



New Zealand

**GARDEN BIRD
SURVEY**

State of NZ Garden Birds

Te Āhua o ngā Manu o te Kāri i Aotearoa

2022



BACKYARD BEATS

What are our birds telling us?

Birds act as backyard barometers – telling us about the health of the environment we live in. They are signalling significant changes in our environment over the last 10 years. We should be listening.

The Bioeconomy Science Institute has distilled a substantial information base – bird counts gathered by New Zealanders from more than 51,000 garden surveys since 2015 – into simple but powerful metrics.



Key signals now seen in five native species



Kererū counts again show a slow increase over 10 years (16%), but now show a moderate decline over 5 years (22%), compared to the short-term slow decline seen last year.



Fantail (pīwakawaka) counts again show a slow increase over 10 years (31%), with moderate long-term increases in two regions. Their counts remain stable over 5 years (-3%), but with slow short-term declines in three regions.



We continue to see a slow increase in tūī (kōkō) counts in the long-term (19%) and short-term (7%). Their regional long-term trends continue to show a rapid increase in Canterbury (198%).



For the first time, silvereye (tauhou) counts show a slow increase nationally over the long-term (16%) and short-term (15%).



Bellbird (korimako) counts over 10 years continue to be stable (5%), but for the first time they show a slow increase over 5 years (9%).

Key signals for introduced species that also act as environmental indicators



Myna counts remain stable nationally over 10 years (-1%), with some evidence of a stable trend over 5 years as well (-4%). They show evidence of long-term increases in three regions and short-term increases in two regions.



Goldfinch counts now show a slow decline over 10 years (16%) and a rapid decline over 5 years (37%), compared to the stable long-term trend and moderate short-term decline seen last year.



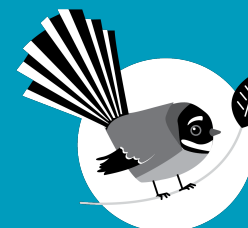
For the first time since 2020, dunnock counts are stable nationally over 10 years (1%), with slow to moderate increases in three regions. There is some evidence for a slow increase nationally over 5 years (6%), with moderate short-term increases in three regions.



Starling and chaffinch counts again show a slow decline over 10 years (11% and 24%, respectively). Similar to last year, chaffinch counts also show a moderate decline over 5 years (18%).



Bioeconomy Science Institute™
Maiangi Taiao



New Zealand
**GARDEN
BIRD
SURVEY**

NATIONAL PICTURE

How have garden bird counts changed?

2015–25

SLOW INCREASE

GREENFINCH 40%

FANTAIL 31%

TŪI 19%

SILVEREYE 16%

KERERŪ 16%

STABLE

*BLACKBIRD 10%

BELLBIRD 5%

SONG THRUSH 4%

DUNNOCK 1%

0% HOUSE SPARROW

-1% MYNA

-11% STARLING SLOW DECLINE

-16% GOLDFINCH

-24% CHAFFINCH

2020–25

SLOW INCREASE

SILVEREYE 15%

BELLBIRD 9%

TŪI 7%

*DUNNOCK 6%

STABLE

*GREENFINCH 3%

SONG THRUSH 1%

0% STARLING

0% HOUSE SPARROW

-3% FANTAIL

-3% BLACKBIRD

-4% MYNA*

-18% CHAFFINCH MODERATE DECLINE

-22% KERERŪ

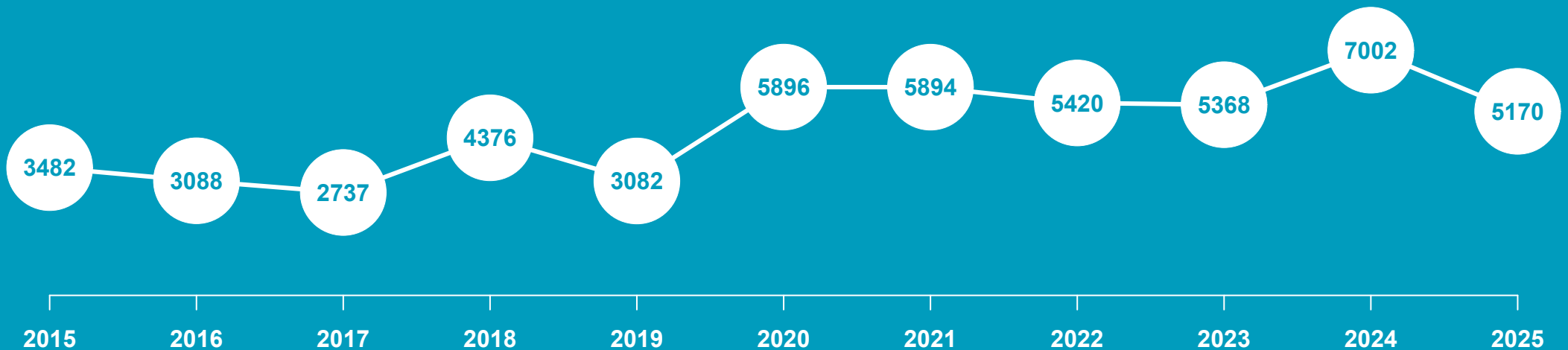
-37% GOLDFINCH RAPID DECLINE

* Based on available data, evidence for these species' estimates is weak.

Data source: 51,515 and 34,750 garden surveys nationwide for 2015–25 and 2020–25, respectively.

51,515
garden
surveys
nationwide

**Thanks to all our
volunteer bird counters!**



What more needs to be done to care for birds?

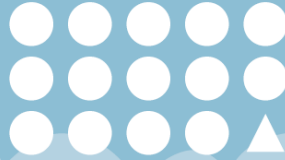
Since 2021 we've asked New Zealand Garden Bird Survey participants what more needs to be done to care for birds in Aotearoa New Zealand. In 2025, 3,503 participants responded to the question. We've analysed the responses, and they reflect the five themes below.

● 100 comments ▲ < 100 comments

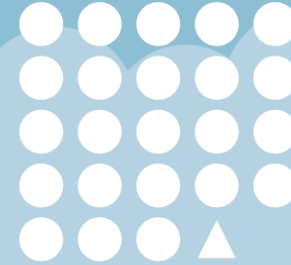
Increase engagement, education, and awareness



Protect and create suitable habitat



Manage weeds and predators



Increase funding and resourcing



Increase connection with birds and nature



Note: Some participants suggested multiple actions, so the analysed responses for each theme exceed the total number of participants.



gardenbirdssurvey.nz

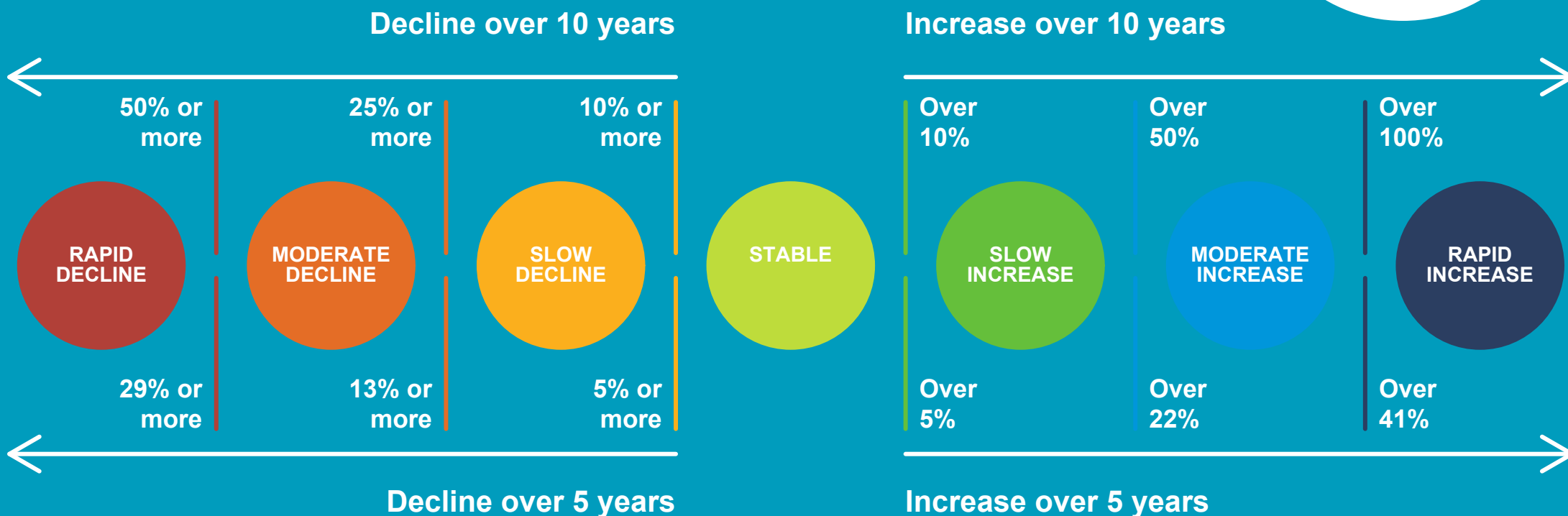
We have estimated how bird counts have changed over the last 10- and 5-year periods in different regions, districts, and neighbourhoods across New Zealand for 14 common garden visitors – five native and nine introduced birds.

Thanks to all our volunteer bird counters, 51,515 garden surveys have been completed nationwide since 2015. We use specialised statistical tools to account for variation in sampling effort between regions, districts, and suburbs over time. We also account for variation in bird counts depending on whether the surveyed gardens were in a rural or urban setting, and whether birds were fed or not. Finally, we correct for the actual number of gardens in each area.

We then classify these changes according to their direction and size (see diagram below) to help us identify changes of potential concern or interest.

How have bird counts changed?

