

# The Wrybill

Newsletter of the Canterbury Region,  
Ornithological Society of New Zealand

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February 2016

What's on at OSNZ Canterbury:  
February to April 2016

## Indoor Meetings

Evening Meetings take place at 7.30 pm on the last Monday of the month at Mahaanui Area DOC Office, 31 Nga Mahi Road, off Blenheim Road, Sockburn. Plenty of parking is available.

February 29 – Member's Night. Some members will give short talks or show photographs of their birding experiences.

April 4 – A short AGM, followed by a talk from Murry Cave, a well-known bird photographer who lives on the West Coast.

May 2 – A talk by Andy Roberts, the Director of Conservation Services in the Eastern South Island.

## Field Trips

February 13 – Big Bird Count of Lake Ellesmere. For more information or to register contact Jan.

March – Sea watching trip one Sunday to Godley Head or Scarborough Head. The date will be confirmed later as we want a windy day

for the best viewing conditions. More information to follow.

April 16 – A search for Riflemen on Banks Peninsula. More information to follow.

Please contact Jan if you will be attending these trips - 321 7178 or shesagreen@gmail.com.

## Rambles

February 16 – Brooklands Lagoon. Meet at the car park opposite the Spencer Park camp grounds entrance at 9:30 am.

March 15 – Halswell Quarry. Meet in the car park by the toilet block near the ranger's office at 9:30 am.

April 12 – The Groynes. Meet at 9:30 am.

If you intend to go, please contact Bev Alexander on 03 313 7009 or birdiebev@xtra.co.nz. This is really important in case the ramble is cancelled or the location changed.

### Ann Sherlock

Arriving in New Zealand in 1975 from England Ann Sherlock and husband Rob settled in the Waikato where Ann found a job as a secondary school English teacher. Ann's attention to detail, grammar and good writing were to prove just what the Canterbury Region of Birds New Zealand needed in a newsletter editor. But that was in the future.

Ann and Rob had always enjoyed hill-walking in Derbyshire and the Lake District, transferring this love to the high country of both the North and South Islands of New Zealand. In 2000 they decided to retire to Christchurch so Rob could more easily partake in his love of gliding and they could both do lots of walks and tramps. They never did anything by halves, so they did amazingly difficult routes, carrying a tent, across the main divide and up and down the length of Canterbury and Nelson. Seeing native birds along the way and recording the sightings led to Ann's involvement with the Atlas project and she joined OSNZ in 2004 after giving then Canterbury RR Nick Allen data for lots of 10 km squares that no one else had contributed to.

In 2007 Ann was kind enough to agree to be editor for Canterbury OSNZ's newsletter *The Wrybill* and did this in a very efficient and thorough way until 2014, producing lovely issues that many people wrote to say they enjoyed. Extremely fussy about spelling, grammar and getting facts right, Ann would pester me as RR for copy for *The Wrybill*, having to fit the newsletter into a busy schedule including overseas trips to visit her family scattered all over the world. She could be exasperating, but she was a lovely genuine person, very funny and generous and enthusiastic about the natural world, the planet, people and Birds New Zealand. She is very much missed.

By Jan Walker

Ann also proof read numerous issues of

*Southern Bird*, efficiently but gently putting the editor right regarding his sometimes wayward grammar. She also wrote the Canterbury regional roundup for a number of years. I would like to express my and the Canterbury region's deepest sympathies to Ann's family, and Rob in particular.

By Nick Allen

### Recent Happenings

Our final two field trips of the year took place in November. First up was the annual Ashley River survey. More than twenty volunteers participated including many OSNZ members. The numbers of Wrybill, Banded Dotterel, Pied Stilt and South Island Pied Oystercatcher were much as expected but the numbers of Black-billed Gulls and Black-fronted Terns were lower than expected. Hopefully this is just normal variation and not part of a long term trend. The second field trip was to Lake Ellesmere for the Summer Wader Count. Only one Wrybill was seen, but good numbers of Pacific Golden Plovers were counted, including 26 at Yarrs Bay. See the attached spreadsheet for full results.

Eight members were treated to a pleasant walk around Styx Mill Reserve for the last ramble of 2015. The main sighting of note was that of a Ring-necked Pheasant. One Shining Cuckoo was heard but despite plenty of looking, none were seen.

The last evening meeting of 2015 began with a well – attended, delicious pot luck dinner. Ron Nilsson then led a discussion about the Black Stilt including the pros and cons of introducing them to the Ashley River area. Ron also gave an interesting insight into the early conservation work which was done with this species.

