

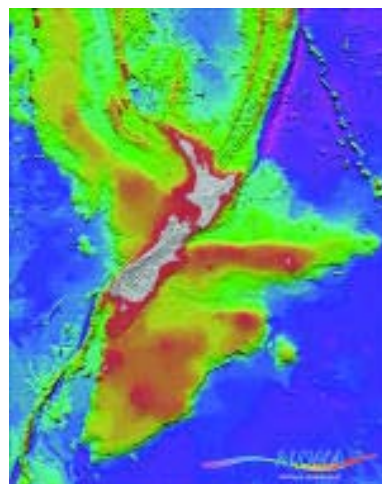
CHATHAMS BOUNTY ANTIPODES SNARES ISLANDS 2006/2007



New Zealand has the most diverse seabird community in the world. Ninety-five species breed in the New Zealand region including 35 species (42%) that are endemic (breed nowhere else). In addition many other seabirds from across the Great Southern and tropical South Pacific Oceans visit New Zealand waters making a visit Downunder for seabirds a truly memorable experience. Our expedition to the Chathams, Bounty, Antipodes and Snares Islands aboard *MV Braveheart* offers a big trip for a small group (up to twelve participants). With so many great sights, wildlife and seabirds to see our high participant-to-leader/crew ratio provides an excellent level of personalised service. You won't be neglected!

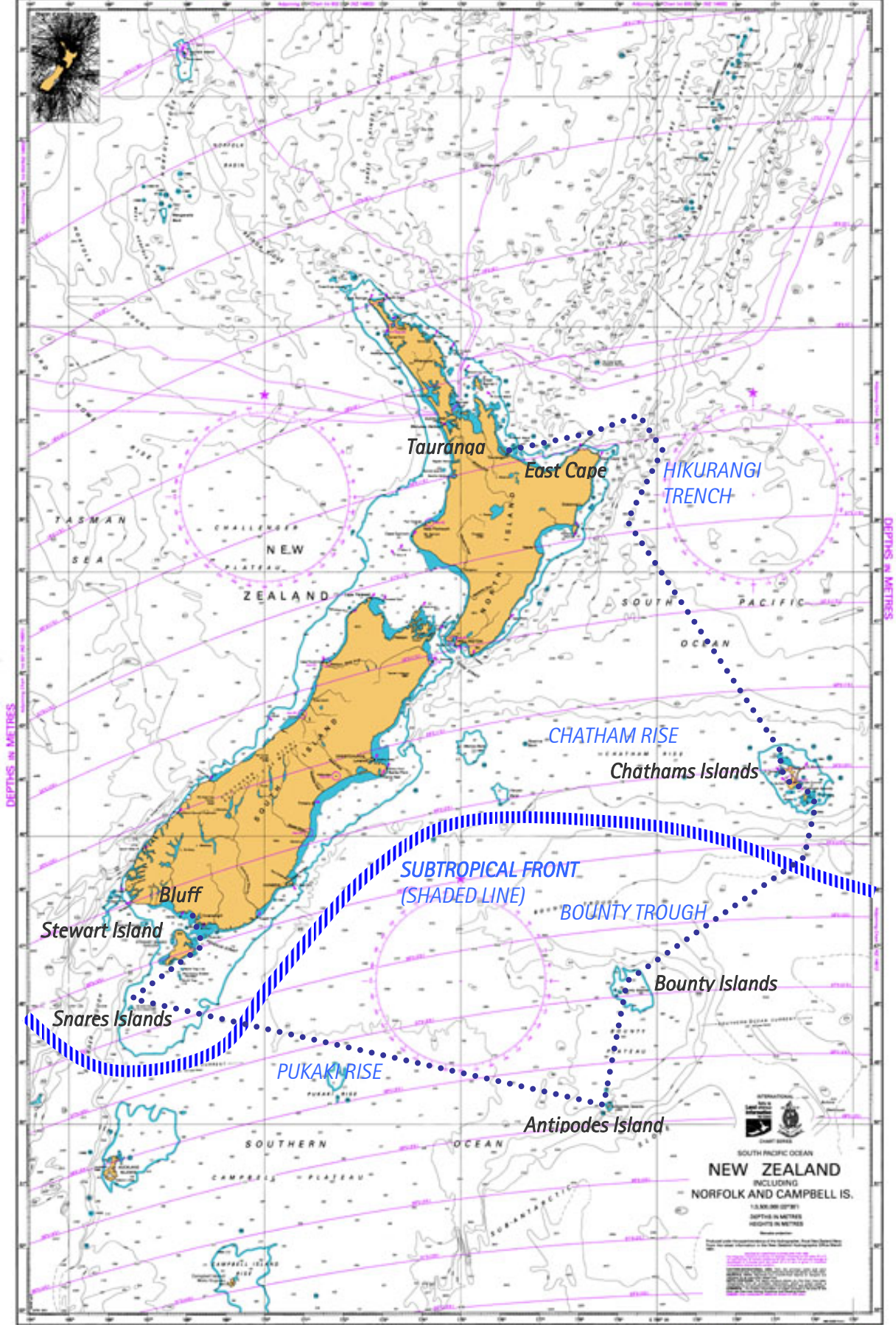
VOYAGE SUMMARY

0. Travel to Tauranga and board *Braveheart* in afternoon; depart at night
1. East Cape
2. At sea
3. At sea – arrival Chatham Islands
4. Chatham
5. Chatham Islands – Pyramid, SE Island, Pitt Island
6. At sea
7. Bounty Islands
8. Antipodes
9. At sea
10. At sea, Snares
11. Bluff Harbour, Invercargill



