



MĀTAKITAKI MANU BIRD WATCHING

Did you know? 61 different species of birds have been detected across the Auckland region. Of these, 37 are native and 21 are endemic to New Zealand, meaning they are found nowhere else. The three most common birds found are native: tūī, riroriro (grey warbler), and pihipihi (silveryeye). Birds are a good indicator of ecosystem health, if they are doing well, it's likely that the invertebrates and plants that they feed on further down the food chain are doing well too.

Tiakina nga manu, ka ora te ngahere Ka ora te ngahere, ka ora nga manu.

Look after the birds and the forest flourishes. If the forest flourishes, the birds flourish.

To find out more about Auckland's birds visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and search 'birds'.

For help with bird identification visit doc.govt.nz and search 'bird ID' or 'bird calls'.



KĀKĀ

Kākā are large parrots that are related to kea and endemic to New Zealand. Most of the kākā spotted on the mainland of the Auckland Region are likely to be seasonal visitors from islands or pest-free sanctuaries such as Tawharanui, with some living in the Hunua Ranges. They feed on fruit, nectar, flowers, sap and insects and can use their large beaks to pull away at bark and rotting wood to search for grubs. They make a loud, noisy repeated "ka-aa" call.

Kākā nest in tree hollows where their eggs and chicks are vulnerable to predators. Possums and rats also compete for food sources including mistletoe and rātā.



KERERŪ (NEW ZEALAND PIGEON)

Kererū are endemic to New Zealand. They have an important role in forest ecology as the dispersers of seeds of native trees with large fruits that other birds cannot eat for example, karaka, miro, tawa and taraire. They also feed on leaves and flowers. Kererū are not very vocal, but sometimes call with a 'ooo' sound.

Their noisy wing beats create a distinctive sound when in flight. They lay a single egg in a flimsy looking nest. Eggs and chicks are vulnerable to predators such as rats, possums and stoats. Possums also compete with kererū for food.



PĪPĪWHARAUROA (SHINING CUCKOO)

Pīpīwharau migrate from islands near Papua New Guinea to New Zealand each spring to breed, returning to their over-wintering grounds at the end of summer. Their metallic green plumage makes them hard to spot in the trees but their call is quite distinctive with a repetitive upwardly-slurred whistle followed by a downward whistle. Instead of building their own nests and raising their young, pīpīwharau infiltrate the nests of riroriro (grey warbler). Females lay a single egg in the host nest and once hatched the 'imposter' chick will evict the host's eggs and young and get fed by the host parents.



PĪWAKAWAKA (NEW ZEALAND FANTAIL)

Pīwakawaka are endemic to New Zealand. Easily identified by their fan-shaped tails, these little birds are commonly seen flitting around searching for invertebrates such as moths, flies, beetles and spiders. They will often come quite close to people, hoping to catch insects that have been disturbed by their movements, and are often seen in urban gardens as well as parks and forests. They have a distinctive, high pitched 'cheet-cheet' call used when foraging or when alarmed. They lay 2-5 eggs in nests woven from moss, grasses, ferns and cobwebs and can rear up to 5 broods in one season.



RĪRORIRO (GREY WARBLER)

Riroriro are endemic to New Zealand. They are more often heard than seen – listen out for the male's delicate, complex trilling call. Females don't sing but give short chirps to keep in contact with their mate. If you do see riroriro they are likely to be flitting around searching for flying insects or picking spiders from plants. Their dome-shaped nests may be seen hanging 2-4m above the ground in species with smaller leaves such as mānuka, kānuka and coprosmas. Shining cuckoo 'hijack' riroriro nests, replacing a single riroriro egg and laying one of their own.



TAUHOU (SILVEREYE)

Tauhou are native to New Zealand having arrived in the 1800s with the help of wind currents from Australia. Their Māori name means 'stranger' or 'new arrival'. Their distinctive white eye-ring makes them easily identifiable. They have high pitched, melodic calls that include repetitive trills and warbles. Like tūi, they use their brush-tipped tongues to feed on nectar and also eat fruit and insects. They help pollinate some trees including kōwhai and fuchsia, and spread the seeds of trees and shrubs including kahikatea and coprosmas.



TŪI

Tūi are endemic to New Zealand. They use their brush-like tongues to feed on the nectar of native flowers including kōwhai, pūriri, rewarewa, kahikatea, harakeke, pōhutukawa and rātā. They have important ecological roles as pollinators of native plants and dispersers of seeds through their droppings.

Tūi have a double voice box enabling them to create beautiful, tuneful songs. Adding to their repertoire, tūi often mimic other sounds such as car alarms, doorbells, and even human voices. In spring tūi stake out their breeding area by singing from the high places, often in the early mornings and late afternoons.

OTHER BIRDS

Other native birds that you are likely to see or hear in forests in the Auckland Region include kōtare (kingfisher) and ruru (morepork).

Common non-native species include blackbirds, rosellas, starlings and myna.

Visit nzbirdsonline.org.nz to help you identify what you see.