Drawing attention to changes in counts that may be of concern or interest



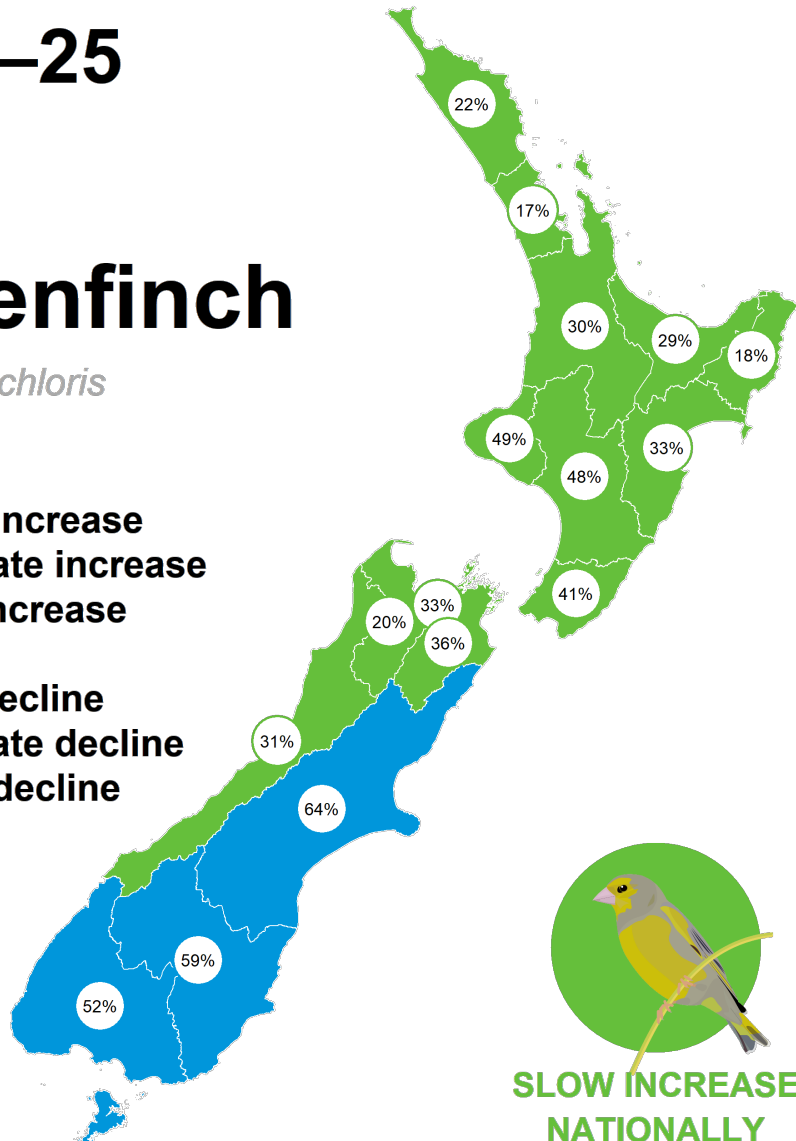
How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

