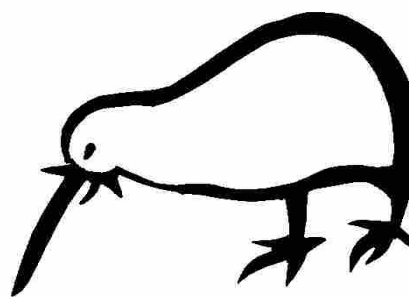


APTERYX

Issue 21

August 2008



NEWSLETTER OF THE FAR NORTH REGION OF THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND



Silvereye
Landing Road,
Kerikeri

ALL
PHOTOS
BY
DETLEF
DAVIES



EDITOR'S COMMENTS

This issue of 'Apteryx' is late mainly because 2 officers for the region have been out of New Zealand for 10 weeks (guess who . . .) but also because local activity has been slack over a very wet and dismal winter. We will do a presentation in December on our recent visit to north Peru.

We welcome Chris & Maria Lamens as new members to the Society; Tom & Margaret Pasco who have moved to our region from Gulf Harbour & Paulla-Jean Pridham and Rangi Zimmerman who have moved to our region from Nelson, so local membership is now 48.

I often circularise news by email such as programme changes, confirmation of times and meeting places of events, etc. If you do not have email, please give me a phone number so I can contact you with this information.

Detlef Davies

The Far North Regional Officers are:

Regional Representative & 'Apteryx' Editor Detlef Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 09 407 3874 detlefdavies@yahoo.com	Treasurer Isabella Godbert, 67 Waipapa West Road, Kerikeri 09 407 8058 godbert@xtra.co.nz
Regional Recorder Laureen Alston, 48a Riverview Road, Kerikeri 09 407 8747 lm.alston@actrix.co.nz	Secretary & Publicity Carol Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 09 407 3874 carolanndavies@yahoo.com

RECENT EVENTS

2 May FAR NORTH AGM & TONY BEAUCHAMP

We had a short AGM of which the minutes appear on page 3. Tony Beauchamp, a research scientist with DOC then gave us a presentation on Wekas which although a rare endemic species in New Zealand is sometimes a danger to other rare endemics. His subject then moved to native frogs which has prompted interest in a 'frogging trip' (see later).

16 May INDOOR MEETING, BORNEO

We met at Bill Campbell's house tonight and had a repeat performance of Detlef & Carol's talk on Borneo which had been disrupted previously by computer problems. Kevin Matthews also showed us some recent photos of Far North dragonflies.

30 May – 2 June ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM, KAIKOURA

Detlef & Laureen were the only 2 from the Far North who made the journey to this part of the South Island, well-known for whales & seabirds. Some information on the Conference & AGM will appear in 'Southern Bird' or can be seen on the Society's website. It is proposed that new members joining after 1 Oct in any year will have membership until the end of Dec the following year so that renewals will all be due at the same time in January. Members should read the section in 'Southern Bird' about the new bird recording system called 'eBird'. There may be a note about this in the next newsletter when the RR has worked it out . . .



No visit to Kaikoura would be complete without getting a boat out into the wildlife-rich seas offshore. Conference attendees were offered both half day & full day trips & as the latter would get us further out to sea, I joined a day-trip on Sunday 1 June with about 10 others in calm weather and we got out about 15 nm. It lived up to expectations with over 100 albatrosses of 6 species, Hutton's Shearwater, Westland & White-chinned Petrels, Ocean Wings' first White-headed Petrel, 2 Antarctic Fulmars and towards the end of the afternoon, great views of a breaching Sperm Whale. What made the trip more special for photographers was the backdrop of the snow-capped Kaikoura Ranges. For us Far-Northerners it was nice to see southern species like Spotted Shag, Black-billed Gull & Black-fronted Tern.

Northern Giant Petrel, Antarctic Fulmar & White-capped Albatross (DD)



5 – 7 July WINTER WADER COUNT

Thanks to all who took part in this. A detailed report by Laureen and results appear later.

28 August INDOOR MEETING, RAY & BARBARA WALTER

We had 25 people at this event and enjoyed a first hand account from Ray and Barbara of 25 years of progress on Tiritiri Island from bare grass to forest and from a sprinkling of everyday bird species to a sanctuary of New Zealand's most precious endemics and most famous dawn chorus.

