

Birds New Zealand

Birds New Zealand

PO Box 834, Nelson. osnz.org.nz

Regional Representative: Mary Thompson

197 Balmacewen Rd, Dunedin. 03464787

Regional Recorder: Jim Wilson

PO Box6149, Dunedin 9059 jim.wilson@actrix.co.nz

Otago Region Newsletter 5/2014 July 2014

Winter Wader Count.

Species	Blueskin Bay	Aramoana	Harbour	Papanui Inlet	Hooper's Inlet	Catlins	Total 2014	Total 2013	Total 2012
Pied Oystercatcher	396	115	543	185	58	219	1516	1364	1070
Variable Oystercatcher	6	2	27	22	13	16	86	157	84
Pied Stilt	13	3	18	38	34	42	148	140	103
Banded Dotterel	14	115			4	48	181	287	153
Bar-tailed Godwit	4	27		169	60	5	265	286	127
Spur-winged Plover	5		4	2	3	36	50	90	61

This wader count took place in calm, overcast conditions on 22 June. Only the waders have been summarised since the rest of the species should go on eBird. Of all the waders only the Pied Oystercatchers were in higher numbers than last year.

Many thanks for all that helped with this survey.

Peter Schweigman

Botanic Garden Bioblitz

We had 14 members helping organize and man the event. Thanks to everyone who volunteered on the day to help make this a very successful event. It was a perfect day for watching birds. The weather could not have been better; mild calm day, and hundreds of people were out enjoying the Gardens and taking part in a variety of events including the Bioblitz. Over



40 people turned up for the Bird Watching walks in the morning led by Derek and Bruce and there was a good deal of interest in the birds nests we had on display and discussions with Peter. A few really keen folks took part in 5 minute bird counts with Maree.

During the Bioblitz in the Botanic Garden from 10 am to 4 pm on 12th July, a total of 28 species were recorded;

15 native species:-

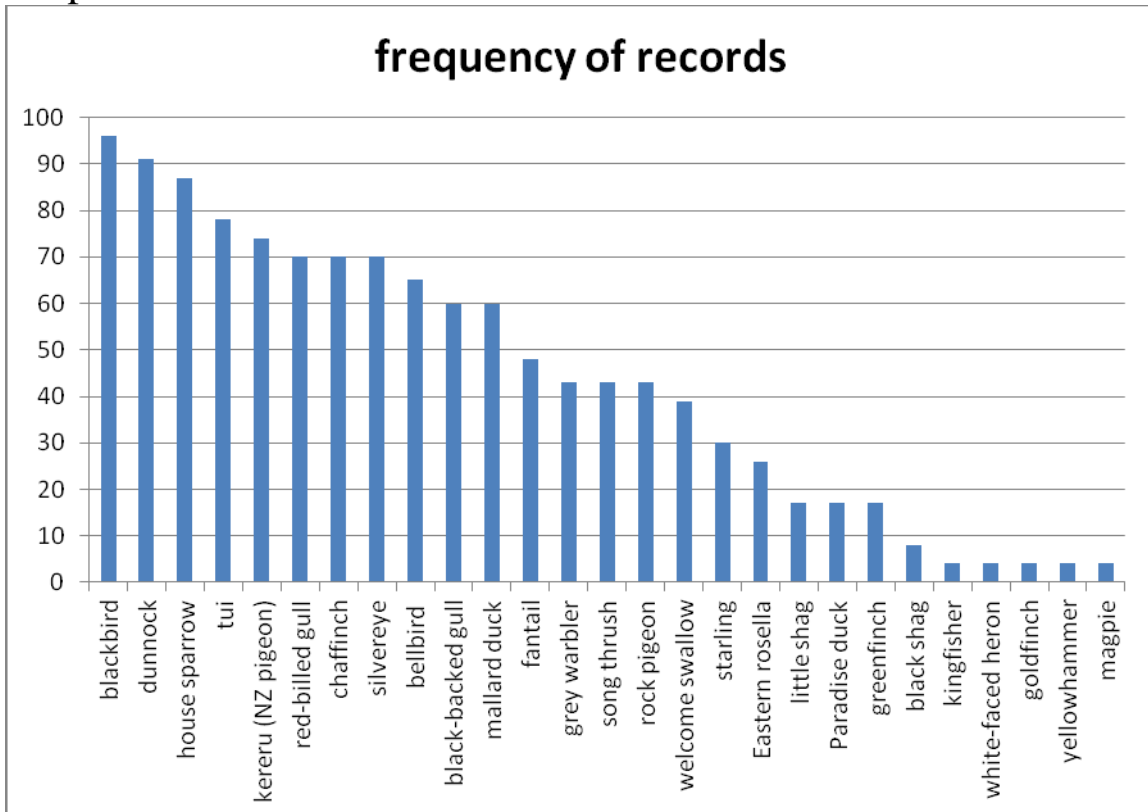
silvereeye, bellbird, tui, kereru (NZ pigeon), fantail, grey warbler, little shag, black shag, red-billed gull, black-backed gull, paradise duck, welcome swallow, kingfisher, white faced heron, pukeko,