2015–25

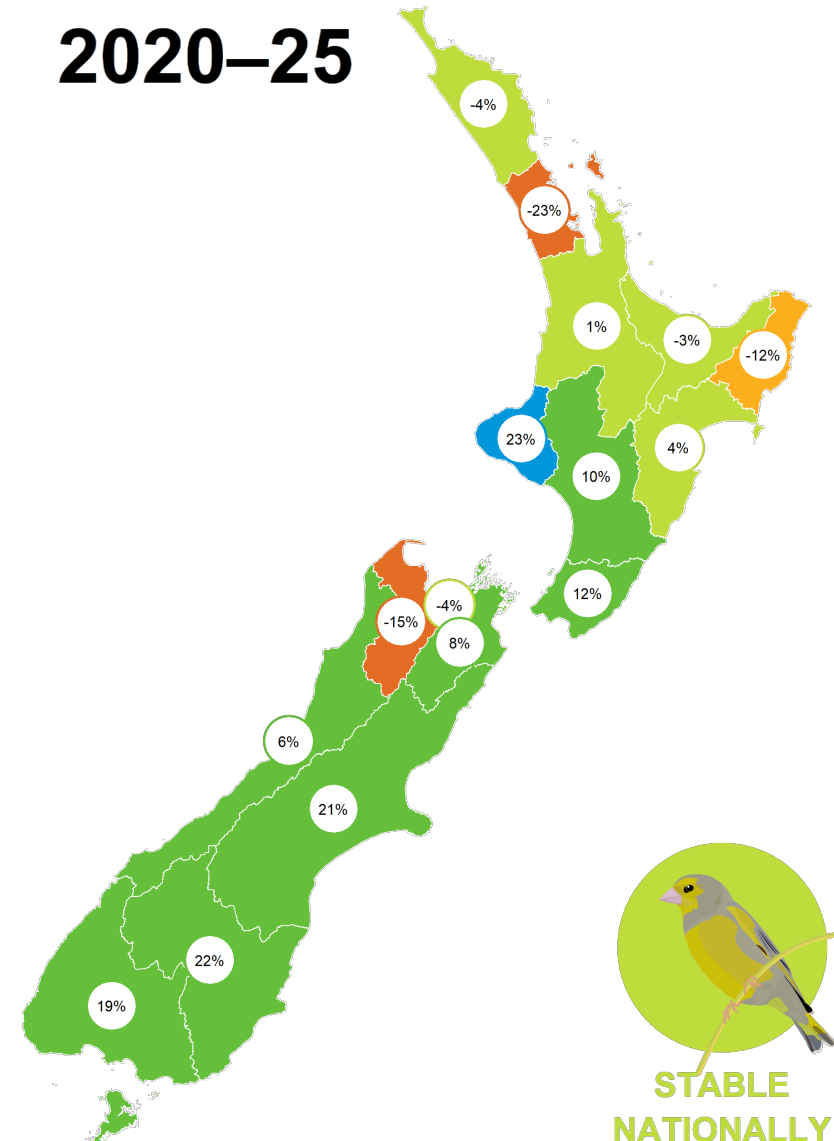
Greenfinch

Carduelis chloris

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

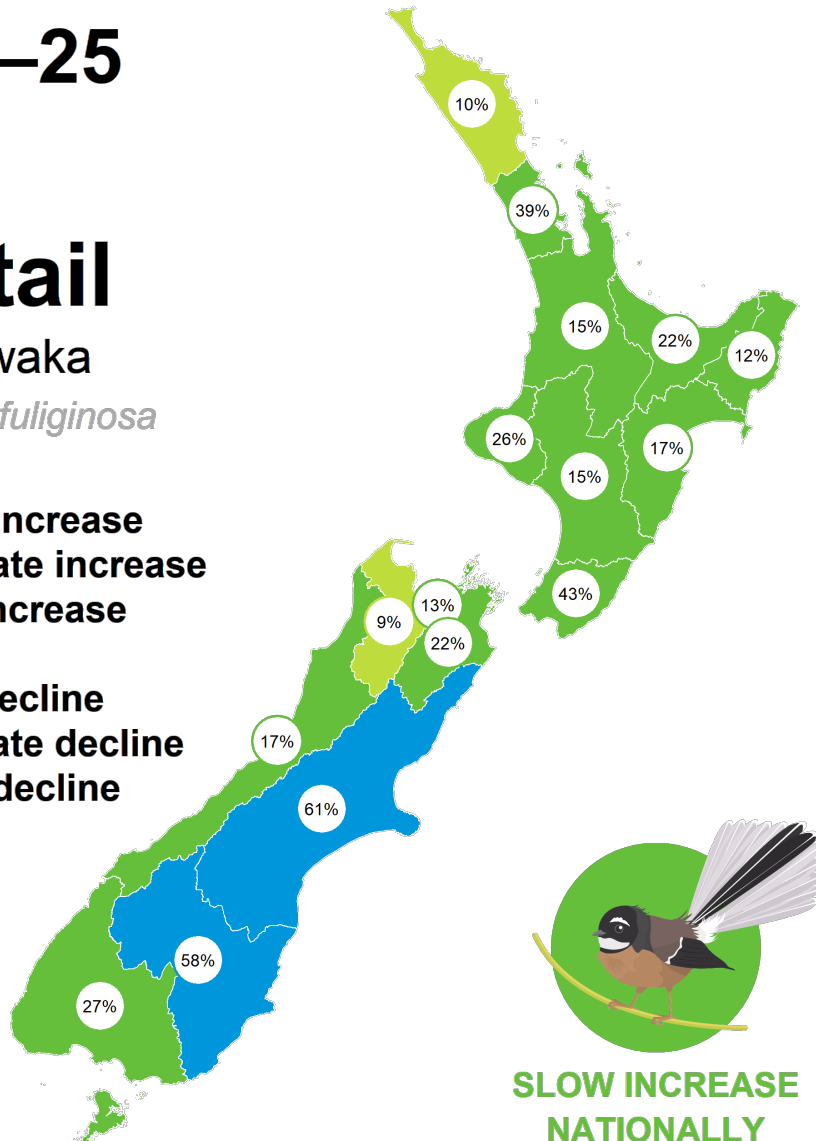
2015–25

Fantail

Pīwakawaka

Rhipidura fuliginosa

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

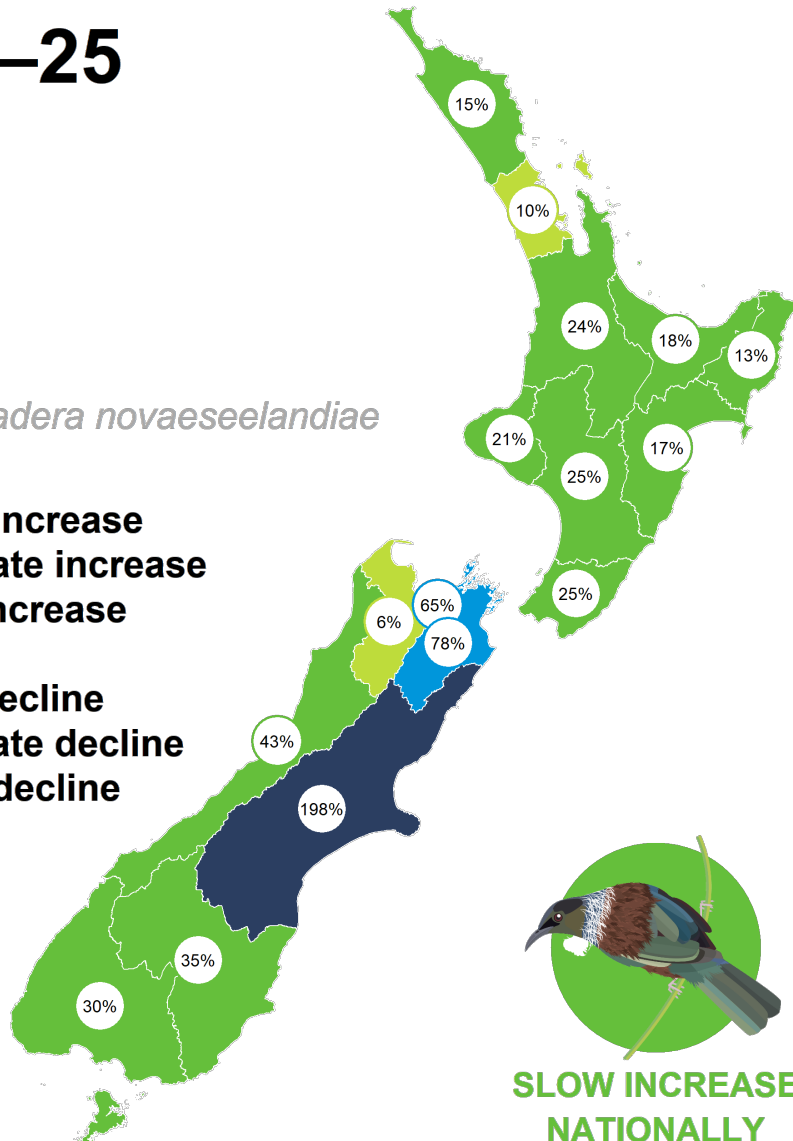
2015–25

Tūī

Kōkō

Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



