



Birds New Zealand
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Otago Region Newsletter 8 /2020 August 2020

Indoor Meeting for August cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions

Ornithological Snippets

Alan Baker reports a pair of **Spur-winged Plovers** possibly nesting in Fryatt St, having seen a bird sitting in the same place two weekends in a row. Alan has seen a pair with a chick there in a previous year. Alan also reports a **Pied Shag** in the Leith, near the mouth. It wasn't a new bird for the square, but it was new for the season. Tom Waterhouse counted 16 **Pied Shags** at Kakanui on 20th July.

Petrina Duncan recorded at least 32 **Kereru** opposite Dunedin Botanic Gardens on 1 August, while the following day 2 **Caspian Terns** were at Titri (Waihola). On a couple of occasions in the first half of August Suzanne Schofield has noticed skeins of **Canada Geese** around Balclutha, with between 40 & 50 birds each time.

Please send any interesting reports to cluthaphotos@gmail.com

Richard Schofield

eBird News

The eBird app now has the functionality to display the New Zealand Bird Atlas grid when you are entering a checklist. However, it is also possible to view the New Zealand Bird Atlas grid on an interactive map on your phone, using the [Maps.Me](#) mapping app, even without cellular service! With this in mind, Maps.Me provides a valuable service to you as an Atlas participant. The app not only helps you locate yourself within a grid square and see where you are in relation to adjacent grid square boundaries, even whilst out of cellular service, using your device's GPS. It also helps with Atlas trip planning as it contains heaps of walking tracks and elevation information for tramps. This means you don't have to start a checklist just to see where you are in relation to the grid or indeed plan your Atlasing!

For those wanting to check on what Atlas coverage there has been for a particular area (and that should be all of us!), there is a great new tool that is now available. KML* files can be downloaded from the Atlas portal (About > Handbook & Supporting Material > Mapping Files), either to Google Earth or to the Maps.Me app. You have the choice of year-round coverage, or for each individual season. Once installed, the map shows the location of all checklists submitted for the relevant season, and clicking on a marker shows the number of checklists at that location. This enables you to see which habitats have been visited. Just bear in mind that the files are up-to-date till the end of year one, so any visits since 1st June 2020 will not show. (*Keyhole Markup Language, in case you were wondering.)

In the latest issue of eBird news (which all eBirders should receive) there is an interesting article on [flagged records](#), and in particular how you should respond if any of your records are flagged at the submission stage.

Richard Schofield cluthaphotos@gmail.com

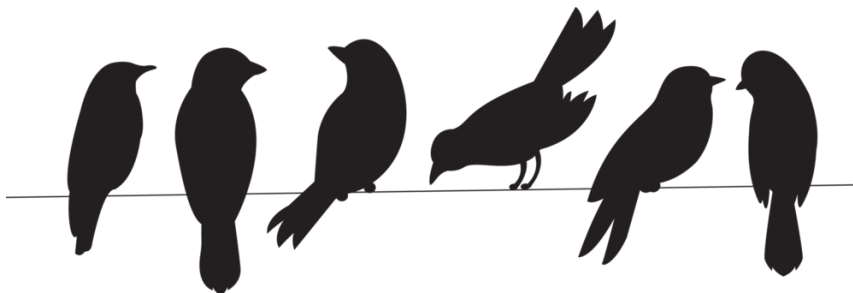
Atlas Field Trip Sunday 6 September

We will travel to the Lawrence/Beaumont area. Meet at Bunnings in Otaki Street for car-pooling at 9 am, or if you would like to travel there directly then please meet in Lawrence at 10.15am, just over the bridge in Gabriels Gully Road. Don't forget warm clothes, binoculars, good walking shoes and your own lunch and refreshments. We are suggesting each passenger contribute \$5 towards petrol costs to the driver.



Please contact me (cluthaphotos@gmail.com 027 281 8701) if you are interested in coming along.

Richard Schofield



Otago Branch News

The Indoor Meeting for August is cancelled, but field trips will still go ahead.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we have to cancel our monthly meeting for August but hopefully we will hear from Georgina about the Moponui robins at a later date. The following are some really important notices because we will not be meeting in August and we need responses from members for guiding at Botanic Garden birdwatching walk and the weekend field trip.

Guides needed for Birdwatching Walks at Dunedin Botanic Garden. Sunday 13 September, starting at 10 am

We are again holding guided bird-watching walks in the Dunedin Botanic Garden. Members of Birds NZ will guide small groups around the Botanic Garden, helping to spot and identify introduced and native birds. We will spend about an hour slowly walking around several parts of the gardens looking and listening for birds. Other years we have had about 50 members of the public turn up so we will need as many guides as possible (at least 10). You don't need to be an expert ornithologist, just an enthusiast. We also need a couple of people to stay at the Information Centre to look after things there. It is a fun morning and a valuable opportunity to advertise Birds NZ and get other folk enthused with birds.

So please all those keen to help, let Suzanne know: smiddleton7@yahoo.co.nz or ph 022 601 8579. Guides will meet at the Visitor Information Centre at 9.30 am for a Health and Safety briefing, and the public should arrive by 10 am.

The walks will be cancelled if the weather is bad.



Trying to spot a grey warbler on last year's walk

Weekend Atlas Trip to Wanaka, Labour Weekend, Friday 23 October to Monday 26 October.

