



FOR SUCH A SMALL ISLAND GROUP (280 ha), the Snares have an extraordinary number of birds, including an estimated six million sooty shearwaters. The Snares crested penguin (population 23,000 pairs) (above and opposite) lives only on the Snares. Seemingly unafraid of humans, it makes a sleek shape underwater in its search for food. At slow speed it appears suspended in the liquid blueness but then a quick acceleration compresses its feathers, expelling a trail of bubbles behind. Photo: Kim Westerskov

FOREST AND BIRD has proposed a marine mammal sanctuary around the Auckland Islands to protect the threatened Hooker's sea lion. Top carnivores in the food chain, sea lions play a key role in the ecology of the Southern Ocean. If squid trawling within the 60-mile limit is allowed to continue, these superb swimmers may gradually slide to extinction. Photo: Kim Westerskov

