

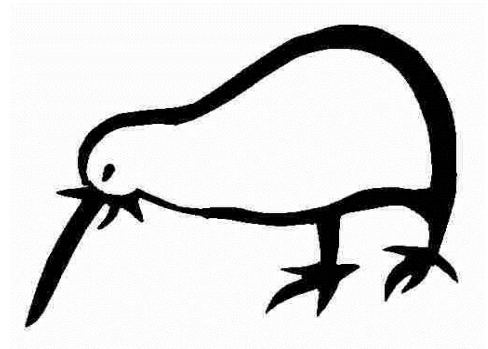
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Issue 39

August 2014

Photos:

Les Feasey (LF)
Dettef Davies (DD)
Jenny Atkins
Denise Kutz



BIRDS NEW ZEALAND

FAR NORTH REGION NEWSLETTER

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

www.osnz.org.nz

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

As the weather slowly gets warmer and the frosts less frequent, we already hear rumours of Shining Cuckoo calling, unusual before September. Kiwi have been reported calling from new sites recently and Cattle Egrets are lingering in several places. The first report of a Marsh Crake in the region this century was found north of Pukenui and 2 winter pelagics turned up some interesting seabirds.

Les Feasey has been going through the region's records and gradually putting many of these onto eBird – eventually I will resume this task as Regional Recorder, a job I have now taken over from Laureen Alston. Thanks go to Laureen for setting up this database and keeping it updated over the last few years.



Buller's Albatross
Whangaroa Pelagic, 28th July
Jenny Atkins

Jenny Atkins 2014

The Far North Regional Officers are:

Regional Representative Les Feasey, 54 Oromahoe Road, Opua 09 402 8917 lfeasey@mac.com	Treasurer Isabella Godbert, 67 Waipapa West Road, Kerikeri 09 407 8058 godbert@xtra.co.nz
Regional Recorder & Newsletter Editor Detlef Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 09 407 3874 detlefdavies@yahoo.com	Projects & activities Carol Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 09 407 3874 carolanndavies@yahoo.com

RECENT EVENTS

14th May – Indoor Meeting, Paihia - The first meeting with Les as Regional Rep. Les spoke about his recent birding experiences and showed some excellent photos. Detlef then gave a presentation on voluntary work with Kakapo on Codfish Island.

30th May to 2nd June – Annual Conference & AGM, Palmerston North. Les, Detlef and Carol attended from the Far North. Notes on sightings over this weekend are reported on page 10.

23rd June – Whangaroa Pelagic. See report on page 8.

12th July – Indoor meeting, Mangonui – some discussion on the future of the Society and bird-recording protocols took place – Les expands on this on page 11.

24th July – Beach Patrol, Ninety Mile Beach – see page 11.

28th July – Whangaroa Pelagic. See report on page 8.

RECENT REPORTS and SIGHTINGS

Compiled by Detlef Davies

These records cover the period from April to August 2014 unless otherwise stated. Contributors include Anthea Goodwin (AJG), Detlef & Carol Davies (DD, CD, DCD), Les Feasey (LF), Isabella & Derry Godbert (IDG), Jenny Larson, Kevin Matthews (KM), Gerald Messenger (GM), Alan Cordery (AC), Jenny Dymock, Trudy Crerar, Bruce Collett, Maria & Sharen Lange. **WP = Whangaroa Pelagic**

North Island Brown Kiwi – apart from the usual sites, birds have been heard calling from Richmond Road, Mangonui, Cable Bay and Opua. Heard & seen in Waipapa West Road, Kerikeri (see page 12) (IDG)

New Zealand Dabchick – 7 on Lake Ngatu 12 July

Australian Little Grebe – 8 on Lake Ngatu 12 July, 4 in flooded pools in that area, 5 Lake Rotokawau.

Wandering Albatross – 1 on each of the WPs

White-capped Albatross – 3 on each of the WPs

BULLER'S ALBATROSS – 1 on WP on 28 July

Northern Giant Petrel – 2 on WP on 23 June, 1 on 28 July.

Fluttering Shearwater – few on both WPs, 1000s at Whatuwhiwhi end of Tokerau Beach on 12 May & again on 19 May & 15 August (BC, TC, KM). About 2000 off Takou Bay 17 August (LF).

Isabella reports one seen in April near Kawau Island (Hauraki Gulf) estimated flying at 30kph as it overtook a boat which she was on, cruising at 29 kph!

Little Shearwater – 8 seen while heading out from Stephenson Island on 23 June WP.



Common Diving Petrel - near Cavallis, August 2014 (LF)



Black (Parkinson's) Petrel - near Cavallis, August 2014 (LF)

Common Diving Petrel – Several near Cavalli Islands 13 May (LF), WPs-23 on 23 June, 21 on 28 July.

