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## REVIEW

### **A photographic guide to the birds of New Zealand**

Rob Suisted

Text by Alison Dench

New Holland Publishers (NZ) Ltd, 2011, Auckland.  
 ISBN 9781869663339. 80 pp., Paperback \$19.99.

This is a convenient sized book, 180 mm square giving an introduction to 61 species of birds found in New Zealand. This is not an exhaustive guide to New Zealand birds, but is a well-illustrated introduction of some of our birds. Rob Suisted's photographs illustrate the birds in their environment, and Alison Dench's well researched text is concise. It is basically a picture book of

photographic images accompanied by a readable and informative text. Each bird is referred to by its common name and Maori name if endemic. The illustrations adequately give sufficient information, that the reader may easily recognise the bird in the field, and would be a good book to start someone with an interest in birds around them.

The book is divided into 4 sections: forest, wetland, coastal and seabirds, and open country. The forest section covers 19 species and illustrates most of the common bush birds, although kakapo, which one is not likely to come across readily is illustrated here, probably because of its oddity, as the heaviest parrot in the world and its novelty as a ground parrot. The blue duck/whio also appears in this segment of the book. The wetland section is represented by 13 species, the coastal and seabirds

section illustrates 18 species and 11 species are given in the birds of the open country, including takahe and song thrush, as well as chaffinch, yellowhammer, house sparrow, starling and the self introduced welcome swallow. Notable omissions are the blackbird, myna, and skylark. As this is not designed to be an exhaustive book or as a reference

guide there is no index included, but at the modest price could be a useful gift as some interesting facts are given about our unique birdlife.

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