

Penguin Protection Programme

Date Requested: 13 May 2025

Date Provided: 22 May 2025

Request

It would help to know if there is any historical data pertaining to these, or any other known little penguin populations in Christchurch, that we might be able to review. Also, we were curious to know what systems and protections are currently in place to protect kororā in the area? This could include a reporting system for people finding dead/injured penguins, bylaws pertaining to penguin nesting sites/dog control on beaches/etc., as well as any signage posted near colonies.



Council Response

Thanks for your inquiry about Penguin populations in Christchurch. Some extra observation and monitoring could be useful information for us to have. There are some established groups here in Christchurch and on Banks Peninsula who are monitoring and working with localised colonies of White Flipped Penguins who might be worth connecting with first. They include:

- The Christchurch Penguin Rehabilitation group who undertakes the monitoring of the Harris Bay site for the Department of Conservation (DOC)
- Helps Pohatu Conservation Trust - working at sites on Banks Peninsula.
- Lyttelton Port Company.
- Whaka ora Healthy Harbour project.

DOC are the lead agency when it comes to wildlife monitoring including White Flipped Penguins so they would be another agency worth reaching out to on this.


Please find below the answers to your questions.

We are aware of one monitored colony in Harris Bay and have reason to believe kororā may also be present in the New Brighton beach area based on images taken on iNaturalist and anecdotal reports. It would help to know if there is any historical data pertaining to these, or any other known little penguin populations in Christchurch, that we might be able to review.

The Council doesn't hold any specific long term monitoring data for White Flipped Penguins. We are declining your request under the following section of the LGOIMA: 17(e) the information requested does not exist or cannot be found. Other groups such as DOC and the Christchurch Penguin Rehabilitation Trust would be best to contact regarding this.

At Council Our Regional Parks team are involved with the management of sites such as Harris Bay and other Coastal areas in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula. Council rangers maintain trap lines at some known sites in Christchurch when and where penguin nesting occurs and continue to maintain the Harris Bay Predator Proof Fence to support nesting white flipped penguins. Our staff maintain trap lines around the fence and also support a Forest and Bird Group doing trapping and habitat work inside the fence.

Our rangers have a good local knowledge of where White Flipped Penguins have been present historically and have assisted with the monitoring of penguin activity and nesting sites at times during development projects such as the coastal pathway and other seawall renewal works. As part of those works, rangers have successfully advocated for the installation of nest boxes to provide areas of safe nesting e.g. Shag Rock and Sumner Esplanade. We are aware of Penguins being present throughout the dune system along the New Brighton coastline at various locations although we don't know of any fixed populations or hold any specific monitoring data.



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DOC are the lead agency for collecting information on dead or injured wildlife. [The Wildlife Act 1953](#) is the main law which controls how people interact with wildlife. The Councils [dog control bylaw](#) has areas that prohibit dogs from certain places to protect wildlife values (particularly endangered birds), it also prohibits dogs or requires a leash in certain places to protect conservation values. If a dog owner is found to be in breach of the Bylaw, then under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), Council has the power for enforcement.

The relevant Acts, Bylaws, and plans include: [Animal control](#) (dog Bylaws), [Wildlife Act 1953](#), [Reserves Act 1977](#), [Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2016](#) (now 2024), [Regional Coastal Plan](#) (this Plan has rules to restrict vehicles from driving on beaches south of Spencer Park).

Our parks signage will sometimes have information where there is sensitive wildlife values present. For example, around the Estuary and Southshore spit. We don't have any signage around the Harris Bay Colony which is fenced off.

Thanks again for your interest and support.
