



URBAN ARK MANAWA TAIAO

Nature in the city

Bird Monitoring Special

Today's newsletter is all about the birds. As we dispatch rats in our backyards and plant species that attract birds we're hoping that our native biodiversity rebounds. Birds are both easy to spot and a great indicator of that biodiversity. Read on to:

- See our Endemic Snapshot of what birds are in our gardens and what's close by
 - See the results of our recent lockdown Garden Bird Survey. Why not take part in another this week?
 - heed our call for birders and those still learning
 - Make your birding count towards the New Zealand Bird Atlas, a massive 5-year project to map the country's birds.
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Endemic snapshot

Have you seen a pair of kākā flying over, or noticed more tūi in your back garden or local park? We hope that's because these species are becoming more abundant, but perhaps everyone just has more time to notice what's around them. With more pest trapping and we should start to see more natives returning to the suburbs. Let's see what has been reported on [eBird](#).

- [Kākā](#) Excellent fliers who have almost taken over Wellington since the opening of Zealandia and the great work of Predator Free Wellington. We're nowhere near that situation, but kākā are spreading out from the island and mainland sanctuaries. They're now occasionally seen flying across the city with recent sightings in Pt Chevalier, Howick and Birkenhead.
- [Kōkako](#) Found around Ark in the Park in the Waitakeres, but unlikely to invade the suburbs.
- [Korimako / Bellbird](#) There are plenty on Rangitoto and occasional sightings in the Waitākere Ranges. One to watch out for.
- [Kākāriki / Red-crowned parakeet](#) Lots on Rangitoto and Motutapu but a rarity in the city. Create the environment and maybe we'll see kākāriki over this side.
- [Miromiro / Tomtit](#) Bush-loving species unlikely to be found in the city. Recent sightings in Titirangi and on Rangitoto.
- [Pīwakawaka / Fantail](#) Widely observed, but still not that common. Looking forward to more in my garden.
- [Riroriro / Grey warbler](#) Widely seen across the region. Maybe not the most charismatic of our native birds, but once you learn to recognise them

they're hard to forget.

- **[Tieke / Saddleback](#)** Plenty on Rangitoto, Motutapu and Motuihe islands but so far none recorded on the mainland. Correct me if I'm wrong.
- **[Toutouwai / North Island robin](#)** A bird of the bush that we wouldn't really expect to see in the suburbs. The nearest recent sightings are at Arataki Visitor Centre and on Rangitoto.
- **[Tūi](#)** Widely seen across the region. Happy with nectar from native and introduced trees. Get near a cherry tree in spring.



Another Garden Bird Survey

In our last newsletter we put the call out for people to take part in our lockdown Garden Bird Survey. We had a good response but we'd love more people to take part. Along with plenty of non-natives such as blackbirds, starlings, sparrows, mynas, song thrushes, goldfinches and swallows we're seeing quite a few natives – pīwakaka /fantail (in half of our surveys), tūi, touhou /silvereyes (in most surveys), riroriro / grey warbler (especially strong in Grey Lynn), black-backed gulls and red-billed gulls.

We'd love you to take part in this week's survey. You don't need to be an expert birder but it helps if you can recognise a few species. All you need to do is:

Pick a day to do your survey From today (Thursday 16 April) until Wednesday 22 April inclusive

Pick your survey location It should probably be your home under Level 4

Download the bird [tally sheet](#) (optional but recommended)

Find a comfy spot A chair in your garden or even looking out your window.

Set aside one hour Record what you see (or hear). For each species record the **highest number** you see (or hear) **at one time**.

Record your observations Our survey is separate from Manaaki Whenua's, so please click [this link](#). It should only take 5 minutes to record your observations.

And please send this newsletter to anyone you think might want to take part in

the Garden Bird Survey. We're mostly targeting Auckland's inner west, but any observations are worthwhile. Happy observing!



A call for birders (and fledgling birders)

In the next few months we're planning to get some citizen science going across the region with some five-minute bird counts. These snapshots of birds in an area are a time-honoured way of measuring bird presence. The data we collect will give us a great idea of how our groups' pest control and native planting work has impacted on biodiversity.

To be really effective we need people who can put in a little time every few months to record birds at sites across the inner west. If you already have a great eye (and ear) for birds then we'd love to have you on board. If you're less skilled but keen, we'd still like to hear from you. A few months ago I barely knew a starling from a song thrush and definitely wouldn't have recognised a riroriro / grey warbler, but I'm getting better. Drop me a line on paul@urbanark.nz.



New Zealand Bird Atlas

At Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao we're interested in our local biodiversity, but we're also happy for our data to form part of the wider efforts to produce a [New Zealand Bird Atlas](#). This five-year project (to be completed by 2024) follows on from earlier comprehensive studies of New Zealand's avifauna distribution in 1985 and 2004.

The whole country has been divided into 10km by 10km squares (3232 of them) and the plan is to collect at least one complete bird checklist from each habitat within these squares for each season. Here in Auckland's inner west we almost all live in the square labelled AB67, and that's where we'll be counting birds for the next 10 days (or maybe longer). Once the shackles are off, we can select other parts of the country to go birding.

The project is a collaboration between [Birds New Zealand](#) and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which is home to [eBird](#).

If you're keen to take part, check out the [NZ Bird Atlas webinars](#) that are taking place over the lockdown. The first two have already happened and can be viewed online. The next takes place on Friday at 1pm. Register [here](#).



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