

**THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW
ZEALAND (Inc)**

Wellington Region Newsletter

OSNZ—Birds New Zealand

December 2017

<http://osnz.org.nz/> and

<http://notornis.osnz.org.nz/>



Greetings

Another year has all but gone. I am actively compiling a list of speakers for our monthly meetings in 2018. If you have any suggestions for speakers please let me know. Thanks to those who have supplied names of possible speakers and to those who have offered to speak.

In 2018 we are proposing to run three Cook Strait Pelagic bird watching trips. This is a great opportunity to see a great range of albatross and mollymawks. We will also continue the monitoring of fernbirds at Pauatahanui and banded dotterels at East Harbour.

In 2018 Wellington Birds New Zealand is proposing to carry out another Wellington Harbour survey. This survey will be the 5th in a series of harbour surveys dating back to 1975. The success of this survey depends a team effort to carry out monthly counts over two years. Details of the survey will be forwarded to members next year.

Best wishes and good birding for 2018.

Geoff de Lisle

Wellington Regional Representative, Birds New Zealand (OSNZ)

Upcoming Monthly Meetings WHERE and WHEN

Meetings are held at Te Papa's collections building, 169 Tory Street. Go up the steps/ramp and across the carpark.

First Monday of the month, 7.45pm.

There will not be a meeting in January

February Meeting. This meeting will be held on Monday the 12th of February. Note, this is a change from the normal meeting day of the first Monday of the month. The change has been made because many members will be taking holidays on Monday the 5th and the following 6th Waitangi Day.

The February meeting will be the traditional members' night with a series of short presentations. I am looking for volunteers to present at this meeting. The talks should be 5-10 minutes with no restrictions on the subject matter apart from having an avian theme. Please let me know if you can present at this meeting.

March meeting. Michael Szabo will talk on his Heritage Expeditions tour in the South Pacific

April meeting. Johannes Fischer will talk on studies on the South Georgian Diving Petrel on Whenua Hou (Codfish) Island.

Regional Representative: Geoff de Lisle (04) 527 0929 or osnzwelly@gmail.com

Regional Recorder: Nikki McArthur nikki.mcarthur.101@gmail.com

Birds New Zealand Regional Roundup: Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop (04) 527 0929
osnzwelly@gmail.com

Shag Survey - Geoff de Lisle

Mist netting – Matu Both, manager@ngamanu.co.nz

October Meeting "Birds of Middleton Island, Alaska", *Michelle Bradshaw*, Technical Advisor, Ecology - Bird Banding Officer, New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme (NZNBBS), Department of Conservation

Michelle's talk was a summary of her time spent as a volunteer on Middleton Island, Alaska. Middleton Island is a small island (3 x 8 km) 130km south (60°S) of the Alaskan mainland. The island was a US Air Force early warning station, complete with all the infrastructure, including a still operating runway. The Alaska earthquake in 1964 resulted in the island being raised an additional 3.7m. Middleton Island is an important location for a number of bird species. This includes the largest concentration of Black Oystercatchers anywhere on the Pacific coast, as well as good numbers of other breeding shorebirds and seabirds. The island's nesting population of Black-legged Kittiwakes has been monitored and studied intensively since the mid-1970s. The Kittiwakes have made extensive use of radar towers for nesting and allowed detailed studies of nesting birds.

Michelle's slides can be viewed at the following Dropbox link.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/gjnsxli9h5zpisr/MBradshaw_Middleton%20Island%20ALASKA.pptx?dl=0

Note: To open this link you need a Dropbox account. These can be obtained from the following link.

https://www.dropbox.com/business/landing-t61fl?tk=sem_b_goog&camp=sem-b-goog-au-nz-eng-top-exact&kw=dropbox|e&ad=139428383660|1t1|c&gclid=Cj0KCQjwx8fOBRD7ARIsAPVq-Nks7OVxSWmp6nye_mnyoeAQPuZXdMmzmDnrHOzpyuU3UQScZ429ZBoaApTREALw_wcB

