



## **February 2018 Amokura 121**

(Published in February, July and October of each year)

**MEETINGS** of the Northland Branch of the O.S.N.Z. are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER. TIME: 7-30p.m.

**VENUE:** Founders Room, Alzheimer's Society, 148 Corks Road, Tikipunga, Whangarei.  
**COST:** A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of Hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

**ALL WELCOME**

### **PROGRAMME TO July 2018**

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 8 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph 09 4377760  
13 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **MARCH**

- 8 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph 09 4377760  
13 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **APRIL**

- 12 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph 09 4377760  
17 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **MAY**

- 10 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph 09 4377760  
15 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **JUNE**

- 14 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph 09 4377760  
19 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

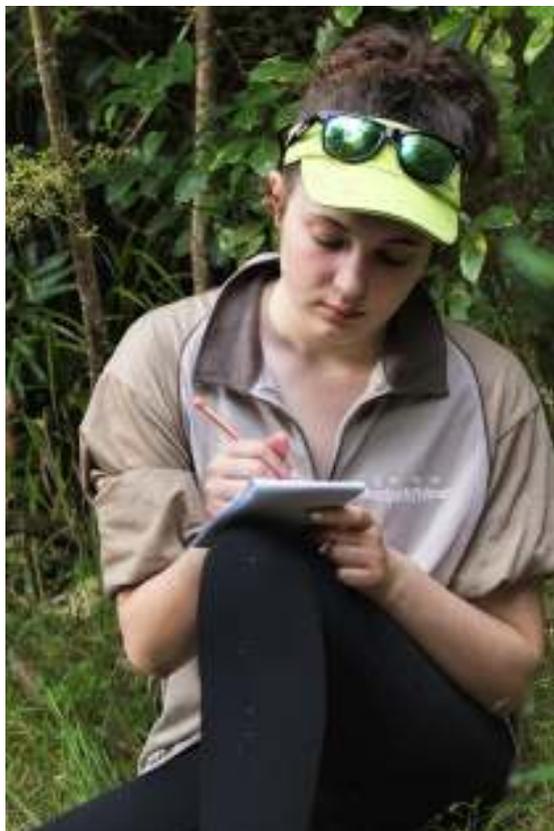
<b>REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>Anne McCracken</b>	<b>438-1145</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>Ruth Crockett</b>	<b>435-0954</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Kevin Hayes</b>	<b>437-6470</b>
<b>REGIONAL RECORDER</b>	<b>Tony Beauchamp</b>	<b>436-2224</b>
<b>REGIONAL REPORTER</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>AMOKURA EDITOR</b>	<b>Hilton Ward</b>	<b>946-0074</b>

Previous Issues of Amokura - <http://www.osnz.org.nz/regnews.htm>

#### **OCTOBER**

Five minute bird counts continued at Whangarei Heads on October 27th. Local members Dayna Davies and Heather O'Brian took part. Here are a small selection of Heathers photos.

Recorder Dayna on the right.  
North Island Robin below



Male and Female Tomtit



Looks like the Whimbrel has returned back to Ngunguru after it's long migration to Asia. Hope it hangs around for the summer like it did last year. Just saw it this morning amongst the Bar-Tailed Godwits and New Zealand Dotterels. Only about 70 come to NZ each year so it's awesome to have one here.



Hope you birders are taking advantage of the high tides. Marsden Bay has good numbers of godwits and Red Knots today. Stoked to see my favourite bird number 29.

I first heard about this place from Wade in his book *Bringing back the birdsong*. When it's busy in the bay. I.e. people launching their boats the waders go to Ruakaka Sandspit.



## NOVEMBER

We had an interesting November meeting with Dayna talking about her experience with the Young Birders Banding workshop at Kaiaua over labour weekend

Hilton and Dayna then described their visit to Motuora Island with Guy and Sandra Bowden, Mike Camm and Malcolm Pullman. The objective was to learn how the Motuora Trust went about starting the Gannet Colony that is now on the Island.