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DEPTHS in METRES



DEPTHS in METRES

DEPTHS in METRES

DEPTHS in METRES INT 600
N.Z. 14600

Day 0 – Tauranga

Travel to Tauranga from Auckland with members of the group using one of our minibuses. Meet your tour leaders, *Braveheart's* skipper and members of the crew over dinner. This is the time to make you feel at home. We leave Tauranga at evening, past Mount Maunganui and across the Bay of Plenty.

Day 1 – East Cape



In recent years pelagics the East Cape/Tolaga Bay area has netted some great birds, and we anticipate the same, with subtropical seabirds including **White-necked Petrel** which is high on the list of our target species. We also saw how far south subtropical seabirds were venturing on our Kermadecs trip in Jan 2006. We will explore north-east towards the warm waters of the East Cape Eddy, and in the vicinity of the Hikurangi Trough and the Ranfurly Banks. If conditions allow we will spend time chumming

Day 2 – at sea

Beyond the Hikurangi Trough we cross some very deep water, between 2500m and 3800m.

Day 3 – Chatham Islands

Today we will close in on the Chathams Group, first seeking out The Sisters to the north of main Chatham itself, then at the end of the day anchoring at Waitangi. The Sisters is the main colony of northern royal and Pacific (northern Buller's) albatrosses.

Day 4 – Chatham Islands

Time ashore on Big Chatham. The Chathams comprise an archipelago of two large and more than a dozen smaller islands. The group is volcanic in origin. The main island of 90K hectares appears as a series of low hills joined by wide vegetated sandbars with a large central lagoon. The southern and northwestern parts of the main island are rugged with some forest areas. Local specialties, besides the people and crayfish are:



Chatham Island oystercatcher, Chatham Island pigeon (parea), Chatham Island shag, Chatham Island taiko (Magenta petrel), buff weka, banded dotterel, Chatham Island pipit, Chatham Island warbler, fantail and tomtit.



Day 5 – Chatham Islands

Pitt Island, Mangere and Rangitira (Southeast Island) – **New Zealand shore plover**, Pitt Island shag, Chatham Island snipe, Forbes parakeet, Chatham Island red-crowned parakeet, black robin. Also grey-backed storm petrel.

Pyramid – breeding **Chatham island albatross**



Day 6 – at sea

Grey-backed storm petrel, black-winged petrel, Chatham petrel, Fairy and Chatham Island fulmar prion, sooty shearwater, white-capped albatross..... The area we plan to explore today with beautiful ashy Grey Petrel and White-headed Petrels, and possibly Taiko (or Magenta Petrel). These are prime areas for picking up a range of seabirds moving north post-breeding from the subantarctic, such as Black-bellied Storm Petrel and White-headed Petrel.



Day 7 – Bounty Islands

The Bounties are mere specks in a boundless ocean. When HMS Bounty sailed past in 1788, Captain William Bligh recorded 'white spots like patches of snow'. What he observed was almost certainly not snow but areas of guano deposited by generations of seabirds and enameled to the granite surfaces. The Bounty Islands resemble the last vestiges of a disappearing landmass – the tips of the submerged Bounty Platform. And yet they are the home to an extraordinary diverse collection of

seabirds and seals: Bounty Island shag, Erect-crested penguin, Salvin's albatross, Snares cape petrel (pigeon) and fulmar prion. NZ fur seals. We move between the Bounty and Antipodes Islands at night.

Day 8 – Antipodes Island

Perched on the southeast margin of the Bounty Platform, over 800km from the South Island, the Antipodes group is the remotest of NZ's subantarctic Islands. Measuring a chunky by five kilometres, Antipodes Island rises to an altitude of 366m at Mt Galloway, a prominent volcanic cone. The Antipodes is a



haven for seabirds: Antipodean, light-mantled sooty, black-browed and white-capped albatrosses; erect-crested and eastern rockhopper penguins; soft-plumaged, white-headed, white-chinned, grey and northern giant petrels; black-bellied storm petrel; and subantarctic diving petrel. Also sooty shearwater and fairy prion. Two parakeets, Antipodes and Reischek's parakeets, the latter a subspecies of the mainland red-crowned parakeet. Antipodes Island snipe and Antipodes Island pipit. NZ fur seal and southern elephant seal

Day 9 – at sea, Pukaki Rise

Grey, soft-plumaged, white-headed and white-chinned petrels; albatrosses. We plan to cruise through this rich feeding ground for seabirds en route to the Snares.

Day 10 – at sea, Snares

Southern royal, Gibson's, and snowy albatross, white-capped, Salvin's and Buller's albatross, blue petrel, Snares cape petrel....

