

Trip Dossier

15 Day New Zealand South Island Wildlife & Wilderness Expedition



Accommodated Small Group Tour - Max 12 passengers
Queenstown - Queenstown 13 - 27 February 2021

Itinerary Highlights:

- Kawarau Gorge, Lake Dunstan - home to many species of water birds.
- Lake Ohau - explore the Hopkins River.
- Aoraki Mt Cook National Park - spectacular views of New Zealand's highest mountain with Lake Pukaki in the forefront. Visit Tasman glacier lake.
- Hooker Valley - walk to the terminal lake of the Hooker Glacier.
- Otago Peninsula - Royal Albatross nesting site and home to fur seals.
- Orokonui Eco Sanctuary
- Catlins Coast - little visited coastal area with a variety of seals and sea lions, unspoiled temperate rainforest and waterfalls.
- Stewart Island - cruise for pelagic birds, including several species of Albatross, Cape Petrels, Shearwaters and Prions.
- Ulva Island - a bird sanctuary with unspoilt New Zealand bush.
- Mt Aspiring National Park, Matukituki River Valley
- Mou Wahou - a pristine island cleared of predators. Take a short walk up to the summit for spectacular views.

Most New Zealand tours only visit the popular highlights while we take you further to remote areas away from the crowds.

You will see spectacular high peaks, massive glaciers, glacial lakes with floating icebergs and wild alpine plants on the valley floor at Mt Cook National Park.

We visit the pristine Nothofagus beech forests of the Ohau and Mt Aspiring regions, home to many of New Zealand's native birds such as the Tomtit, Bellbird, Rifleman, South Island Robin and Tui. Your naturalist guides know the places to search for endangered birds such as the Yellowhead, Black Stilt, Wrybill and New Zealand Falcon.

On the Otago coast, we will be looking for NZ fur seals and endangered Hooker's Sea Lions that have returned here to breed. The Catlins coast is captivating and comprises the last stands of east coast temperate rainforest home to many bird species. On past tours in Stewart Island, NZ's newest national park, we have seen endangered birds such as Kaka, Saddleback, Yellowhead and Red-Crowned Parakeet.

We finish the tour with three nights in Wanaka where we will take a private boat cruise and to the remote and pristine Mou Waho Island. A guided walk to the top of the island exposes a hidden lake on the summit; the perfect spot for an unforgettable view of the surrounding wilderness.

Your guide, Martin Curtis, is a well known New Zealand wildlife enthusiast, adventurer, mountaineer guide and folk singer. Martin lives in this part of the South Island and knows it's natural history better than most. He loves sharing his "back yard" with our guests.



Itinerary

Day 1 Sat 13 Feb Home Port to Queenstown

Today you'll arrive in Queenstown and check-in to your accommodation. Your hotel is right on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, with beautiful views of The Remarkables mountain range. Your guides will join you in the hotel restaurant at 7:00 pm for dinner.

Accommodation Sherwood Hotel D

Day 2 Sun 14 Feb Drive to Lake Ohau

We leave Queenstown and drive through the stunning Kawarau Gorge to Cromwell, followed by a drive along the shores of the man-made Lake Dunstan, which is home to many species of waterbird. We cross the Lindis Pass and turn off into the isolated and beautiful Ahuriri Valley for lunch and will have a couple of hours to search for the elusive unique wrybill and the endangered black stilt. We then continue north past Omarama, looking at a couple of exciting places on the way, before turning off into the little-visited Hopkins Valley and Lake Ohau Lodge on the banks of the beautiful lake.

Accommodation Lake Ohau Lodge BLD

Day 3 Mon 15 Feb Lake Ohau

Lake Ohau is a relatively unvisited area, and we will spend the whole day exploring the Hopkins River Valley north of Lake Ohau and the Temple Valley where we will go for a short walk. A marked track ascends gently beside the North Temple River through pristine Nothofagus beech forest. We are unlikely to meet anyone else in this delightful alpine valley, and we see many native birds during the walk. We return to Lake Ohau Lodge in the late afternoon to enjoy great food and superb views from the outdoor spa.

Accommodation Lake Ohau Lodge BLD

Day 4 Tue 16 Feb Lake Ohau to Mount Cook

Leaving Ohau after breakfast, we head back out to the highway across the McKenzie plain and head north a short way until we reach the turn off into the Tasman valley, which is the entrance to the Aoraki Mt Cook National Park. Given fine weather, we will have spectacular views of New Zealand's highest mountain which stands sentinel at the head of the valley, with the distinctive blue-coloured Lake Pukaki in front of it. The colour comes from the rock flour, brought down from the Tasman glacier. We'll stop on the way up to look for the rare black stilt, as we located a new site where they can often be found. We then continue to the spectacular Mt Cook village, where massive hanging glaciers tower above us. After lunch, we visit the Tasman Glacier Lake, now growing at an alarming rate. We will also spend some time around the village to search for N.Z.'s iconic mountain parrot, the kea, which is now seriously endangered.