The intention being to start a colony at Taurawhata on the Tutukaka Coast on the Bowden's QE2 Trust headland.

It was wonderful to see this small successful colony with birds on eggs and a chick.. We also visited their Fluttering Shearwater and Pycrofts Petrels burrows. These also are active and breeding.

Below – Gannets at Motuora



Below – Fluttering Shearwater Chick at Motuora



Below – Pycrofts Petrel nests at Motuora



## BLUE PENGUIN NEST



Also at Taurawhata on October 15<sup>th</sup> Dayna discovered these Blue Penguin nesting. Dayna and Hilton checked the nest weekly and discovered a parent sitting on two eggs. On December 3<sup>rd</sup> we could just see the grey fluff of a very young chick. Sadly this nest was very low up under the rocks and the large super moon tide of the week following washed the nest out killing the chick.



## DECEMBER

The December meeting started early. As usual for this meeting attendees brought a plate and all tucked into food and conversation celebrating another year past. This is always a fun time full of natter.



Hilton and Dayna spoke to encourage members to use the Northland Birds Facebook Group for sharing stories, observations and photos. Detailed instructions on how to create a Facebook page and follow Northlands Birds Group was emailed to all email addresses.

## **JANUARY**

**No Meeting**

### **Stories - Adventures – Yarns – Sightings**

#### **Tutukaka Pelagic Seabird trip**

13<sup>th</sup> January was the second Tutukaka Pelagic Seabird trip which left Tutukaka at 7am and powered out past the Poor Knight Islands to the explore the trench area beyond.

10 of us were on the journey and over the course of the day, we sighted 21 different seabird species (see full list below), a few other bird species on the Islands, a couple of sunfish (one being cleaned by kingfish!) and some dolphins. A fantastic day had by all!

Highlights of the trip were:

- 1 White-naped Petrel
- 1 Mottled Petrel
- 1 Pomarine Jaeger
- 18 Gray Noddy
- Approx 40 NZ Storm-Petrels, along with some White-Faced Storm Petrels bouncing around the boat at most spots - a delight to watch.

Cheers Scott

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So here's the full trip results:

- 1 x Royal Albatross (Northern)
- 1 x Mottled Petrel
- 1 x White-naped Petrel
- 2 x Gray-faced Petrel
- 31 x Cook's Petrel
- 260 x Fairy Prion
- 28 x Black (Parkinson's) Petrel
- 3 x Flesh-footed Shearwater
- 3000 x Buller's Shearwater
- 1 x Sooty Shearwater

33 x Fluttering Shearwater  
2 x Common Diving-Petrel  
20 x White-faced Storm-Petrel  
38 x New Zealand Storm-Petrel  
1 x Pomarine Jaeger  
18 x Gray Noddy  
2 x Little Penguin  
500 x Australasian Gannet  
80 x Red-billed Gull  
30 x Kelp Gull  
45 x Pied Cormorant

Birds seen flying over the Poor Knights Island:

3 x Swamp Harrier  
1 x Sacred Kingfisher  
2 x Red-crowned Parakeet  
1 x Tui  
3 x Bellbird  
3 x Welcome Swallow  
3 x European Starling





## Dayna's Davies Adventures



### **New Zealand Fairy Tern Charitable Trust - Fish Survey**

By Ria Migaloo:

On Sunday Trust members and volunteers were out with Fairy Tern scientist Ian Southly.

This is an ongoing project which the trust is funding. We are returning to the same designated sites as before to check on the abundance of the fish that are the main food for Fairy Terns.

It was interesting to see all the different marine species caught in our nets, less fish where many people were but still some spots out there that Fairy Tern can forage without disturbance.

Did not like the dog we saw happily chasing the Bar Tailed Godwits which was most disturbing although after a word the gentleman did put his dog back on its leash.

So a big thank you to everybody that attended especially some of the young folk like OSNZ NZ Young Birder Dayna (up and coming ornithologist) who runs the Northland Bird Facebook page.) It was very cool to see a couple of Fairy Tern too.



