

OSNZ National Wader Census
 June - July 2012
 November - December 2012 & January - February 2013
 Summary compiled by Adrian Riegen

Winter Census 2012

A total of 124,741 waders of 21 species were counted during the June - July 2012 wader census, down from 132,371 in November 2011 (Table 1). There was good national coverage with only the Far North, Gisborne/Wairoa, and the Kaikoura/Marlborough coastal regions not counted. The Far North was not counted in 2011 either. Numbers of Red Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit were considerably higher than in 2011 and about 9,000 less South Island Pied Oystercatcher were counted.

Rarities included, 1 Marsh Sandpiper and 1 Terek Sandpiper.

Summer Census 2012

A total of 129,850 waders of 28 species were counted in the November - December 2012 wader census, down from 148,662 in 2011 and 159,111 in 2010. National coverage was again very good, with only the Far North and Gisborne/Wairoa not counted. The big difference was the godwit number, which have fluctuated widely over the past 10 years. The 2012 count was down to 77,103 from 88,949 in 2011 and 101,459 in 2010. The Red Knot count in 2012 was down to 27,594 from 32,208 in 2011. Turnstone numbers also continue to decline, down to 914 in 2012, possibly the lowest summer count?

Rarities this census included 1 Wandering Tattler, 1 Common Greenshank, 1 Marsh Sandpiper and 3 Grey Plover.

NOTE: Species listed in the following tables are arranged in the order they appear in the fourth edition of the OSNZ checklist.

Table 1. Total Count June - July 2012

Species	2011	2012
Red Knot	1,537	3,183
Curlew Sandpiper	2	1
Red-necked Stint	2	10
Whimbrel	6	3
Bar-tailed Godwit	9,151	14,142
Black-tailed Godwit	0	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	2
Marsh Sandpiper	1	1
Terek Sandpiper	1	1
Turnstone	275	154
Variable Oystercatcher	2,870	2,756
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	81,541	72,873
Oystercatcher (Hybrids)	13	22
Pied Stilt	21,028	17,484
Black Stilt & (Hybrids)	27	25
Pacific Golden Plover	0	5
New Zealand Dotterel	726	852
Banded Dotterel	7,365	5,993
Black-fronted Dotterel	100	53
Wrybill	5,022	5,836
Spur-winged Plover	2,690	1,344
Total >	132,371	124,741

Table 2. Total Count November - December 2012

Species	2011	2012
Red Knot	32,208	27,594
Sanderling	0	3
Curlew Sandpiper	9	4
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	11	24
Pectoral Sandpiper	6	2
Red-necked Stint	67	53
Eastern Curlew	8	5
Whimbrel	35	14
Bar-tailed Godwit	88,949	77,103
Wandering Tattler	0	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	3
Common Greenshank	0	1
Marsh Sandpiper	1	1
Terek Sandpiper	0	1
Turnstone	1,393	914
Variable Oystercatcher	2,296	2,313
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	16,467	15,653
Oystercatcher (Hybrids)	15	16
Pied Stilt	4,897	3,446
Pacific Golden Plover	116	63
Grey Plover	0	3
New Zealand Dotterel	393	432
Banded Dotterel	519	410
Greater Sand Plover	0	2
Wrybill	156	231
Black-fronted Dotterel	17	12
Shore Plover	0	1
Spur-winged Plover	1,095	1,545
Total >	148,662	129,850

There was incomplete nationwide coverage in January - February 2013 but counts from Lake Wairarapa, Nelson, Canterbury, Otago and Southland were received. Numbers for Nelson, Canterbury and Southland are compared with the November - December 2012 counts in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3. Nelson Region counts for November 2012 and February 2013

Species	Nov.12	Feb.13
Red Knot	7,608	10,579
Sanderling	0	2
Red-necked Stint	10	16
Eastern Curlew	1	1
Whimbrel	0	2
Bar-tailed Godwit	17,512	15,949
Grey-tailed Tattler	2	0
Terek Sandpiper	0	1
Turnstone	202	791
Variable Oystercatcher	690	602
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	3,425	18,446
Pied Stilt	34	466
Pacific Golden Plover	4	31
Grey Plover	3	0
New Zealand Dotterel	0	3
Banded Dotterel	39	1,266
Greater Sand Plover	2	2
Wrybill	0	8
Spur-winged Plover	9	5

Table 5. Southland Region counts for November 2012 and February 2013

Species	Nov.12	Feb.13
Red Knot	7	103
Red-necked Stint	3	16
Eastern Curlew		1
Bar-tailed Godwit	1,398	2,622
Grey-tailed Tattler		1
Terek Sandpiper	1	
Turnstone	130	74
Variable Oystercatcher	4	24
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	173	2,101
Pied Stilt	11	257
New Zealand Dotterel	1	18
Banded Dotterel	8	107
Wrybill		2
Spur-winged Plover	4	30

Table 4 Canterbury counts for November 2012 and February 2013

Species	Canterbury Regional sites		Avon-Heathcote Estuary		Lake Ellesmere	
	Nov.12	Feb.13	Nov.11	Jan.12	Dec.12	Feb.13
Red Knot		5	1		13	
Curlew Sandpiper		1			3	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		2			13	12
Pectoral Sandpiper		2			2	
Red-necked Stint					16	34
Eastern Curlew	1	1				
Whimbrel	1	2				
Bar-tailed Godwit	638	547	1,720	1,804	125	436
Common Greenshank					1	
Turnstone					1	
Variable Oystercatcher	11	30	55	50		
South Island Pied Oystercatcher						
Oystercatcher	251	857	897	2,694	25	33
Oystercatcher (Hybrids)	13	15	3	1		
Pied Stilt	299	312	147		778	3,726
Black Stilt & (Hybrids)		1				6
Pacific Golden Plover					5	
Banded Dotterel	41	146	1	2	265	1,228
Wrybill		2		11	38	429
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	1				
Spur-winged Plover	530	245	150		17	197

Tables 6 and 7 show sites with more than 3,000 waders counted during winter and summer censuses.

Table 6. Sites with >3,000 waders in June - July 2012 & 2011

	2012	2011
Manukau Harbour	37,428	35,843
Kaipara Harbour	21,271	27,335
Firth of Thames	15,349	18,235
Farewell Spit	7,395	9,135
Tauranga Harbour	6,974	3,816
Tasman Bay	6,645	6,076
Kawhia Harbour	5,442	3,271
Golden Bay	3,815	3,027
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	3,346	3,549

Table 7. Sites with >3,000 waders in November - December 2012 & 2011

	2012	2011
Manukau Harbour	32,851	31,304
Farewell Spit	20,283	19,794
Kaipara Harbour	19,114	24,346
Firth of Thames	11,068	14,690
Tauranga Harbour	6,891	10,319
Tasman Bay	5,308	6,797
Golden Bay	3,950	4,600
Whangarei Harbour	3,864	(619)
Ohiwa Harbour	3,808	3,099
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	(2,974)	3,060