Black (Parkinson's) Petrel – One near Cavalli Islands 13 May (LF)

Fairy Prion – WPs - c.53 on 23 June & c.650 on 28 July. An amazing 1400 or so on fishing trip, Takou Bay, 17 Aug (LF)

Grey-faced Petrel – heard coming in to Stephenson Island on 23 June WP.

Little Penguin – Mangonui: first calls heard 4 May, lots on 6 June (AJG); 18 on WP on 23 June (13 at dusk).

Australasian Gannet – 26 inshore Coopers Beach 4 July.

All 4 Shag species – Upper Whangaroa Harbour, up to 8 **Black Shags**, 8 **Little Shags**, 17 **Little Black Shags** & 18 **Pied Shags** (9 occupied nests) in August (AJG).

Little Black Shag – flock of 18 Mangonui Harbour 8 June.

INTERMEDIATE EGRET – one feeding on mudflats in Hokianga Harbour, off Kohukohu 12 May (KM)

Cattle Egret – 5 Waipapa Road, Kerikeri 25 April (Stan Green), 1 near Opononi 9 May (AC), 2 by SH1 north of Kaitaia industrial area 12 May (KM), 3 in non-breeding plumage on Skudders Beach on 11 May (DCD)

Reef Heron – 2 Taipa 24 May, 2 Chucks Cove 13 Aug, 2 Mill Bay 14 Aug.

Australasian Bittern – One in flight over Skudders Beach Wetland Reserve on 11 May (DCD), one over Kaeo rivermouth 10 Aug (AJG).

Australian Pelican – Rawene, ferry operator saw one there in April.

Royal Spoonbill – 18 Rawene Oxidation Ponds 9 May (AC), 5 Paewhenua Island, Mangonui Harbour 28 July (GM), up to 16 Upper Whangaroa Harbour in August.

Australasian Shoveler – 30 Rawene Oxidation Ponds 9 May (AC).

Brown Teal – increasing numbers of reports from the Russell area, pair Oronga Holiday Park 22 July.

MARSH CRAKE – One caught by cat (but uninjured) north of Pukenui in June (see article below).

Weka – 11 seen in Russell area on 22 July

New Zealand Dotterel – 4 Kaeo rivermouth 10 Aug, 2 pairs Kaitaia Airport 21 August, up to 44 at Waitangi roost over winter.

Wrybill – 17 Tokerau Beach 6 July (a good number)(AJG), 6 there on 6 July (LF) & 4 on 16 August (KM)

South Island Pied Oystercatcher – Largest numbers reported: 41 at Te Haumi & 63 at Waitangi on 25 May

Variable Oystercatcher – 27 Tokerau Beach 15 Aug.

Hybrid Stilt – one with nearly full collar & noticeably short legs at Marchant Road, Hihi with 14 Pied Stilts



Australasian Shoveler (LF)



Caspian Terns – Te Haumi, 9 July (LF)

Caspian Tern – regular birds at Te Haumi reached 27 on 9 July sheltering from storm (LF)

Shining Cuckoo – rumours of song heard in late August

Long-tailed Cuckoo – late report from earlier in the year of 5 noisy birds seen together at Totara North (AC).

Barn Owl – regular birds near Kaitaia – 3 seen on 8 August (LF)

New Zealand Pipit – recorded from Tokerau Beach

Fernbird – present at usual sites including Otangaroa Road

Tomtit – seen regularly at Totara North as well as Puketi & usual sites.

MONITORING LANDBIRDS IN EASTERN BAY OF ISLANDS

CJ Ralph

BACKGROUND

Ipipiri experienced a major ecological shift in June 2009 with the poison bait drop primarily for rats. Thus began one of the most ambitious conservation experiments in the country. To monitor its effects, bird counts were done before the drop in November and December 2008 and continue on, now for five years through January 2014. As a background censuses were also conducted on several islands for 18 months in 1995-6 by David Tindall (Tindall 1996).

OBJECTIVES

Bird monitoring is a primary objective of Project Island Song to determine long-term responses of fauna and flora to predator (e.g., rat, mouse, and stoat) eradication. We expect an increase in bird numbers and species as predation and competition from rats and stoats is absent. These censuses will be the proof of this hypothesis.

METHODS

Over the past 5 years more than 500 station counts have been completed, mostly by volunteers from the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (now referred to by its new brand name of 'Birds New Zealand'), Guardians of the Bay, and staff from the Department of Conservation, working together under Project Island Song.