Scientific publications on Middleton Island

https://scholar.google.co.nz/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Middleton+Island+kittiwakes&btnG=

November Meeting "An update on the riverbed-nesting shorebirds of the Wairarapa" *Nikki McArthur*, *Wildlife Management International*

Nikki's talk was a summary of the bird survey carried out in January 2017 with Daniel Bergin, on 211km of rivers in the Wairarapa. The survey was focused on 6 shorebirds and was conducted for the Greater Wellington Regional Council. A total of 514 black-fronted dotterels were recorded. This equates to approximately 20% of the black-fronted dotterel population in New Zealand and indicates a steady increase in the Wairarapa population. The number of banded dotterels recorded in the survey was 344 with the largest numbers present on the East coast rivers. Pied stilts numbered 317 and variable oystercatchers 8. The most numerous bird was the spur-winged plover with 569 observed. A single black-billed colony of 78 pairs was found on the Ruamahanga River. Over the

years the location of this colony has changed and in other years it has nested on the shores of Lake Wairarapa. Nikki's survey provides valuable information for the GWRC for designing its flood control programme and compiling resource consents. Furthermore, it will be used for longitudinal studies for the identification of any changes in these bird populations. Nikki acknowledged the valuable contributions of Daniel Bergin, Joanna McVeagh, and Colin Shore in this survey.

December Meeting “Kokako on Kapiti Island – 2017 Update” Ian Flux, Independent Consultant.

While Ian's talk was principally devoted to the kokako on Kapiti Island, he did also review the national status of this unique bird. Where there are now 1624 pairs of kokako compared to only 399 pairs in 1999. This pleasing recovery has occurred through the control of possums and rats, the main predators of kokako. Stoats are less of a problem but still may be an important predator in some situations. The conservation status of kokako has been down listed to 'recovering'. Computer modelling suggests that if current levels of predator control continue, there will be 3940 pairs in 2025.

The first transfers of kokako to Kapiti Island were in 1991 and followed a proposal by Kerry Brown. The early transfers (1991-94) were 'rescues' from remnant populations. Most of the early birds were males. Later transfers (1995-97) included young birds and more females. They originated from Mapara, Hauturu and Mount Bruce. From 1995-2007 kokako on Kapiti were intensively monitored. Initially breeding was slow with low hatchability and low fledgling rates. Additional losses occurred during the rat eradication programme with the loss of 3 birds and other possible adverse effects from brodifacoum. Chicks were produced from birds from 5 different relic populations.

In 2016 Wellington DOC instituted a new survey of kokako on Kapiti. The survey was carried out by Ian in April 2016 and April 2017. There was evidence of good breeding with double nesting and examples of 2 chicks being raised by parents. The densest population of birds was the area below the Trig which includes the two major public tracks. One of the original transferred birds, now 23 years old, was found during the survey. A total of 51 pairs were found during the survey, indicating a growing population of kokako. However, the population has been established from a low gene pool and an additional transfer is required to ensure a broader gene pool. There is some urgency for a transfer to occur which requires sponsorship.

Bird of the Year 2017 - Kea

Science Bird Videos

<http://www.sciencemag.org/video/cockatoos-use-tools-make-music>

<http://www.sciencemag.org/video/how-clumsy-galapagos-cormorant-lost-its-flight>



Bird Snippets

Little tern at Waikanae Beach

Imogen » Thu Oct 05, 2017

Associating with white-fronted terns. Very flighty with all the whitebaiters around. BirdingNZ.net

Falcons and Pied Shags at Pharazyn Reserve, Waikanae

Peter Hodge » Sat Oct 14, 2017

Last weekend I was staying at Waikanae beach. I visited Pharazyn Reserve on two days. On Saturday, early morning, I saw two NZ Falcons from the hide, an adult and a juvenile. Both birds were on the far side of the south pond. The adult was down low, perched on a fence behind a screen of scrub, and facing the water, while the juvenile was perched on an outer branch of a tall macrocarpa. The birds were about 300 metres apart. In the late afternoon I returned, and saw the juvenile, in the same tree, but higher up, beneath the crown, and harder to spot.