**SLOW INCREASE
NATIONALLY**

2020–25



**SLOW INCREASE
NATIONALLY**

How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

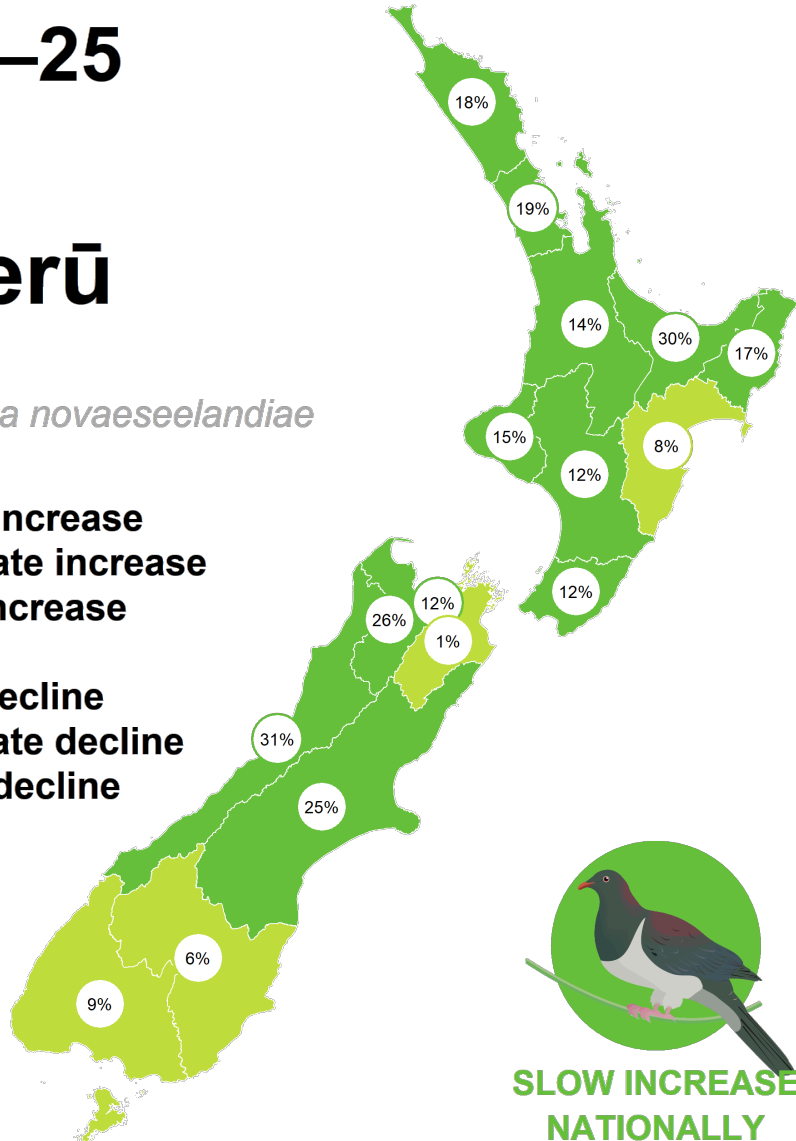
2015–25

Kererū

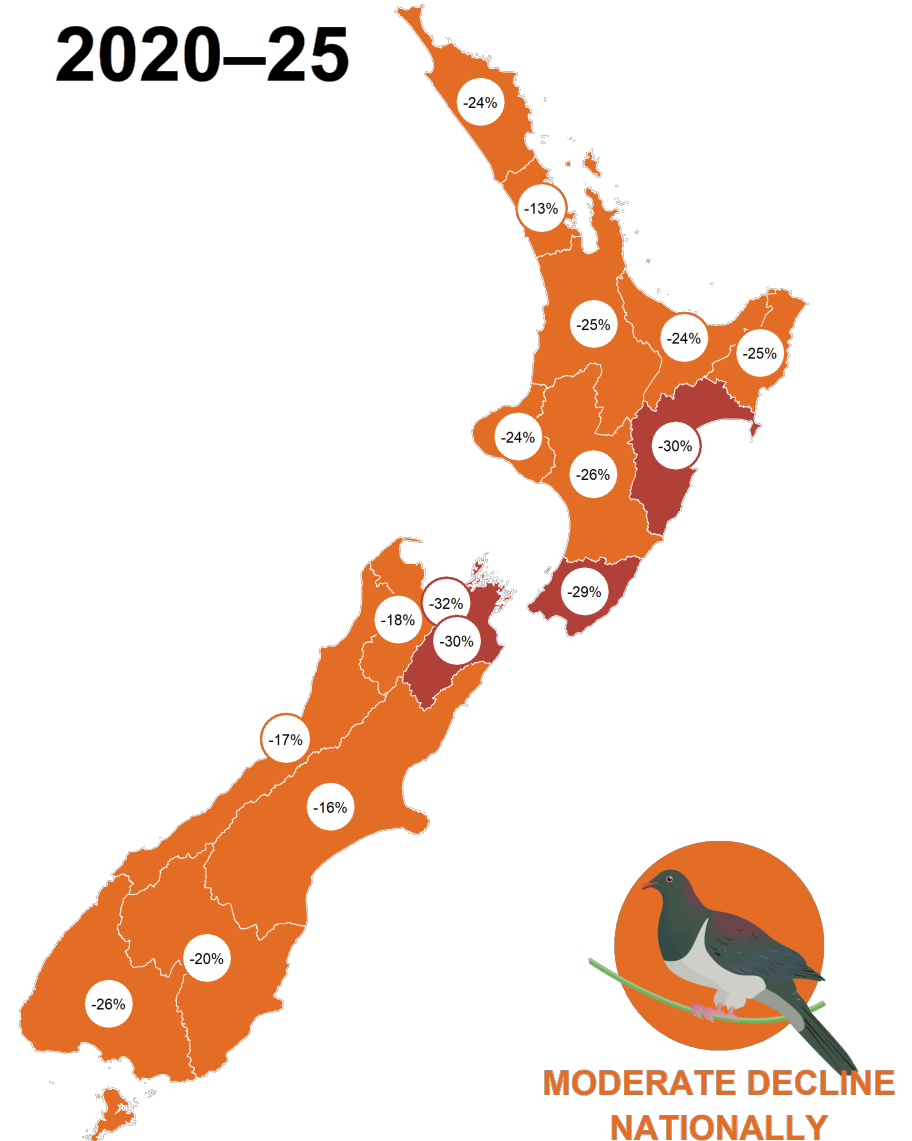
Kererū

Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

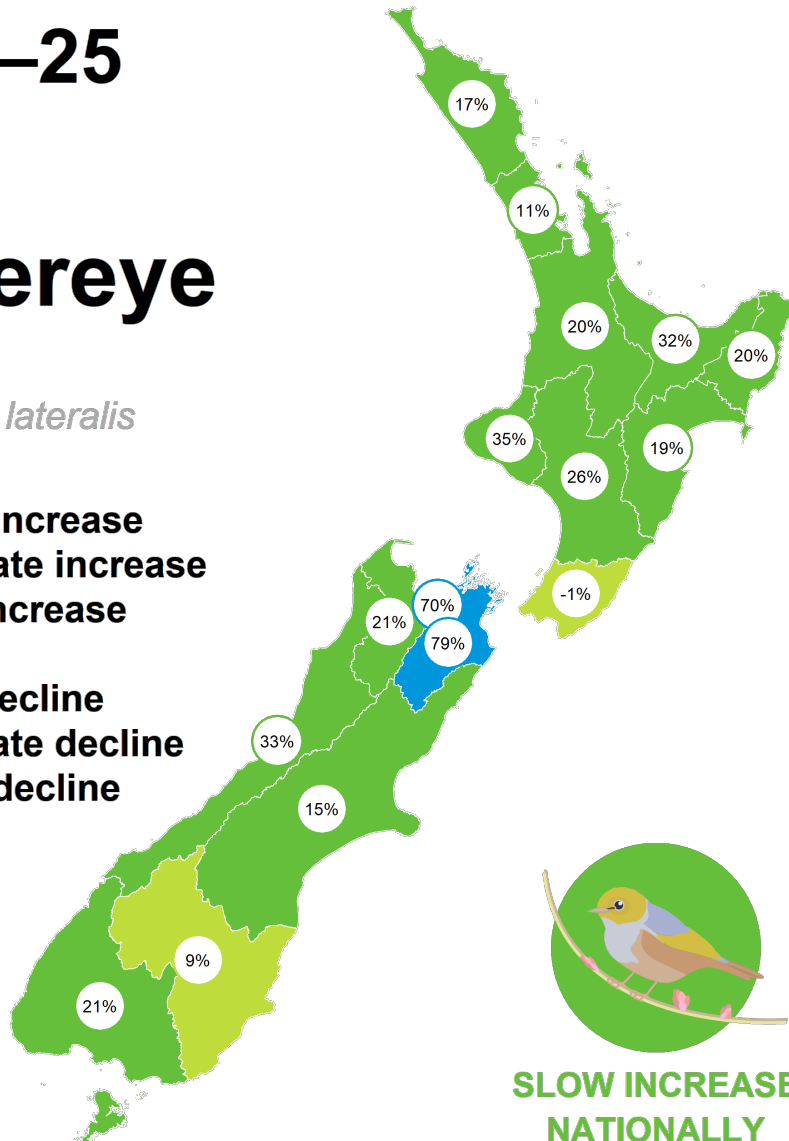
2015–25

Silvereye

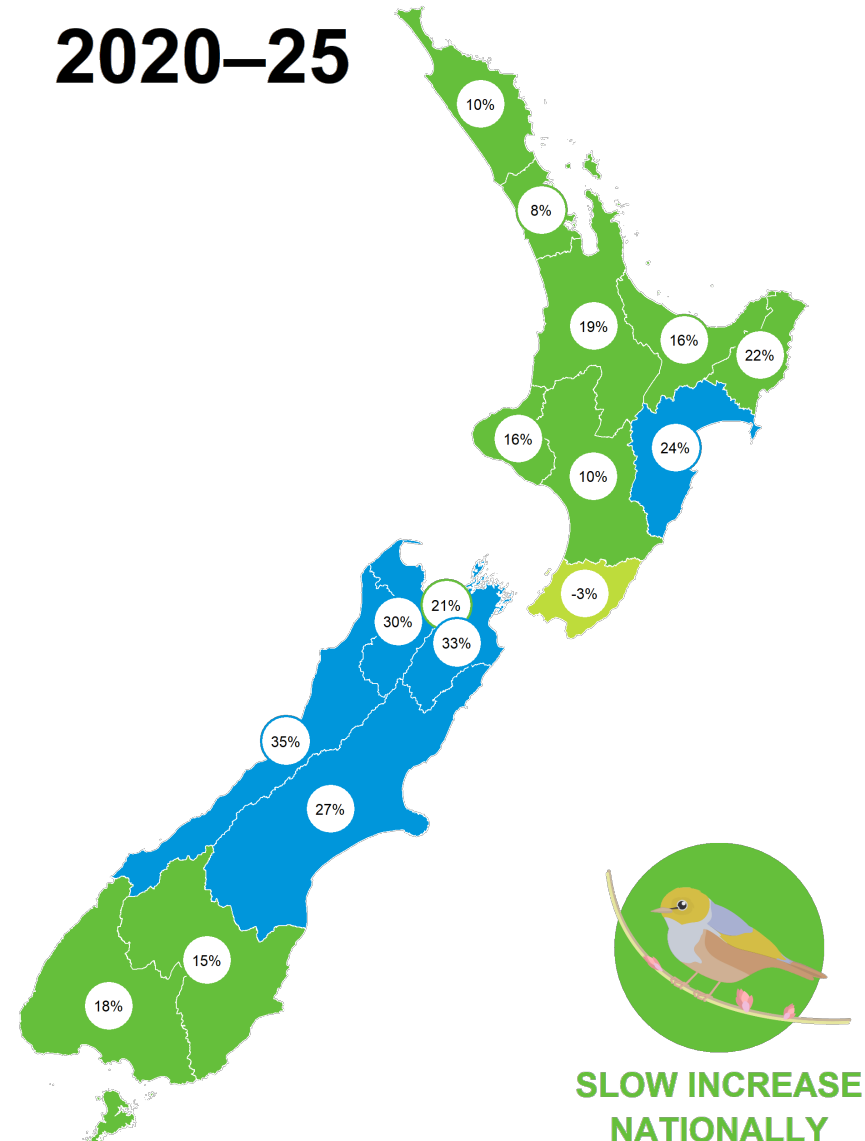
Tauhou

Zosterops lateralis