Far North AGM – Minutes of meeting on 2 May 2008

Present: Detlef & Carol Davies, Laureen Alston, Anthea Goodwin, Ian Wilson, Robin Booth, Verna Brevig, Frank & Bet Jacques & guest speaker, Tony Beauchamp. Apologies from Sian Kendall, Kerry & Jane Walshe, Isabella & Derry Godbert, Barry Stevens, Russell & Lesley Thomas, Terry Cottier. Meeting opened 7.47 pm.

Detlef gave an oral overview of the past year's events and successes. Newsletters would continue 3 times a year as would a variety of events. Although not intended as something which needed to be 'passed', it was proposed by RB & seconded by BJ.

Isabella was not present but DD presented the accounts which showed a balance of \$793.93 at 4 April; however, the total included \$140 which was left in the account from the \$1,000 paid to us towards wader count costs. We had spent more than usual on the April newsletter & the sum from central funds had not yet arrived. So finances were considered satisfactory. Enquiries made with Mark Nee revealed that the contribution was \$4 per member with a minimum of \$230. So we would need over 50 members to see any increase.

Report proposed by FJ & seconded by LA.

Laureen reported as Regional Recorder & suggested a box be available into which people could put a written note of their sightings, it would help to know the actual observer, particularly for unusual sightings.

Carol spoke as Promotions officer and she is forming links with other local like-minded groups in the Far North, such as Landcare Groups & local Forest & Bird. Other joint ventures were proposed with groups further south. The library display had been a great success & we hoped to repeat it in October.

There were no offers to replace any of the Officers & all were willing to continue to serve so it was proposed by IW to maintain the status quo & seconded by AG.

For some time our area was considering producing a Far North site guide. We hoped to find time for this but sensitive sites would not be disclosed so as not to harm the rarer species.

DD & LA would be going to the Kaikoura AGM & Conference.

Programme for the next 6 months would include another attempt at Waima Forest and Carol would find suitable speakers for the indoor meetings over the period. DD & CD would be away for the winter wader count but AG & LA would be able to assist.

The next event was the Three Kings Pelagic which was believed to be full but this too could be repeated with sufficient demand.

Meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

RECENT REPORTS and SIGHTINGS

This covers the Far North region since May 2008. Prepared by Laureen Alston and Detlef Davies with other contributors including Kevin Matthews, Anthea Goodwin, Isabella Godbert, Ray Wiblin, Dave Panckhurst, Jill & Ron Hayes, Alison Stanes, Jan O'Boyle & Heather & Robb Campbell.

Reef Heron 1 on the wharf and one on the Shellbank, Parengarenga Harbour on 7 July.

Bittern 1 on Wallace Road! One showing well in the swamp by Herekino Hall Bridge recently.

Variable Oystercatcher 24 on Tokerau Beach on 5 July; 24+ at Walker Island, 9 on East Beach, Rangaunu Harbour, 16 on Kowhai Beach on 6 July; 32 on the Shellbank and 35 on Kokota Sandspit, Parengarenga Harbour on 7 July.

South Island Pied Oystercatcher 5 on Tokerau Beach on 5 July; 542 in Paua Road paddocks, Parengarenga Harbour on 7 July.

Pied Stilt 270 at Wallace Road, Karikari on 5 July; 5 on Rangaunu Harbour on 6 July; 203+ in Paua Road paddocks and 200+ on the Shellbank, Parengarenga Harbour on 7 July.

New Zealand Dotterel 3 banded at Urapukapuka Beach & 1 banded at Waewaetora by John Dowding on 12 April; 22 on Karikari Beach, (including 1 banded by John Dowding in 1999) in June; 2 on Kowhai Beach and 10 on East Beach on 6 July; 11 on Kokota Sandspit on 7 July; 1

pair on subdivision Lot 62 & 1 pair on the beach at Matauri Bay, 1 pair on Te Ngaere spit, 6 birds on Tauranga Bay spit, 1 with a metal band, on 28 July; 2 pair on Tapuaetahi Estuary on 2 August.

Banded Dotterel 2 at Kowhai Beach & 6 on East Beach on 6 July; 106 on Paua Road paddocks & 1 on Kokota Sandspit on 7 July.

