

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

18 cm

INTRODUCED TO NEW ZEALAND AND CHATHAMS

Skylarks were introduced to the main islands of New Zealand by European settlers during the late 1800s because of their melodious flight song. Some were introduced to Chatham Island by Walter Hood in the 1890s, but it is likely that many also flew in from mainland New Zealand. Between August and January, males give a loud trilling territorial song, which can last for up to five minutes, while they fly up and hover at 30-100 m. Skylarks are common in open country, sand dunes and farmland on Chatham and Pitt Islands and are also found on Rangatira and Mangere. Skylarks have very similar colouring to pipits but are slightly stouter, have a shorter tail and do not flick their tails in the way characteristic of pipits.



Skylark at nest.
Photo: Peter Morrison
(DOC).