and 13 introduced species:-

blackbird, song thrush, starling, dunnock, chaffinch, greenfinch, goldfinch, house sparrow, yellowhammer, eastern rosella, mallard, rock pigeon, magpie.

Our survey adds 4 more species to the eBird Botanic Garden hotspot – kingfisher, white-faced heron, pukeko and, surprisingly, starling. We missed seeing harrier hawk, NZ falcon, brown creeper, kaka, shining cuckoo (summer only), black-billed gull (summer only), black swan and pied oystercatcher (reported in 2008 on eBird). So after the Bioblitz the total number of species reported in the Botanic Gardens is 35.

23 checklists were completed. The frequency of records (below) was obtained by determining the percentage of checklists each species was recorded on. For example, blackbird was recorded on 22 of 23 checklists giving 96%, whereas song thrush was recorded on 10 of 23 checklists, 43%. This frequency value indicates which species were seen most often and is related to a combination of how easily the bird can be seen (conspicuousness) and to its abundance. Blackbird, dunnock and house sparrow top the list with tui and kereru and red-billed gull the top of the native species list.



left: Bruce wondering if he can turn a white-faced into a white-necked heron?

Mary Thompson

Description and measurements of nests of New Zealand Passerines Part 2 Native species

For the descriptions the Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand has been followed. For the measurements of the nests (in cm) the following material has been used: Otago Museum Collection, Birding New Zealand member's collections, and Handbook of Australia, New Zealand and Antarctica.

Note: measurements of the nests are o dia (outside diameter), i dia (inside diameter), cup depth and total height.

Fernbird: The nest is a neat deep cup of dry grass, sedge and rushes, generally lined with feathers.

Measurements: o dia 12, i dia 6.5, depth of cup 6.5, total height 11

NZ Tomtit: The nest is a bulky cup of twigs, bark, fibres and moss, bound together with cobwebs and lined with tree-fern scales, moss, fine grasses and occasionally with feathers or wool.

Measurements: o dia 10, i dia 6.5, depth of cup 4, total height 8

NZ Robin: The bulky nest with compact cup, is made of twigs, grass, dead leaves, lichen, moss or pieces of ferns, bound together with spider web, lined with scales of tree-fern, moss, fine grasses and occasionally with feathers and wool.

Measurements; o dia 14, i dia 7.5, depth of cup 5, total height 10.

Grey Warbler: The nest is an enclosed structure with a 3 cm hole on the side, hanging freely from an attachment at the top, made of rootlets, moss, lichen, leaves, bark, tree-fern scales and fibres, twigs, cobwebs, spider egg-cases, wool, hair and feathers. The nest is lined with a thick layer of feathers, downy seeds and tree-fern scales.

NZ Pipit: The nest is a deep cup in a bulky structure of dry grass.

Measurements: o dia 12, i dia 7, depth of cup 5, total height 6.5

Bellbird: The nest is loosely built of twigs and fibres with a deep cup lined with feathers and fine grass.

Measurements: o dia 25, i dia 8, depth of cup 5, total height 6

Tui: The nest is a bulky structure of twigs and sticks, lined with fine grasses.

Measurements: o dia 20, i dia 10, depth of cup 5, total height 6.5.

