



*Newsletter of the Northland Region of the  
Ornithological Society of New Zealand - trading as **Birds New Zealand***

## **February 2019      Amokura 124**

(Published in February, July and October of each year)

**MEETINGS** of the Northland Branch of Birds New Zealand are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER.      **TIME:** 7-30p.m.

**VENUE:** Founders Room, Alzheimer's Society, 148 Corks Road, Tikipunga, Whangarei.

**COST:** A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of  
Hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

Or you can pay an Annual fee of \$30.00 to the Northland Branch bank account **12-3099-0614160-00**.

Payment Due after the AGM

**Be sure to include your *Surname* and the word *Sub* in the details.**

**ALL WELCOME**

### **PROGRAMME TO JUNE 2019**

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 14 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760
- 19 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **MARCH**

- 14 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760
- 19 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **APRIL**

- 11 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760
- 16 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **MAY**

- 9 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760
- 14 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **JUNE**

- 13 MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760
- 18 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

**REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE**  
**SECRETARY**  
**TREASURER**  
**REGIONAL RECORDER**

<b>Anne McCracken</b>	<b>438-1145</b>
<b>Heather O'Brian</b>	<b>437-0085</b>
<b>Kevin Hayes</b>	<b>437-6470</b>
<b>Tony Beauchamp</b>	<b>436-2224</b>

Previous Issues of Amokura - <http://www.osnz.org.nz/regnews.htm>

**OCTOBER** - We had an informative and interesting get together that began with us listening to a Radio New Zealand interview with a Young Birder, George Hobson from Wellington where he discussed the Banded Dotterels nesting at Eastbourne.

Tony Beauchamp then talked about Matakohe Island bird audits; what is coming from and going to the island as well as planning another audit by volunteers.

**NOVEMBER** – Dayna Davies talked about the five minute bird counts at Whangarei Heads that she is partaking in for The Whangarei Heads Conservation Trust.  
Hilton Ward commented on *Oi burrow time* taken from data obtained by camera monitoring of the Oi (Grey Faced Petrels) at Taurawhata. Using camera it was easy to establish when the chicks hatched and feeding habits. See below for ongoing comment.

Graham gave a very interesting account of some the birds he knows in England. Of particular interest was the behaviour of the Starlings and the Arctic Swallows. He informed us that the swallows have been recorded in flight for up to 200 days without landing.

Janet Snell updated us on the Fairy Terns at Mangawhai and the antics of a pair of Welcome Swallows in the garage by her house.

This was followed by Heather O'Brian sharing her wonderful photos of her E-Bird Global Big Day on October 6<sup>th</sup> and her four day trip to Tiritiri Matangi.

**DECEMBER** - The December Christmas party. A small but happy bunch as we tuck into our pot luck dinner. Heather and Anne presented a brilliant feather test for us all that had us attempting to not only name the bird the feathers came from but the part of the bird also. No one got full marks and Heather enlightened us with the correct answers.



**JANUARY** – No meeting

## Stories - Adventures – Yarns – Sightings

### Ngunguru Shorebird Count 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018

The next Ngunguru Shorebird count is on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11am. Meet in the School Carpark.







Crossing to the Sandspit



Anne McCracken spotting from Te Maika



Heather O'Brian with camera and Janet Snell on the Sandspit



Thank you Judi, Adrian, Darlene, Wendy, Dayna, Margi, Warren, Scott, Heather, Anne and Janet for helping with the count. The results are below.

## Ngunguru Shorebird Count

OSNZ REGION YEAR  MONTH CENSUS DATE	Northland				MAIN SITE COMPILER	Ngunguru				
	2018					Hilton Ward				
	November	Tide Height, Time, Weather								
	10-Nov-18	2.7	10:00am							
	TIDE TIME >	10:15am at Marsden Pt								
	LOCAL SITES >	Sandspit - NW	Sandspit - NE	Sandspit - SE	Sandspit - SW	Ngunguru Shore Te Maika ~ Snells Pt	Papaka Rd	Te Maika Rd	Te Maika Spit / Est	Tongatu Rd
SITE TOTALS >	19	50	27	0	113	0	0	35	0	