We followed the protocols in Spurr (2008), "Guardians of the Bay of Islands, Project Island Song Bird Count Instruction Sheet" protocols in the Project Island Song Monitoring Plan (DoC 2008 and DoC 2009) by Cinzia Vestena. Data were recorded on the "Bird Count Recording Form," one form for each station on each morning. This method covers the most species and involved a ten-minute count (two 5-minute counts) at each station on the 7 presently-established routes (Table 1): Waewaetorea (1 line of 11 counting stations in 2009, increased to 15 stations in 2010); Urupukapuka (2 lines of 15 stations each); Moturua (2 lines of 15 stations each); Motuarohia (Roberton) (1 line of 15 stations); and Okahu (1 line of 6-9 stations). Most of the time, two censusers counted each station together to ensure good coverage. In Table 1, you can see that some years stations were done more than once, some were missed occasionally, and four on Waewaetorea and Okahu were added to better sample bush and wetter areas. The data are divided into "Austral Years", or the summer breeding season, so censuses in December 2009 and January 2010 would be considered to be, for example, Austral Year 2010.

Table 1. Number of Stations by island route and austral year.

AUST. YEAR	Island Route							TOTAL
	MOTU- AROHIA	MOTURUA EAST	MOTURUA WEST	OKAHU	URUPUK. EAST	URUPUK. WEST	WAEWAE TOREA	
2009	15	15	15	9	15	15	11	95
2010	15	15	15	0	15	19	15	94
2011	0	15	4	6	15	0	15	55
2012	15	15	15	10	15	15	11	96
2013	0	15	14	0	15	15	12	71
2014	15	15	15	0	16	15	15	91
TOTAL	60	90	78	25	91	79	79	502

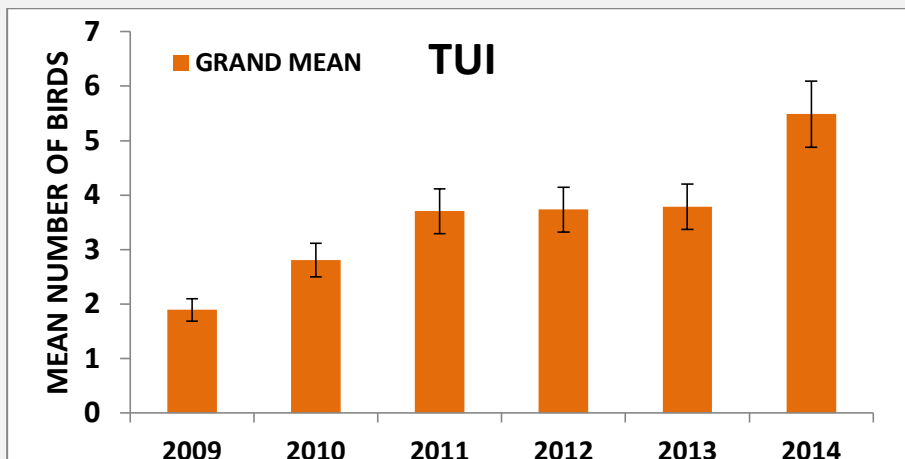
RESULTS

A total of more than 10,000 birds have been counted (Table 2), with the commonest being the Tui with almost 2,000 individuals, and had a marked increase over the past five years. The native species, the Silvereye, Grey Warbler, and the ubiquitous introduced Common Myna, all scored more than 1,000 birds. The Welcome Swallow, and three introduced birds, had 400-500 individuals

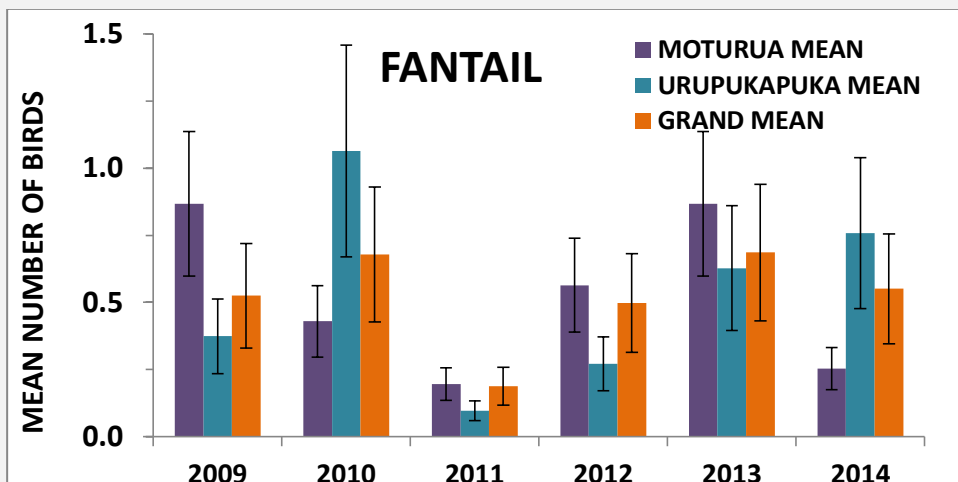
counted. Overall a surprising almost 50 species were tallied, many of them with many individuals seen. Two species are yet to be confirmed were interesting, as Bellbird (possibly present only a few kilometers away on the Cape Brett Peninsula and to the south at Waipiro Bay) and Fernbird (present in several areas around the bay) were heard by good observers on the counts. It would be informative if more individuals were observed by more people visiting the islands.