Brown Creeper: The nest is a compact deep cup of strips of bark, small twigs, grasses, moss, leaves and leaf skeletons and lichen, bound with cobwebs and lined with dry grasses, feathers and wool.

Measurements: o dia 9, i dia 4.5, depth of cup 4, total height 6

Silvereeye: The nest is a delicate cup, usually suspended from twigs and foliage. The nest is woven strongly from fine grasses, rootlets and fibres, with fragments of moss, spider web, lichen and thistledown.

Measurements: o dia 7, i dia 5, depth of cup 4, total height 6

Fantail: The nest is a neat cup of dried grass, strips of bark, moss and cobwebs, lined with fine fern fibres, hair and feathers, and with a tail of nest material hanging about 10 cm down from the bottom of the nest.

Measurements: o dia 7, i di 5, depth of cup 3, total height 12

Saddleback: The nest is made of rootlets, leaves and twigs, lined with fine grasses, bark-fibres and tree fern scales.

Measurements: o dia 18, i dia 8, depth of cup 5, total height 12



I was able to measure over 100 nests and I have come to the conclusion that the two most reliable measurements of a nest are the inner diameter and the depth of the cup. The outside diameter and total height are influenced by the lengths and thickness of the material used.

Peter Schweigman

PS Last month's photo was of a dunnock's nest.

Ornithological Snippets

On returning home to Dalmore, Dunedin, on 6 July at 11 pm, Paul Sorrell heard a **Morepork** calling. He thought it may have been coming from up the hill in Pine Hill, but the direction was difficult to pinpoint.

From ebird Mark Ayre reports a **NZ Falcon** at Bridge Hill Alexandra on 15 July and at Tomahawk Lagoon, Maree Johnstone found 2 **White Herons** still present on 11 July. Several local residents in Waikouaiti have reported that the **White Heron** is still around Hawksbury Lagoon and the Racecourse, while the single **Cattle Egret** has been moving around the local herds.

Derek Onley hasn't seen much at sea from either Aramoana Mole or Huriawa (Karitane) over the past month. Other than the usual few **Buller's Mollymawks** and odd **Gannet** the only notable bird was an adult **Pied Shag** at Aramoana.

Notices and Business

IBAs and Monitoring of Aramoana Saltmarsh

Forest and Bird in partnership with Birds New Zealand and Birdlife International has just this month published the Seabirds of New Zealand, a splendid document, which identifies all areas that are important areas for seabird breeding and foraging. Kate Hand talked at our September meeting last year about the IBAs in Otago and information that she compiled is part of this extensive report. It can be accessed from the Forest and Bird website. IBAs are sites that are recognized as internationally important for bird conservation and known to support key species and other biodiversity. Ongoing monitoring of IBAs is important to discover trends and monitor conservation efforts. The document suggests that Birds New Zealand encourage monitoring of selected IBAs.

Aramoana is one of our local IBAs and a site for our regular winter and summer wader counts and monthly when we did the harbour survey for 2 years. I explored the data for the Aramoana Hotspot on eBird and was disappointed to find that there are huge gaps in the monthly coverage of this important area. I think we should endeavour to count birds on the salt marsh whenever we go to Aramoana and enter the data on eBird. I am endeavouring to get an Aramoana hotspot for OSNZ to use routinely.

Mary Thompson

Some things to think about prior to AGM.

Possible Projects

“Beyond Orokonui”. We have been asked to be involved in surveying the distribution of forest birds- rifleman, brown creeper, tomtit - and fernbird in the East Otago Area as part of a biodiversity management plan commissioned by the Landscape Connections Trust. This would require doing transect counts in selected habitat types - we would like to compare fragmented patches of bush in farmland and riparian strips with larger areas of bush and exotic forest. Derek and Mary attending meeting with organizers so can report further at the July Indoor Meeting.

Red-billed Gulls (nationally vulnerable)

A National Survey.

2014/2015: confirming location of current breeding colonies

2015/2016: count number of breeding pairs

Note: Lyndon Perriman and Chris Lalas have studied the RBG colonies in Otago; comment from their paper in *Notornis* - “surveys will need to continue in order to determine the duration of present increase in nest numbers in Otago ... recent surveys have indicated possibility of trend towards fewer and larger colonies as numbers have increased”.

