

Must-Do Bird Encounters in New Zealand

New Zealand is home to unique manu (bird) species not found anywhere else, including the world's smallest penguin and the only alpine parrot. Many of our feathered friends are endangered and there are several ecosanctuaries across the country dedicated to helping these at-risk populations thrive. Get your binoculars ready and visit these must-do bird spotting experiences.



KEA

The world's only alpine parrot, kea are incredibly intelligent. Known for their cheeky behavior and problem-solving abilities, keep your eyes peeled for them on the drive to Piopiotahi Milford Sound.

Top kea spotting experiences:

- **Auckland Zoo:** Walk through Te Wao Nui to see native New Zealand wildlife including the inquisitive kea. Daily guided tours available for up to 10 people.



NORTHERN ROYAL ALBATROSS

Toroa (northern royal albatross) are the world's largest flying seabirds boasting a 10-foot wingspan. They spend most of their life at sea, only returning to land to breed and raise their chicks.

Top albatross spotting experiences:

- **Royal Albatross Center Dunedin:** Offers year-round tours of the world's only mainland breeding colony of toroa. Sightings may be fewer in October when chicks have left their nests.



GANNETS

New Zealand has three mainland breeding colonies of gannets where you can witness the habits of these acrobatic birds – Muriwai (northwest of Auckland), Hawke's Bay and Nelson Tasman.

Top gannet spotting experiences:

- **Gannet Safaris Overland, Hawke's Bay:** Guided daily, private and sunset offroad tours of the Cape Kidnapper's gannet colony where more than 20,000 birds reside.

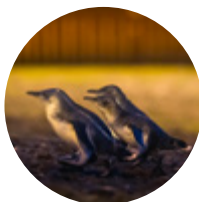


KIWI

Nocturnal and flightless, the kiwi is New Zealand's most iconic bird and is considered a taonga (treasure) to Māori. Listen out for their nighttime call in the wild on Rakiura Stewart Island.

Top kiwi spotting experiences:

- **National Kiwi Hatchery, Rotorua:** A world leader in kiwi hatching programs, visit between September – March for the best chance of seeing newly hatched chicks.
- **Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne, Wellington:** The world's first fully-fenced urban ecosanctuary offers guided night tours that provide the opportunity to spot little spotted kiwi.



PENGUINS

Did you know there are more penguin species found on New Zealand's shores than any other country, including kororā (little penguin), the world's smallest penguin standing at just 9.8-inches tall.

Top penguin spotting experiences:

- **Pōhatu Penguins, Akaroa:** Guided tours of the largest colony of kororā on the mainland. The highest likelihood of spotting penguins is September – February and April – August.
- **The OPERA, Dunedin:** Seek the rare and endangered hoiho (yellow-eyed penguin) during a daytime or twilight tour of this private eco reserve on the Otago Peninsula.



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