Although no Robins were detected in the routes on Moturua this summer, Fleur and Dennis Corbett did see one shortly after the survey in the valley above Otupoho (Homestead) Bay with another sighting on the track above Army Bay several weeks later.

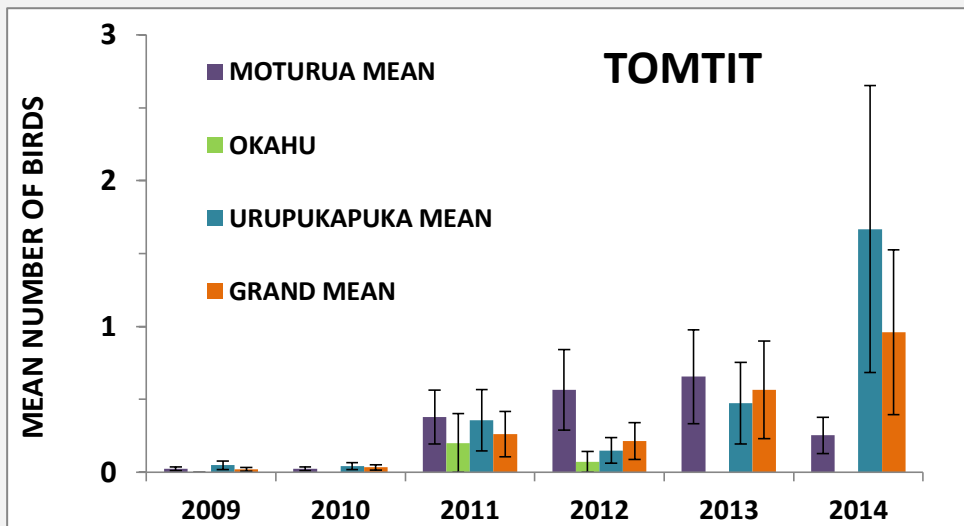
Among the highlights of the census is the Tui, that for all islands and routes combined, increased nearly three-fold. The figure shows the average of each 10-minute count of Tui seen on all the island routes censused (with the error of the estimate shown).



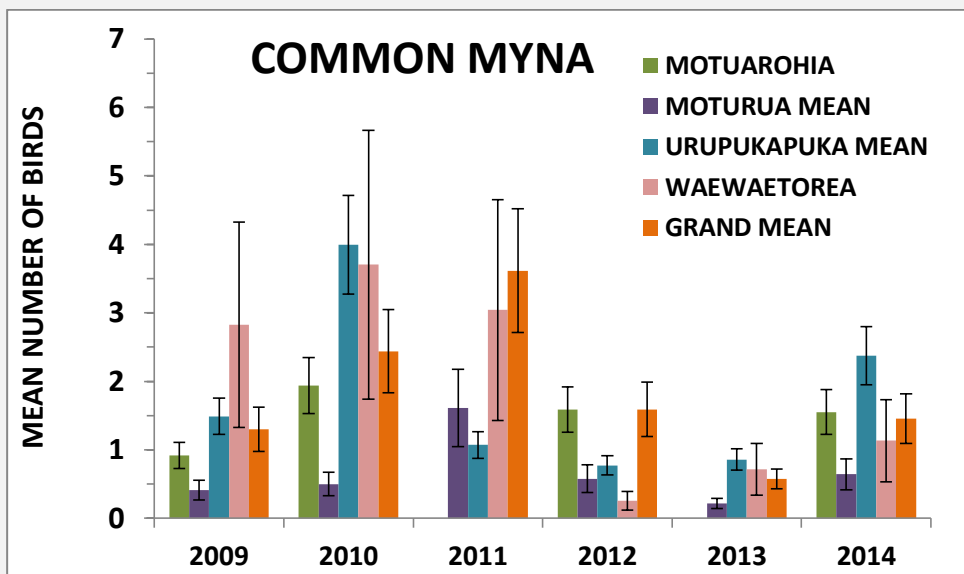
The Fantail is a common bird in the censuses, and is typical of many species, having ups and downs, seemingly regardless of pest control. On both Moturua and Urupukapuka the fantail was in synchrony, having apparently a down year in 2011 but bouncing back in the past three years.