On Sunday morning - no sign of the Falcons, but I scoped the Pied Shag colony. The shags are nesting in the two tall pines on the east side of the ponds. From two different angles I counted 35 active nests (at least one bird in each) - 28 nests on the northern-most tree, and 7 in the southern tree - and observed 48 Pied Shags in the trees or on the ponds. BirdingNZ.net

Kaka over Pharazyn Reserve, Peka Peka, Waikanae

Rogerandmavis » Sun Oct 29, 2017

This morning at about 9.30am, I sighted this kaka flying over the Pharazyn Lakes between Waikanae and Peka Peka. BirdingNZ.net

Where do the Redpolls hang out?

Ledzep » Sat Oct 28, 2017 2:43 pm

In Belmont Regional Park (Wellington northern suburbs) at the moment. Several flocks each of 20 - 30 birds. BirdingNZ.net



eBird 2017 Redpoll Observations

Eastern common tern @ Waikanae Estuary

Alan Tennyson » Sat Nov 11, 2017

There was a common tern in non-breeding plumage sitting with the white-fronted tern flock at the river mouth this evening. BirdingNZ.net

Red-billed gulls Wairaka Rock - Pukerua Bay

Gillian Candler » Fri Nov 10, 2017

Last year the red-billed gulls disappeared from Wairaka Rock around the coast from Pukerua Bay, this spring they are back nesting on the rock, although I think smaller numbers than in 2015. Around 80 pairs are visible from the shore, also around the same number of white-fronted terns. Two harrier hawks were circling high up above the rock. BirdingNZ.net

Rifleman Days Bay

Michael Szabo » Sun Oct 29, 2017

I found a pair of Rifleman in East Harbour Regional Park (Day's Bay), Wellington, this afternoon, feeding in beech forest near the top of the track. There were plenty of Tui, Kereru, Bellbird and Shining Cuckoos about. Then, when the Tui all started squealing, I looked up and saw a spectacular stoop diving New Zealand Falcon. BirdingNZ.net

Rifleman Days Bay

Michael Szabo » Mon Oct 30, 2017

The pair I saw repeatedly flew into a nest hole with food, so presumably they were feeding chicks. BirdingNZ.net

Rifleman Days Bay

Ledzep » Sun Nov 05, 2017

Thanks to Michael's accurate directions, I had good views of the pair yesterday. Hard to spot the hole in the tree, but the pair were visiting at around 10 min intervals with tasty morsels so looks like they are still feeding chicks. Hoping for a population increase. BirdingNZ.net



Photo – Duncan Watson

Dabchick – Maoribank, Upper Hutt Duck Pond

Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop 6th Nov 2017. Pair of dabchick raising two young. Is this the first time they have bred in this location?

NZ dotterels at Waikanae River estuary

Rogerandmavis » Sun Nov 12, 2017

During the last week there have been up to 6 NZ dotterels on the sandspit at the Waikanae River estuary. No sign of nesting as yet. BirdingNZ.net

NZ dotterels at Waikanae River estuary

Rogerandmavis » Thu Nov 23, 2017

Two NZ dotterels have established a nest on the sand spit at Waikanae Beach. The nest contains six eggs, so the likelihood is that both birds may be female and have each laid 3 eggs in the nest. If this is the case, then the eggs will be infertile and will not hatch. Local birders are watching and waiting for the results. BirdingNZ.net

Pied shags colony Lake Kohangatera (Pencarrow)

Geoff de Lisle 6th Dec 2017 Pied shags continue to nest on the shores of the outlet of Lake Kohangatera (Pencarrow Lakes). The photograph shows well developed chicks. On the 6th of December there were at least 5 active nests





Te Papa Blog

Seabird discoveries in remote southern Fiordland

Posted 5 December 2017 by [Colin Miskelly](#) Te Papa scientists Alan Tennyson and Colin Miskelly recently joined a Department of Conservation-led survey of seabird colonies in remote Chalky Inlet and Preservation Inlet in southern Fiordland. The team made the most of an extended spell of fine weather to land on an astonishing 77 islands. Vertebrate curator Dr Colin Miskelly here summarises some of their more notable discoveries.

