the fourth place in the ‘Bird of the trip’ competition this year!

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*: We had a single bird in flight at Enderby Island which was most probably this species. It was relocated on the same day at Derry Castle Reef by our doctor John and was photographed. Even from the pictures however the Pectoral Sandpiper *C. melanotos* cannot be ruled out.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*: A flock of 60 was seen at Sandy Point near Invercargill.
STERCORARIIDAE

Subantarctic Skua (Antarctic Skua) *Catharacta antarctica*: Fair numbers were seen throughout the trip, with birds breeding in all of the island groups that we visited. There was a considerable amount of variation in plumage, with some birds (presumably adults) on Macquarie Island showing a large amount of pale feathering on the mantle. The subspecies involved is *lonnbergi*. We estimated that around 133 birds were seen on the cruise and about 60 of these were in Australian waters.

Arctic Skua (Parasitic Jaeger) *Stercorarius parasiticus*: Two birds were seen around the Chatham Islands.

LARIDAE

Kelp Gull (Southern Black-backed Gull) *Larus Dominicans*: The common and widespread gull, present in all the island groups that we visited. This is a widespread southern hemisphere species, although it is possible that more than one species is involved. New Zealand birds are currently included in the nominate form which also occurs in southern South America. The highest count of 400 birds was in Otago Bay.

Red-billed Gull *Larus scopulinus*: First seen around Invercargill and common in the Snares, Auckland Islands, Campbell Island and Chatham Islands. This New Zealand endemic is often considered conspecific with the Silver Gull *L. novaehollandiae* of Australia and New Caledonia. It differs in being slightly smaller and in having slightly darker upperparts and a relatively deeper bill. Recent mitochondrial DNA research and anatomical studies suggest a closer relationship to the Black-billed Gull. Up to 250 were counted in Otago Bay.

Black-billed Gull *Larus bulleri*: Just a single non-breeding individual was seen at Sandy Point near Invercargill. This New Zealand endemic is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International. The total population is estimated at 96,000 and is declining rapidly, apparently as a result of introduced predators, invasive weeds on the shingle banks where the birds breed, and human disturbance.

STERNIDAE

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*: We saw two birds on our way out of Bluff Harbour.

White-fronted Tern *Sterna striata*: First we saw about 22 by the wharf in Bluff Harbour and then a few others in scattered localities. It was common in the Chatham Islands, especially on the zodiac cruise around South East Island, where we had a colony of about 50 pairs. The White-fronted Tern is confined to New Zealand as a breeding species, but migrates to Australia in winter.

Antarctic Tern *Sterna vittata*: First seen around the Snares, and then found on Enderby Island in the Auckland group, Macquarie Island, Campbell Island, Antipodes Island and the Bounty Islands. The form *betihunei* is restricted to the Subantarctic islands of New Zealand, while the form *macquariensis* breeds only on Macquarie.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*: It was a surprise to see this long-distance migrant and Birdquest ‘write-in’ on four different occasions at sea. We even had a tired individual landing on the Professor Khromov on our way back to Dunedin. A total of five individuals were seen and photographed.

COLUMBIDAE

New Zealand Pigeon *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*: Several close views of different birds in the park near the Southland Museum in Invercargill. We also had some in the Sandy Point area next day. This species seems to be doing better than most of New Zealand’s native woodland birds, but is still classified as ‘Near threatened’ by BirdLife International.
Chatham Island Pigeon *Hemiphaga chathamensis*: About 15 of these huge, colourful pigeons were seen in a native woodland on the main Chatham Island, including several extremely confiding birds feeding by the roadside. Often treated as conspecific with New Zealand Pigeon, the Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds Volume 3 (1996) states that a “combination of allopatric distributions, differences in ecology and many differences in morphology clearly indicate that *chathamensis* and *novaeseelandiae* are different species”. BirdLife International does not split this form in *Threatened Birds of the World*, but notes that if it is split, it should be listed as ‘Endangered’.

Rock Dove (Rock Pigeon) *Columba livia*: A few of this introduced species were seen in Dunedin.

**PSITTACIDAE**

Antipodes Island Parakeet *Cyanoramphus unicolor*: Although our zodiac cruise was doubtful in the murky, windy and rainy morning when we arrived at the Antipodes the weather greatly improved in a few hours and on two different zodiac cruises all Birdquesters saw two or three of these rare parakeets. The total population of this single-island endemic is only 2,000-3,000 birds, and the species is therefore listed as ‘Vulnerable’ by BirdLife International.

Red-crowned Parakeet *Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae*: We saw three different subspecies on the cruise and some of these are good candidates for future splits into separate species. First we enjoyed many close views of about 15 birds of the nominate form on Enderby Island in the Aucklands, and also saw at least ten of the very distinctive *hochstetteri* form on Antipodes Island. The *chathamensis* form was easily seen on several islands in the Chathams.