The Tomtit was the poster child of the censuses. This species had been detected occasionally before pest control on Moturua, and was confirmed to be breeding only in December 2008. Observers were delighted to find that since pest control, it has rapidly increased on Moturua and Urupukapuka, and has even been detected on Okahu when we censused that island.



The Common Myna was interesting, as the numbers have markedly declined in the three past years, perhaps part of a normal cycle, or perhaps a side effect of pest control.



OTHER BIRD MONITORING POSSIBLE

There are other survey protocols available, including “Diurnal Water and Shore Monitoring” that requires very little training. This is a method to keep track of water and shore birds such as the New Zealand Dotterel. There is also a protocol for “Little Blue Penguins and Grey-faced Petrel nests”, and “Area search and nocturnal track monitoring.” Less formal, but really useful for us to track birds is entering data into eBird (Ebird.org/nz/) by visitors to the islands and nearby mainland sites.

NEXT THINGS TO DO

Training of censusers is paramount. We conducted a training session in late January of this year, and have scheduled two more in the coming spring. The Far North branch of Birds New Zealand will be given the dates of these sessions and will be announced by its new Regional Representative, Les Feasey. Detlef and Carol Davies have calls and songs of most New Zealand birds on an MP3 player, including all species likely to be recorded on the islands – this would be an excellent training tool. Kevin Parker also has the calls and songs of the 20 or so most common species, suitable for loading on a MP3 player – these were made this for the censuses that the Auckland Regional Council were doing.

To track the regional changes to compare with the island routes, we have our 32 years of censuses on Moturoa (in the western Bay of Islands). We also need to put routes on mainland in collaboration with *hapū* and *citizens*. These can be road or tracks for “controls” to compare with island routes.

We have a bird monitoring working group of Birds New Zealand, Guardians and DOC. Their task is to assess possible actions to ensure monitoring continues long-term.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Transportation to the island was provided by Tim Roffey, Dive Ops (Paihia), and Dennis Corbett. We are also very grateful to the folks that have participated so far, including Laureen Alston, Lindsay Alexander, Paul Asquith, Gay Blunden, Bruce Collett, Bruce Cottier, Jim Cottier, Teri Cottier, Carol Davies, Detlef Davies, Morag Fordham, Simon Fordham, Derry Godbert, Anthea Goodwin, Amanda Hunt, Jung Kyu Lee, Steve McManus, Angela Newport, Paul Padfield, Carol Ralph, Judit Szabo, Cinzia Vestena, Adrian Walker, Keith Woodley, and Ian Wilson. I would be grateful to hear of others who helped, but whose name didn't make it onto the census forms. My thanks to Linda Long, Fleur Corbett, and Carol Ralph for helpful comments on this report.

REFERENCES

Vestena, C. 2009. "Project Island Song Monitoring Plan – Draft". Department of Conservation. Kerikeri
Tindall, S. D. 1996. Ecological Impacts and Management of the Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*. M.Sc. Thesis, Biological Sciences, University of Auckland, New Zealand.
Tindall, S.D., C.J. Ralph and M.N. Clout. 2007. Changes in bird abundance following Common Myna control on a New Zealand island. Pacific Conservation Biology. 13(3):202-212.

Landbird Census

"Bird Point Count Instructions" February 2011. How to do census stations on routes. Two forms for site information and bird recording. Eric Spurr and C.J. Ralph
"Area Search and Nocturnal Track Monitoring." January 2011. Instructions for 20-minute area search for all birds and for nocturnal species such as kiwi and Morepork. Two forms. C.J. Ralph
"Bird call and Song Training CD". December 2010. Instructions on using the CD by Kevin Parker, Massey University, Albany.
"Landbird surveys on islands of Ipipiri (Eastern Bay of Islands): summers of 2008-9 and 2009-10". December 2010. Report prepared by C.J. Ralph. Two tables.

Water and Shorebird Census

"Monitoring Water and Shorebirds in Ipipiri, the Eastern Bay of Islands" January 2010. Instructions for volunteers for dotterels, oystercatchers, gulls, etc. One form. C.J. Ralph
"Surveying for Little Blue Penguins and Grey-faced Petrels". Instructions for survey by Carol Ralph.

C. John Ralph. Moturoa Island, Private Bag, Paihia (cjralth@extra.co.nz)

PROGRAMME

Les Feasey

Thursday 11 September - Combined Far North and Northland meeting at 7:30 pm at 148 Cork's Road, Tikipunga, **Whangarei**. Detlef & Carol have room for 2 more people, leaving Kerikeri c.6.15 pm. I will be leaving from Puketona Junction car park at 6:30 pm, and have room for 3 people. This will be an excellent chance to meet our neighbours & make new contacts. Subject TBA.