Fish Data  
Collection

**Gardening with Matata (Fern Birds) by Melva Ward.**



In 2008 when we were coming to our scruffy piece of land and the adjacent piece of wetland that we had to purchase with the main piece of land we thought we heard a Fern Bird. As the weeks went on we got more familiar with that specific call and we were pretty sure it belonged to Matata.

The house was built and exploring began in earnest. A slog into the wetland trying not to get gumboots filled and a slightly precarious plank walk over the main drain got us across to the reserve on the other side.

It did not take long for us to decide that maybe some trapping could be of benefit to fragile Matata so we contacted Tutukaka Landcare and got some assistance with traps and bait. Slowly we heard more calls, different calls, but all from Matata. And so the population began to grow. Exciting times to walk down the lane and stop to listen to the calls and then see a Matata fly out across the wetland.

Not only did the rats and odd weasel go west so did the pampas grasses but the pampas was not taken out in one hit, we did it bit by bit so the birds did not suddenly have a huge change in their environment, and who knows they may have been hanging out in some of that pampas. It took probably no longer than three years to kill the pampas off. Ribbon wood was growing in this area and now it has extended into some of the old pampas areas.

Matata, well they have extended too, and now they are seen in my vegetable garden. For about the last three years I have had to go quietly as they would be in the coprosma bushes and flitting from them to the long grass on the hill. I was quite intrigued to see these shy little birds moving into an area frequented by humans so when I heard them close by I would stop any movement and just watch for them moving about in the foliage. All the while feeling quite privileged that they should be comfortable sharing space with a human. It got to the stage that most days, especially early morning, I would see one or two of these little birds, sometimes even midday they would be transiting from the wetland to the garden.

This year, late winter early spring I was working quietly and heard one close by and saw that it was going into the ferns behind my stainless work bench. Now this was going to be difficult because I needed to work there and Matata needed to go past me. Well we must have done ok because it seems that there was a nest there as two birds were coming and going. However one day I heard a great ruckus and crept along to see what looked like Matata banging a fern frond on the back and edge of the bench.



We put a trail camera on the bench and came to the conclusion it was seeing its reflection in the stainless steel and thinking it was an intruder it was trying to scare it off. Time to take the stress out of its life and we put some cloth along the bench to stop reflection and sure enough there was no more bashing itself against the steel.

Nine years on and we have a board walk across the wetland where the Matata can observe us humans and sometimes we see them on the boardwalk as well as gardening with them. We feel we are privileged humans living with shy fern birds and of course we have others using the space too.

It will be really wonderful when our friend Australasian Bittern frequents the area more.

## Sightings Count Sheet

Bird	Number	Place	date	Name
Shining Cuckoo	2	Pompallier Estate Drive - Whangarei	9-Nov-17	Anne McCracken
Californian Quail	8	"	"	"
Spotted Dove	1	Tealmere Grove, Maunu	"	"
Wood Pigeon	1	Takahi Street, Whangarei	28-Oct-17	Kevin & Pauline
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	50+	Pahi Wharf area	8-Nov-17	Janet Snell
Wood Pigeon	2	Pahi	"	"
Pied Shag	3	"	"	"
White Faced Heron	2	"	"	"
Californian Quail	1	2a Princes St, Whangarei	14-Oct-17	Prue Cozens
Australasian Bittern	1	Old Mill Ln, Ngunguru	23-Dec-17	Hilton Ward
Australasian Bittern	1	Old Mill Ln, Ngunguru - Heard booming	25-Dec-17	Hilton Ward
Banded Rail + 4 Chicks	5	12 Old Mill Ln, Ngunguru	14-Jan-18	Hilton Ward

