



## NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2013

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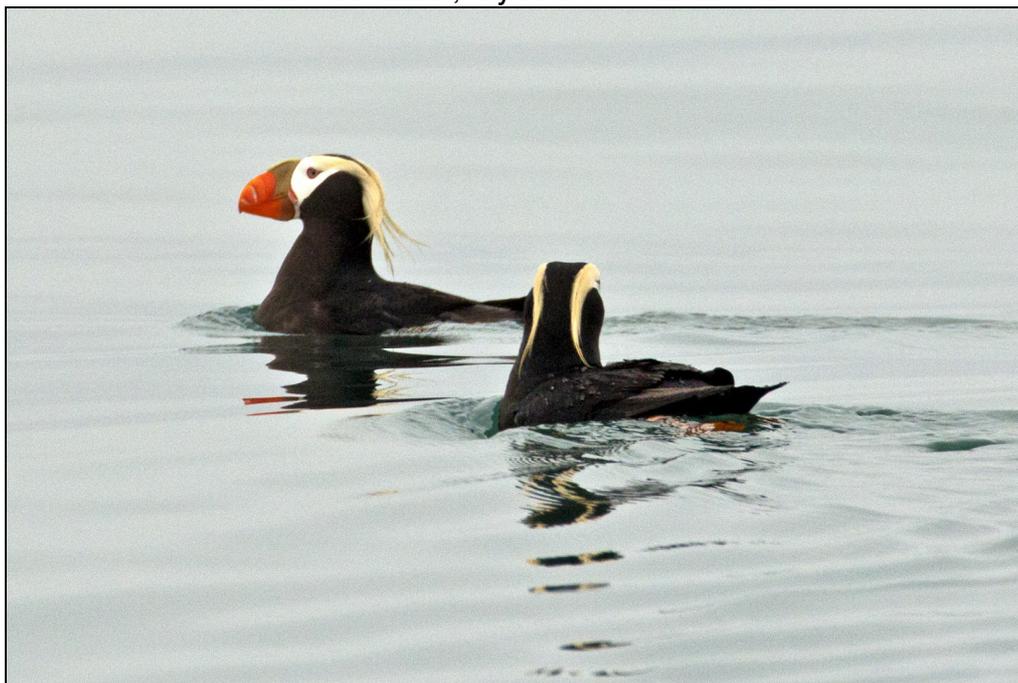
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And another quote from Kenneth Grahame  
..... *'the joy of living and the delight of spring without it's cleaning'*

**I was in** Wellington recently and was thrilled to see suburban **kaka**, entered my sightings on ebird and then explored other kaka sightings and was surprised to see so many. I'm aware though, not all Wellingtonians are happy with their presence, including a nearby neighbour of my daughter who took the hose to two birds while shouting obscenities. I later saw her trees festooned with plastic bags. I would prefer to have kaka in my trees.

**Thanks** to Rebecca for her sumptuous photos shown at the last meeting. If you weren't there, here is one you missed.

Tufted Puffins, by Rebecca Bowater



## DEPARTURES

**White heron and spoonbills** should be thinking about heading south, some have gone already. Check out Otago's latest newsletter via [osnz.org.nz](http://osnz.org.nz) for their very dedicated white heron watch on Tomahawk Lagoon where 6-7 birds have been resident for several months. By mid September **wrybills** were no longer cruising the flats of Waimea Est. **Spotted shags** are still on Fifeshire Rock but most, if not all, will spend summer elsewhere. (Arrow Rock reads all right on paper but Fifeshire Rock rolls off the tongue better so I'll continue to call it as such.) Breeding **SIPO** and other river followers have gone inland as new generations are being considered amongst some tough elements and conditions.

## ARRIVALS

Willie recorded a jump in **godwit** numbers in the Waimea on 12 Sept, many in post-breeding plumage. 8 **red knots** were also in the flock.

Media coverage of the return of the godwits has been pleasing and many thanks to members who helped make the godwit celebration in Motueka (sponsored by the Motueka Arts Council) another success. Sunday morning saw a steady stream of folk (200 or so) congregate around the telescopes for a turn to see close views of these amazing travellers. Special thanks to Pauline Samways for her time and hard work as champion for the cause. In fact others consider her a champion also. Several days later at the Motueka Arts Council opening of the art exhibition, it was especially great to see her presented with a framed DoC '**Conservation Champion**' award by the Motueka DoC office. – *'in recognition of your valuable contribution to the conservation and advocacy of the Motueka Sandspit and its resident godwit population'*.

**Still on godwits et al....** Rob Schuckard has finalised his many hours collecting, collating and analysing local wader census figures from 2001 – 2012, and the OSNZ Wader Report is now available in pdf format from the NCC website. <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz/environment/biodiversity-2/nelson-biodiversity-strategy-3/shorebirds-of-farewell-spit-golden-bay-and-tasman-bay/>

Swallows don't necessarily herald summer down here in the antipodes but the arrival of the **shining cuckoo** with its distinctive call must surely herald spring. From late September calls have been heard around our region. Mahana, 27 Sept, 12.30pm, GP; Pohara, 28 Sept, 10.26am KG; Waimea Est area, 25 Sept, midday, also heard on an earlier occasion and negative long tailed cuckoo records for 35 yrs, GD. A reminder too about the **cuckoo survey** you can help with by entering your sightings/hearings online at [osnz.org.nz](http://osnz.org.nz)

**A WARM WELCOME** also to - new members, Phoebe van der Pol and Amber Callman.

**YELLOW HAMMERS**, - (more than "a little bit of bread and no cheese")

You may recall last summer a paragraph or two on a 'yellow hammer dialects project' initiated by Charles University in Prague. The question is – What happens with birdsong during invasion of a new territory? Recordings of song were asked for, 18 were received from NZ, 92 from UK and 236 from elsewhere in Europe. The project is on again this year and again recordings are being requested from NZ. This time a smartphone app called Epicollect+ is being suggested as being easier with good quality of sound. See [yellowhammers.net](http://yellowhammers.net) for info on the project, click on tutorials for info on the app.

## **AUGUST MYSTERY PHOTO,**

I'm sure you all guessed correctly, Willie's photo was of a **curlew**, here's a more diagnostic photo of the same bird in the Waimea Est on 27 August.

Photo by Willie Cook



## **PROGRAMME 2013**

We meet **usually** on the 1st Monday of the month, at 7.15 pm in the "Solander Fisheries Building", Cross Quay, off Akersten Street, Port Nelson (opposite the red Cruising Club building). All birders are welcome! Contact: Don Cooper 03-544 8109 or Gail 03-5450456.

Monday, 7 October  
Indoor Meeting

Members photos  
including Fiordland by  
Graeme Martyn

Monday, 4 November  
Indoor Meeting

November  
**Wader Count**

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for the October newsletter please email or phone by 20 Oct.  
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