



Birds New Zealand
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Ornithological Snippets

After the spate of waders last month, things quietened down a little, though scarce sandpipers in other parts of the country suggest it's still worth getting out there and looking. The **Whimbrel** at Warrington Spit was last seen on 31st October by Maureen Howard, while single **Red Knot** were seen at Clutha Mouth on 20th October & Catlins River Estuary on 27th (the same bird?), along with the long-staying **Grey-tailed Tattler** at the latter location, reported by Sharon Roberts. Also at Clutha Mouth on 20th were 2 ducks in a paddock, which were apparently indistinguishable from **Grey Duck**, though it seems a pretty unlikely location for pure birds. Nearby a **White Heron** was roosting on a gravel bank in the Matau, while possibly the same bird was seen on Greenall Rd pond, near Balclutha, on 10th November by Annie Schofield; another was at Karitane on 21st October (Nick Beckwith).

Shining Cuckoos have been regularly heard around Dunedin, with a few reports from the Catlins, but the only report so far from South Otago has been one at Gabriels Gully on 26th October (Bruce McKinlay). Lala Fraser reports from the Peninsula that they have now arrived and are being heard regularly, but only for the last few weeks and not on two of the sites where they have been in previous years. Meanwhile one near McLean Falls on 17th November was seen in the same tree (& at the same time) as a **Long-tailed Cuckoo**; the latter species was also reported from the Fleming catchment on 25th October by Franny Cunninghame & Graeme Loh, and by Mark Ayre with 2 at Meads Road by Lake Hawea on 28th.

Please send reports to cluthaphotos@gmail.com

Richard Schofield

Kaka

As some of you may well know, two kaka have recently died at the Orokonui Ecosanctuary due to poisoning by an anticoagulant, the identity of which has yet to be determined. Bruce McKinlay recently forwarded the following from Binny Guy at DoC as possible copy for the newsletter.

I received a call from a member of the public called Shen this morning. Shen was out walking his dog on Monday night (18 November) and saw a sick looking Kaka on the hill above the Aquarium about 7pm.

Are the two connected? It is thought that the kaka that died had eaten bait put out in dispensers for OSPRI's possum control programme following recent bovine TB cases in the area north of the Harbour. Kaka in the Orokonui have learnt to associate bird tables and the like with food and indeed visit bird feeders in Waitati and Osbourne regularly, prompting a request from Orokonui not to feed kaka such unhealthy food. Did they spot a couple of anticoagulant dispensers and think "yum"? Or more disturbingly, is the anticoagulant getting in to the environment at toxic levels one way or another as it can with brodifacoum?

OSPRI has apparently removed baits from dispensers after the kaka deaths and the discussion whether to continue to feed kaka in the Orokonui, thereby teaching them to investigate artificial looking devices in trees for food, has at least been mooted over a beer or two at the Gallery on Blueskin.

Your cynical, aged editor however is prompted to ask whether a forest species like the kaka is ever going to be able to survive in the likes of a bit of regenerating bush like the Orokonui without supplementary feeding?

If you see any sick kaka please report them to the Orokonui and to OSPRI. And if you see any kaka at all. Put them on ebird. **Derek Onley**

Notices and Business

Stand in Newsletter Editor

Sue Odlin has kindly offered to edit this newsletter until further notice. Please send any copy for the January edition to her at sodlin@gmail.com by January 22nd.

November Atlas Trip

The next Atlas field trip will be on Saturday 30th November. (Yes, it will still be spring!). Destination is the Berwick/Waipori Falls area. Meet at 9 am at Otaki St outside Bunnings to carpool, and then at Berwick, by the War Memorial. Let Richard know if you plan to come. Phone 027 281 8701.

Ebird Atlas News

With about one week of the spring period remaining, 48% of Otago squares have now had some coverage, with 38% in spring. To see which squares have received coverage, and how much, go to the coverage map - "Explore" > "Atlas Effort Map" and then zoom in to the relevant area. The default map is set for year-round coverage, but you can change this to spring (or any other season) by clicking the dialogue box towards the top left. You can also change the map to show nocturnal, number of checklists, and number of species recorded. The latter probably gives the best idea of which areas may not have been visited.

I've been asked if there is any advantage in areas being surveyed regularly, when no new species are being added? Obviously many of us would like to carry on submitting lists for local areas when there is not the chances to get to unsurveyed locations. Well, it's definitely useful to keep submitting checklists from well-surveyed squares, and for these checklists to continue to be submitted to the Atlas portal. The more data we have that captures the spatial and temporal variability in bird occurrence, the better the resulting Atlas maps will be, so repeat checklists from well-surveyed locations will certainly be useful.

And if you accidentally submit data to standard eBird, rather than through the Atlas portal (from personal experience the first indication of this is

being asked to specify habitat) then you can move the checklist by going into My eBird > Manage My Checklists, then click on “view or edit” for the checklist you want to change. Once that is open, click the edit button and select “change portal”. You can then change the checklist to the Atlas portal.