SPECIES v TOTALS										
Bar-tailed Godwit	5								5	
New Zealand Dotterel	25	9		14					2	
Spur-winged Plover	8	3	3			2				
Variable Oystercatcher	34	3		11		18			2	
<b>OTHERS</b>										
Black bird	10					6			4	
Black-backed Gull	35		31			3			1	
Caspian Tern	1		1							
Gannet	1		1							
Greenfinch	1								1	
Grey Warbler	1								1	
Little Black Shag	3					3				
Little Shag	4					4				
Mallard / Hybrid	10					8			2	
Myna	5		2			3				
Pipit	4	1	3							
Red-billed Gull	29		1			19			9	
Skylark	7		6						1	
Sparrow	24					23			1	
Starling	6					6				
Thrush	3					3				
Tui	6	1				4			1	
Welcome swallow	14	2	2			6			4	
White-faced Heron	2					1			1	
Yellowhammer	6			2		4				
Site Total	244									

## Oi on the Tutukaka Coast

As of December 2nd and according to the cameras monitoring two of the Oi burrows one of the chicks has had 23 meals over the past 88 days.

The East Burrow chick had 50 meals over 93 days. 15 of those days were not recorded. (Camera issues) so there would have been a few more meals.

One would think that the parents from two burrows only 10 metres apart with chicks that hatched at almost the same time would behave similarly. Not so. The longest feeding break we recorded was eleven days!

We are expecting the chicks to fledge near to 29th December, about 118 days from hatching.

In the picture below a parent is emerging from the burrow after spending 40 minutes with its chick and just before heading to sea again for a few days.

Ps - The East burrow chick Departed at 12:02am on January 1<sup>st</sup>. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 11:19pm the other monitored chick fell prematurely off the pad at the burrow entrance and over the bank and was not seen on camera again. In all we believe thirteen Oi fledged this season.





## Piwakawaka Chicks

After the Ngunguru Shorebird count Heather, Anne and Janet came to our place (Hilton and Melva) in Old Mill Ln for a cuppa but were soon distracted by these fantail chicks being fed close to our deck. Photos taken by Heather.





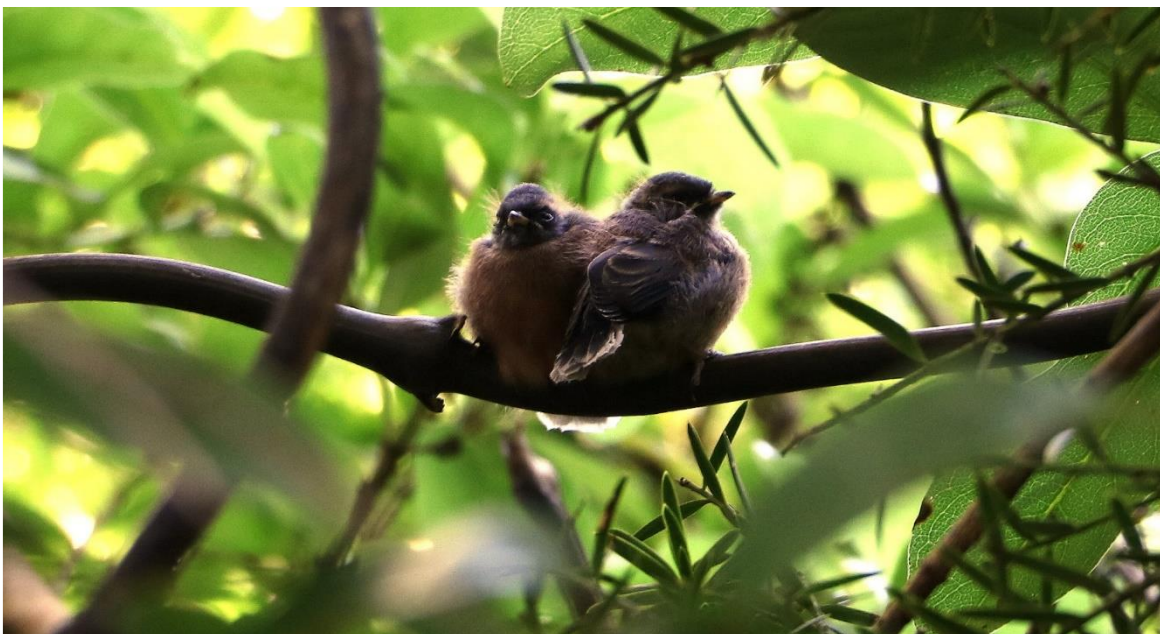




## Taurawhata Gannets

Dayna and I (Hilton) visit the startup Australasian Gannet Colony weekly to check the camera and sound system and to see if any Gannets are taking notice.

