

Watola, G. 2011. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (3rd Edition in prep.)
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Skylark: p 233.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* Linnaeus 1758
1864 Nelson

Twenty birds were released in Nelson in 1864 (Thomson 1922). Further large numbers were released between 1864 and 1879.

“The song of the skylark was listened to with a delight that can hardly be expressed in words. It sent a thrill of pleasure through the whole settlement. The bird was a “blithe spirit” which poured out the fullness of its joy “in profuse strains of unpremeditated art”. It showered a “rain of melody” on the toiling colonists, and awakened the sweetest thoughts of home and of childhood’s happy hours. The colonists had absolutely no suspicion that their charming little feathered friend, the gay and debonair “embodiment of joy”, the gentle singer of the field, who had come to sing to them the old songs of Merry England, would soon be ranked as a feathered pest, second to none but the sparrow” (Drummond 1906).