Richard Schofield

Last Chance - Birdy Books for Sale or to a Good Home

Field Guides

Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica; M. de la Pena, M Rumboll. Collins 1998

Birds of East Asia. M. Brazil. Helm Field Guides 2009.

Birds of Chile. A. Jaramillo. Princeton University Press.. 2003.

Birds of Jamaica. A. Hayes-Sutton, A. Downer, R. Sutton. Christopher Helm. 2009.

Field Guide to the Birds of Australia. G. Pizzey. R. Doyle. Collins. 1980. (Very used and battered.)

The Shell Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe. J. Ferguson-Lees, I. Willis. J.T.R. Sharrock. Michael Joseph. 1994.

Hawaii's Birds. Hawaii Audubon Society. 1997.

Guia de Campo de las Aves de Chile. Braulio Araya Modinger, Guillermo Millie Holman. Editorial Universitaria. 1998.

Field Guide to Australian Birds. Michael Morcombe.

Seabirds of the World. Peter Harrison. Christopher Helm 1987.

Field Guide to the Birds of Australia. Simpson & Day. Viking O'Neil.. 1993.

Birds of Europe with North Africa & the Middle East. L. Jonsson.. Christopher Helm 1992.

Seabirds an identification guide. Peter Harrison. Croom Helm 1983.

Field Guide to the Animals & Plants of Tristan da Cunha. Peter Ryan ed. Pisces Publications. 2007.

Birds & Mammals of the Falkland Islands. R.W. & A. Woods. WildGuides 2006.

The MacMillan Field Guide to Bird Identification. A. Harris, L. Tucker, K. Vinicombe. MacMillan 1990.

Not Quite Fieldguides

Collins British Birds. J. Gooders, T. Lambert. Collins 1987.
 Rare Birds of Britain & Europe. I. Lewington, P. Alstrom, P. Colston.
 Harper Collins. 1991.
 Where to Watch Birds in Mexico. S.N.G. Howell. Christopher Helm.
 1990.

Reference, Photos, etc

Bird Navigation, the solution of a mystery? R.R. Baker. Hodder & Stoughton. 1984.
 The British Bird. E.A.R. Ennion. Oxford University Press. 1949.
 Best Days with British Birds. M. Ogilvie, S. Winter eds. British Birds Ltd. 1989.
 Redbreast. The Robin in Life & Literature. A. Lack. SMH books. 2008.
 More New Zealand Bird Portraits. M.F. Spoer. Whitcombe & Tombs. 1965.
 Ducks of the World. J. Kear. Weldon. 1991.
 Bird Behaviour. R. Burton. Granada. 1985.
 New Zealand Birds in Focus. G. Moon. Weldon. 1988.
 New Zealand Birds. D. Brathwaite, D. Haddon, J. Warham.. Kowhai Publishing. 1983.
 The Birds of Papua New Guinea. B.J. Coates. Dove Publications. 1985.
 Eric Hosking's Waders. E. Hoskings & W.G. Hale. Pelham Books. 1983.
 The Reed Field Guide to New Zealand Birds. Geoff Moon. Reed. 1984.

Arty

Thorburn's Birds. James Fisher. Mermaid Books. 1982.
 Thorburn's Landscape. The Major Natural History Paintings. J. Southern. Guild Publishing. 1981.
 A Sketchbook of Birds. C.F Tunncliffe. Ian Niall. Victor Gollancz. Ltd. 1984.
 Tunncliffe's Birdlife. Noel Cusa. Clive Holloway Books 1985.
 The Silvery Tay. Keith Brockie. J.M. Dent & Sons. 1988.
 A Bird Artist in Scotland. D. Watson. H.F & G. Witherby. 1988.
 The Living Birds of Eric Ennion. J. Busby. Victor Gollancz. 1982.
 Shorelines. Birds at the Water's Edge. Michael Warren. Hodder & Stoughton. 1984.
 Bruno Liljefors. The Peerless Eye. Martha Hill. Allen Publishing Co. Ltd. 1987.
 contact derekonley@yahoo.com**Derek Onley**

OBNZ Literary Supplement.

Cliff Drinkers

Dusk cleared of rain spreads silver
twilight over Tomahawk Beach and sea
like a moody Swedish film.

Are you sure you know anything?
Two piping Black Oystercatchers call
more from a wet mirror underworld,
so four Toreapango challenge passersby.

Volcano roasted stone walls
say you stop here – it is getting too dark
and the sea is coming in.
Caves yawn forever at the world
as they wait to collect the ocean's dead,
lost Korora penguins who didn't go home,
wrecked Titi shearwaters and expired Kawau shags –
once a dead whale.

Night caves holding breath too heavy say
come in and see what the sea gives us,
from the tide rising over
boulder traps and we will let you out.
Turn away from their dark gape and go home.
Black rock cliff streams days of hard rain
as falling curtains and little waterfalls
like moving glass.