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

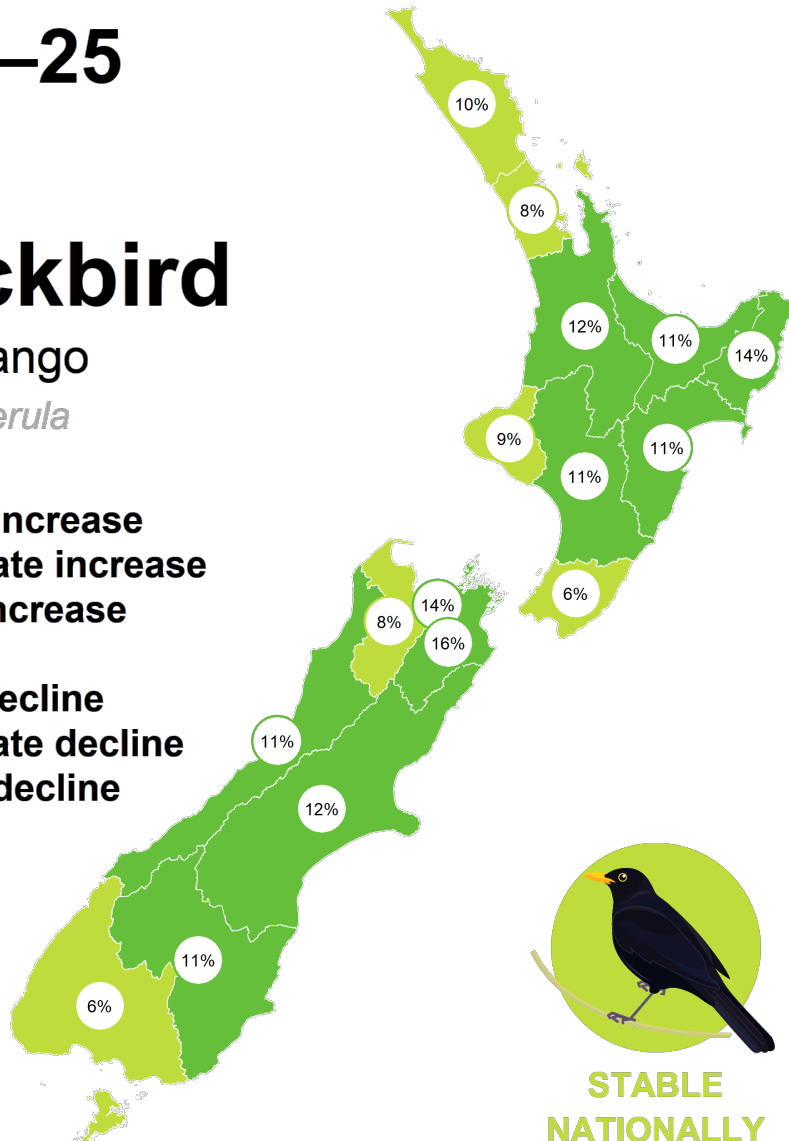
2015–25

Blackbird

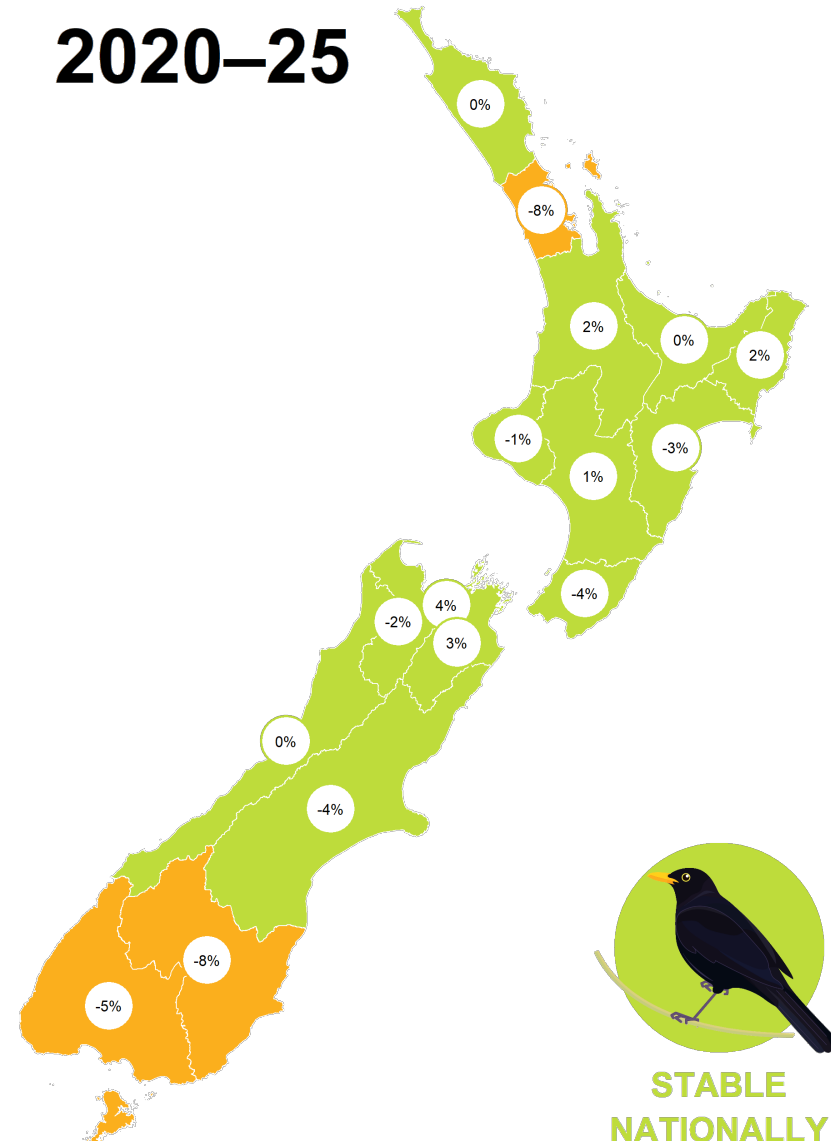
Manu pango

Turdus merula

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

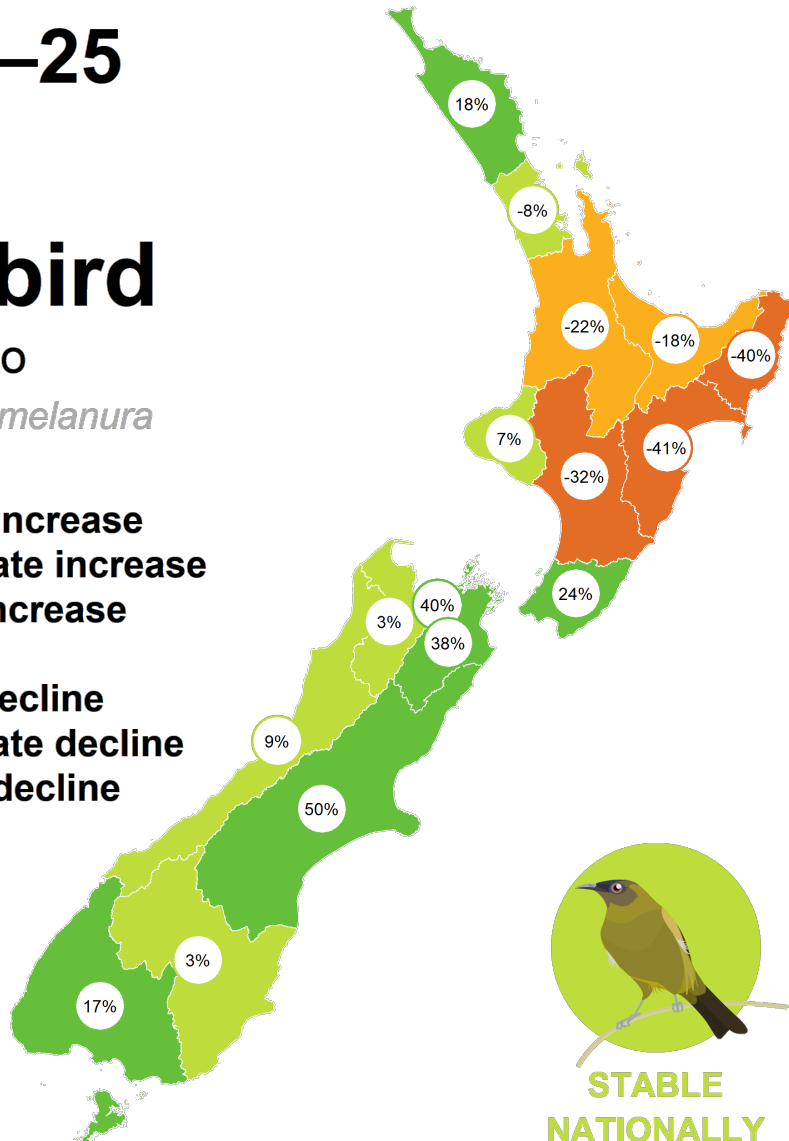
2015–25

Bellbird

Korimako

Anthornis melanura

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



**STABLE
NATIONALLY**