Wrybill 21 on Kowhai Beach & 16 on East Beach on 6 July; 56+ at Kokota Sandspit on 7 July.

Turnstone 2 at East Beach on 6 July.

Red Knot 42 at East Beach on 6 July; 10 on Kokota Sandspit on 7 July.

Whimbrel 2 on Kokota Sandspit, Parengarenga Harbour on 7 July.

Bar-tailed Godwit 28 at Wallace Road on 5 July; 136+ on Paua Road paddocks & 213 on Kokota Sandspit on 7 July.

Kaka 2 feeding in kowhai tree near Stone Store regularly over last 4 weeks.

Shining Cuckoo Heard in Kapiro Road on 22 August, at Mount Taratara a few days earlier & at Radar Hill on 2 Sept (& still present).

Barbary Dove 10 seen sunning themselves, early morning in tall, scrawny eucalypts at Ashby's Boatyard on 8 April.

Tomtit 1 male seen in Waima Valley and heard in the bush. An old nest found in a mamaku.

PROGRAMME

All Far North OSNZ indoor meetings take place at Detlef & Carol's house at 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri unless otherwise stated, 7 pm for 7.30. We provide drinks & nibbles but contributions welcome. From now on we hope to make these meetings at least bi-monthly but cannot really make the day consistent, it will usually be Thursday or Friday; we appreciate Bill Campbell's offer to use his home in Coopers Beach as an alternative for some of our meetings.

27 – 28 Sept or 4 – 5 Oct WAIMA FOREST

This is another attempt to run a trip to see Kokakos in our reasonable proximity; now a very difficult bird to see north of Auckland or Tiritiri Island. The plan is to drive to Tutamoe which is 40 kms south of Kaikohe and walk north along the Waoku Coach Road into the forest in the afternoon, camp overnight at a site used by DOC researchers and listen for singing birds on the Sunday morning. There is often a male singing at the camping spot. We will try and go over the Sept weekend and only resort to Oct in the event of bad weather. Please phone Detlef or Carol on 09 407 3874 if you would like to come. If anyone can offer a 4WD, this will get us further up the trail and reduce the non-forest part of the walking.

Fri 17 or 24 Oct INDOOR MEETING – COOPERS BEACH

We hope to have an indoor meeting at Bill Campbell's house on one of these dates but are still looking for a speaker. Further info will follow by email.

Sat 1 Nov NATIVE FROGS

Tony Beauchamp has agreed to take a group of us to look for the endangered Hochstetter's Frog at a site south of Whangarei. This is restricted to members only and to 3 vehicles so please let Detlef or Carol know as soon as possible if you would like to come & to organise transport.

Weekend 15 – 16 Nov WADER COUNT

This weekend should provide good and well-timed high tides so we will count waders and hopefully spot some bands at the usual sites at Parengarenga & Rangaunu Harbours. As we go to press, we hear that the Godwits have returned early. More info by email.

Fri 12 Dec INDOOR MEETING, KERIKERI - 'A MONTH BY THE HUALLAGA'

Detlef & Carol will present pictures and stories from a lodge in North Peru.

BEACH PATROLS

Isabella Godbert

These take place every 4th Sunday at 90 Mile Beach and less frequently on Karikari Peninsular. More volunteers would be welcome. Please contact **Isabella Godbert** on 09 407 8058 or **John Dawn** on 09 407 8658. Anyone finding bands on beach-wrecked birds should inform **Laurie Howell** on 09 430 2287

Recent results for 90 mile beach

Date	28 Jan	24 Feb	23 March	1 June	10 Aug
Distance	23 kms	21 kms	21 kms	19 kms	21 kms
Wandering Albatross					1
Buller's Albatross					1
Shy Albatross				1	
Cape Petrel			1		
Buller's Shearwater	1				
Sooty Shearwater		1		2	
Fluttering Shearwater	1	5		1	17
Blue Petrel					1
Common Diving Petrel		1		1	5
Fairy Prion					3
Thin-billed Prion					16
Prion sp.		1			
White-chinned Petrel	1				
White-headed Petrel					1
Blue Penguin	17		2		5
White-tailed Tropicbird		8	1		
Australasian Gannet	3	4	2	1	1
Southern Black-backed Gull	4	5	1	1	
Black-backed Gull (juv.)		4			
Red-billed Gull		2			
White-fronted Tern		1			
Total seabirds	27	32	7	7	51
Duck sp.		1	1		
White-faced Heron			1		