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2017/12/05/seabird-discoveries-in-remote-southern-fiordland/>

3 November 2017 by [Te Papa](#). Fossilised bird grave sites are common in New Zealand, but one particular cave in Martinborough has revealed thousands of bones of flightless birds who plunged to their deaths. Curator of vertebrates Alan Tennyson describes how over thousands of years rare and extinct birds such kakapo, kiwi, North Island takahe, and moa fell through the concealed entrance

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2017/11/03/martinboroughs-cave-of-bones-how-thousands-of-flightless-birds-met-their-end/>

Ancient colossal penguin bones discovered in Otago

13 December 2017 by [Alan Tennyson](#)

What do you do when you discover what is possibly the largest penguin ever? You name it after your mum. This is what Curator Vertebrates Alan Tennyson – who has a paper on the discovery out today – did.The emperor penguin is a truly impressive mound of bird but it would have been relatively small in comparison with some of the giant penguins that lived in the distant past.

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2017/12/13/ancient-colossal-penguin-bones-discovered-in-otago/>

Ancient colossal penguin bones discovered in Otago A Paleocene penguin from New Zealand substantiates multiple origins of gigantism in fossil Sphenisciformes

Gerald Mayr¹, R. Paul Scofield², Vanesa L. De Pietri² & Alan J. D. Tennyson³

Nature Communications **8**, Article number: 1927 (2017)

Abstract

One of the notable features of penguin evolution is the occurrence of very large species in the early Cenozoic, whose body size greatly exceeded that of the largest extant penguins. Here we describe a new giant species from the late Paleocene of New Zealand that documents the very early evolution of large body size in penguins. *Kumimanu biceae*, n. gen. et sp. is larger than all other fossil penguins that have substantial skeletal portions preserved. Several plesiomorphic features place the new species outside a clade including all post-Paleocene giant penguins. It is phylogenetically separated from giant Eocene and Oligocene penguin species by various smaller taxa, which indicates multiple origins of giant size in penguin evolution. That a penguin rivaling the largest previously known species existed in the Paleocene suggests that gigantism in penguins arose shortly after these birds became flightless divers. Our study therefore strengthens previous suggestions that the absence of very large penguins today is likely due to the Oligo-Miocene radiation of marine mammals.

Full article; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-017-01959-6.pdf>

Russell Thomas died on the 30th of October, 2017 after a short illness. He was a member of OSNZ since 1963 and the Wellington Regional Representative from 1983 to 1987. While Russell has not lived in the Wellington region for many years older local members will remember him with much fondness. He has participated in many

bird surveys on offshore islands (Little Barrier, Great Barrier, Mayor, Kapiti, Mana) and in wader counts and dead sea bird identification and counts on all west coast beaches from Whatipu to Cape Reinga/Spirits Bay and from Te Huka, Tom Bowling Bay south to Pakiri. He was a foundation member of the Miranda Naturalist's Trust and Treasurer (1974 – 1981). Russell has spent many years working to (first) discover and (then) sustain the Taiko population on Chatham Islands and played an important role with the Taiko Trust as Treasurer and Trustee.



Cook Strait Pelagic Trips – 2018

Wellington Birds New Zealand (OSNZ) will run three Cook Strait Pelagic trips - 1st April, 1st July and 1st September (7am-1pm trips as previously). Further details of the trips and request for names of people wanted to come and see some spectacular birds will be sent next year.

Gillian Candler, one of our members, has produced another book.