Yellow-crowned Parakeet *Cyanoramphus auriceps*: We had good looks at about six different birds on our first landing of the cruise in Carnley Harbour of the Auckland Islands. Some authors suggest that further study is needed of this insular Auckland population, particularly its relationship with *C. forbesi*, which was given full specific status by BirdLife International.

**CUCULIDAE**

Shining Bronze-cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*: A fine male was seen in the Sandy Point area near Invercargill. This was another Birdquest ‘write-in’.

**ALCEDINIDAE**

Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*: About five were seen in the Sandy Point area near Invercargill on our first full day of the tour.

**ALAUDIDAE**

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*: We had one in agricultural land around Invercargill and then it was very common on the main Chatham Island. A few were also recorded in the Dunedin area. When we landed at Waitangi some were singing right above the wharf. This is an introduced species all over New Zealand.

**HIRUNDINIDAE**

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*: We had a couple on our way to Bluff Harbour in the Invercargill area, about eight near the harbour at Waitangi on the main Chatham Island and five at Dunedin. This species colonised New Zealand from Australia in the late 1950s.
MOTACILLIDAE

New Zealand Pipit (Australasian Pipit) *Anthus novaeseelandiae*: We had all three subspecies on the cruise except the nominate one of the main islands. At least 50 on Enderby Island in the Aucklands, at least 10 on Campbell Island, about six during the zodiac cruise along the coast of Antipodes Island, and about half a dozen on the Chathams Islands. Those on the Auckland and Campbell Islands were particularly confiding and photogenic. It has recently been suggested that the Australian Pipit *A. australis* is specifically distinct from the New Zealand Pipit. Four subspecies occur in New Zealand, the nominate on the main islands, *chathamensis* on the Chathams, *aucklandicus* on the Aucklands and Campbell, and *steindachneri* on the Antipodes.

PRUNELLIDAE

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*: A few in the Invercargill area and also one on Campbell Island and on the main Chatham Island. This is an introduced species from Europe.

TURDIDAE

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*: Very common around Invercargill and Dunedin, and recorded in small numbers on the Snares, Enderby Island, Campbell Island and the Chathams. This is another introduced species from Europe.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*: Very common around Invercargill and on the main Chatham Island, and odd ones recorded on the Snares and Campbell Island. This is another introduced species from Europe.

SYLVIIDAE

Fernbird (New Zealand Fernbird) *Bowdleria punctata*: Superb views of a minimum of three birds of the *caudata* subspecies during our zodiac cruise in the Snares. This form, which is confined to the Snares, is almost flightless and may warrant specific status (Snares Island Fernbird).

PACHYCEPHALIDAE

New Zealand Creeper (Brown Creeper) *Mohoua novaeseelandiae*: Superb views of an incredible 14 birds in several small flocks at Sandy Point near Invercargill.

ACANTHIZIDAE

Grey Warbler (Grey Gerygone) *Gerygone igata*: Several great views of these fast moving birds in the parkland of Invercargill and also at Sandy Point.

Chatham Islands Warbler (Chatham Islands Gerygone) *Gerygone albofrontata*: It was fairly common in the native patch of woodland we visited on the main Chatham Island. We saw a total of 9 birds and some of them gave excellent views as they were nest building. This species is slightly larger than the closely related Grey Warbler, with a much longer bill and white supercilium and forehead.

MONARCHIDAE

Grey Fantail (New Zealand Fantail) *Rhipidura fuliginosa*: An inquisitive bird showed well in the Queen’s Park in Invercargill and a few more were seen at Sandy Point. We also had three birds on the main island of the Chatham group. It is the nominate race on the south island and the *penita* race on the Chathams.
EOPSAALTRIIDAE (PETROICIDAE)
Tomtit Petroica macrocephala: We recorded four different races on the tour. The South island Tomtit is the nominate form and we saw several at Sandy Point near Invercargill. At least five of the dannefaerdi subspecies were seen well during our zodiac cruise in the Snares. This form, which is uniformly black, numbered about 500 pairs in 1987, and is surely a good candidate for a split. The form marrineri in the Auckland Islands (Auckland Island Tomtit) is rather similar to the mainland form, but shows reduced sexual dimorphism. We saw at least 16 of these on Enderby Island and three more at Carnley Harbour. A couple of us also observed two birds of the form chathamensis on South East Island in the Chathams (Chatham Island Tomtit).

ZOSTEROPIDAE
Silvereye Zosterops lateralis: A fairly common bird around the Invercargill area. We saw it in several places on the cruise as well. We had two in the Snares, four on the Aucklands, six on Campbell Island and about 20 on the main Chatham Island. This was a natural colonist from Australia in recent times.

MELIPHAGIDAE
New Zealand Bellbird Anthornis melanura: About eight birds were seen well in the Queen’s Park in Invercargill and a few more at Sandy Point. We also had several encounters in the Auckland Islands, where we saw about six on Enderby Island and five in Carnley Harbour.