2020–25



**SLOW INCREASE
NATIONALLY**

How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

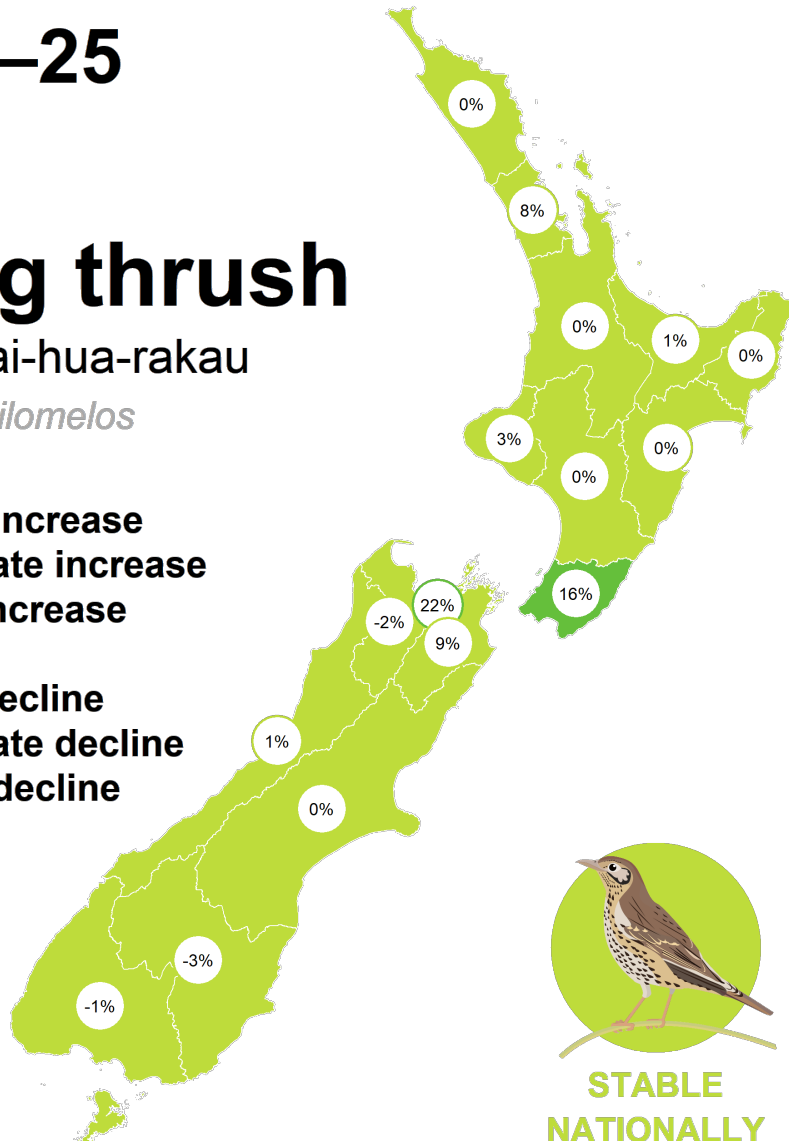
2015–25

Song thrush

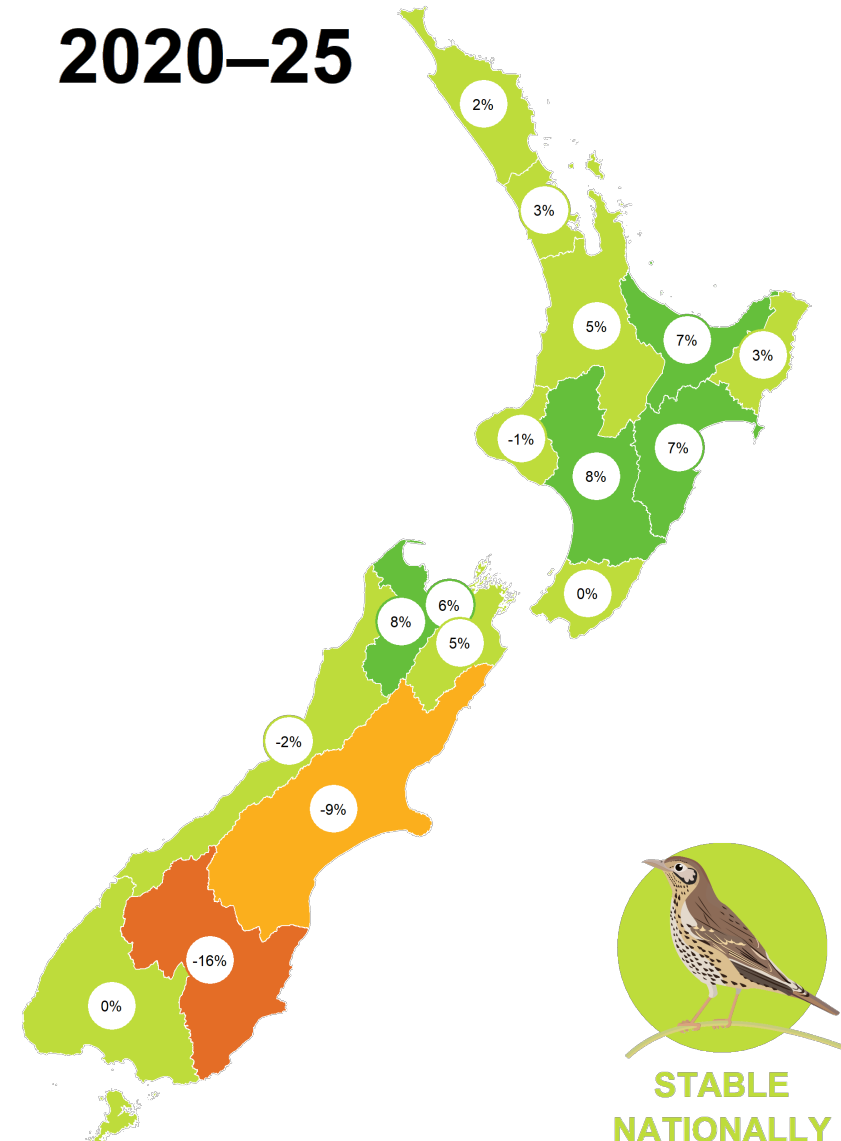
Manu-kai-hua-rakau

Turdus philomelos

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



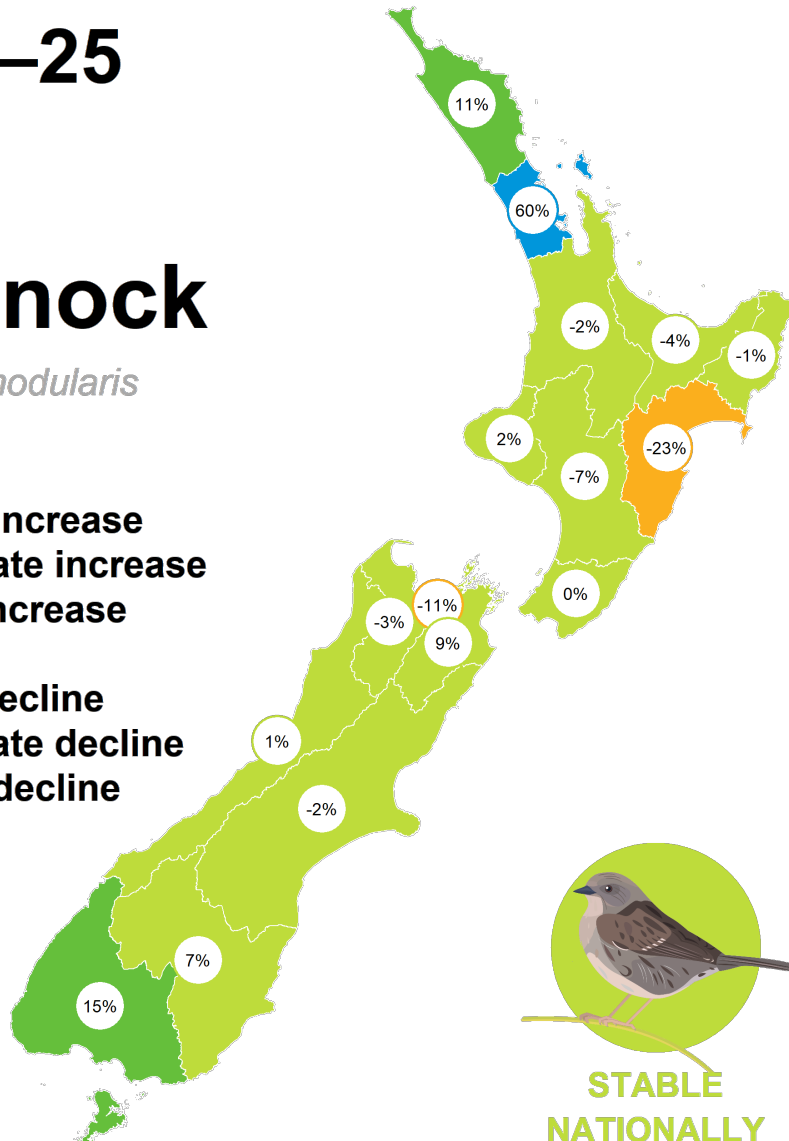
How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

