

# 7 A heaven for birds

Islets provide an irreplaceable habitat for birds, particularly seabirds. Some birds permanently settle on the islets, while others use them as resting, nesting, or feeding sites.

## The guardians of nature

Birds, particularly seabirds, play an essential role in the dynamics of marine ecosystems (reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves), and islets.

- ▶ They regulate certain fish populations by consuming them.
- ▶ They serve as food for other marine species.
- ▶ They fertilize the lagoon and and islets with their guano.
- ▶ They disseminate seeds and promote the establishment of vegetation.
- ▶ They influence the structure of many communities living in their surroundings.

A trail for all, under everyone's responsibility.



**Those who remain « on land. »**

**Grey-eared honeyeater**  
*Lichmera incana incana*  
Protected specie

These birds have no relation to the marine environment. They live sheltered by trees and undergrowth.

**Grey fantail**  
*Rhipidura albiscapa bulgeri*  
Protected specie

**Rufous whistler**  
*Pachycephala rufiventris xanthetraea*  
Protected specie

**Buff-banded rail**  
*Hypotaenidia philippensis*  
Least concern

**Purple swamphen**  
*Porphyrio porphyrio caledonicus*  
Potentially invasive

**Those who stay « between land and sea. »**

These birds never really move away from the coast. They spend a part of their life on land.

**Eastern osprey**  
*Pandion haliaetus*  
Least concern

**Silver gull**  
*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*  
Least concern

**Ruddy turnstone**  
*Arenaria interpres*  
Migratory bird  
Least concern

**Bar-Tailed Godwit**  
*Limosa lapponica*  
Migratory bird  
Near threatened

**Fairy tern**  
*Sterna nereis exsul*  
Vulnerable

**Wandering tattler**  
*Tringa incana*  
Migratory bird  
Least concern

**Pacific golden plover**  
*Pluvialis fulva*  
Migratory bird  
Least concern

**Pacific reef-egre**  
*Egretta sacra albolineata*  
Least concern

**Those who like the open sea.**

These birds, also called pelagic birds, fly far from the coasts, and fly in the open sea. Some go ashore only once a year to lay their eggs.

**Tahiti petrel**  
*Pseudobulweria rostrata*  
Migratory bird  
Vulnerable

**Wedge-tailed shearwater**  
*Ardenna pacifica*  
Migratory bird  
Least concern

**To be continued**

- My first is the opposite of wet.
- My second is an environment full of trees.
- My all is in danger of disappearing.

What am I? Answer on the next sign...

### Let's adopt good habits!

- ▶ Don't get too close.  
If you want to observe them, do so with binoculars to avoid scaring them, which could prevent them from laying eggs or cause them to abandon their nest.
- ▶ Don't touch them.  
If an egg or chick is touched by a human, the nest will be abandoned by the parents.
- ▶ Be careful where you walk.  
During a tour of the islet, walk on the tidal zone to avoid trampling eggs and chicks on the sand and dead corals.



Bird photos: FreeBirdy and BirdC - iStockphoto.com