



## **NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER**

### **January 2012**

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We welcome Stuart back to Nelson after his travels, and he has a new telephone number to add to your address books: - ph 9700124.

Well, another year has been ticked off. I hope you all have this year's note book sorted. Last year I was ticked off for not having certain sightings entered in my field book. Some time ago while on a field trip I remember watching a well known ornithologist continually entering information into a small booklet, all weekend. For Christmas I asked for a shirt with a top pocket to keep a small note book in.

If you're wanting some of this season's fruit bounty, be in quick or be prepared to share. Pukeko have already been seen lumbering about in plum trees scoffing drupes. They like apples and pears too.

#### **SHOW AND TELL**

The countryside looked fabulous, the precipitation had been and gone, a greenfinch buzzed from a garden tree and a group of birders sat round David's veranda in early December and told birding tales while enjoying their evening meal. I didn't detect many lies, well, none at all actually, but there could have been! Thank you David for your hospitality.

#### **CAUGHT AND BANDED**

A small team has continued to work with VOC over the summer in both the Waimea and Motueka estuaries. Included amongst the marked birds are two complete families, each with a metal band and a white leg flag with individual large numbers and letters, eg CV3. To learn more about the movement of these birds Willie and David would love to get your feed-back on reported sightings.

## **BIRDS SCENE**

Willie C reports from the Bells Is shell banks, that after a rough start to the **Caspians'** nesting, with thumping tides, 17 chicks have been banded, quite a drop from last year's 60. A lot of debris has been thrown up onto their patch. White fronted terns from Sand Island and the Boulder Bank have to contend not only with what the sea throws up at them but also with an adversity from above. **Skuas** were seen nearby at the end of November and I saw 5 or 6 just off Ruby Bay on Feb 18, amongst terns and gulls. Also, news has filtered down from over in Golden Bay of a **brown skua** seen on Farewell Spit. **Black billed gulls** are moving onto local coastal real estate. Rob S reported a small breeding colony on Sand Island (opposite the Airport), and Chris P has kept his eye on ten pairs on Rototai Spit in Golden Bay.

If you haven't followed the fattening **godwits** and their **knot** companions, with maybe other odd stragglers, around the estuaries over summer, now's your chance to view these birds and watch their colours change before they shortly leave our shores.

## **MONDAY MEETING**

Come along to our monthly get-together **Feb 13<sup>th</sup>** and hear what we could be getting up to for the rest of the year!

Mr Quail photographed by Rebecca B at Atawhai. Mrs Quayle says he's no relation.



Contributions for next newsletter by Feb 29 please. Gail 5450456