2015–25

Dunnock

Prunella modularis

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

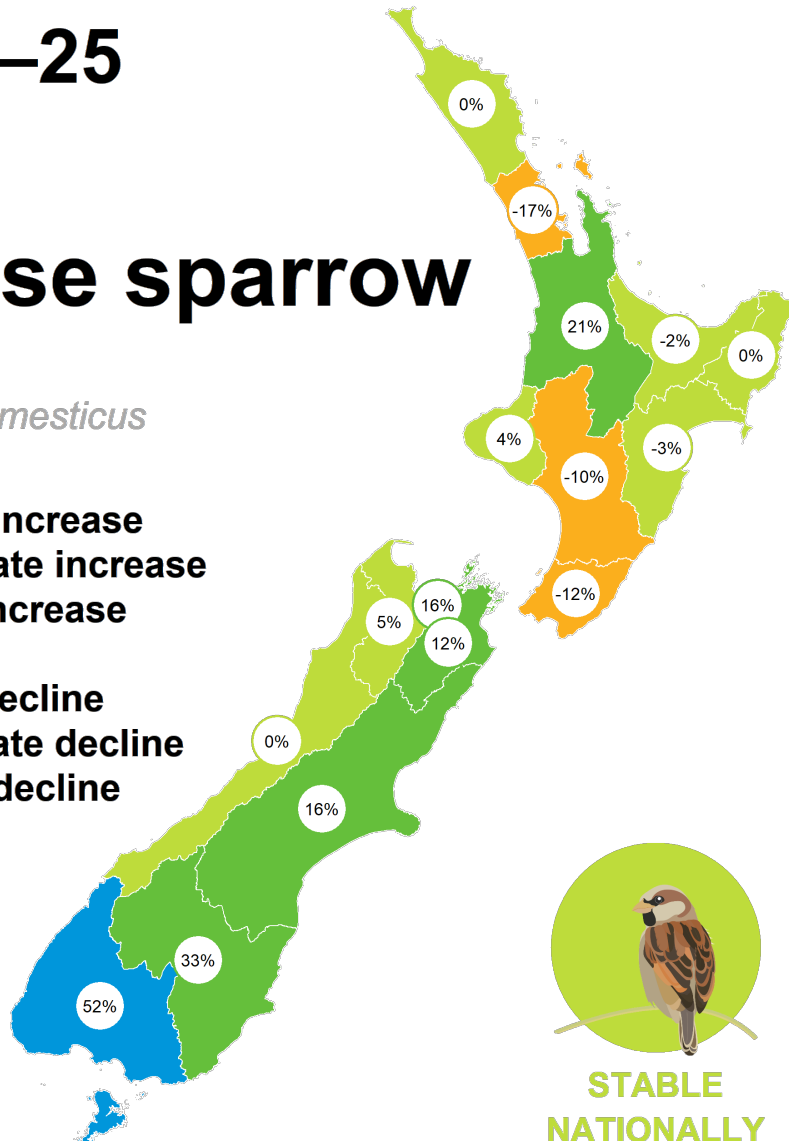
2015–25

House sparrow

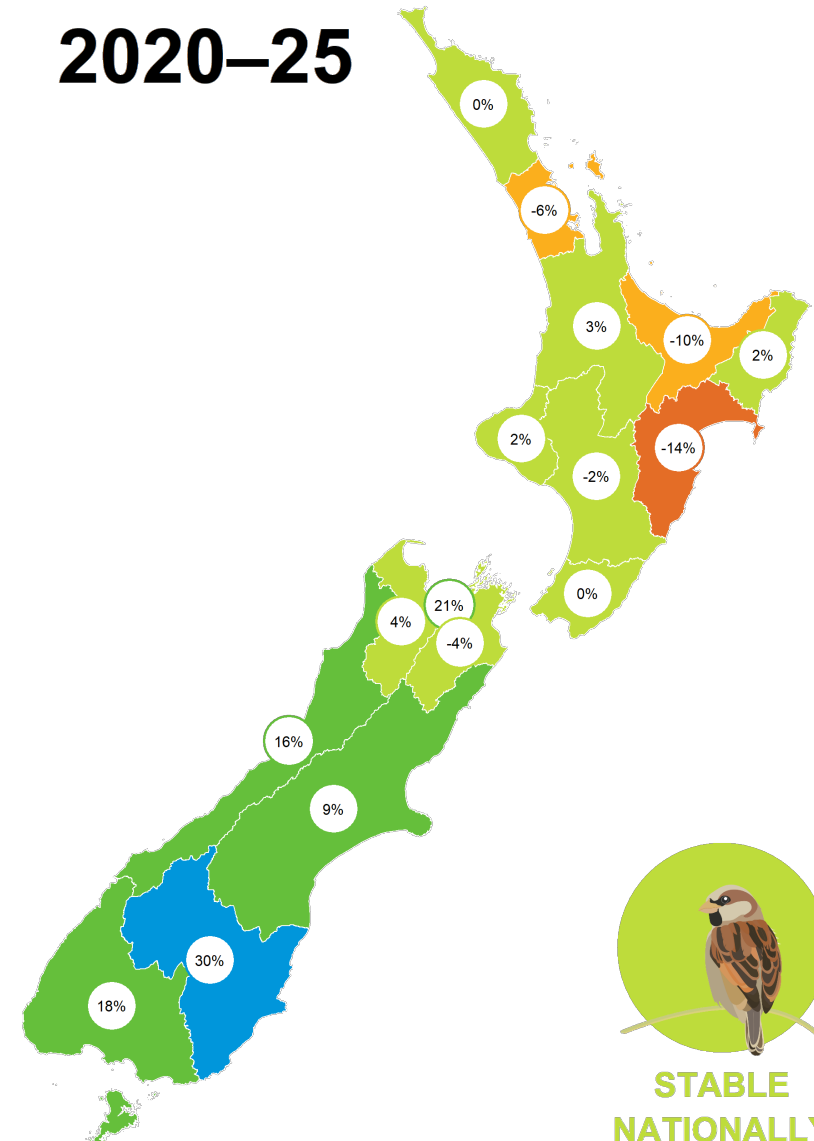
Tiu

Passer domesticus

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

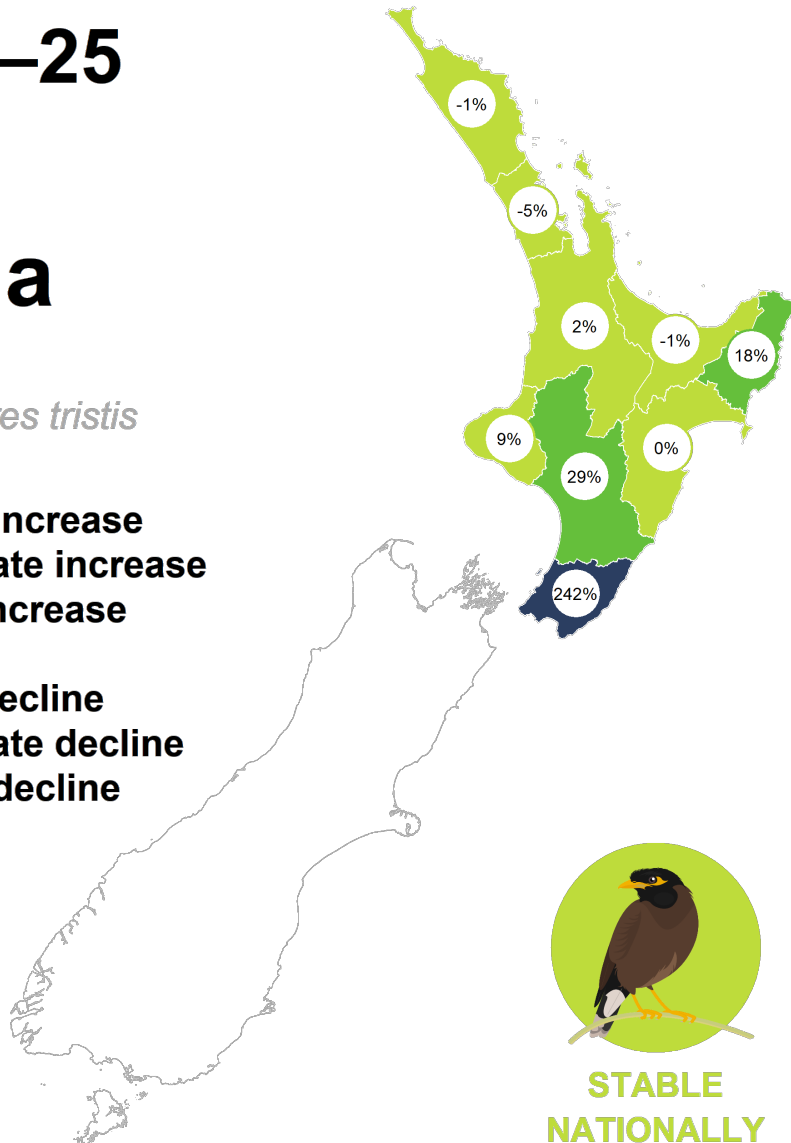
2015–25

Myna

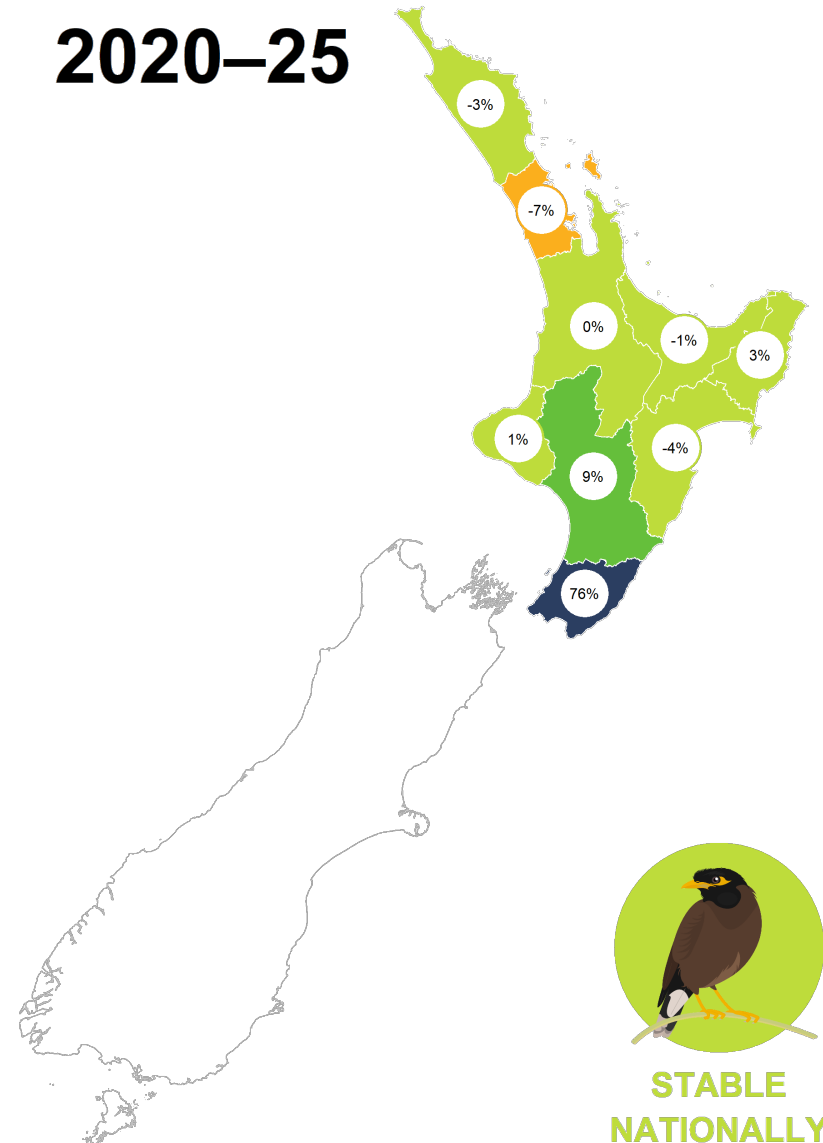
Maina

Acridotheres tristis

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



How have garden bird counts changed across regions?

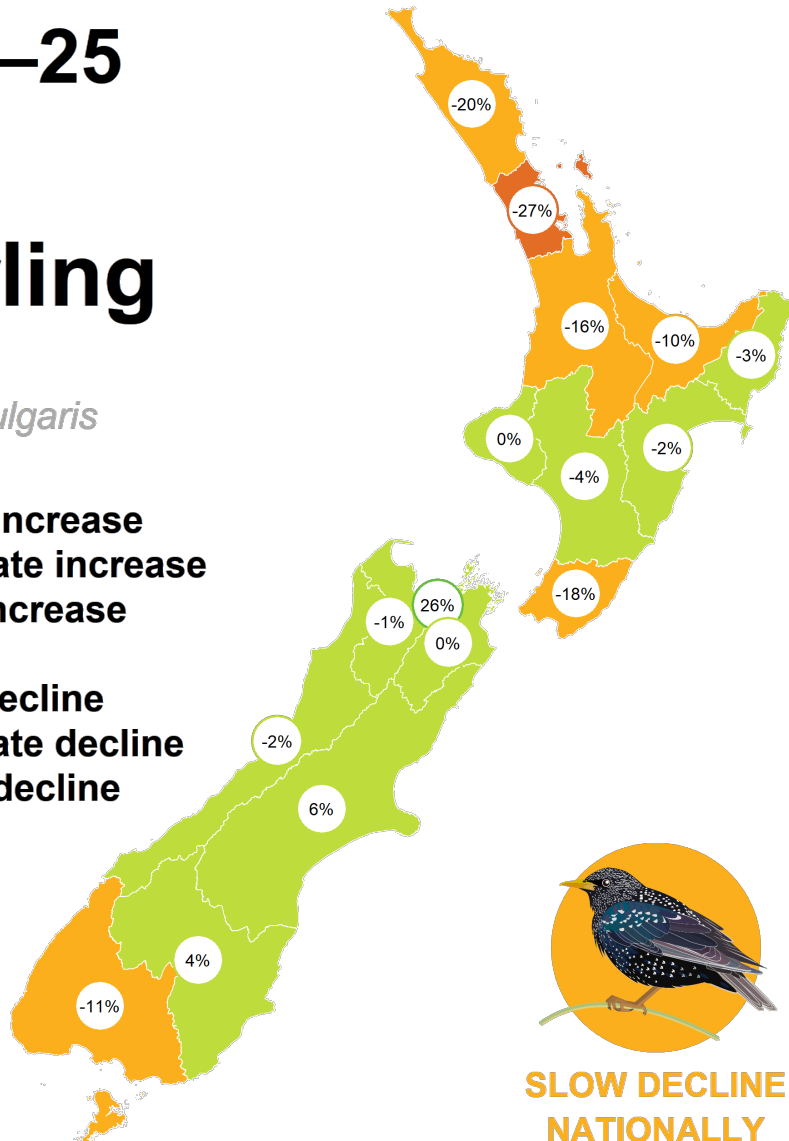
2015–25

Starling

Tāringi

Sturnus vulgaris

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



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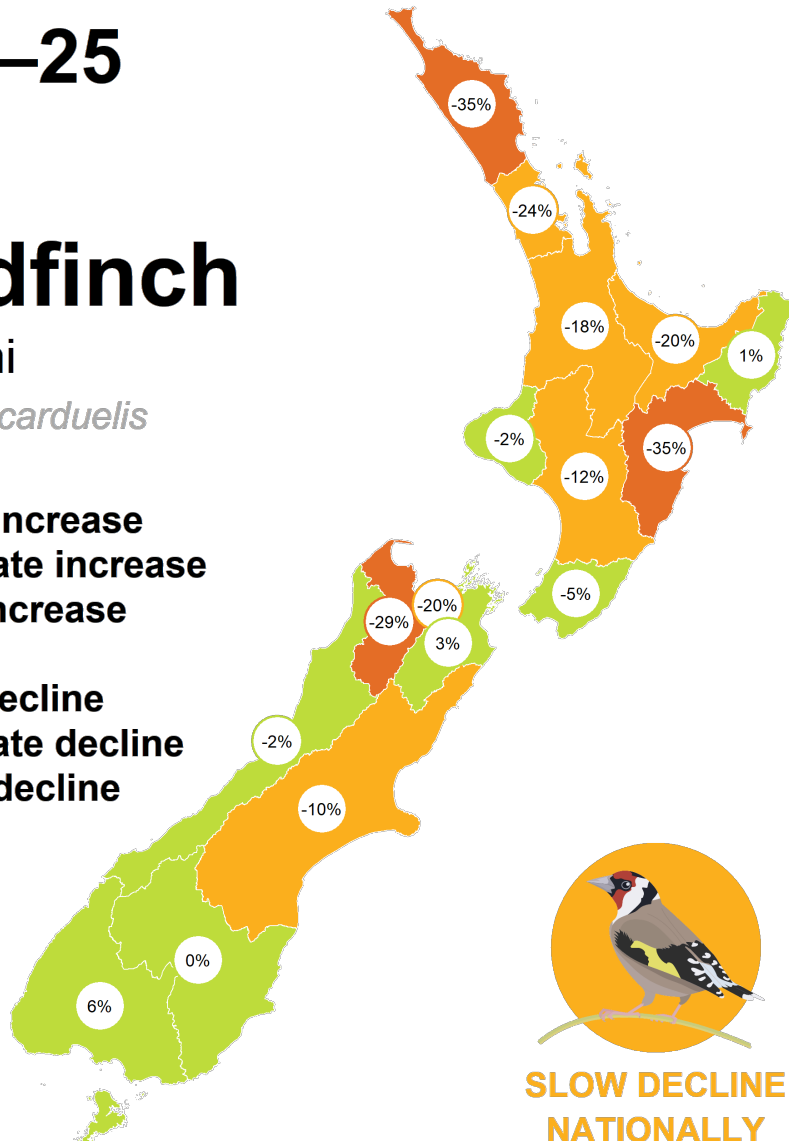
2015–25