Recent results for Karikari and East Coast

Date	9 Feb	27 Feb	27 Feb	3 Mar	6 Mar	17 Aug
Site	Karikari	Taupo Bay	Matauri Bay	Karikari	Tapuae-tahi	Karikari
Small albatross sp.						
Blue Penguin	1	1	1	5	1	3
Red-billed Gull	1					
Black-backed Gull				1		
Fluttering Shearwater						4
Fairy Prion						1
Diving Petrel sp.						1
Little Shearwater						1

Isabella reports as follows:

Beach patrols have been limited by weather and lack of people but we did find a banded Gannet on 90 mile beach in March – banded on White Island in 1995. The recent wild weather has changed the beaches and Pat Gardner setting off to walk on the beach on a much-used track found herself perched at the top of a sand cliff and had to walk a long way along the top before she could descend. It was worthwhile as that day we found 51 birds in 21 kms including several Thin-billed Prions and a Wandering Albatross. Karikari has also changed – new cliffs and the lagoons by the beach shrinking.

PROMOTION**Carol Davies**

Far North OSNZ had a display in the entrance of the Proctor Library in Kerikeri for 2 weeks in April and we were surprised how much material we had to show in the end. The advertising cost us nothing and we have reserved another 2 weeks from 20 October - 3 November. Anyone with items to display or other ideas for promotion please let us know.

FIELD COURSES AT MIRANDA**Carol Davies**

In the April newsletter I described an excellent field course which I attended in January. It is being repeated in January 2009 and topics covered include geology, botany & entomology but with a focus on birds, identification, catching & details on ecology of some of our shorebirds. For details phone 09 232 2781, email shorebird@xtra.co.nz or look at www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz.

WINTER WADER COUNT, JULY 2008**Laureen Alston**

In spite of inclement weather six of us managed to conduct a wader census of the usual roosts from Rangaunu to Parengarenga Harbours over the 5th to 7th of July.

Anthea was first in action checking Wallace Road, Tokerau Beach, and Walker Island (by telescope). On the 6th Dave Panckhurst, Ray Wiblin and Kevin Matthews covered Rangaunu Harbour, East Beach, and Walker Island (by telescope) and Anthea and Laureen drove on past Houhora to Mt Camel Station. It was a longer walk than usual to Kowhai Beach as the paddocks we usually drive over were too sodden and progress was slow with regular squally showers. Once on the beach it was vital to watch for approaching squalls and run to any shelter handy to crouch down to protect telescope and binoculars from rain and sand-blasting! The usual flock of migratory waders was nowhere to be seen – even a climb up to over look Henderson Bay was unsuccessful. However it was good to see the local NZ Dotterels and Wrybills.

We were joined by Isabella on the 7th for the final survey at Parengarenga. Paddocks on the Paua Road gave us our first counting experience as flocks of birds continued to arrive as the tide rose. At the wharf we met Nick Conrad with the DoC boat and set out across the harbour, checking the Shellbank on our way to land on the north end of Kokota Sandspit. After a brief delay for the first rain squall we set off over the dunes and were amazed to see the inland pan area was covered by a series of large lakes! Eventually we found a flock of waders to count and then set off to cross to our pick-up spot on the western shore. It looked easy enough just to skirt around the lakes and keep a lookout for more birds. However it soon became a real expedition as we encountered invisible patches of liquid sand where we suddenly sank up to our knees without warning. We must have looked very comical as we heaved ourselves out with our hands, walked for a while and then sank again! It was 3 hours before we staggered out on to the shoreline but a treat to find a flock of Wrybill feeding on the growing sandflats as we walked out to the boat for the ride back to the Paua wharf.

Many thanks to Nick, DoC and to all participants.