Accommodation Mount Cook Chalets BLD

Day 5 Wed 17 Feb Mount Cook

This morning we will go on a beautiful walk up the Hooker Valley, crossing over several swing bridges and up to the terminal lake of the Hooker Glacier, where we should see icebergs that have calved floating in the lake. New Zealand's highest mountain Aoraki / Mt Cook is right in front of us here. We will see many unique N.Z. alpine plants on the way. The walk is on a formed gravel track and takes about 3-4 hours return. We will then have more time in the Mt Cook area to do other walks and continue our search for the kea. We can also visit the National Park visitor centre, which has very impressive displays about the surrounding area, its botany, geology and the history of New Zealand mountaineering.

Accommodation Mount Cook Chalets BLD

Day 6 Thur 18 Feb Mount Cook to Dunedin

We leave Mount Cook after breakfast and head down the Waitaki Valley past several dams and man-made hydro lakes, then through an area of strange limestone outcrops and on to the east coast. On our way south on Highway One, we will turn off to a couple of good coastal vantage points to look for seabirds and seals before arriving in the scenic 'Scottish' city of Dunedin.

Accommodation: Leviathan Heritage Hotel BLD

Day 7 Fri 19 Feb Dunedin

Today we drive out to the Otago Peninsula, world-famous for its wildlife. We visit the Royal Albatross nesting site at Taiaroa Head, also home to many other birds and fur seals. We will then go to the Orokonui Ecosanctuary where we will have lunch before spending the next couple of hours exploring the Sanctuary.

Accommodation: Leviathan Heritage Hotel BLD

Day 8 Sat 20 Feb Dunedin to Balclutha

A short two-hour drive takes us to the Catlins coast and the rugged headland of Nugget Point, home to many seals and seabirds. We'll then drive a short way south for a beach walk at Surat Bay to look for the endangered Hooker's Sea Lion. Along with the coastal areas the region boasts the last unspoiled temperate rainforest on the east coast of the South Island, where we take a bushwalk through the forest.

Accommodation: Balclutha BLD

Day 9 Sun 21 Feb Balclutha to Stewart Island

Today we continue our drive south, stopping for short walks to various viewpoints including the spectacular MacLean Falls. We continue around this rarely visited coastal area before eventually reaching the southern city of Invercargill and the small port of Bluff where we park the bus for three days and board the evening ferry across the Foveaux Strait to Stewart Island. On the way, we hope to see albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters that roam the Southern Ocean. We will stay at the island's only pub, the basic but iconic South Sea Hotel on the shores of Halfmoon Bay.

Accommodation: South Sea Hotel BLD

Day 10 Mon 22 Feb Stewart Island

Today we'll enjoy a boat trip to see pelagic birds with a local wildlife expert. We'll sail out to a group of islands to see many of the birds that traverse the Southern Ocean, including several species of albatross, Cape Petrels, shearwaters and prions. For the other half of the day, you may choose to take an enjoyable two-hour walk along the coastline and through the native bush. NOTE (These two days on Stewart Island may be switched around depending on weather conditions and availability of the pelagic boat trip).

Accommodation: South Sea Hotel BLD

Day 11 Tue 23 Feb Stewart Island

A short trip this morning by water taxi will take us to Ulva Island, a bird sanctuary in the middle of Patersons Inlet. We will see the New Zealand bush as it was before humans arrived - full of native birds so tame that they will hop onto your boots and pack. We should see endangered species such as the Kaka, Saddleback, Weka, Mohua (Yellowhead) and perhaps even a Kiwi.

Accommodation: South Sea Hotel BLD

Day 12 Wed 24 Feb Stewart Island to Wanaka

After an early breakfast, we board the ferry back to Bluff, collect the bus and drive for three hours towards Queenstown. We can visit several places of interest around the area, including Lake Hayes where there is a large population of ducks, grebes and swans. Another option is the old gold-mining town of Arrowtown, which dates back to the 1860s. Finally, we have a one hour drive over the spectacular Crown Range (N.Z.'s highest public road) to the beautiful alpine town of Wanaka, situated on the shores of the pristine Lake Wanaka.

Accommodation: Lake Wanaka Hotel BLD

Day 13 Thur 25 Feb Mt Aspiring National Park

A drive up the Matukituki River Valley to the roads end at Raspberry Creek will enable us to explore this area. We return to Wanaka in the late afternoon.