East Harbour – Banded Dotterels

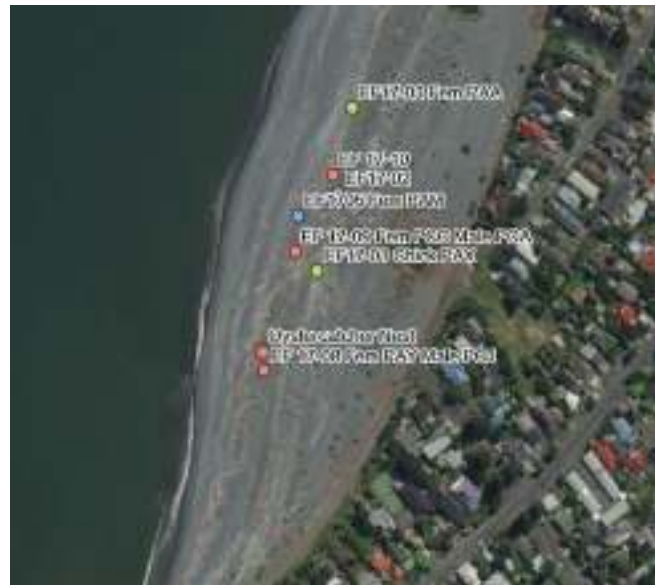
The second season of monitoring banded dotterels in the East Harbour by MIRO is notable for the full implementation of a banding and flagging programme. The birds are being banded with a metal band and a flag with three letters. In the previous season only two birds were banded (adult male and chick). The banded adult DVU returned to the Lakes block for the 2017/18 breeding season.



Adults are being banded by capturing them on the nest using a funnel trap while chicks are being caught using hand nets. The smaller chicks are only being banded with a metal band while the older and larger chicks, if

they can be caught, are also given a flag.

The flag details can be read with difficulty with binoculars or by photographing them. Recently one of the female dotterels banded on Eastbourne beach has been seen at the Pencarrow Lakes block and highlights the value of banding. Having banded birds has the potential to discover where the birds go after nesting. The adults leave the East Harbour nesting sites in the early months of the year but it is unknown where they winter. Possibilities include Lake Wairarapa or further afield. The following season will be of great interest as this will provide information on whether the flagged birds return to the same area where they nested this year.



12th December, 2017
 Top – Pencarrow Lakes Block
 Bottom - Eastbourne
 Green – successfully nested
 Blue – failed nest

Considerable efforts are being taken by MIRO to reduce possible interference to nests. Signage warning the public of nesting birds has been erected at Eastbourne and the Lakes block. MIRO members have been active in educating the Eastbourne public in the control of dogs. At the Lakes block a temporary fence has been erected in an effort to prevent the public interference, especially vehicles driving on the beach. There is an ongoing predator control programme at the Lakes block by MIRO and Greater Wellington Regional Council. Previous investigations by Nikki McArthur showed extensive predation of nests by hedgehogs. Exclusion of sheep from the nesting areas is important to avoid trampling of nests. Predation of chicks by black-backed gulls is also a concern. Recently a falcon was observed taking a banded dotterel at the Lakes block.

The survey of banded dotterels will continue for a few more weeks until the birds depart the nesting areas. Members are most welcome to participate in the survey for the 2018/9 breeding season. Contact details for this new breeding season will be supplied in a later newsletter.



Photographs: left - young chick, banded with metal band but too small to flag, right - unbanded 2017 fledgling, Lakes Block.

Acknowledgements; Thanks to Parker Jones of MIRO for co-ordinating the weekly monitoring, co-ordinating the lakes trapping, arranging Mike Bell of WildLife International to train banders and thank you to GIS in Conservation for the infield nest monitoring application.



