

Your guide to being a Bird of the Year 2025 Campaign Manager

What is Bird of the Year Te Manu Rongonui o Te Tau?

Bird of the Year is an annual competition run by [Forest & Bird](https://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz). New Zealanders vote for their favourite bird at www.birdoftheyear.org.nz.

Enthusiastic and internet-savvy New Zealanders (that's you!) act as volunteer "campaign managers" for their favourite birds, with many going to great lengths to get their bird ahead in the polls.

Bird of the Year gets Kiwis excited about native birds. Folks might even learn a bit about the many threats facing our native species, and how many of our birds are in trouble.

When is Bird of the Year 2025?

Voting opens on **Monday 15 September at 9am and closes on Sunday 28 September** at 5pm.

The winner will be announced on the morning of Monday 29 September.

What does being a campaign manager involve?

You can do as much as you like. Some people have gone all-out by creating videos, selling t-shirts, or taking to the streets to ask for votes.

The reasonable expectation is that you get active on social media or using your own means to campaign for your bird. We've had people campaign on Tinder and TikTok – use whatever you're good at!

Please tag Forest & Bird in your posts (use @ForestandBird on Facebook, Instagram and Threads, @forestandbird.nz on TikTok, @forest_and_bird on Twitter, @forestandbird.bsky.social on BlueSky) or use the hashtag #BirdOfTheYear. We may share some of your content on our social media channels so it can reach more people.

- Read: [Team kākāpō's 10 tips for a successful Bird of the Year campaign!](#)
- Join the community: We have a [Facebook group for campaign managers](#). Please join and get involved.

We will be introducing a new, easier way to count votes made, and to verify votes this year. We will share this information when it is ready and hope that campaign managers can help us circulate and socialise this too.

Code of Conduct

All campaign managers are required to sign a code of conduct form to ensure the competition remains supportive and positive. If you're under 18 years old, you'll have to get a parent or caregiver to sign as well.

Speaking to the media

The media take a big interest in the excitement and silliness around Bird of the Year. If you've agreed to it, we might put you in touch with media interested in talking to a bird nerd.

You never have to speak to the media; only do what you're comfortable with. But it's really cool when regular folks speak up for nature and get excited about birds, so we'll be encouraging journos to ring you if you're up for it!

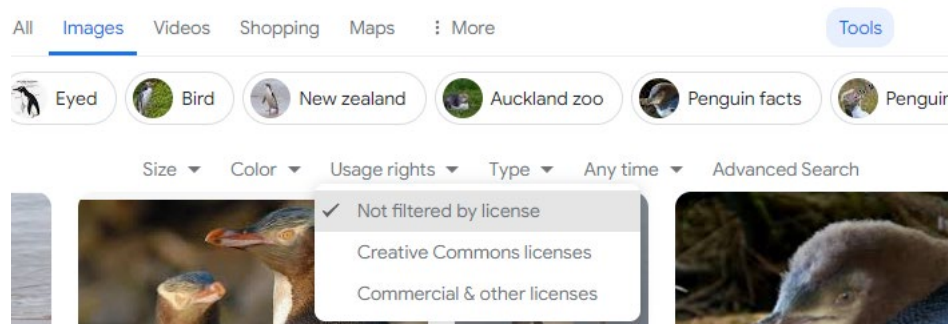
These are our key messages for 2025 if you do hear from a journalist:

Key messages for 2025

1. New Zealand's birds are amazing, and many of them need our help.
2. The more we know about our birds and their homes, the better we can look after them.
3. Show your love for all birds by voting in Forest & Bird's Bird of the Year!

Sourcing images – please ensure you have the rights to images you use!

Many talented photographers are happy for their bird photos to be used for Bird of the Year, but you must ask permission first and include any credits if they ask you to. You can also search for images with a [Creative Commons licence](#) – sites like [Flickr](#) and [iNaturalist](#) are good places to check. You can also filter a Google Image search by selecting 'Tools' -> 'Usage rights' -> 'Creative Commons licenses'. Check which sort of licence applies and make sure you attribute the photo correctly.



If you decide to use **AI generated** images or video, please make sure you label them as AI-generated.

Using macrons

We'd love for you to use the te reo Māori name of your bird in your campaign content. An important part of spelling te reo Māori words is using macrons, or tohutō, correctly. Macrons can change the meaning of a word – for example, a hōiho is a horse, but a hoiho is a yellow-eyed penguin!

You can check the spelling of your bird name, and whether it uses macrons, on the [New Zealand Birds Online website](#) or [Te Aka Māori Dictionary](#).

Why does Forest & Bird run Bird of the Year?

Bird of the Year is a way to celebrate and raise awareness for New Zealand's birds. We hope it makes people want to take action on climate change, protect forests and oceans, and control pest species to protect our incredible native birds and the places they live.

How many people participate?

The Bird of the Year competition is Forest & Bird's most popular annual event and attracts over 50,000 votes and 80,000 website visits each year. That's a lot of attention for our threatened native birds!

We reckon it's the most popular bird-based election on the planet, but haven't got enough evidence to add that to the Wikipedia page.

Fundraising

Bird of the Year is a fundraiser for Forest & Bird. We are an independent conservation charity that relies on donations to protect and restore nature at local, regional, and national levels. We'll ask the people who vote in Bird of the Year to support us with a donation.

Swag

We can help you fundraise for Forest & Bird and Bird of the Year by profiling your merch on our social platforms. You'll need to chat with a New Zealand-based screen printing & wholesale clothing business if you have an idea you want to bring to life. Once you've made arrangements, you can email birdoftheyear@forestandbird.org.nz and let us know what merch you have on offer.

The voting system

As noted above, we will be updating our voting system (and vote verification) to make it much simpler in 2025. We will share information about this with campaign managers, and the voting public, as soon as we can through our website. Essentially though, you want people to pick #1 for your bird to maximise the vote.

We will be sharing regular snapshots of which birds are earning the most votes.

Who gets which bird?

We can't guarantee who gets to campaign for each bird from year to year.

Join the [Bird of the Year Campaign Managers Facebook page](#), and you'll get advance notice every year of when applications for campaign managers open. Later, we'll open applications up to the public.

The application form lets you know which birds aren't spoken for yet, so you can always put your hand up for a different manu, even if it wasn't your first choice. Remember, all birds are good birds!

We generally allocate birds on a first in, first served basis, so make sure you keep an eye on the Facebook page to get a head start.

What does the winner get?

Nothing! Bird of the Year is all about having fun and promoting the cool native birds of Aotearoa. The internet is a crazy place, but this is one competition where we don't take anything too seriously.