Accommodation: Lake Wanaka Hotel BLD

Day 14 Fri 26 Feb Lake Wanaka

We have several options for the morning in this lovely lake-side town, including the outlet where the Lake becomes the Clutha River, N.Z.'s most significant river by volume. After lunch, we will take a boat trip with a local eco-guide up the lake to the unique island of Mou Wahou. This island has been cleared of predators and was extensively replanted with native bush, encouraging the return of its birdlife and natural fauna, including the cheeky Buff Weka who will be waiting for us at the landing stage. We'll take a short walk up to the summit of the island, to a small lake and beautiful views of the surrounding mountains.

Accommodation: Lake Wanaka Hotel BLD

Day 15 Sat 27 Feb Wanaka to Queenstown

Your New Zealand wildlife and wilderness experiences come to an end this morning.

The group transfer to Queenstown Airport will depart from the hotel after check out at around 10.00 am. It is about one and a half-hour drive so we should arrive at the airport at approximately 11.30 am. B

Although this is not a walking tour, some walking is necessary to get to the places where the flora and fauna are at their best.

This itinerary is subject to change due to weather or sea conditions



Tour Costs

Cost: \$6,375.00 Per Person Twin Share
\$1,135.00 Single Supplement
(only a limited number of single rooms available)

Departs: Queenstown 13 February 2021

Finishes: Queenstown 27 March 2021

Tour Payments

Deposit: At time of booking \$1,000.00 per person

Final Payment: On or before 13 January 2021

Note: The \$1,000.00 deposit is non refundable and the final payment is non-refundable after the 13 January 2021.

Travel insurance covering all payments is strongly recommended.

Prices are based on all known costs and current rates of exchange.

Any significant changes beyond our control will be passed on to passengers.

Included

- Coates tour leader/driver;
- Specialist wildlife/botanical guide;
- Land content as set out in the itinerary;
- Accommodation and breakfast, lunch and dinner as shown in the itinerary;
- All national park entrance fees;
- Entrance fee for the Royal Albatross nesting site at Tairaroa Head;
- Ferry (Stewart Island),
- Stewart Island Pelagic Bird Cruise.

Not Included

- Return airfares, airline and airport taxes from home port to New Zealand;
- Airport transfer on arrival in Queenstown;
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended);
- All other private expenses;
- Alcoholic or carbonated drinks;
- Pre and post tour accommodation.

Special Offers

Book Multiple Tours

Save 5% per person on the second and subsequent tours if more than one tour is booked in the same year. Applies to the cheaper tours.

Loyalty Program

Save \$100 per person on your second, third and fourth tour. Save \$150 per person when you have travelled on 5 or more tours. Tours must be operated by Coates Wildlife Tours.

Tour Information

New Zealand Naturalist Guide: Martin Curtis

Coates Leader/ Driver Guide: Red Morrell

Vehicles:

Coaster bus and ferry.

Accommodation:

Hotels and lodges. We chose our properties for their location, quality and either their historical or general interest features. Accommodation is on a twin share basis. Single rooms are usually available at all the properties.

Meals:

All meals as shown on the itinerary are included (B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner). We can cater for special dietary requirements with prior notice. Please contact the office if you have special dietary needs as a surcharge may apply. Note: trail mix or any other snacks required during the walks are at passengers own expense.

Trek Grading:

Moderate with some steep inclines and many steps in some places. N/B All walks are optional.

Weather:

Summer in New Zealand is from December to February, and average temperatures on the South Island range from 10 - 22 degrees Celsius. The weather can change unexpectedly as cold fronts blow in. So be prepared for sudden changes in climate and temperatures. There is also the risk of rain

Clothing:

A suggested list of items to pack will be included in your pre-departure information which is sent to you about one month before departure. However, we recommend that you pack comfortable casual clothing. Sturdy and comfortable walking shoes are essential.

To make a booking or further information please contact

Tom or Sylvia Grove at Coates Wildlife Tours

P.O. Box 4502

Myaree BC, Myaree, WA 6960

Phone: 08 9330 6066 Free Call Country & Interstate: 1800 676 016

Email: coates@iinet.net.au Web: www.coateswildlifetours.com.au

Terms and Conditions

Adina Nominees Pty Ltd (ACN 075 427 324) as trustee for the Grove Family Trust trading as Coates Wildlife Tours (hereinafter referred to as the tour operator) shall not be liable for any accident, injury, sickness, delay, irregularity or damage however caused or arising during any tour under its management or otherwise. Tours are often safari trips to isolated areas; they may include off-road driving, bushwalking, snorkelling, swimming and other activities. These, along with wildlife interactions, planned or otherwise involve a certain degree of risk. All travel involves some measure of personal risk that each passenger has to determine and accept.