October - Far North meeting in Mangonui. I will co-ordinate with Bill Campbell to arrange a date at the Mangonui Christian Centre.

November - We will survey the Red-billed Gull nesting sites, as arranged at the Mangonui meeting.

December - Far North meeting, time and place to be arranged. I will email details. Plan is to co-ordinate this with the visits to shorebird sites for wader counts. As usual, the shorebird sites are Parengarenga, Walker Island and Kowhai Beach.

Monday 11th December - we have reserved the boat for another pelagic with 3 visitors to the area already booked. Contact Detlef for details.

MARSH CRAKE IN THE FAR NORTH

Detlef Davies

On 25th June I received an email from Jenny Larson of Kaitia DOC office with a photo of a bird which had been sent to her by Denise Kutz of Kimberley Road, Ngataki (north of Pukenui). The bird had been caught by a cat (but uninjured) and kept in a cage for a couple of days to recover. I was amazed to find the bird was easily identifiable as a Marsh Crake. It had then been released in a small wetland on Denise's property.

I have heard of no previous records of Marsh Crake in the Far North and the Atlas shows just one record in the Kawakawa area. They must breed up here and keep well out of sight; when they call, it is often at night. We hope to go up to the site this spring and see if we can call one out.



WHANGAROA PELAGIC – 23rd JUNE

Les Feasey

It was a beautiful day sandwiched between some windy and rainy weather. I can't believe that we could be so lucky with the weather and the sea in the midst of all this rain and wind. Jenny, Anthea and I left the harbour at 1:15 pm and observed a flock of 35 White-fronted Terns feeding over kawhai in Pekapeka Bay before heading out into the ocean. A flock of Fairy Prions & a few Fluttering Shearwaters were feeding outside of Stephenson Island, and were photographed and counted before the Kuri II moved on to the chum spot. Common Diving Petrels became frequent and we spotted 8 Little Shearwaters as we motored out.

Northern Giant Petrel (juv) (LF)



The Chum Spot was reached at 3:20pm and as we got there an increasingly large group of Fairy Prions, eventually numbering over 50 birds, was attracted to the salmon burley chum. We enjoyed 3 White-capped and one Wandering Albatross and 2 Northern Giant Petrels at close range. We left that area c.4:10pm and headed for Stephenson Island, arriving about 5:40pm.

In the Bay at Stephenson Island, with the motor of the Kuri II silent and the boat drifting, the calls of the Little Penguins, Grey-faced Petrels, and

other unknown birds was magical. Throw in a beautiful sunset, a calm sea, and the silence except for the bird calls, and it was one of those times you so often wish for. We reached the dock at 7pm, unloaded and left for home. The following were posted on eBird:

Whangaroa Harbour (on the way out):

Little Penguin 5
Australasian Gannet 2
Pied Shag 5
White-fronted Tern 35
Red-billed Gull 3

Northern Giant Petrel 2 juveniles
Fairy Prion - at least 53
Fluttering Shearwater 9
Common Diving-Petrel - 23 from Stephenson Island to chum spot

Chum Spot:

White-capped Albatross 3
Wandering Albatross 1

Stephenson Island in the evening:

Little Penguin 13
Grey-faced Petrels were heard only
Black backed Gull 5

WHANGAROA PELAGIC – 28th JULY

Les Feasey

Four of us, Jenny, Susie Lindauer, Anthea and I went on the Jul 28, 2014 pelagic. Once again we were extremely lucky with the weather, as we had less than 10km winds, less than 0.5 meter swell, and a bright sunny day, sandwiched between windy days, storms and rain.

We left the dock in heavy fog at 7:00 am and headed out to our regular chum spot. White fronted tern drifted towards through the fog as we edged slowly out of the harbour avoiding a small tinny with a fisherman trying desperately to land a large kingfish.

Out of the fog and into the open ocean past Stephenson Island, Jenny had her camera clicking spectacular photographs of the fog drifting over the mainland. We paused to look for Cape Barren Geese, but as has been the case on the last few trips, they were not there, so we kept going. Our first encounter with big birds was a White-capped Albatross closer to land than expected. As usual, small flocks and individual Common Diving Petrels kept us company out past Ruahine Reef, when the birding company suddenly vanished. At 9:15 we encountered the first of two commercial fishing boats, this one accompanied by a White-capped Albatross. We stopped and chatted for a few minutes, took some photos, then proceeded to the chum spot.

At the chum spot, a steadily increasing flock of Fairy Prions was joined by a Buller's Albatross, 2 more White-capped Albatrosses, and we had a longer-range view of a Wandering Albatross. The Buller's was a great thrill, because we hadn't seen one since January 2012 and to see it on a winter pelagic was exceptional.