Goldfinch

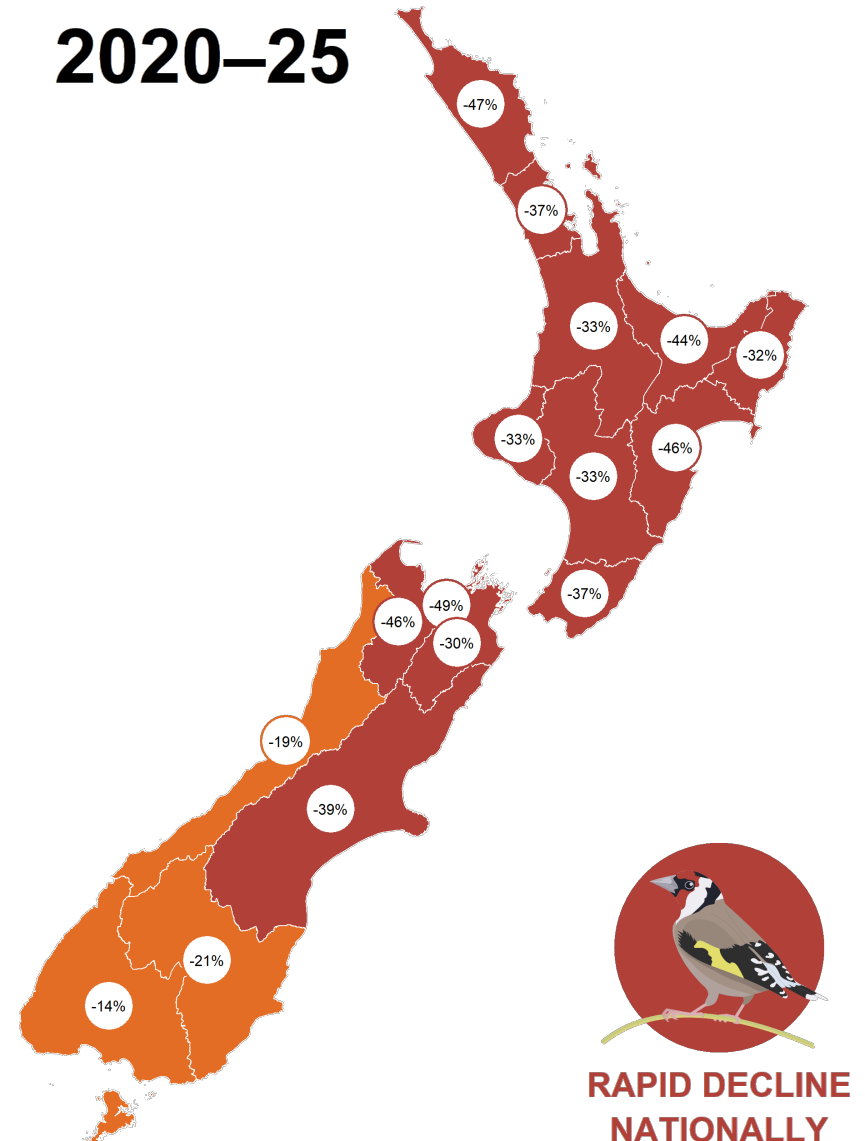
Kōurarini

Carduelis carduelis

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25



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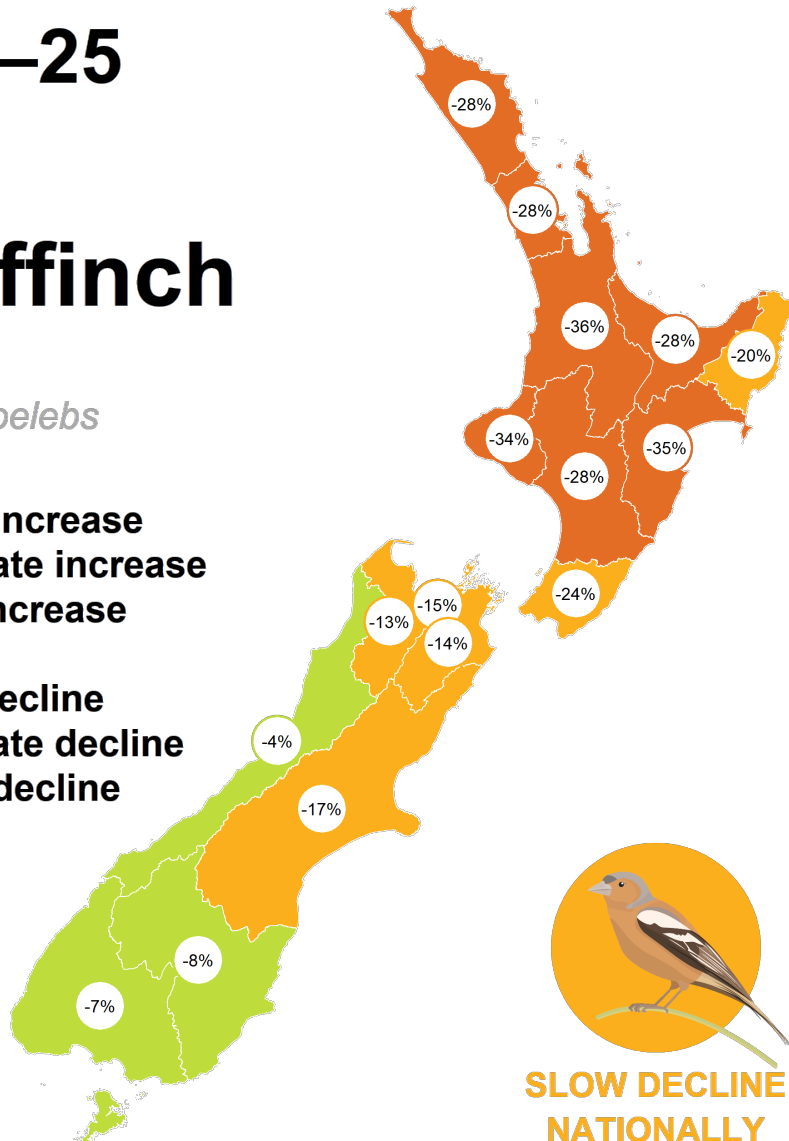
2015–25

Chaffinch

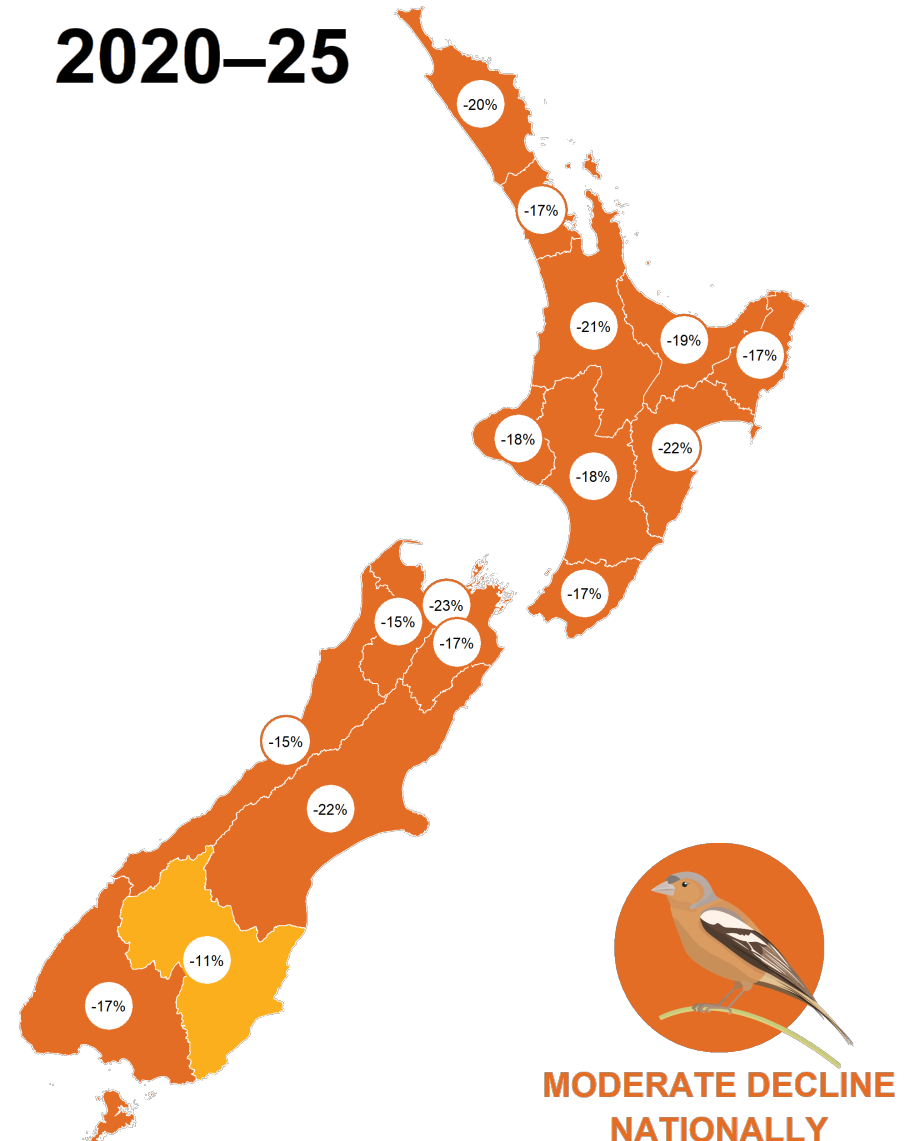
Pahirini

Fringilla coelebs

- Rapid increase
- Moderate increase
- Slow increase
- Stable
- Slow decline
- Moderate decline
- Rapid decline



2020–25





2026

27 June to 5 July

Visit our webpage to learn more:

[https://gardenbirdsurvey.nz/](https://gardenbirdssurvey.nz/)



**Bioeconomy
Science Institute**
Maiangi Taiao

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