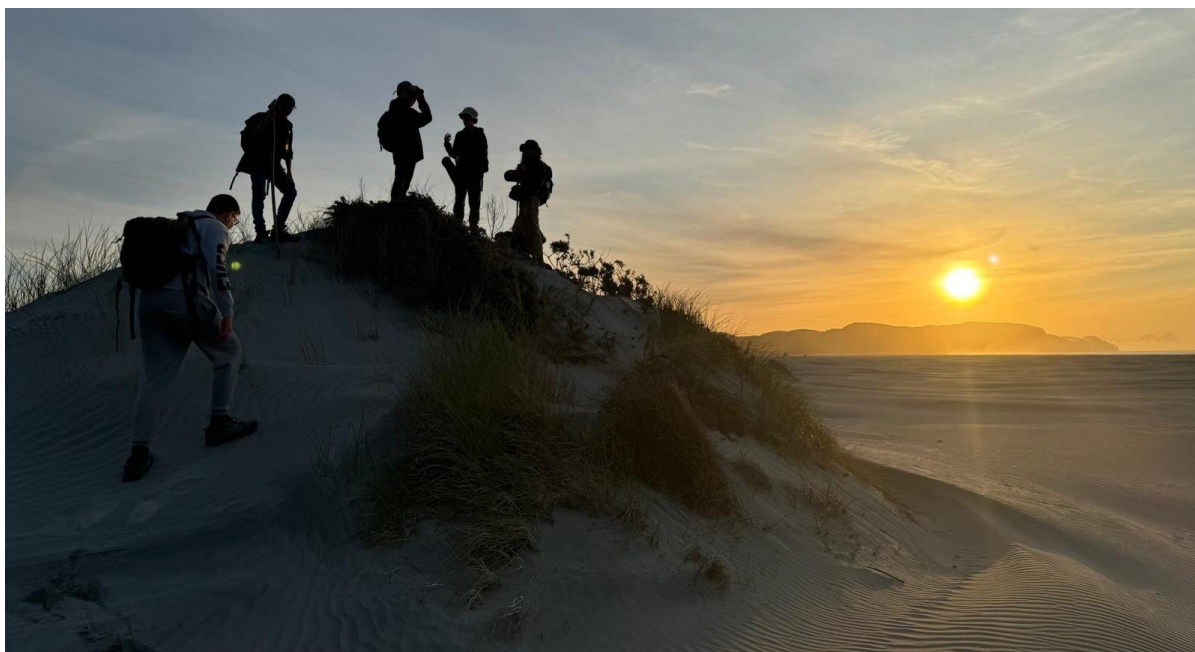


## Nelson Tasman Bird Youth Camp – A Booming Success!

28 September – 4 October 2024



The first Nelson Tasman Bird Youth Camp held at Farewell Spit and Mangarākau Swamp was a “Booming Success!” The Enthusiasm was astonishing and illustrated by the 77 species count with 253 EBird checklists. Highlights included dusk wader roost viewing experience at the iconic wetland site of International Importance Farewell Spit RAMSAR designation. Cape Farewell predator-fenced enclosure informative site visit with Health Post Nature Trust representative Marian Milne, with nesting diving petrel and fluttering shearwater. The starred gecko’s, oystercatcher leg-flag records (at least six), wood ducks, shining cuckoo’s, coast sea-watch, good food and company, end of camp quiz reaffirming learning from our time together. Dusk and dawn calls of “Booming bitterns”, fernbird, spotless crake, ruru and weka. With views of Australasian bittern flying over the swamp ridgeline as dusk approached.

First stop was to see the rare Australasian wood duck on the way to our destination followed by good views of Australasian little grebe. Our first site visit was at the seabird fenced enclosure managed by



the Health Post Nature Trust where invasive predators including mice have recently been removed.

Seeing future birders blossoming and developing their skill set plus a future entomologist Saryu Mae in action inspiring everyone and his undetermined drive to record moths and other taxa, each night of the camp. Saryu recorded 150 species of invertebrate and 200 plant species, all uploaded to iNaturalist! **Chris Turton** did an excellent job keeping us all nourished with her catering for the entire camp and all attendees contributed to food prep and domestic duties at both locations. Evening

presentations on the ecological importance of these two important wetland locations were included and Bradley Shields was a great addition (as a former Bird Youth Camp attendee) helping with field visits at Mangarākau and with his informative presentation on conservation work in action with ZIP on the West Coast. Mist netting installation practice challenged previous students and new ones enjoyed learning about NNBS with interactive banding activities. The end of Camp quiz was received well with tough competition, Saul Ward was pleased with the winning prize of Keith Woodley's book on the Bar-tailed Godwit (a relevant souvenir to our long-distance bird migration learning from Camp).