B Banding study

Are Otago breeding colonies distinct? How far do they disperse?

Longevity?

If we think this project is a good idea we would need a project group (including someone to act as chief coordinator) to plan objectives and logistics of banding; tasks would include: obtain banding permit; obtain bands; get permits; plan banding strategy; organize banding sessions; organize training; advertise for band re-sightings, etc.

C Census at Lawyers Head

Count RBG and white-fronted terns at Lawyers Head regularly throughout year and weekly during breeding season. Aim: to determine any correlation with coliform contamination of St Kilda Beach; DCC say “fairly obvious” that high readings result of large group of seabirds nesting in the area.

Spoonbill Nesting Success

Monitoring spoonbill nests using trail cameras. Would need someone with enthusiasm and technical know-how to collect and analyse images and coordinate this project.

Acoustic Recordings

Morepork. Currently we have set of recordings for moreporks each month for 1 year in Dunedin that need to be analysed.

Kiwi. Recordings at Orokonui for kiwi being analysed for monthly patterns of calling, etc.

Bittern. Survey Coutts Road swamp? Pattern of booming during breeding season at Sinclair wetlands?

Current Ongoing Projects

Hawksbury lagoon-commenced 2007 (Derek Onley)

Urban Moreporks-2012, 2013, ? biennially (Cody Fraser)

Falcons-nest monitoring (Steve Lawrence)

Wader Counts (Peter Schweigman)

White herons-enter on eBird

Possible Areas to Survey. Manuherikia River (weekend); Nevis River (weekend); Kaikorai Estuary; Waterfowl on sewage ponds (Warrington pond already surveyed by Derek; others?)

Help needed for running Otago Branch of OSNZ

Mary would very much like to involve more members in organizing and running events.

Indoor Meetings:

A few people to help plan speakers and events for 2015. Someone to thank speaker and write summary of talk for Otago newsletters. (Roster of helpers to spread the job)

Field trips:

Trip leaders and suggestions for field trips or weekend away field trip.

Publicity:

Write Regional Roundup for Birds New Zealand; 4 issues per year (job can be shared).

Identify stories for Star newspaper; place ad in What's On section?

Mary Thompson

OSNZ Otago Region Accounts

Annual Accounts: 1 January 2013 - 31 December 2013

Current Account: 03 0903 0392455-00

	2012	<u>2013</u>
Balance as at 1Jan.	1916.79 \$	845.75
<u>Plus Income:</u>		
Interest	0	\$0.00
Capitation	350	\$350.00
Donations/local subs	169.55	\$50.00
Transfer from Bonus saver-proj	500	
OSNZ Project assistance Grant		\$953.00
Sale of cards	10	\$0.00
	1029.55	\$1,353.00
<u>Less Expenses:</u>		
Transfer to savings account	12 \$	12.00
Bank fees	6.5	\$0.00
Room hire	0	\$0.00
Envelopes, stamps, photocopyir	370.05	\$196.68
Speaker Gifts	71.91	\$80.91
Book prize-Science Fair	0	\$44.99
YEP Trust sub	0	\$0.00
Bittern/morepork study	1640.13	\$118.76
Spoonbill study		\$100.00
Miscellaneous	0	\$30.47
	2100.59	\$583.81
Closing Balance	\$ 845.75	\$ 1,614.94

