



Media release *19 December 2018*

Dunedin Wildlife Care Code launched

Dunedin's visitor industry has launched a "Dunedin Wildlife Care Code" to help visitors care for the city's unique and rare wildlife.

Spearheaded by Dunedin Host, the local tourism operators' body, the working group includes Enterprise Dunedin, Department of Conservation and the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

"We've recognised that we need to help our visitors understand how to care for wildlife during their visit to Dunedin. This code helps them to understand guidelines for viewing wildlife and to care for our environment." says Dunedin Host Sustainability Group chair Sophie Barker, Marketing Manager of Otago Peninsula Trust.

"Visitors often come from big cities with limited interaction with wildlife, apart from visiting zoos. Dunedin, recognised as the Wildlife Capital of New Zealand, with unrivalled viewing of sea lions, royal albatross and penguins is a magnet for thousands of tourists who come here to see wildlife in its natural habitat. The code will help visitors to keep a safe distance from penguins and sea lions, and has advice on not feeding animals plus rules around drones, camping and suggestions for how people can help the great work of Dunedin's wildlife charities" explains Sophie.

Sarah Bramhall PR and Promotions Advisor Enterprise Dunedin adds "This initiative sits under one of the Dunedin Destination Plan goals, which is to 'sustain and enhance our natural and built environment for the benefit of residents and visitors'. Providing clear information on how to protect Dunedin's wildlife and environment is an important and very necessary part of this."

DOC Community supervisor Craig Wilson says "DOC is a partner in the newly introduced Tiaki Promise which asks visitors to act as guardians to New Zealand on their visit, making a commitment to protect and preserve our nature. The Dunedin Wildlife Care code is an example of a community working together to help visitors understand how they can be good guardians".

Chris Roberts, Chief Executive of TIA says "This is a fantastic initiative which contributes to the TIA Tourism Sustainability Commitment goal of 'leading the world in sustainable tourism'. The code fulfils three of the sustainability commitments around educating visitors of behavioural expectations, contributing to ecological restoration initiatives, and businesses actively engaging with their visitors and communities on the importance of restoring, protecting and enhancing New Zealand's natural environment."

Printing of the flyers and posters has been sponsored by Scenic Hotel Dunedin City and Otago Peninsula Trust. Scenic Hotel Dunedin City Manager Adrian Clifton says "Our hotels are committed to making a difference for New Zealand's environment. We're proud to contribute to helping spread the valuable wildlife care messages".

Visitors will find the Dunedin Wildlife Care Code on flyers and posters at local accommodation and key visitor sites as well as online at <https://www.dunedinnz.com/visit/see-and-do/wildlife/dunedin-wildlife-care-code>

Dunedin visitor hosts have resources to help them share the code with their visitors at <https://dunedinhost.co.nz/index.php/dunedin-wildlife-care-code/>

–Ends–

Contact:

Sophie Barker – Dunedin Host Sustainability Working Party Chair

Mobile: +64 22 601 2778

Email: sophie@albatross.org.nz

DUNEDIN WILDLIFE CARE CODE

Dunedin is home to rare and special wildlife.

Help us protect our penguins, sea lions and birds for future generations.

View wildlife with a commercial tour operator as this ensures respectful behaviour and limits wildlife disturbance.

Wildlife Care: Help protect Dunedin's rare wildlife. Do not disturb, touch, feed or go too close to penguins, sea lions and seals. Keep dogs away as they can harm wildlife and prevent them from breeding.

Sea lions and other seals: New Zealand sea lions are rare and endangered, please view from a safe distance of at least 20m and do not disturb them. If you must pass them on the beach, keep as much distance as possible and do not loiter. They can move quickly, so back off if they react and do not block their path to water. They can bite!

Penguins: Yellow-eyed penguins are endangered and rare. Stay at least 50m away from yellow-eyed penguins as they are shy and easily stressed. Ensure penguins can't see you. Don't block penguins' entry and exit from the water and never approach a nest. No flash photography or dogs.

Red-billed gulls. Do not feed or chase the seagulls as they are endangered and human food can kill them.

Drones: Use of drones is prohibited in many sensitive areas and can require a permit elsewhere. The important wildlife site of Taiaroa Head/Pukekura has a permanent restricted airspace.

Any DOC reserve requires a permit, and it is an offence to fly drones within 150m of marine mammals (or 300m vertically above). For more information check the Dunedin City Council or DOC website.

Freedom Camping: There are designated freedom camping sites and holiday parks in Dunedin, please use them as \$200 fines will apply for illegal camping.

Public amenities: Please keep Dunedin beautiful and clean by using public toilets and rubbish bins where provided or taking your refuse with you. Smoking and fires are not advisable and often banned under seasonal restrictions.

Walking Tracks: Stay on the marked track as many cross private land. Keep yourself safe, within barriers and avoid damage to plants and breeding wildlife. Leave sheep alone.

Please report any sick or injured wildlife by calling: 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468)

Poaching is illegal, please report marine poaching by calling: 0800 4 POACHER (0800 476 224)

Thank you for helping us to look after our precious wildlife.

Leave nothing but footprints.....take nothing but memories.

More Information

For more information on wildlife tours, freedom camping, public toilets or walking tracks please visit www.dunedinnz.com/visit or contact:

Dunedin iSITE

50 The Octagon

Dunedin

03 474 3300

visitor.centre@dcc.govt.nz

For local drone use guidelines and permits, go to www.dunedin.govt.nz/drones and/or www.doc.govt.nz

The Dunedin Care Code was developed in recognition of the Tiaki Promise www.tiakinewzealand.com

Volunteer or Donate to Dunedin Wild and Conservations Charities

How you can help: Many wildlife charities including the Wildlife Hospital do great work in Dunedin to protect the unique and endangered local wildlife and habitats. You can aid them in many ways including with donations, volunteering and signing petitions to protect the environment.

Find out more at www.dunedinz.com/wildlifecharities