OSN7 REGION

FAR NORTH

SITES **Parengarenga & Rangaunu Harbours
& East Beach**

YEAR

2008

COMPILER: Laureen Alston

MONTH

JULY

CENSUS DATE

5 to 7 July

Tide Height, Time, Weather etc

DATE >

Moderate high tide 11 am - 12 noon, strong squally west wind with showers

TIME >

05.07.08	05.07.08	05.07.08	06.07.08	07.07.08	07.07.08	07.07.08	06.07.08
H.T	H.T	H.T	H.T	9 - 10 am	10.30-1.30	10.30 am	10 - 1 pm
AG	AG	AG	AG, LA	AG,LA,IG	AG,LA,IG	AG,LA,IG	KM
Walker Island	Wallace Road	Tokerau Beach	Kowhai Beach	Paua Paddocks	Kokota Sandspit	Ahiaruhe Shellbank	Kaimaumau & East Beach
	300	29	41	987	328	232	114

PRINCIPAL COUNTER>

LOCAL SITES >

SITE TOTALS >

SPECIES TOTALS v

		5		542+		200+	
		24	16		35	32	24 WI, 9 EB
	270			203+			5 harbour
			2		11		10 EB
			2	106+	1		6 EB
			21		56+		16 EB
	2						
							2 EB
					10		42 EB
					2		
	28			136+	213		

OTHERS

c.50						# WI
	4					15 harbour
	16		1			2 EB
			1 (wharf)		1	
	1					
	2					
						3 EB

MAIN SITE TOTAL	>	2.022
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Co-ordinator: Adrian Riegen. riegen@extra.co.nz Fax 09-814-9741

COMMENTS: - SITE TOTALS and MAIN SITE TOTAL EXCLUDE 'OTHERS'

COUNTERS: Laureen Alston, Kevin Matthews, Ray Wiblin, Dave Panckhurst, Anthea Goodwin, Isabella Godbert

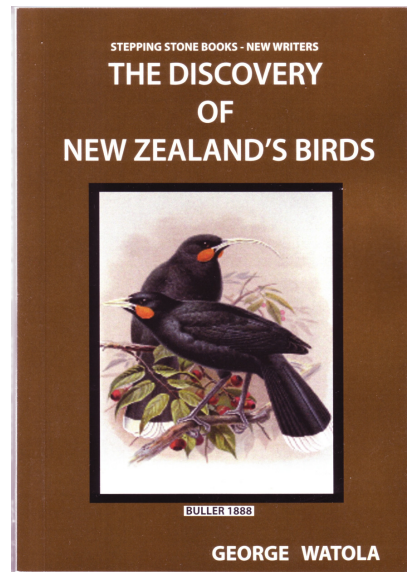


Bar-tailed Godwits on Aroha Island

'THE DISCOVERY OF NEW ZEALAND'S BIRDS' by George Watola

This is a newly published book written and researched by Far North member George Watola & edited by Stuart Chambers. Although George now lives in the UK, the book demonstrates his continued interest in New Zealand birds and describes the very first known occurrences and some history of all the birds known to have occurred in New Zealand including the vagrants, species reported but not substantiated, recently extinct species and those known only from fossils. This is knowledge and information which is not readily available from the existing field guides and covers much new ground.

The book is available through us, Detlef & Carol, at a special price of NZ\$39.00, come & see it here if you are passing.



HOME AND AWAY

Detlef Davies

This is a new idea for the newsletter, a section for anyone to contribute a birding experience, whether in New Zealand or abroad, featuring one or a few species or a locality, something memorable, perhaps with a photo or two.



I will start the ball rolling with a little Argentina experience. Buenos Aires, although not nearby or cheap, is a single hop from Auckland and has a wealth of birds within a small radius of the city. 80 or more species in a day is easily achieved. We spent 4 days there during our recent holiday and even after 2 previous trips, we found another 20 new species.



Many-coloured Rush-Tyrant (above) & Long-tailed Reed Finch (right)

One of these was the spectacular Many-coloured Rush-Tyrant. Of the 425 species in the Tyrant Flycatcher family (the largest bird family in the world & exclusively American), this is one of the most beautiful & although skulking, when it does appear, it is often quite confiding. It was 'bird of the day' on 8 July when we were in the flat marshy country known as Entre Rios to the north-west of the city. Also in the vicinity we found Long-tailed Reed Finch, White Woodpecker & Southern Screamer. It was a superb day's birding.