Breakdown of Accounts

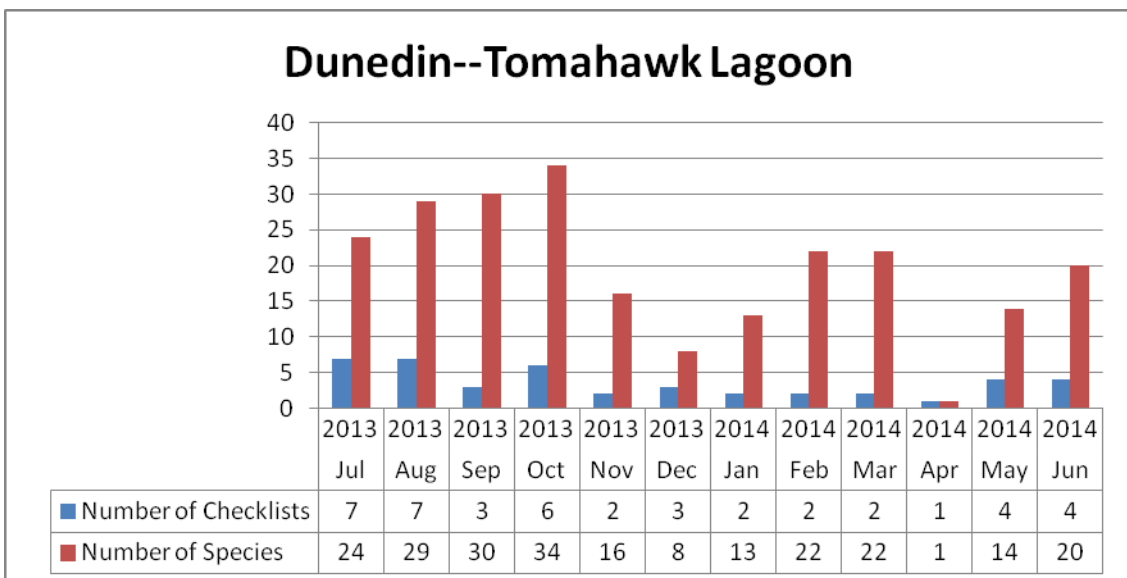
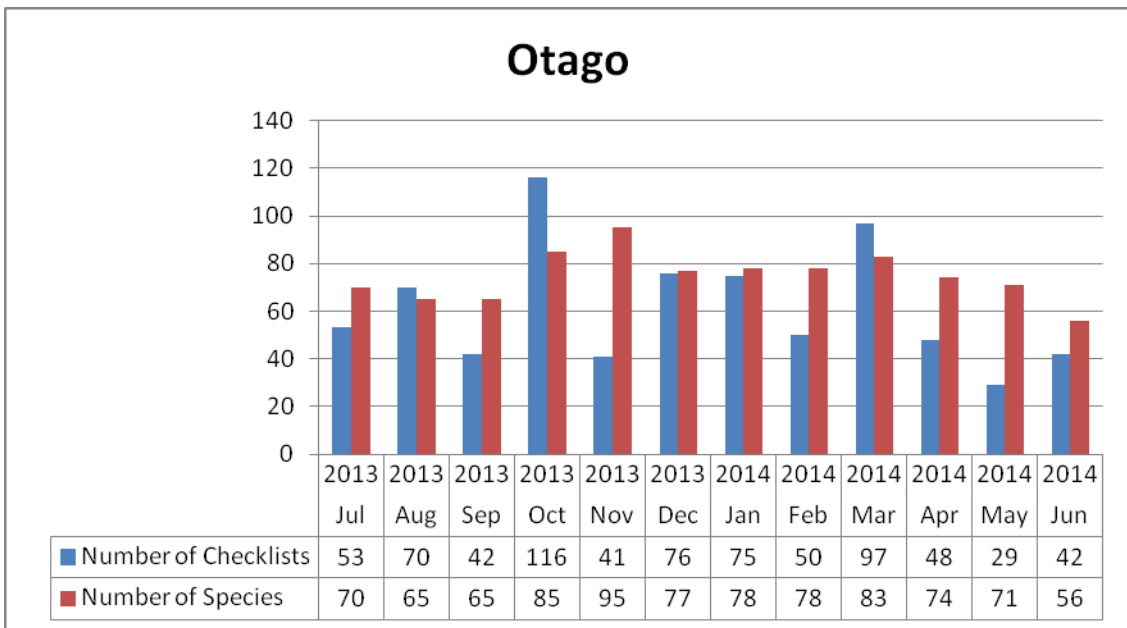
Running Expenses		
Balance brought forward	266.42	
Income	400	
expenses	365.05	
Balance		301.37
Falcon Project		
Balance brought forward		250.00
Project Account-acoustic		
Balance brought forward	329.33	
Income	0.00	
Expenses	118.76	
Balance		210.57
Spoonbill Project		
Income	953.00	
Expenses	100.00	
Balance		853.00
Total		1614.94

Bonus Saver account 0309030392455-25

Balance brought forward	1759.40	
Interest	17.75	
Transfers from cheque	12.00	
transfer for projects	0.00	
Balance		1789.15

eBird Report

In addition to the Otago report I have added a couple of reports from specific “hotspots”. As to be expected Tomahawk has been the subject birding activity with a number of reports. However I suspect that there have been more checklists that have not yet been entered into eBird yet. Please consider entering yours while we still have long winter nights, specially arranged for such indoor activity.