Tui Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae: Fairly common in the Invercargill area, plus three birds on Enderby Island and about 20 in Carnley Harbour in the Auckland Islands and about 65 on the Chathams.

EMBERIZIDAE
Yellowhammer Emberiza citrinella: We only had three of these introduced birds at Sandy Point near Invercargill.

FRINGILLIDAE
Common Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs: Common in the Invercargill area, and also recorded in small numbers on the main island in the Chathams. Another introduced species.
European Greenfinch Carduelis chloris: Common in the Invercargill area, and also recorded in small numbers on the main island in the Chathams. Another introduced species.
European Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis: Fairly common in the Invercargill area, and also recorded in small numbers on the main island in the Chathams. Another introduced species.
Lesser Redpoll Carduelis cabaret: Common in the Invercargill area, on Enderby Island in the Aucklands, on Campbell Island, and on the main island in the Chathams. We could not land on our second day on the Macquarie Island so we were unable to find one for our Australian lists.

PASSERIDAE
House Sparrow Passer domesticus: Common on the mainland and also seen in Waitangi in the Chatham Islands. Introduced from Europe.

STURNIDAE
Common Starling Sturnus vulgaris: Common on the mainland, in the Chatham Islands and also seen in very small numbers on Enderby Island in the Aucklands. Yet another introduced species.
Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*: Some of us saw one at Auckland airport on our last day just before our flight back to London. This is also an introduced bird to New Zealand.

CRACTICIDAE

Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen* (introduced): Only four were seen in the Invercargill area and two more on the drive out to Dunedin airport.

**MAMMALS**

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*: We saw about ten on Macquarie Island. There are now plans to eradicate the population on there owing to the damage they do to the vegetation, which results in soil erosion.

New Zealand Fur Seal *Arctocephalus forsteri*: We had good views in the Snares, around Antipodes Island and in the Chatham Islands. On our way back to Dunedin we saw several far out to sea.

Subantarctic Fur Seal *Arctocephalos tropicalis*: This rare mammal was amazingly seen twice on the cruise. We had one on Antipodes Island and later another on South East Island on the Chathams. It is a very rare to see one this far north.

New Zealand Sea-Lion (Hooker’s Sea-Lion) *Phocarctos hookeri*: The first two were seen in the Snares. Our best encounters were on Enderby Island, where there were at least 80, and on Campbell Island, where a young bull was very inquisitive to Rodney.

Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonina*: Some great encounters with several hundred of these monsters on the beaches on Macquarie Island. There were still several huge bulls about showing off their fantastic proboscis, while the wide-eyed youngsters were particularly endearing. We also found the odd individual on Auckland Island.

Great Sperm Whale *Physeter catodon*: Fairly good views of one on our magical day between the Bounty Islands and the Chathams.

Gray’s Beaked Whale *Mesoplodon grayi*: Two were seen by János briefly as we were cruising towards Campbell Island and then a school of four animals were seen around the Bounty Islands. As is typical of beaked whales, they stayed only briefly at the surface and then were gone.

Killer Whale (Orca) *Orcinus orca*: A had a group of six individuals appeared several times on our stand-by day at Macquarie Island. Excellent views of these type ‘B’ orcas.

Long-finned Pilot Whale *Globicephala melas*: We had a school of 20 south of the Antipodes Islands and a school of 10 towards Dunedin. The diagnostic pale ‘saddle’ was clearly visible on many of the larger individuals. We even got some photos!

Common Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*: We saw a pod of ten as we were approaching Waitangi in the Chathams.
APPENDIX: overall results of the ‘Bird of the tour’ contest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Nominations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Magenta Petrel (Taiko)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Subantarctic Snipe</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Royal Penguin</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Shore Plover</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Light-mantled Sooty Albatross</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
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Chatam Albatross, Chatam Islands

Shore Plover, Chatam Islands
Royal Penguin, Macquarie Island
Erect-crested Penguin, Antipodes Islands

Rockhopper Penguin, Antipodes Islands

Snares Crested Penguin, Snares

Yellow-eyed Penguin, Enderby Island

King Penguin, Macquarie Island
King Penguins (below) and chick (above)
Southern Royal Albatross, Enderby Island

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, New Zealand
Snares Fernbird, Snares

Snares Tomtit, Snares

Mottled Petrels, New Zealand

Fulmar Prion, Bounty Islands
Auckland Island Shag, Enderby Island

Double-banded Dotterel, Enderby Island
Auckland Island Teal, Enderby Island

Subantarctic Snipe, Enderby Island
Magenta Petrel, New Zealand

Northern Royal Albatross, Chatam Islands

Blue Petrel, Macquarie Island

White-faced Storm-Petrel, Chatam Islands

Wandering Albatross, New Zealand