By Eleanor Gunby

### 2016 Birds NZ Conference/AGM

This year's conference will be held in Napier at the Museum Theatre Gallery, Marine Parade, during Queens Birthday Weekend (4-6 June 2016). Two days will be filled with scientific papers and workshops, while on the third day field trips will be made to local places of birding interest. The AGM will be held on Saturday afternoon. A variety of workshops (such as the use of GPS, triangulation methods for locating birds by sound, and a look at historical books at the museum) will be held on Sunday morning, followed up by a trip to the estuary on Monday. These are excellent get togethers, plus a good chance to check out the birds in a different area. The deadline for Earlybird registration (only \$95) is 31 March. Please register online or contact Jan if you don't have a computer.

### Banded Birds

Black-billed Gulls with bands such as "M13" have been banded in the north of the South Island this breeding season. Birds carrying white bands were caught at colonies on the Wairau River, yellow bands are from the Clarence River and red from the Buller. Black-fronted Terns have either coloured bands or flags with a two-letter combination such as "AB". Terns with white bands or flags are from either the Wairau River or Wairau Lagoons, whereas yellow banded/flagged birds have been caught on the upper Clarence or Acheron Rivers. Sightings of birds banded as described would be really appreciated. You can either post them on [birdingnz.net](http://birdingnz.net) or send to Claudia Mischler ([Claduia@wmil.co.nz](mailto:Claduia@wmil.co.nz)) for gulls or Nikki McArthur ([Nikki@wmil.co.nz](mailto:Nikki@wmil.co.nz)) for terns. For eBirders, it would be useful if you added a comment about any Black-billed Gull or Black-fronted terns in your checklists, specifying whether any were banded or not. For more information, visit [http://www.birdingnz.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=9&t=5266&p=26290#p2\\_6290](http://www.birdingnz.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=9&t=5266&p=26290#p2_6290).

### Birds NZ Subscriptions 2016

Those of you on email will have received notification that the annual membership subscriptions are due 1 January 2016, and others will have received notices via Birds NZ mailing. It is all too easy to overlook this during the Christmas/New Year period so please check and if you haven't already paid, please do so. Remember that you can pay these online.

### Great Backyard Bird Count 2016

The Great Backyard Bird Count (12-15 February) is an annual international bird survey. To participate, you simply record the number of each species of bird spotted in your count location in fifteen minutes. You can do one count or many counts. Afterwards, put your list(s) on ebird, and those entered during the count dates will be used by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Bird Studies Canada, and the National Audubon Society. Visit <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/get-started/> for more information.

### Contributions

Any contributions (articles, photographs, etc.) for the next *Wrybill* would be very much appreciated. Please send them to the editor no later than April 20.

## Recent Sightings

### Contributors

AC – Andrew Crossland; BA – Bev Alexander; DT – David Thomas; GB – Grahame Bell; JW – Jan Walker; KR – Kieran Rowe; MA – Mike Ashbee; NA – Nick Allen; NM – Niall Muga; PC – Phil Crutchley; PS – Paul Sagar; RL – Russell Langdon.

## The Wrybill - February 2016

### October

Possible Large Sand Plover (was later confirmed as a juvenile New Zealand Dotterel), 1, Ashley Estuary, 29/10, BA.

### November

White-winged Black Tern, 2, Lower Waimakariri River, 3/11, AC.  
Red-necked Stint, 47, Embankment Road, 12/11, KR.  
Chestnut-breasted Shelduck, 2, Sandy Point (Avon-Heathcote Estuary), 16/11, AC and PC.  
Pacific Golden Plover (juveniles), 2, Ruddy Turnstone, 2, Red Knot, 8, Red-necked Stint, 2, Kaitorete Spit, 22/11, AC and NM.  
Pacific Golden Plover, 2, Crescent Island, 22/11, AC and NM.  
Arctic Tern, 1, Ashley Estuary, 24/11, MA.  
Far Eastern Curlew, 1, Bar-tailed Godwit, 10, Red Knot, 1, Washdyke Lagoon, 24/11, PS.  
Common Tern, 1, Far Eastern Curlew, 1, Variable Oystercatcher, 14, Whimbrel, 1, Bar-tailed Godwit, 123, Red Knot, 8, Ruddy Turnstone, 7, Red-necked Stint, 1, Ashley Estuary, 26/11, AC.  
Antarctic Tern, 1, Kaitorete Spit, 28/11, KR.  
Little Tern (possible), 1, Birdlings Flat, 28/11, AC and DT.  
Gull-billed Tern, 1, Kaituna Lagoon, 28/11, reported by AC.  
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 2, Kaitorete Reserve, 28/11, reported by AC.  
Red Knot, 3, Avon-Heathcote Estuary, 29/11, GB.  
Red-necked Stint, 12, Curlew Sandpiper, 3, Pacific Golden Plover, 1, Kaitorete Spit, 30/11, AC.