“Hotspots”

Entering Data

Please when you are entering your checklists use the existing “Hotspot” locations if they are appropriate to your sightings. This makes the data more user friendly and easier to access.

Generating Reports

If you want to check out activity in any particular “hotspot” just follow the steps below:

1. Log on to ebird.org
2. Select “Explore Data” tab
3. Click on “Summary Tables” (at bottom of page)
4. Click on;
 - a. “All Observations” (for reports on all activity) or
 - b. “My Observations” (for your activity)
5. In the window “Select a Report and Date” Set criteria for your report
 - a. Week/month/year report
 - b. Set start date
 - c. Set country
 - d. In “States/Provinces” Select Otago or other provincial location of interest
 - e. Click on “Hotspots” and select “hotspot” of interest from drop box.
 - f. Click on “Continue”

Jim Wilson Regional Recorder

Banded Tui and Bellbirds

Murray Efford has been busy again this summer and autumn and has banded another 70 tui and bellbird at his place in Helensburgh. It is crucial for the project that re-sightings are made and recorded. The tui and bellbirds will be starting to come to feeders soon so keep a good look out. Murray is overseas until August but is keen for us to be looking out for banded birds. Please record any sightings of banded birds and send information to Murray Efford email murray.efford@otago.ac.nz; or post to 60 Helensburgh Road, Dunedin 9010. Include location, date, time, left leg: colour over metal; right leg: top colour over bottom colour. Also take a digital photo if at all possible.

Dead Shags and Penguins



A paper giving the results of a dna and morphometric study of Stewart Island and Chatham Island Shags is available at:-

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0090769>

Results indicate that Otago and Foveaux Strait Stewart Island Shags comprise "two regional groups (Otago and Foveaux Strait) that show consistent differentiation in relative frequencies of pied versus dark-bronze morphotypes, the extent of facial carunculation, body size and breeding time."

However don't stop collecting those dead shags or penguins (all species, including feathers, bones and eggshell), especially from areas south of Dunedin (Taieri Island, Catlins). The samples will be used for genetic analysis in Martyn Kennedy, Hamish Spencer and Nic Rawlence shag and penguin research. We have a DoC holding permit and samples can be collected for us without a permit; we just inform DoC (the system we have been using as approved by Bruce McKinlay).

If remains are good it would probably be a good idea to place in plastic bag, seal, label! and put in freezer. Contact Nic and he will arrange pick-up.

Dr Nic Rawlence Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dept of Zoology, University of Otago

340 Great King Street, Dunedin, New Zealand

Ph: +64 (0)3 479 4039 Mobile: +64 (0)22 121 8537

E-mail: nic.rawlence@otago.ac.nz

Programme 2014

Monthly Indoor Meetings will be held in the Benham Seminar Room,
Benham Building, Department of Zoology, 340 Great King Street.

Note change of time to 7.30 p.m.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Wed July 23 | Junichi Sugishita. Royal Parenting - foraging strategies and risks in N. Royal Albatross. |
| Wed August 27 | Kalinka Rexer-Huber and Graeme Parker. 'Birds of the Falkland Islands and S.Georgia.' |
| Wed September 24 | Jean Fleming. 'Learning to be a "birder" a report on Heritage Expedition's Birding the Pacific.' |
| Wed October 22 | Derek Onley. The birds of Hawksbury Lagoon-results of 4 years of surveys. |
| Wed November 26 | Bruce McKinlay, Birding around the world. |

Newsletter editor: Derek Onley, derekonley@yahoo.com
Many thanks to all who contributed.

Final date for copy for next newsletter 21 August.