Moa Point – Banded Dotterels

The banded dotterel nest at Moa Point discovered in October appeared to have failed. Another nest was found in December and has three eggs. Interestingly the female appears to have only one foot but does not seem to be too handicapped by this loss. A temporary fence has been installed with notices to protect the nest and discourage disturbance, especially disturbance from dogs and their owners. Sandy Winterton

Long-tailed cuckoo observations – ebird records, November / December 2017

Kapiti Island, Wilkinson Track	19/12/2017	Imogen Warren
Kapiti Island, Okupe Track	18/12/2017	Imogen Warren
Akatarawa Forest	17/12/2017	Nikki McArthur
Near summit, Mt Climie	2/12/2017	Mike Bryan
166 Blue Mountains Road, Silverstream	15/11/2017	Nikki McArthur – 4.34am
166 Blue Mountains Road, Silverstream	17/11/2017	Nikki McArthur - 4.16am
244 Blue Mountains Road, Silverstream	18/11/2017	Dallas Bishop / Geoff de Lisle – 10.20pm
Ridge Track, Days Bay	5/12/2017	Dallas Bishop / Geoff de Lisle
Eastbourne	11/12/2017	George Hobson
Rimutaka Park	15/12/17	Peter Hodge

Kapiti Island news

Dallas Bishop and I have just returned from another 5 day tour of volunteering on Kapiti Island. The following are some observations made during our stay while doing a range of volunteer activities from clearing foliage from tracks to cleaning toilets.

Currently the most notable feature of Kapiti Island is the magnificent rata trees which are having one of their best flowering years for some considerable time. The bird life, especially the tui, bellbird and hihi are greatly enjoying the nectar from the flowers. This is evidence by the very low consumption of sugar water which is used for supplementary feeding the hihi. While the hihi feeders can exclude tui, they cannot prevent bellbirds from using the feeders. However, bellbirds are currently showing virtually no interest in using the feeders. Nick Fisentzidis, DOC Kapiti, reports that the kaka were having a field day on the rata below the hihi feeder on the Wilkinson track. The photograph (left) was taken on the 2nd December of rata on the Trig track which leads to the summit.



Sooty Shearwaters

The Wilkinsons, former rangers on Kapiti reported in their book (1952) that sooty shearwaters in the breeding season were very numerous and were the only petrel known to breed on Kapiti Island. They also recorded seeing “smaller, white-breasted birds” while watching the sooty shearwaters coming in to the breeding grounds at the summit. The breeding grounds for the sooty shearwater were all along the top of the cliffs on the Western side of the island, and on several of the higher ridges of the eastern portions. Over the last 30 years the number of sooty shearwaters on Kapiti have declined to a colony near the summit of approximately 150 burrows (Brown et al., 2016).

In contrast to sooty shearwaters, weka have not always been on Kapiti and were first introduced in 1896, a year before the island was proclaimed a sanctuary. When the Wilkinsons arrived on Kapiti in 1924 they reported that weka were everywhere and their numbers increased during the tenure of the Wilkinsons (1924-42). Weka were introduced to southern Titi islands off Stewart Island in the early 20th century. Harper (2006) observed on Taukihepa (Big South Cape I), Rerewhakaupoko (Solomon I) and Mokonui (Big Moggie I) predation by weka of sooty shearwater chicks from early January to mid-February in 2004 and 2005.

In 2016 DOC (Brown et al., 2016) identified as a high priority to exclude weka from the sooty shearwater colony to enable it to persist on Kapiti Island. After finding juvenile birds in April 2016, indicating successful breeding, members of DOC, Ngati Toa and The United States Embassy visited the island in September to discuss the potential options for





erecting a weka-exclusion fence. In 2017 with sponsorship from the US Embassy to mark the 100 years anniversary of the US National Park Service, 3 weka exclusions were erected around sooty shearwater burrows on the western cliffs near the summit. The exclusions are approximately 50-75m square and have a ramp (picture) for the birds to leave the protected areas.

Adult birds are currently returning to the colony, refurbishing their burrows and getting used to their new enclosure. Trail cameras show that the birds are using the ramps when leaving the enclosure (picture).

The success of the project will be evidence of successful rearing of chicks inside the exclusions.