# EAST COAST BEACH PATROL – SUMMARY – Code NE

Compiled by P. R. SMITH – Period Jul to Dec 2017

MONTH	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTALS
FROM	Ruakaka Riv	Ruakaka	Ruakaka River	Ruakaka Riv.	Ruakaka Riv.	Nth of daypark.	
TO	Waipu River	Sth of tip	Sth of Tip.	Sth of Tip	Sth of Tip.	Sth of Tip.	
DISTANCE	3.5km	7.5 km	7.5 km	7.5 km	7.0 km	3.5 km	
<b>PATROLLERS</b>		M. Robinson. J Snell	P. Cozens	A. McCracken W. Ambury	M. Snell		
Wandering Albatross							
Royal Albatross							
Black-browed Mollymawk							
White-capped (shy mollymawk)							
Grey-headed Mollymawk							
Buller's Mollymawk							
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross							
Flesh-footed Shearwater					2	1	3
Buller's Shearwater					1		1
Sooty Shearwater					1		1
Short-tailed Shearwater					1		1
Fluttering Shearwater		2	2	1	5		10
Hutton's Shearwater							
Little Shearwater							
Common Diving Petrel		2			1		3
Black Petrel							
White-chinned Petrel							
Kerguelen Petrel							
Cape Pigeon							
Antarctic Fulmar							
Northern Giant Petrel							
Fairy Prion					1		1
Thin-billed Prion							
Antarctic Prion							
Broad-billed Prion							
Lesser Broad-billed Prion							
Prion sp		2			1	1	4
Blue Petrel							
Pycroft's Petrel							
Cook's Petrel					3		3
Black-winged Petrel							
Mottled Petrel							
Grey-faced Petrel							
White-faced Storm Petrel					2		2
N.Z. Storm Petrel							
Blue Penguin			1		1	1	3
Australasian Gannet	1				2		3
Pied Shag	1						1
Wedge-tailed Shearwater							
Petrel Sp.			1				1
Variable Oystercatcher							
Southern Black-backed Gull					1		1
Red-billed Gull	1			1	2		4
Caspian Tern							
White-fronted Tern							
Domestic fowl						1	1
Morepork							
Blackbird							
Grey Duck							
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>

## NORTHLAND WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Code NW - SUMMARY

Compiled by Prue Cozens – Period JULY to DECEMBER 2017

MONTH	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
FROM	3.5k Nth Bayleys	Bayleys	Bayleys	Mahuta	Mahuta Gap	Mahuta Gap	
TO		Mahuta Gap.	Mahuta Gap	3.5k Nth.Bayleys	3k Nth.Chases	3k Nth.Chases	
DISTANCE	km.	15.5km	km.	0km.	0km.	0km.	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>PATROLLERS:</b>		<i>A. Beauchamp</i>	<i>P. Cozens W Ambury,</i>	<i>Ambury</i>	<i>D Davies</i>	<i>A McCracken</i>	
Wandering Albatross							
Royal Albatross							
Black-browed Mollymawk							
White-capped (shy mollymawk)							
Storm Petrel Sp.							
Buller's Mollymawk							
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross							
Flesh-footed Shearwater							
Buller's Shearwater							
Sooty Shearwater							
Short-tailed Shearwater							
Fluttering Shearwater	NO		NO	NO	NO	NO	
Hutton's Shearwater	PATROL		PATROL	PATROL	PATROL	PATROL	
Little Shearwater	DONE		DONE	<b>DONE</b>	DONE	DONE	
Common Diving Petrel							
Black Petrel							
White-chinned Petrel							
Kerguelen Petrel							
Cape Pigeon							
Antarctic Fulmar							
Northern Giant Petrel							
Fairy Prion		1					1
Thin-billed Prion							
Antarctic Prion							
Narrow-billed Prion							
Lesser Broad-billed Prion		<b>1</b>					1
Prion sp							
Blue Petrel							
Pycroft's Petrel							
Cook's Petrel							
Black-winged Petrel							
Mottled Petrel							
Grey-faced Petrel							
White-headed Petrel							
White-faced Storm Petrel							
Blue Penguin							
Australasian Gannet							
Pied Shag							
Grey-headed Mollymawk							
Shearwater Sp.		1					1
Paradise Duck							
Southern Black-backed Gull		1					1
Gull Sp.							
Pheasant.		1					1
White Fronted Tern							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>5</b>