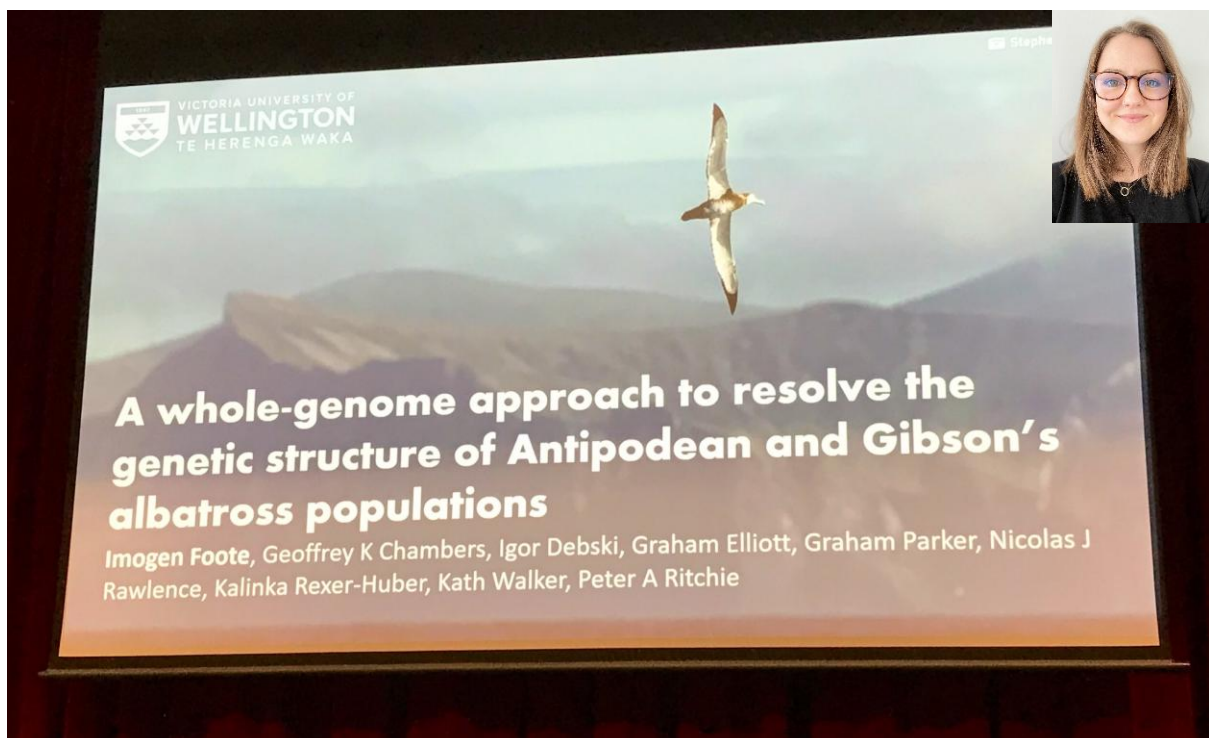


## BirdsNZ conference 2022 Christchurch – Imogen Foote

Over Queen’s birthday weekend this year, I travelled to Christchurch to take part in my first ever BirdsNZ conference. With an incredible 38 talks and 11 posters centred around native, endemic and introduced bird species, the weekend provided something for every NZ birder. The bar was set high from the beginning, with an impressive show of science communication, and an inspiring enthusiasm for birds and birding all around. I enjoyed hearing from a range of birders, from activities of community monitoring groups, to the effects of light pollution, plastic pollution and fisheries on our native species, to dealing with banding data, atlas checklists and old field notebooks. In particular I found it very illuminating to see the range of different backgrounds of everyone in attendance, and the possibilities of so many bird related career paths. I very much enjoyed sharing the preliminary results from my PhD and hugely appreciated the support and enthusiasm for my research. I can’t wait to attend in Taranaki next year and give an update.

I am very grateful to BirdsNZ for awarding me the ‘Fledgling Fund’ student travel grant to attend this conference. This conference provided an opportunity to reconnect with old friends as well as form new networks and share lots of bird facts. A big thanks to the organising committee for hosting a fantastic conference. I am looking forward to attending many more BirdsNZ conferences in the future.



Imogen Foote (inset) presents the preliminary results from her PhD research where she is using genomics as a tool to help resolve taxonomy and population structure of the Antipodean and Gibson’s albatross. Watch this space for further results in the not-too-distant future..... Photo: Natalie Forsdick