### December

Royal Spoonbill, 43, Kaiapoi Oxidation Ponds, 1/12, AC.  
Crested Grebe, 2, Bromley Oxidation Ponds, 1/12, AC.  
New Zealand Dotterel, 1, Ashley Estuary, 5/12, reported by NM.  
Australasian Bitterns (close to fledging), 2, Travis Wetland, 7/12, reported by AC.  
White-winged Black Tern, 1, Ashley Estuary, 7/12, MA.  
Whimbrel, 2, Far Eastern Curlew, 2, Bar-tailed Godwit, 202, Ruddy Turnstone, 5, 9/12, NA.

Cape Barren Goose, 1, Wrybill, 1, Washdyke Lagoon, 13/12, AC.  
Wrybill, 51, Pacific Golden Plover, 10, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 2, Bar-tailed Godwit, 26, Red Knot, 8, Crescent Island, 22/12, AC.  
Wrybill, 17, Banded Dotterel, 215, Bar-tailed Godwit, 4, Red Knot, 13, Curlew Sandpiper, 3, Red-necked Stint, 24, Ruddy Turnstone, 2, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 1, Kaitorete Spit Tip, 22/12, AC.

### January

Banded Dotterel, 90, Wrybill, 61, Red-necked Stint, 3, Embankment Road, 5/1, JW and BA.  
Red Knot, 2, Jarvis Road, 5/1, JW and BA.  
Royal Spoonbill, 10, Riverbridge Centre (Ashburton), 9/1, RL.  
Crested Grebe, 2 (seen building a nest), Kaiapoi Lakes, 17/1, BA.  
Cattle Egret, 2, Drain Road, 18/1, BA.  
Glossy Ibis, 2, Taranaki Wetlands/Kaiapoi Pa Road, 19/1, BA.

### Canterbury Region Contacts

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# CANTERBURY SUMMER WADER COUNT DEC 2015

Species	Waipara RM	Ashley / S water / Crk Est	Brooklands Lagoon	Waimakariri Bridges	Travis Wetland	Avon-Heathcote Estuary	Lytelton Harbour	Port Levy	Pigeon Bay	Okains Bay	Akaroa Harbour	Lake Forsyth	Kaitorete Spit Tip	Remainder Kaitorete Spit	CCC Reserve	Aggie Price's	Kaituna Lagoon	Halswell Flats B	Halswell Flats A
Counters/NC	NA	NA	AC	AC	AC	AC,PC	AC	AC	AC	AC	AC	AC,PC,B	PC,BD	PC,BD	AC	AC	AC	KR,RH	KR,RH
Date counted	12-Dec	9-Dec	1-Dec	1-Dec	1-Dec	16-Nov	30-Nov	30-Nov	30-Nov	30-Nov	30-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov
Aus Crested Grebe																			
Mute Swan																			2
White Heron																			
Australasian Bittern																			
Royal Spoonbill		17	44			19					1		1	17	3	3	6	276	37
Pied Oystercatcher	3	89	37			723	46	7	3	8	23				2	4	11	2	
Variable Oystercatcher	4	2	3			56	9		4		8								
Hybrid Oystercatcher		7																	
Pied Stilt	8	51	50	2	24	72	23					93		40	45	309	209	302	53
Black Stilt																			
Hybrid Stilt		2																	
Banded Dotterel	6	5	4									4	25	32	78	17	1	41	30
Black-fronted Dotterel	3																		
Wrybill																			
Pacific Golden Plover														1					
Spur-winged Plover			8	6	8	48	13	6	4	4	16	42	12	9	15	36	39	96	21
Turnstone		5																	
Lesser Knot						3								6				5	
Curlew Sandpiper													4						
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper															2				
Pectoral Sandpiper																			
Red-necked Stint													10						
Eastern Curlew		1																	
Whimbrel		2																	
Bar-tailed Godwit		202	205			1905	275									3		67	
Black-billed Gull		77											116						
White-winged Black Tern																			
Black-fronted Tern		1																	
Caspian Tern	4	3	6			10	2						3				2	1	2
Gull-billed Tern																1			
White-fronted Tern		2											534	2					
Site totals	28	466	357	8	32	2836	368	13	11	12	48	139	705	107	145	373	268	790	145
Wader totals	24	366	307	8	32	2807	366	13	11	12	47	139	51	88	142	369	260	513	104
wader % of total count	0.32	4.95	4.15	0.11	0.43	37.95	4.95	0.18	0.15	0.16	0.64	1.88	0.69	1.19	1.92	4.99	3.51	6.94	1.41
# wader species at site	5	10	6	2	2	6	5	2	3	2	3	3	4	5	5	5	4	6	3

