

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Tomtit: pp 244-247.



TOMTIT

Family Eopsaltriidae

Species *Petroica macrocephala* closely related to the Australian genus of *Petrocia* but larger in size.

Common name Tomtit

Status Endemic

Abundance Common

Size 130 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Grey Warbler 100 mm)

Habitat A bird of old forests, secondary forest and exotic pine forests. Absent from scrublands.

Range Can be found in most forested areas throughout New Zealand including Stewart Island, but absent from large areas of farmland in the Waikato and

Canterbury. Also on offshore islands, but not on Tiri Tiri Matangi Island.

Species Divided into four subspecies, the Pied Tit of North Island forests, the Yellow-breasted Tit of South Island forests, the Chatham Island Tit of the Chatham Islands and Snares Island Tit found on Snares Island to the south of Stewart Island

Description – male bird (above)

Head, throat and upperparts Black. **Frontal dot above bill** White. **Wings** Black with a conspicuous white wingbar. **Underparts** Pure white on the North Island bird and white, washed with yellow, on the South Island bird (top) and Chatham Island birds. **Tail** Black with white edges.

Description – female bird (below)

Upperparts Brownish. **Frontal dot above bill** Less conspicuous than on male bird and sometimes absent. **Wingbar** White but less obvious than that of the male bird. **Chin and breast** Grey-brown. **Underparts** Greyish.



Conspicuous features

- Bigger and heavier than the Grey Warbler.
- Has prominent eye, larger and bolder than the Grey Warbler.
- White or yellow breast.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Confiding nature.
- Birds just arrive and peer with head on one side.
- Although usually found inside the forest, Tomtits will venture out for

short spells from forest verges into cleared areas.

- Cling to the side of trunks with head down.

Call Song, delivered by the male bird, is a fragile “sweedle sweedle sweedle swee”. Male birds in nesting territories can be very vocal.

Nest A bulky structure of twigs, fern, moss and cobwebs, lined with feathers and tree-fern hairs, on a branch fork or a cavity in a bank. Up to 5 cream, yellow-speckled eggs are laid.

Where to find – North Island

Northland – Bay of Islands at Puketi Forest. P. 281.

Northland – Warkworth at the Dome Valley. P. 287.

South Auckland – Waharau north of Miranda. P. 302.

King Country – Pureora on the track near the Pureora Park headquarters. P. 314.

Rotorua – Mamaku at Galaxy Road. P. 325.

Rotorua – Hongis Track near Lake Rotoiti and Rotoehu. P. 323.

Rotorua – Whakarewarewa. P. 324.

Central Plateau – Atiamuri. P. 315.

Taupo – Opepe Forest on Highway 5. P. 326.

Taupo – Lake Rotoponaumu. P. 316.

Where to find – South Island

Marlborough – Pelorus Bridge. P. 343.

Canterbury – Alford Forest. P. 363.

West Coast – All the roadside forests here are good for Tomtits.

Fiordland – Cascade Creek and Lake Gunn. P. 370.

Where to find – Stewart Island

Oban – Can be seen in the forests here. P. 367.

Ulva Island – This island in Paterson Inlet has good numbers. P. 367.

South Island Tomtit





SNARES ISLAND TOMTIT

Family Eopsaltriidae

Species *Petroica macrocephala dannefaerdi*

Common name Snares Island Tomtit

Status Endemic

Abundance Common locally

Size 130 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm)

Habitat A bird of secondary and tall forests.

New Zealand range Snares Island only which lie to the south of Stewart Island on about the 48th parallel south.

Description

Upper and underparts Black.

Call The song, delivered by the male bird is similar to the mainland species - "sweedle sweedle sweedle swee".

Nest As for North and South Island Tomtits.

Where to find

Snares Island south of Stewart Island.