



THE
ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF NEW ZEALAND
(INCORPORATED)

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Otago Region Newsletter 7/2010 August 2010



Fantail Craig McKenzie

OTAGO HARBOUR SURVEY

Hi colleagues,

With the count this Sunday we will have completed a full years counts.

Thanks very much for your efforts in sometimes appalling weather conditions.

We now have completed the third count over thirty years. As is often the case with such surveys the results so far have raised as many questions as they have answered. In particular some of the pattern reported by red billed gulls is confusing and needs further investigation.

After some debate I've decided that we should attempt to do another year of counts. The reasons for this are: that for some counts the weather was so bad that taking them on their own without a cross check would not be a good result; that in the next year or two the Port Company will start dredging the harbour and having two years of good data before they start will make it easier to interpret trends and also that for some of the early counts there were very high numbers for some species and it would be good to see if they are repeated in another years effort.

I've been very grateful for the consistent effort of people turning out each month but when you signed up for this it was only for a year so if you'd like to pull out now and do something else with your Sundays (like go falcon surveying with Steve Lawrence) then that's a good options and don't feel bad about not continuing to do the harbour surveys.

Some of you might feel that your not being asked often enough and true some people have their own blocks. But over the year for one or more reasons it has been good to have a back up team or two to fill in. I've tried to spread this around. Also in November, February and June we have the wader counts for the national wader count to complete and so having extra people to cover for all of this is really good. I've revised the dates and time for the coming year and these are appended. If you'd like to be part of the group carrying on then you are welcome. Please let me know.

If not then thank you very much for your efforts over the past year in gathering some really good data.

I'll be talking about the result so far at the OSNZ November meeting.

Kind regards
Bruce



Blue Duck Craig McKenzie



Grebe Craig McKenzie



Campbell Albatross Craig McKenzie



Royal Albatross Craig McKenzie

Many thanks to Craig McKenzie for sharing his beautiful bird photographs at our last meeting, and his generous offer to allow the branch to use further images from his website www.flickr.com/photos/craigmckenzie.

2009 records wanted for Bird Report

Although nothing has yet been done with the 2008 records (so it is not too late to send them in), I thought I'd better start collecting 2009 records for the Annual Bird Report. Could you please send your 2009 sightings to me at 48 Pacific Street, Dunedin. I would appreciate receiving them even if they have been in the newsletter, as the newsletter does not always include information such as the date or the observer's name.

Thanking you in anticipation,
Alan Baker, Regional Recorder

Ornithological Snippets

In Len Buchanan's Brighton garden is a metre-long sugar water trough. This year he has had huge numbers of silveryeyes, sometimes 60 on the trough with more nearby. 8 to 10 bellbirds are regularly seen. On 5/8, he saw 14 tuis on the trough with others on nearby bushes. 2 of the tuis were banded.

Programme 2010

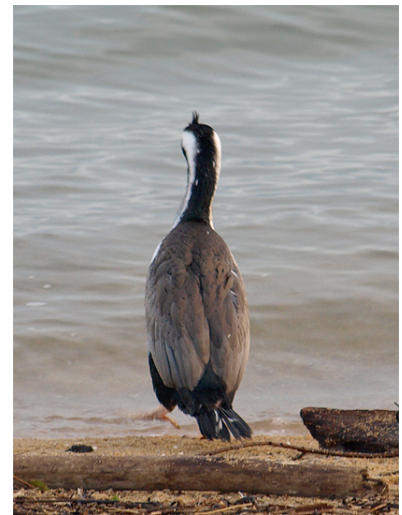
Monthly Indoor Meetings will be held in the Benham Seminar Room, Benham Building, Department of Zoology, 340 Great King Street at 8 p.m.

Please be on time: the door will be locked after 8 p.m.

Sun 22 August	Harbour survey starting at 12:15
Wed 25 August	Indoor Meeting Graeme Loh Catlins Ark and Mohua
Wed 22 September	Indoor Meeting Murray Efford Tui and bellbirds in a Dunedin garden... and beyond
Saturday 9 October	Hawksbury Lagoon

Email Newsletters are in glorious colour!

Many of you will have received a pdf copy of this Newsletter by email as well as mail. It is quite a big job to photocopy, collate, address and post the newsletters so if you are happy to receive the newsletter **only by email**, or if you would like to but do not, please send your email address with your request to:
mary.thompson@stonebow.otago.ac.nz



The very last one to leave

Spotted shags arriving and departing Tata Beach, Golden Bay before sunrise

These images of the spotted shags, are taken from my blog - birdzones adventures of amateur ornithologists. Here is the link <http://birdzones.wordpress.com/>

Please send all contributions for the September newsletter to:
waitapu1@clear.net.nz

Many thanks to all who contributed.
Final date for copy for next newsletter: 15 September

OTAGO HARBOUR SURVEY 2010-2011

Introduction

The aim of this survey is to record the pattern of bird distribution and numbers on the Otago Harbour at High tide for the second consecutive year. The Otago Region of the OSNZ previously undertook this survey in 1977/78 and 1988/89 and completing it for a fourth time will enable us to compare the pattern across three decades. The survey not only records the distribution of the birds on the harbour but also any seasonal changes that occur.

Method

The harbour has been divided up into seven sections, which are to be counted monthly in about two hours by two people. The following dates and time have been selected for the 2009/10 survey. The start time for the survey is two hours BEFORE the high tide time listed below.

Month Date	Time
Sept 19	1305
Oct 17	1245
Nov 21	1620
Dec 19	1508
Jan 16	1350
Feb 13	1222
Mar 20	1712
Apr 17	1459
May 15	1346
June 12	1346
July 10	1119
Aug 14	1612

Counting can begin two hours before high tide at the Dunedin wharves and should be completed as quickly as possible for each section. We want as near as possible to a simultaneous count and so each set of counters needs to keep on the move through their Section. There is no purpose to be gained by stopping in your Section to allow for numbers to build up in your count.

Before starting your Section you need to be sure of the boundaries of your Section. This includes the boundaries for any subsections in your section. Start your count as close to the above time as possible and finish as quickly as possible.

Please make sure you have:

- A set of the instructions
- A data sheet or notebook
- A map of your sections
- A pair of Binoculars
- A driver

Count all birds on the shore, and on or over the water. If birds are too far out to identify positively record them and your description of them in the space at the bottom of the recording sheet. Someone in the opposite section may have had a better view of them.

Record locations and numbers of obvious seabirds behind the shoreline (e.g. on Logan Park) in the space at the bottom of the recording sheet. Note the time and direction of any notable species or wader flock passing from your section to another. Also please note any wader flock that fly off over the Peninsula or north up the coast. Estimate flocks as best you can in proper numbers, not in the form 100-1000.

Make two copies of your record and send one of them to Bruce McKinlay at either: 97 Tomahawk Road Dunedin or mckinlaywakelin@actrix.co.nz Keep one copy in case the other goes astray.

Keep in contact with the counters on neighbouring Sections prior to and after the survey each month to discuss any potential overlap.

Any questions please ask.

Many Thanks for you help.

Bruce McKinlay