



HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIPS

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 is the workplace health and safety law in New Zealand. This Act sets out the principles, duties and rights of people and organisations in relation to workplace health and safety. **All organisations** have a legal obligation for ensuring that activities they undertake meet their health and safety responsibilities.

Birds New Zealand is committed to ensuring that all field observations, research and any other activities related to birding that are arranged and led by the society are safe, healthy and enjoyable. Trip leaders need to be aware of the *Birds New Zealand Health and Safety Policy Statement* adopted by Council on 3rd April 2017.

The following guidelines set out basic advice for members of Birds New Zealand when making observations of birds in the field. Regional Representatives, trip leaders and members are strongly encouraged to apply, or adapt, these guidelines to the local circumstances of specific field trips.

Health and Safety

At a health and safety briefing before a field trip commences the trip leader will describe the route, any specific or potential physical difficulties that might be encountered, and the approximate times for lunch, tea breaks and the end of the trip.

The leader will bring the regions first-aid kit and a topographic map of the locality. Members are encouraged to bring their own first-aid kit. If a member has an allergy or medical condition, they should bring their own anti-histamines and personal medications. The trip leader should be advised of medical problems a member has and how to deal with them. Bring a mobile phone and share phone numbers with others.

If a member decides to leave a trip early, they must tell the leader, and they need to be confident that they know their way back to the start. They should record their name and time of arrival on a 'register' under a wind-screen wiper on the leader's car, or at another agreed place, to record their safe return.

The trip leader should check the weather forecast for the day and, if necessary, monitor the weather conditions during the trip. Turn back if the weather deteriorates.

Each member should bring sufficient food and drinking water for their personal needs.

Fitness, experience and clothing

Field trips are mostly on established tracks, or on level ground, and proceed at a leisurely pace with frequent stops for observations, but trips may vary in the level of fitness and walking experience required. Although many field trips require little physical effort for most members some may be more strenuous than others.

Although the trip leader will take care to minimise risks, members participate at their own risk. If a member has doubts about their ability to walk over rough or steep ground, or have difficulty when travelling in boats, they should discuss this with the leader and reconsider their participation on a trip.

Warm clothing and strong footwear are essential. A wind jacket / raincoat, gloves, warm hat / sunhat and sunscreen are recommended, depending on the weather.