Two big moths hand span broad
flutter on the black cliff!
Ah – they are Goldfinches flying and clinging,
drinking from stone.
Over whispers of dripping cliffs and sea filling caves,
they fly atop a last light hebe and call.
Yes – they are bright birds knowing
those minerals make their song liquid too.

A Little Bird Told Me

Doris Plum Dunnock is one of my posher relis. She haunts the corridors of power. Well not the corridors exactly. The Parliamentary Precincts as she likes to call them. Unlike those sparrow commoners she dismisses with a flick of her alula, she hasn't quite mastered the trick of slippin' in the main door when some worthy or menial Homo so called sapiens swipes their card. But don't mention it otherwise she'll deem you for ever unworthy of her attentions. Honestly for one whose main diet is the crumbs from the security guards' fast food lunches, she does act a bit superior. But she is a font of info. Apparently she tells me, it's finally dawned on H. so called sapiens that they'd better be carbon neutral by 2050 at the very least, otherwise it's gonna be hard going for the kiddies. Darling says Doris, surely you mean hard going for the Economy?

A little bird told me, actually it was quite a big bird; a Cattle Egret in fact, knee high to a cattle beast, that he always reckoned those Homos were one sandwich short of a picnic. Colin's his name, though he prefers Col, being from Aussie. One of the last of his breed in Aotearoa. No wonder if you ask me, hangin' out with those scrawny Friesian Blackpoll crosses up in the DoC rent a paddock land some hour or so's flight north of here. Slim pickings I said to him. Get yerself a decent dairy herd on a bit of irrig. Look after yerself Col I says. But being an Aussie bloke he weren't havin' any of that new age carin' male bonding nonsense but what he did say was, they's f**kin' slow as, these Homos. Why d'youse reckon us lot invaded Godzone year after year startin' 30 years age? F**kin' climate change mate, that's what. The wet like you've never seen before. Frogs and fish and tucker all over the place and just when you thinks you've got it made; the dry like you've never seen the likes of. So we ups and heads East. A diaspora I say. You can say that again mate says Col, grabbing a skink and tossing it back in one. Poorer we was by a bloody mile. Dire. Call yerself a Green and Pleasant land. I'll tell you how green my valley was.

I think you mean Clean and Green, I say. Green and Pleasant is the Aristos' bucolic England and the Green Valley was coal mining in South Wales. There you are then mate says Col. You ever tried foraging in a sheep paddock. Green it ain't so I stands by my point. Clean. You can say that again. Cleaned out. Now I knows bein' way out in the deep sea outback, youse can't be expected to have all the tucker we have back in Aussie. I

mean who but idiots like us Bubus would set out across thousands of miles of sea in the hope of hitting a speck of land between here and Tierra del

bloody Fuego. And with all them Mollies gliding away with barely a twitch of the pecs laughing at you as you plod along dyin' of thirst; flap, flap bloody flap. Lost me best mates he says doing a bit of displacement preening. Then there was the Sheilas and chicks. Dropped like flies. First of the Climate refugees we was. If you reckons the Med is tough then you should try the bloody Tasman.

He stabbed at the ground and came up with a dung beetle, then stared at me with those cold pale eyes. I mean I can't help laughing. He's got these funny eyes staring straight down this huge long yellow beak. Bi-focal they are he tells me. All the better for stabbin' youse with. Makes him look cross-eyed if you asks me. Anyway I didn't like the way he was looking at me so I sort of sidled quietly away so's not to cause offence, fading into the background, as a good Dunnock does.

Us blokes, he says, managed a bit of colour in the spring, struttin' our stuff like in front of the Shielas but call us old-fashioned if you like, we weren't gonna get married 'cus there's no way we'd be able to look after the wife and kids on yer poxy NZ rations. Never had any kids over here. None of us.

Good bloody thing if you asks me he says, spying a bony bullock out on the mudflat. What with 2 degrees of warmin' coming at 'em like a bull in a china shop. And youse wouldn't catch me in a irrig dairy paddock. Biggest bloody climate crims of the lot those Fonterror buggers.



Derek Dunnock

Not a lot on offer this month, so for photos I'm afraid we have to go off-piste with Janet Ledingham to Ship Creek north of Haast in early



November.
photo: Peter Ledingham.

Programme 2019

Monthly Indoor Meetings will be held at 7.30pm in the Benham Seminar Room, Benham Building, Department of Zoology, 340 Great King Street.

Wed 27 November Raphael Richter-Gravier on “Birds in Maori and other Polynesian traditions.” Followed by an end-of-year supper; please bring along some festive food to share if you can.

Sat 30 November Destination is the Berwick/Waipori Falls area. Meet at 9am at Otaki St. outside Bunnings to carpool, and then at Berwick, by the War Memorial. Let Richard know if you plan to come. Phone 027 281 8701.

Many thanks to all who contributed. Articles, photos etc for next newsletter to **Sue Odlin**, sodlin@gmail.com by 22 January.