



NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER JUNE 2014

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BLAST FROM THE PAST

1905, 6 Sept *'The Akaroa Mail'* "NATIVE BIRDS. It was announced in the House on Thursday last that it is proposed to include the kingfisher and the tern in the list of indigenous birds to be protected absolutely."

MORE RECENTLY,

The OSNZ New Zealand Bird Conference held at Palmerston North over Queen's Birthday Weekend had 28 short talks, workshops and field trips and plenty of bird banter in-between. The scientific papers included topics from microbial infection of kiwi eggs, stress in little blue penguins, migration of red knots, to personality of dunnocks, and musings about Chatham Island's extinct duck "Pachyanas".

Our Nelson region was well represented among conference delegates. Half a dozen of us made the trip up by car, plane or train. Thanks go to outgoing council member David Melville and outgoing secretary Pete Gaze for their expertise and many many hours of contribution to the Society, and to Ingrid Hutzler for her continued behind the scenes work as Executive Officer. Alec Milne and Richard Stocker took to the podium to show evidence supporting the continued existence of populations of South Island kokaka and of course yours truly was there to enjoy it all.

At the Regional Representative's meeting, combining with Council for some discussion, three upcoming projects were mooted. A national survey of red billed gulls, a North Island dabchick survey (we just scrape in with this one!) and a national survey of birds utilising sewer ponds. Keep your eye on our web site osnz.org.nz for the complete run down of abstracts on the talks and further details regarding the surveys, or you're welcome to contact me for information.

ARE YOU GAME

Waterfowl are sporting wonderful winter plumages and are readily spotted around estuaries and coastal ponds at the moment. **Shoveler ducks, grey teal** and **scaup** seem to be more common than anecdotal accounts suggest from 20-30yrs ago. While a close watch is kept, by organisations other than OSNZ, on the build up of **black swans** for their potential interference with airways, Ken George tells of a lovely sighting of 5 **mute swan** grazing in a farmer's paddock in Golden Bay. **Canada geese** have taken a liking for the Waimea Est and continue to breed on Bells Island and in Motueka it's not unusual to spot a **Cape Barren goose** or two, probably flown the coop from a nearby farm.

This month's mystery photo. What's the name of the hut?
Well, what are the birds anyway!?

Photo by Nick Smith June 2014



(Not the Nick Smith who commutes to Wellington regularly)

Thanks go to Rob Schuckard for organising the **wader counts**, he writes:
The OSNZ winter count 2014 went very well with all areas well covered. A total of about 20,000 shorebirds were counted, 2,500 migratory and 17,500 endemic shorebirds. Highlights were 3 NZ Dotterels, 50 Wrybills, 1 Grey Plover, 4 Red necked Stints and 1 Sanderling.

Farewell Spit – High number of Pied Oystercatcher, Banded Dotterel and Ruddy Turnstone.

Golden Bay – Very low numbers of Banded Dotterel and Bar-tailed Godwits. These birds were particularly missing from Westhaven and may have been feeding inland in the paddocks.

Tasman Bay – Low number of Pied Oystercatcher likely due to inland feeding but high number of Banded Dotterel and Ruddy Turnstone.

Thanks to the Department of Conservation for Farewell Spit Logistics. Thanks to all that made this a very successful count. (For further breakdown of numbers please contact Rob or Gail.)

PARISH NOTICES

Thank you to those who have sent me updated email addresses. I have altered the Nelson member data base but unfortunately I can't access the national data base. So for those with new email addresses, and if you haven't already done so, please could you advise Julia, the membership secretary.
membership@osnz.org.nz

OSNZ/Birds New Zealand is now calling for applications for this year's "**Birds NZ Research Fund**".

The application form and details are available on <http://osnz.org.nz/news/call-applications-birds-nz-research-fund>

Photo Craig Martin 2014, Motueka



PROGRAMME 2014

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 July
Indoor meeting

Leona Plaisier
Macquarie Island

Monday 4 August
Indoor Meeting

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for July newsletter by 25th, please email, snailmail, or phone:
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