Bev Alexander = BA John Allan = JA Nick Allen = NA Mike Ashbee = MA Grant Bowden = GB Andrew Crossland = AC Phil Crutchley = PC Bethan Dardecker = BD Eleanor Gunby = EG  
 Duane Harland = DH William Harland Robbie Hewson = RH Kenny Rose = KR Joy Sagar = JS Paul Sagar = PS David Thomas = DT Jan Walker = JW Sandra Wallace = SW Peter  
 Wilson = PW

Lake Ellesmere level 0.82m (estimated as too windy) on 20/11/15 and closed.

<b>Species</b>	<i>Osbornes</i>	<i>Greenpark Huts Bay</i>	<i>Greenpark Huts - Jarvis Road</i>	<i>Jarvis - Embankment Roads</i>	<i>Embankment-Yarri</i>	<i>Yarri Bay</i>	<i>Lil Pools</i>	<i>Lower Selwyn Huts</i>	<i>Rennies Bay</i>	<i>Irwell RM</i>	<i>Drain Road</i>	<i>Harts Creek</i>	<i>Johnstons Rd</i>	<i>Lake Road S</i>	<i>Fishermans Pt</i>	<b>Subtotal Lake Ellesmere</b>	<i>Coopers Lagoon</i>	<i>Ophi RM</i>	<i>Washdyke Lagoon</i>	<i>Ki-Wainono</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Counters/NC</b>	n/c	JW	EG,SW,JA	BA,MA,?,PW	GB	JW	n/c	DT,DH,WH	n/c	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	n/c	PS	PS,JS	
<b>Date counted</b>		28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov		28-Nov		28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov	28-Nov		28-Nov		24-Nov	30-Nov	
Aus Crested Grebe																0					0
Mute Swan															1	3	18				21
White Heron																0					0
Australasian Bittern																0					0
Royal Spoonbill		5		1	18	5		27		2	1	18	1	10	1	432				40	553
Pied Oystercatcher			1		4	5					1					30			1	5	975
Variable Oystercatcher																0			11		97
Hybrid Oystercatcher																0					7
Pied Stilt			44		220	232		142			4			4		1604	4		46	561	2538
Black Stilt																0					0
Hybrid Stilt																0				2	4
Banded Dotterel		12	26	22	31	5		21								341			12	32	404
Black-fronted Dotterel																0					3
Wrybill					1											1					1
Pacific Golden Plover				5		26										32					32
Spur-winged Plover			7					34								269			24	31	479
Turnstone																0					5
Lesser Knot																11			1	2	17
Curlew Sandpiper																4					4
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper																2					2
Pectoral Sandpiper																0					0
Red-necked Stint				2	35											47					47
Eastern Curlew																0			1		2
Whimbrel																0					2
Bar-tailed Godwit					59	49		3								181			10		2778
Black-billed Gull		97	288	2	20	6		5								534			3	107	721
White-winged Black Tern																0					0
Black-fronted Tern					48											48				6	55
Caspian Tern		1	124	2	6	10		3			1					155			1		181
Gull-billed Tern																1					1
White-fronted Tern																536			1	24	563
Site totals	0	115	490	34	442	338	0	235	0	2	7	18	1	14	2	4231	22	0	111	810	9492
Wader totals	0	12	78	29	350	317	0	200	0	0	5	0	0	4	0	2522	4	0	106	633	7397
<b>wader % of total count</b>	0.00	0.16	1.05	0.39	4.73	4.29	0.00	2.70	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	34.09	0.05	0.00	1.43	8.56	100.00
<b># wader species at site</b>	0	1	4	3	6	5	0	4	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	10	1	0	8	6	15