In the photos below Dayna Davies changing the SD Card from the camera monitoring the decoy Gannets that have been installed on and about nests that we built. The humanoid thing with the wire hairdo is the camera. The wires are to stop the resident Kingfisher from roosting on the camera and not minding its own business and messing up the camera. We saw a fly by Gannet and on our return more Fantail chicks.





## Reported Sightings

Bird	Number	Place	date	Name
Kaka	5	Pahi Rd	15-Jul-18	Owen Stevens
Kookaburra (Heard)	1	Main Rd, Mangawhai Village	11-Jul-18	Joy Wilson
Eastern Rosella (Male & Female)	2	On Annes lawn eating carrot weed	13-Sep-18	Anne McCracken
Australasian Bittern	1	Pacific Bay Rd Wetland	27~30th Aug 2018	Dayna Davies
Shining Cuckoo	1	Pacific Bay Rd	26-Aug-18	Dayna Davies
Shining Cuckoo (Heard)	1	Old Mill Ln, Ngunguru	20-Aug-18	Melva Ward
kaka	2	18 Kiwi Ave, Maunu	15, 23rd, 25th Sep 2018	Jenny Edwards
Little Black Shag	4	Hatea Loop Walk, Whangarei	25-Sep-18	Anne McCracken
A noted decline in Kukupa numbers this season		maunu		Anne McCracken & Jenny Edwards
Shining Cuckoo (heard)	1	Otaua, near Taheke	2-Oct-18	Terry Toohill
Shining Cuckoo (heard)	1	Tatton Rd, in Mulberry tree	5-Oct-18	Terry Toohill
Kukupa	3	Tatton Rd, in Mulberry tree	7-Oct-18	Terry Toohill
Shining Cuckoo	1	Pacific Bay	11-Oct-18	Dayna Davies

## Eco sanctuaries & Xcluder Fences (By Birds New Zealand Young Birder, Dayna Davies)

Eco sanctuaries are revolutionary. Places fenced by Xcluder offer a safe place for New Zealand's natives, it lets them act as they did hundreds of years ago before the arrival of pests. A perfect example of this modern idea is Zealandia.

Zealandia is a (not so) hidden treasure within New Zealand's capital, Wellington. Eco sanctuaries like Zealandia have allowed once locally lost wildlife to not only return, but flourish. Zealandia is a place where people can have the opportunity to see some of the rarest wildlife in New Zealand. Public tracks in Zealandia cover a tiny percentage of the overall sanctuary, this allows the wildlife to flourish with minimal to no human contact. Zealandia also excels in spreading awareness for the plight of the wildlife within it, allowing educational opportunities for all ages to help conserve and create awareness for New Zealand's flora and fauna.

Around New Zealand (and the world) there are places that are extremely benefiting from the well thought out design of the Xcluder fences. Designing and manufacturing a fence that is able to last in New Zealand's harsh and unpredictable environment is a challenge, along with creating a fence that can be adapted sometimes to unsafe and steep terrain.

Creating 'safe zones' to give New Zealand's wildlife places to recover and recuperate is a great idea. Sectioning off parts of New Zealand is a temporary measure given that one day there may be no need for fences. But for now, Eco sanctuaries allow us to showcase our unique wildlife while protecting and spreading awareness at the same time.

**Scott Brooks** reported on 27<sup>th</sup> October that our local Ngunguru Whimbrel has returned for yet another summer – it's great to have it back again. He found it feeding at the estuary that afternoon. This Whimbrel migrated to Asia back in April and would have just arrived back to New Zealand very recently.



Scott also arranges Pelagic trips out past the Poor Knights Islands. These are very successful with many good sightings. Here is his note.

Had another great day on November 6th on the Tutukaka Pelagic Seabird trip with 7 of us venturing out via the Poor Knight Islands to explore the deep beyond. A strong SW wind throughout the day provided great viewing of a variety of seabirds.