Tour participants should be in reasonable health and fitness and be carrying all required medications in ample quantities. Medical clearance from a registered medical practitioner may be required for participants wishing to join some tours. Some activities like scenic flights, boat cruises, helicopter flights are not operated by the tour operator, nor by persons or companies associated with the tour operator and may involve inherent risk of injury, death, accident and loss. Passengers assume all risks concerning any misadventure death, injury or loss which occurs during or as a result of any such activity.

Should the tour operator deem it desirable for climatic or other reasons whatsoever to amend or vary any itinerary, they may do so by shortening or varying the trip in which case the participant will make no objection or claim for compensation.

The tour operator and its employees are unable to guarantee exact arrival and departure times and are not liable for any failure to make connections with any other services.

The tour operator does not own or operate any third-party suppliers of air transportation, hotels, restaurants, cruise craft or local sightseeing companies. The tour operator is not responsible for any loss or expense due to overbooking of flights, accommodations, default of any third parties or any other cause beyond its control. The tour operator takes all reasonable care in selecting these operators; it cannot accept responsibility for the operator's conduct or the conduct of their employees or agents or for any ramifications of that conduct.

While all care is taken, the tour operator does not accept liability for loss or damage to baggage, sickness or injury, or additional expenses caused by factors beyond their control.

All care is taken to ensure this document is correct at the time of printing. Prices and services, as shown in the trip dossiers and website are however subject to change or withdrawal without notice.

BOOKING DETAILS

DEPOSIT: See the relevant trip dossiers for the amount required.

FINAL PAYMENT: In most cases, final payment is required at least 30 days before departure. However, some tours may require payment up to 4 months before departure. Please refer to the tour's trip dossier for exact details.

Payments can be made by Cheque, Direct Deposit, Visa or Mastercard.

N/B Visa and Mastercard payment will incur an additional bank credit card fee of 1.5%

CANCELLATIONS

Coates Wildlife Tours reserves the right to cancel any tour in the event of minimum numbers not being reached, in which case all amounts of money will be refunded in full.

Coates Wildlife Tours will not be considered to be in breach of this contract due to a delay or cancellation caused by a Force Majeure. "Force Majeure is any circumstance which is outside our reasonable control.

In these circumstances, Coates Wildlife Tours will use our best endeavour to re-schedule the tour to a date within 12 months of the original date. Coates Wildlife Tours shall not be held liable for amounts that cannot be retrieved from third parties.

In respect of cancellations by a passenger, specific to the New Zealand South Island Wildlife & Wilderness Expedition the following cancellation time or penalties are in place plus any costs charged by other parties involved with the Tour will apply: -

Deposits are non-refundable for all tours at any time.

Where written notice is received:

Before 13th January 2020: Deposit is non-refundable however any other payments may be refunded

Between 13th January 2020 and 13th February 2021: Full tour cost is non-refundable.

No refunds are considered from the day the Tour starts.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that travel insurance against imposition of cancellation fees, loss or damage to baggage and extra costs arising from injury or illness be affected.

GENERAL INFORMATION

EQUIPMENT: - Transport by an air-conditioned custom built 4WD tour coach, minibus or 4WD vehicle; whichever is appropriate for the tour. Camping equipment suitable for each tour (except sleeping bags and pillows) is provided. A second vehicle may accompany the group on tours to remote areas. In the case of breakdown or other unforeseen circumstances affecting the vehicle or guide, the operator reserves the right to substitute vehicles and guides other than those specified, to ensure the operation of a tour.

GENERAL INFORMATION CONT.

SEAT ALLOCATION: - Seats on tour vehicle are not pre allocated. To ensure all participants get to enjoy forward positioned and window seats we have incorporated a daily seat rotation system.

LUGGAGE: - Please note that due to health and safety requirements luggage on tour is limited to one medium sized, soft sided bag per person. The sum of its length, width and height is not to exceed 140 cm. The maximum weight of the bag should not to exceed 15 kilograms. A small day pack is also permitted. International tours, some island tours and the Kimberley Coastal Cruises luggage limits may vary, please see the respective tours trip dossier for specific weight maximums.

WILDLIFE: - Sighting of wildlife mentioned in the itineraries cannot be guaranteed as they are wild and therefore free to come and go as they please.

WILDFLOWER DISPLAYS: - Cannot be guaranteed as they are dependent on seasonal rains.

MEAL SYMBOLS: - B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

GROUP SIZES: - Minimum and maximum numbers apply to all tours. Generally, tours have a maximum of 12 passengers. For camping tours, a camp cook and a naturalist leader will accompany camping groups with more than 6 passengers.