We make Snares landfall in afternoon. These islands are forest covered and birds enjoy the luxury (rare on this planet) of having no introduced mammals, not even mice. The forest, predominantly large tree daisies *Olearia lyallii* and *Brachyglottis stewartiae*, is one of tight wind-shorn canopy and gnarled trunks. The peat layer beneath the trees is riddled with seabird burrows. Sooty shearwaters number over two million on the Snares, high density living! We'll use the zodiacs to cruise the shoreline to get close to the **Snares crested penguins** and possibly land birds, especially the Snares fernbird, Snares island tomtit (which is all black) and the New Zealand snipe (which is extinct on the main islands). (Landing is not permitted on the Snares). Other birds breeding on the Snares include Buller's albatross, Salvin's albatross, Southern diving petrel, Snares cape petrel, fairy, fulmar and broad-billed prions, mottled petrel and Antarctic tern. Many other species have been reported in the vicinity of the group.



Day 11 – Arrival Bluff (Invercargill)

By morning we will be off Stewart Island and there will be the opportunity to explore some remote corners of New Zealand's third largest island before heading across Foveaux Strait to Bluff Harbour.

TRIP LEADERS



CHRIS GASKIN is the Expedition Leader. He has worked as a natural history artist and heritage illustrator over a period of 25 years. He has illustrated over 20 books with several award-winning children's nature books and natural history reference books. The latter include books on albatrosses and penguins. More recently Chris specialised in designing displays and educational resources for museums and visitor centres. Chris has developed specialist skills through working with palaeontologists reconstructing New Zealand's fascinating extinct fauna and creating artwork which brings fossil birds such as penguins and other creatures including early whales and dolphins to life. With his wife Karen he operates Pterodroma Pelagics NZ.

Chris as Expedition Leader will ensure we make the most of our opportunities, at sea and on land.



KAREN BAIRD has a Masters degree in zoology and has worked in a professional capacity in conservation for 14 years. She has been involved in projects including studying the Little Spotted Kiwi on Kapiti Island, New Zealand Sea Lion, Southern Right Whale and Royal Albatross on New Zealand Subantarctic islands, and efforts to establish marine reserves in New Zealand. She was the Department of Conservation's Coastal Marine Manager in Otago. Karen also worked at DOC Auckland Conservancy office for several months in 2002 on the Great Barrier Marine Reserve Proposal and DOC Northern Regional Office in 2003 on Coastal Units Classification.

As tour leaders and specialist bird guides Karen and Chris have gained considerable experience on many pelagics and tours throughout New Zealand and the South Pacific. Both have a lot of 'sea-time' experience, whether for recreation (including sea kayaking and sailing) or during the course of professional work. They have been operating pelagics to the outer Hauraki Gulf (through Kiwi Wildlife Tours NZ) since the end of 2002 when they recognised the Gulf's full potential as a pelagic destination, also off Stewart Island, NZ's Far North and northern outliers, the Kermadec Islands.



HADORAM SHIRIHAI is the author of the Antarctic Guide, Princeton Univ. Press: the forthcoming Tubenoses of the World (Princeton Univ. Press, US; A & C Black, London) and author of the forthcoming guide to the Marine Mammals of the World (Princeton Univ. Press, US; A & C Black, London) acts as Identification and Expedition Consultant for Pterodroma Pelagics. Hadoram will be on hand to help with spotting and identification. There's a great deal of experience and skill behind that camera. The Kermadecs trip and other voyages we are doing together will give him an opportunity to research and photograph for his forthcoming books.





OUR EXPEDITION VESSEL



MV Braveheart is a 110ft (40m) ex-Japanese research vessel that has been converted into a comfortable charter vessel. She has seen service in all Southern Oceans under its current owners (Nigel Jolly & associates), and is used by NZ, Australian and British Governments to service Kermadec and Pitcairn Islands in the Pacific, as well as islands in both Indian and South Atlantic Oceans (including Kerguelen and South Georgia) – testament to her sea-worthiness. *Braveheart* is ideal for the extended birdwatching expeditions, with plenty of safe viewing areas on deck, comfortable living quarters and a great atmosphere. Her skipper and four crew are all Kiwis (New Zealanders). They, like your expedition leaders, aim to ensure that your time aboard is thoroughly relaxed and enjoyable. With so many great sights and seabirds to see our high participant-to-leader/crew ratio provides an excellent level of personalised service. You won't be neglected!



All passenger accommodation is on the lower deck. This is at the water line and ensures we are all sleeping where the movement of the vessel is at its minimum. Along one side of this deck are four cabins with twin berths, one single (lower) and one double (upper). There are lockers for storage, individual lights with each berth and a desk in each cabin. These are covered by the **twin share price**.



Along the other side of the accommodation deck are six berths (all with individual lights). These are three sets of bunks, one up one down. They are all curtained for privacy. There is storage available. This level of accommodation is essentially bunkroom style. All very comfortable with fresh linen and duvets. These berths are covered by the **single berth price**.



A laundry is operated by the crew. The excellent library and lounge area is a great place to relax when you need a break from birding.

There are also full dive facilities on board.