Trail camera picture – DOC Kapiti.

References

Brown K, Rolfe J, Adams L, de Lange P, Green C. (2016). Kapiti Island Restoration Strategy. DOC.
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter_James_Lange/publication/309789956_Kapiti_Island_ecological_restoration_strategy/links/5823919708aeabc4f8987d90/Kapiti-Island-ecological-restoration-strategy.pdf

Harper, G. (2006) Weka (*Gallirallus australis*) depredation of sooty shearwater/titi (*Puffinus griseus*) chicks. *Notornis* 53:318-320.

Wilkinson, AS & A. (1952) Kapiti Birds Sanctuary. A natural history of the island. Editor, RHD Stidolf, Masterton Printing Company.

Royal spoonbills and Red-billed gulls

This is the 4th year we have surveyed at the beginning of December the spoonbills and red-billed colonies at the north end of Kapiti Island. This year the survey was carried out on the 1st of December.

Royal spoonbills

The spoonbills remain faithful for many years to the colony situated on the east side of Okupe Lagoon. A total of 60 spoonbills were observed



in 2017. There were birds in breeding plumage and one active nest was visible. The actual number of nests was not determined because it was not possible to observe them without causing significant disturbance to the colony. Given the difficulties of viewing the colony it is not possible to determine any trends from this survey. The number of adults present during the surveys ranged from 41 in 2014 to 61 in 2015.

The red-billed gulls

In marked contrast to the spoonbills, the red-billed gulls during the four years of surveying have used a number of different locations for nesting. The table below is a summary of the number of red-billed gulls and nests recorded between December 2014 and December 2017. In 2017 the gulls moved away from site 3 which they used in the previous 2 years. The majority of the birds used a new site (5 on map) which was on the ground amongst the vegetation and less prone than site 3 to being washed away by high seas. Some birds in 2017 also used 4 rocks stacks in the same vicinity. These rocks had previously been used

Year - December	Location on Map	No. Birds	No. nests
2014	1,2	35, 36 (71)	7, 8 (15)
2015	3,4	~80, 3 (83)	31, 2 (33)
2016	3	112	~35
2017	1,5	65, 109 (174)	34, 72 (106)

Total in brackets.

Map, north eastern end of Kapiti Island.



Since December 2014 there has been an increase each year in the number of red-billed gull nests recorded on the north-western shores of Kapiti.

Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop



Red-billed gull chick, 2/12/2015 (above)
Main colony (5) 2/12/2017 (below)



Pauatahanui Fernbird – update

The good news is that translocated fernbirds have successfully bred and, fledged young have been seen. The first evidence of successful breeding was recorded on the 29th of September when a bird Red/Blue was seen carrying food, evidence that it was feeding young (photo). Interestingly this bird has been seen on numerous occasions by a number of people. In contrast, the band combinations of his mate have never been identified. Unbanded fledglings have been seen and may number at least 3. .



As the breeding season has progressed there has been a change in the locations of some birds. The latest map (below) of bird locations was compiled by David Cornick from observations made between 25/11/17 and 3/12/17. Observations of fledglings are made with a red symbol lettered J.

As the breeding season has progressed there has been a change in the locations of some birds. The latest map (below) of bird locations was compiled by David Cornick from observations made between 25/11/17 and 3/12/17. Observations of fledglings are made with a red symbol lettered J.



Fledgling fernbird – Photo, David Cornick.



The optimal time for observing the fernbirds is early morning or late afternoon. During the middle of the day they appear to be less vocal and less inclined to respond to play-back calls. A new set of power poles and lines were installed across the reserve during the period. While steps were taken to reduce the impact of the construction work it is not known whether or not this work reduced the breeding success of the fernbirds. A further transfer of fernbirds from Lake Rotokare in the Taranaki to Pauatahanui is planned for April of next year. Would members please send me their fernbird observations. Geoff de Lisle – osnzwelly@gmail.com