At 11:00 am we started making our way back to shore. At Ruahine Reef we encountered a huge flock of Fairy Prions. We estimated the numbers at 650+, feeding very vigorously on what were probably small krill like creatures on the surface. They were in 6-8 groups of over 100 birds each. There appeared to be some disagreements.

Some of the Fairy Prions were sharing a pink maumau when the White-capped Albatross spoiled the fun and took the fish for himself.

Leaving the Fairy Prion flocks, we moved towards Stephenson Island, and had a great chance to photograph those very elusive Common Diving Petrels. There were several small groups of 3-7 birds each and we were able to get very close to some of these birds. As usual I was jinxed in getting a good picture of them. Our list for the day was:

Buller's Albatross 1
White-capped Albatross 3
Wandering Albatross 1
Northern Giant Petrel 1
Fairy Prion estimated at 650

Fluttering Shearwater 51
Common Diving-Petrel 21
Australasian Gannet 6
Black Shag 2
Pied Shag 2

Red-billed Gull 13
Black Backed Gull 23
White-fronted Tern 5



White-capped Albatross with pink maumau (LF)

SEABIRDS GALORE – TAKOU BAY

Les Feasey

Out fishing in Takou Bay on 17th August we saw a remarkable sight. Thousands of seabirds in every direction feeding on fry upwelling from the feeding Koheru below. It was like a black wave on the horizon from a distance and it had a noise like the wind.

Rotating through 360 degrees taking photographs, it looked the same in almost every direction. Sometimes there were birds 3 layers deep instead of 2. I'm sure there were other species there besides the ones I easily identified - about 2000 Fluttering Shearwaters and 1400 Fairy Prions (just a guess), some 70 Red-billed Gulls, a few Little Penguins, Common Diving Petrels, a Black (Parkinson's) Petrel which came quite close to the boat, some birds that could have been Flesh-footed Shearwaters but I couldn't get close enough to positively identify. I have never seen so many birds in on place at one time. We were there from 1:30 noon to about 3:30pm and they were out there the whole time.

Just an observation, but many fishermen remarked that they had never seen so many kawhai eggs in the Bay of Islands as they had this past summer. In some places the water was so thick with them that you could scoop them out of the water with a net, and the shoals of breeding kawhai were larger than they had been for years. Perhaps these tiny fry were the eggs developing to the next stage. Anyway, a very interesting day on the Bay.



Fairy Prions off Takou Bay (LF)

NEWS FROM FURTHER SOUTH

Detlef Davies

Les Feasey, Carol and I attended the OSNZ Annual Conference in Palmerston North, a town we had not been to before. Apart from the usual high standard of presentations and the mixing and mingling with fellow bird enthusiasts, we had some excellent bird sightings. We were not far from the Wanganui River where for many years there has been a small colony of **Nankeen Night Herons**. They are usually very elusive and crepuscular but one adult had been seen regularly but quite well hidden in a tree behind a café. In return for purchasing some refreshment, the owners were happy to show us the bird, viewable only from directly below the tree.



Nankeen Night Heron, Upokongaro
Blue Ducks, Tongariro River (DD)



We joined a field trip to the Manuwatu Estuary which produced a good variety of species including **Fernbird, New Zealand Scaup, Black-fronted Tern, Black-billed Gull, Shoveler, Grey Teal, NZ Dabchicks, Spoonbills**, shorebirds, and a surprise record of 2 **Glossy Ibises** flying over.

Returning home afterwards, Carol and I gave a lift to Neil Robertson & the 3 of us stopped at Turangi at the southern end of Lake Taupo. 2 special species greeted us there – a pair of **Blue Ducks** on the Tongariro River and a **Spotless Crake** feeding completely in the open by the lakeside and in view from the wharf at Tokaanu.

And while on the subject of rarities, the 2 of us and Les managed to catch up with the **Crested Tern** which had eluded us at Waipu several times (reported in the April issue of Apteryx).



Crested Tern, Waipu (DD)



Spotless Crake, Lake Taupo (DD)

BEACH PATROLS

Isabella Godbert

Here are the results of our Beach Patrol Saturday 24th July

Shy Albatross 1
Fluttering Shearwater 3
Little Shearwater 1
Fairy Prion 3
Narrow Billed Prion 2
Little Blue Penguin 4
Black-backed Gull 1

The patrollers were Les Feasey, Bruce Collett, Anthea Goodwin, Isabella & Derry Godbert.



Not many birds but a happy crowd (LF)

JULY MEETING IN MANGONUI

Les Feasey

Meeting held in the Mangonui Christian Centre, kindly arranged by Bill Campbell.

