



## NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER

**APRIL 2017**

Regional Representative :

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**Weka watch** has paled somewhat recently, have we become a bit ho-hum. But I did spot one foraging around in the undergrowth of the scrubbery recently at the Pascoe Street rubbish dump; an adult with four half grown juveniles around picnic areas on Rabbit Island early April and another sighting came from the Queen's Gardens. Plenty of sightings around Atawhai but still none in my garden.

Woodn't be in Nelson



T Quayle photo Melbourne April 2017

**If it wasn't** for computers I wouldn't have known that a lady in the Isle of Man bought from her local plant nursery a lovely specimen of NZ's Kaka Beak, unfortunately labelled 'parrots claw'! ; or that someone in the UK spotted a well grown clump of NZ flax in southern England; or a snippet from Don Haddon via, you guessed it, the internet - a **Pukeko** (*Porphyrio porphyrio poliocephalus*), was seen in Bermuda from 25 October to 19 November 2016, at Somerset Long Bay. Presumably its origin is from the introduced population in Florida, USA.

Closer to home, a sea watch can be interesting. During the latter part of April offshore from Cable Bay with a telescope I spotted several **skua** harrying white-fronted terns, gulls were also feeding. Then offshore from the Boulder Bank with binoculars, a sea boil with a long raft of **shearwaters**, terns, gulls, shags and again several **skua**.

**Wader Census**, from Rob Schuckard:

"First there was the whale stranding in February. Where most areas have been counted around mid-February, Farewell Spit was counted at the next spring tide, 2nd March 2017. Due to unforeseen circumstances, coastal areas between Puponga and Totara Avenue missed out from census and have not been part of survey. Instead, I have used the three year average for these sites to create some consistency in overall analysis of numbers.

Overall, about 54.000 birds have been counted, 49% migratory species and the rest endemic. In total 14 species were recorded, Wrybill, Sanderling, Red-necked Stint, Whymbrel and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (Marlborough) among them.

At Farewell Spit we had the highest number of Pied Oystercatcher's since 1998. Also number of Banded Dotterels have been highest since 2008. This could be an indication of migratory movements of the species, starting from mid-February. Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruddy Turnstone numbers were average and Red Knot numbers were very low. Birds were very concentrated in the middle part of the spit which made counting in some spots very challenging.

Golden Bay numbers need to be read with understanding that some important spots were not counted but average numbers from 2014, 15 and 16. In that context, all numbers look very average.

Tasman Bay, Pied Oystercatcher, Banded Dotterel and turnstone numbers are average but godwit and knot numbers are low.

Thanks for all your input. Thanks to Department of Conservation ongoing support to provide car and accommodation at Farewell Spit. All very much appreciated.

The next census will be between 23-25 June 2017"

**Check out [osnz.org.nz](http://osnz.org.nz)** for recent articles on the importance and relevance of our national wader counts and further afield importance of the Yellow Sea tidal flats for shore birds.

Female scaup and duckling, McKenzie Country



T. Quayle photo Feb 2017

### **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 1 May**  
**Indoor meeting**

**Queen's Birthday Weekend Conference in Te Anau.**

**Monday June 5**  
**NO Indoor meeting**

**Winter Wader Count**  
**23/25 June**

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for May newsletter by 24<sup>th</sup>, please email, snailmail, or phone:

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