The classic sighting of the day was a shining cuckoo which did a boat flyby out at the 31 mile mark offshore!

The other highlights of the trip were:

- 28 New Zealand Storm Petrels at one chum spot (they were everywhere - fantastic!)
- 2 Wilson's Storm Petrels
- Huge amount of Flesh-footed Shearwaters which were bombing the chum spot and the boat.

During the trip we sighted 24 different seabird species. A fantastic day out.

Cheers Scott

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So here's the full trip results:

2 x Wandering Albatross  
1 x White-capped Mollymawk  
1 x Northern Giant Petrel  
3 x Grey-faced Petrel  
35 x Cook's Petrel  
2 x Pycroft Petrel  
7 x Black Petrel  
15 x Fairy Prion  
120 x Flesh-footed Shearwater  
1500(+) x Buller's Shearwater  
30 x Little Shearwater  
6 x Fluttering Shearwater  
1 x Short-tailed Shearwater  
2 x Wilson's Storm-Petrel  
5 x White-faced Storm-Petrel  
28 x New Zealand Storm-Petrel  
35 x Common Diving-Petrel  
400 x Australasian Gannet  
6 x Black-backed Gull  
35 x Red-billed Gull  
1 x White-fronted Tern  
47 x Pied Shag  
3 x Little Pied Shag  
1 x Little Black Shag  
1 x Shining Cuckoo

Other marine included:

1 x Fur Seal  
2 x Blue Shark  
1 x Mako Shark

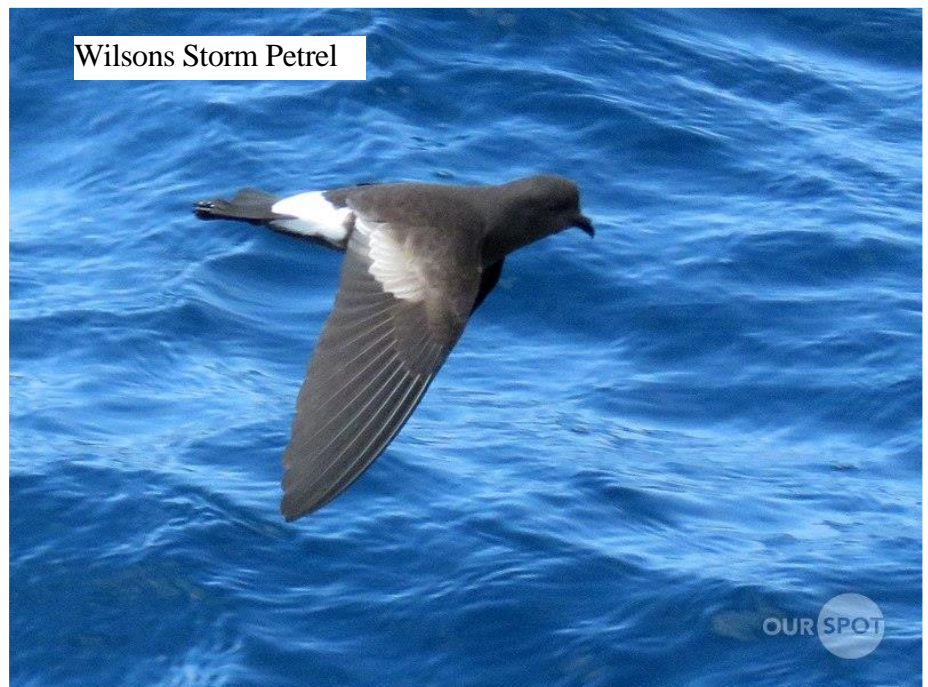
Poor Knights Islands sightings  
(on or flying above):  
2 x New Zealand Pigeon  
3 x Australasian Harrier



2 x Red-crowned Parakeet  
5 x Tui  
3 x Bellbird  
3 x Welcome Swallow  
1 x Sparrow  
1 x Starling

Other marine included:

1 x Fur Seal  
2 x Blue Shark  
1 x Mako Shark





Black Petrel



OUR SPOT

Flesh Footed Shearwater



OUR SPOT

Wandering Albatross



OUR SPOT