1. **Call to order 6:15 PM. Present** were Les Feasey, Detlef and Carol Davies, Anthea Goodwin, Bill Campbell, Bruce Collett, Trudy Crerar, and Jocelyn Campbell.

2. **Apologies** were received from Kevin Mathews, Gerry Messenger, Russell Thomas

3. **Minutes** were taken as read.

4. Beach wreck survey results

Bill Campbell reported on a beach wreck patrol on Karikari Peninsular and Cable Bay in Taipa. Detlef and Carol went out to 90 Mile Beach and did a short survey.

5. **Regional recorder appointment** - Detlef has taken over the reins from Laureen. Laureen has been compiling the database in Excel since 2009 and has hundreds, perhaps thousands of records that are being slowly updated to eBird by Les.

6. OSNZ Communications

a. 5 minute bird count training. (Carol and Les are interested)

b. Regional recorder (eBird). Detlef will update his and Carol's observations from Laureen's database. Les is updating other observations, by creating a login for that person, and entering that data.

c. Birds NZ Research Fund (call for applications). Birds NZ has research funds available for those who can meet the prescribed requirements. See the OSNZ web site for details.

d. Birds New Zealand Business cards. I finally have one.

e. Gurr and Kinsky red-billed gull paper. OSNZ has undertaken a major initiative to update the knowledge about red-billed gulls. The OSNZ Far North branch has been asked to do a survey between October 2014 and January 2015 of red-billed gull nesting sites in the Far North. Detailed maps of previously known nesting sites have been updated to Google Earth. These sites, and any new sites known to members and the general public (fishermen, DoC personnel, other interested parties) are to be recorded and forwarded to Peter Frost, who is co-ordinating the study. More information will follow as we get closer to the action date.

7. Presentations

Les made a presentation summarising the new technologies that emerged during the OSNZ Annual Conference at Palmerston North in June, 2014

Les updated the audience on recent Internet developments including eBird, the Garden Bird Survey web site, blogs of rare bird sightings on birdingnz.net, the Wrybill Tours birders totals challenge (a bit of fun for the testosterone charged), nzbirdsonline.org where Detlef, Jenny and Les have had photos published.

The subject then changed to mobile recordings. Traditionally, banding birds has been the preferred method. New techniques discussed included geolocators, the recent development of very clever new monitoring and tracking tools (GPS tags, dive depth recorders, passive tag readers, etc.) have revolutionised our ability to follow the daily lives of our sea birds, especially the nocturnally active ones. Quadcopters and triangulation were also discussed as techniques that excited a lot of discussion.

Bird identification and reclassification using mitochondrial DNA on fossil birds, and existing species and sub-species was explored.

Kiwi mortality from microbial infection using advanced lab technology has advanced our knowledge of kiwi survival techniques.

Video cameras are leading to increased understanding of the threats to our bird population.

8. **Meeting adjourned 8:10 PM**

KIWI NOTE

Derry Godbert

Do you have Kiwis calling / snuffling in your back garden? A number of people in Rangitane and points East regularly see them checking over the garden design to harvest worms in the lawn and other items from the compost heap.

We are not quite so lucky on Waipapa West Road but we do hear them reasonably often and on the 13th of this month [August] we heard, then saw, a male outside our bedroom window about 1.30am. Then on the 22nd of this month we heard five male calls in the space of twelve hours.

We keep a record of all / most of our hearings and note that the timing of the calls seems to have no set pattern except that it is almost always between dusk and dawn. But can be any time during this period.

I guess the 6.30 to 8.30 pm typical kiwi listening / sampling period is mainly a matter of convenience and standardisation.

Our main worry here is the number of visiting dogs who come barging into our garden, wish their owners would keep them under better control!

Derry

It's a long time since we had a photo of a Kiwi in the newsletter so in case you have forgotten what one looks like, here is one (DD, 2007). An article about nestboxes for Kiwi will hopefully be ready for the December issue.



PERU NEXT YEAR?

For those interested in seeing tropical birds in spectacular quantity, North Peru is a very good choice. We have 3 week and 2 week tours departing in June 2015 and again in October 2015. In conjunction with our ground agent in Tarapoto, we have put together various other options with a combination of other interests including other wildlife, archaeological sites, trekking, mountain biking and opportunities for children.

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OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR BIRDING ABROAD

In the course of our travels abroad, we are gathering much useful information about bird sites and local guides who would be well able to arrange birding or wildlife tours without the necessity to use large, expensive tour companies. Very often a group of 4 or 6 people could easily arrange an economical trip arranged almost entirely in the destination country.

Contact us for information on Fiji, India, Nepal, Indonesia, Thailand, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, Europe, parts of Africa, Madagascar and a number of other places. A group of us wanting to do a birding cruise might get a good price by block-booking places on the ship.

We are open to all such ideas.