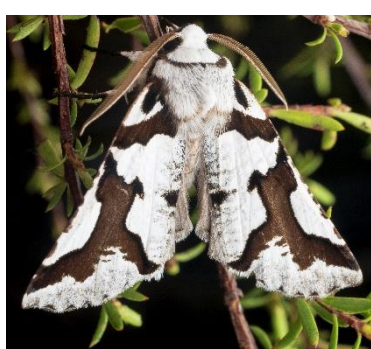


Camp organised and successfully delivered by **Rachel Hufton** and **Mark Ayre**. Rachel's second bird youth camp delivered for 2024. Thanks to Mark for his enthusiasm, valuable time to get this in action. Upcoming Youth camp include Makarora Jan 2026 and possibly a Sept/Oct 2025 location tbc!

With thanks to enabling **event supporters** BirdsNZ, Nature Quest, Albatross Solutions, Health Post NZ, Over The Fence Produce Reefton, Illuminate Ecology and Friends of Mangarākau.

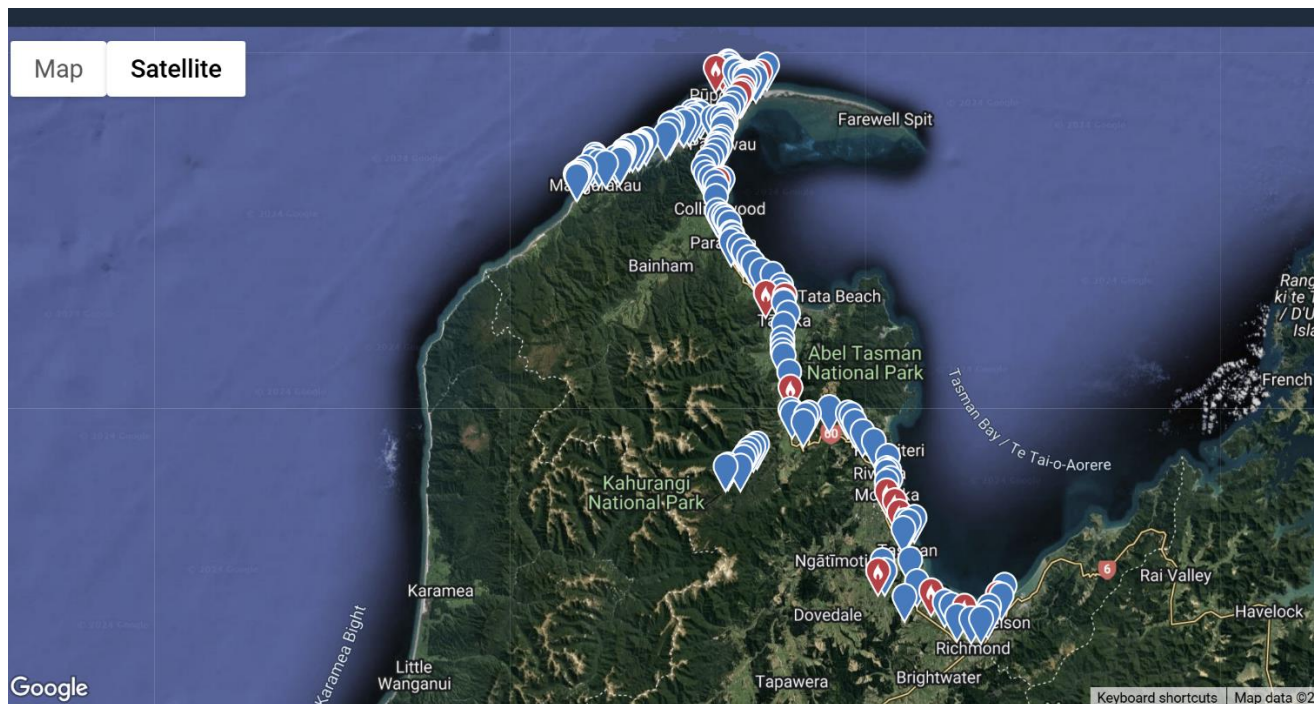


Other fauna recorded during the event included a mānuka tree with five starred geckos and a South



Island lichen moth *Declana egregia* a New Zealand endemic species, a new moth record for Mangarākau (Saryu Mae).

[EBird Trip Report For Nelson Tasman Bird Youth Camp Spring 2024](#)



DATA FOR: Group (all people) ▾

**77**  
Species Observed  
+12 other taxa

**253**  
Checklists



**Attendee Commentary**

*The Youth Camp was awesome I learnt a lot about birds, bugs, and so much more. It was very fun!*

*Judha - Auckland*

*It was good birding in other locations with other people. I gained seven new lifers! The food was great!*

*Archer - Wellington*

*Exceeded expectations. Great experience fun and enjoyable. Met some new people and gained some nice lifers! The food was amazing!*

*Saul - Wellington*

*Super awesome experience, also meeting new likeminded people and learning new skills.*

*Sam - Tasman*

*I enjoyed it because of the different environments and new birds/calls we experienced, and I also loved the lizards.*

*Jamie - Christchurch*