This is a great chance to get out of town for a few days and spend it birding with friends in the Atlas grid squares around the Wanaka area. There should be great crested grebes nesting in the marina. At Covid Level 1 or 2 this trip is doable, but if things change for the worse we will have to cancel.

Accommodation has been booked at X Wanaka township <https://www.stayatbase.com/hostels/base-backpackers-wanaka> Five rooms with ensuite bathroom facilities have been booked. Three rooms have two beds, two rooms have three beds. All rooms are heated and come with tea and coffee facilities as well as linen, towels, shampoo & conditioner and a TV. There are shared kitchen, dining and lounge areas.

Birds NZ Otago has agreed to provide a subsidy from our reserves for each Birds NZ member towards the cost of the trip. At this stage we assume folk will organise for their own meals and travel.

Some folk may like to bird on the way to Wanaka on the Friday. We will have full days birding on Saturday and Sunday and allocate squares for the trips home on Monday. Hopefully some of our Central Otago members will be able to join in these field trips too.

At this stage we need to know if you are interested in coming on this trip, who you want to share a room with, and anything else pertinent. Places will be allocated on first-in first come basis. Please register your interest as soon as possible, with Sue Odlin sodlin@gmail.com

If you want to arrange other accommodation, let me know so we can include you in our planning.

Focus on Plants and Birds – Visit to Chatham Islands

Lloyd Esler is leading a party of 12 participants to Chatham Islands, 27 October to 2 November 2020. There are a few spaces left.

Please contact Lloyd if you are interested to get full details. esler@southnet.oc.nz

Mary Thompson

Notes from AGM held on Wed 22 July

Mary was nominated to continue as RR for 2021.

Advisory group: Bruce, Nick, Georgina, Graeme, Richard, Sue O. Oscar Thomas appointed to represent the younger members.

Finances: Sue O. presented the accounts. We have some funds in reserve that we may use to subsidise costs of Atlassing trips. Proposed that \$50 be used for refreshments at meetings rather than asking for a gold coin donation each time. Thanks to Francie for organising refreshments for us.

Newsletter: Thanks to Sue O. for compiling, Hamish for emailing, Susan for mailing printed copies. Those who wish to receive printed copies by mail are asked to pay \$25 towards costs; contact Sue O. for bank account number for direct credit.

Projects:

Robins outside Orokonui: led by Georgina. Monitoring and banding will continue during August to December.

Wader Counts: coordinated by Maree

Town Belt 5MBC: October and November; coordinated by Bruce

Botanic Garden Birdwatching Walks: coordinated by Suzanne

Wild Dunedin – Tomahawk bird watch: coordinated by Andrew (cancelled due to covid this year)


Atlassing: coordinated by Richard.

Planning a weekend field trip at Labour Weekend, based at Wanaka.

Day field trips: suggest passengers contribute \$5 to driver towards petrol costs.

Atlas publicity posters available for distribution at various community venues. If you know a spot for one ask Mary for a poster.

Any ideas and suggestions for programme and activities would be greatly appreciated, particularly for involvement of student members.

		OTAGO BRANCH FINANCE	
Accounting Period	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020		
Opening Balance		\$4,074.04	
Closing Balance		\$5,202.26	
INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Particulars	Amount	Particulars	Amount
Interest	\$3.16	Bank fee for Overseas chq	\$5.00
Donations	\$161.11	Refreshments	\$50.00
Donations from books	\$10.00	G Pickerell - Banding items	\$419.17
Transfer from Bonus Saver	\$1,300.36	S Schweigman - Newsletter (postage/pcopy)	\$222.24
OSNZ Capitation	\$350.00		
TOTAL	\$1,824.63	TOTAL	\$696.41
FUNDS COMMITTED			
Robin Project	\$2,427.93		
Student Travel	\$150.00		
Admin	\$103.39		
TOTAL	\$2,681.32	BALANCE AVAILABLE	\$2,520.94

Robins outside Orokonui



Six of us had a very successful morning looking for robins at our Mopanui study site to the east of Orokonui Ecosanctuary last Saturday (15 August). Most of the tracks were searched, and a minimum of 15 territories (5 pairs and 10 other males that may or may not be in a pair) were identified. We also located four out of the five robins banded last season, including last year's banded juvenile that has paired up with another bird about 300 m from his natal territory.

Thank you to everyone who was able to come out and help. In order to be able to monitor the breeding success of as many robin pairs as possible, we always welcome people who would like to come out and help. The next monitoring trip is planned for Saturday 29 August. Please email George if you are interested in finding out more and / or would like to be added to our emailing list: gpickerell@outlook.com

George Pickerell

Breakfast with the Birds returns

Experience the intensity of the New Zealand bush at night then wake to hear native birds in a rousing dawn chorus!

This Spring sees the fifth 'Breakfast With The Birds' event Aongatete Forest Project have hosted. The event's creator and

organiser, Barbara McGillivray, has been thrilled with the response each year.

"Hearing the forest at dawn is something many people have never done," she commented. "With the restoration work that the Project has been doing for 14 years, things really are coming alive at Aongatete, and we get such wonderful feedback."

Based at the Aongatete Outdoor Education Centre, the event kicks off with a delicious two course evening meal, talks by renown ecological and conservation experts and a guided walk in the dark forest to see all manner of normally elusive nocturnal insects. Relive your youth with an overnight stay in the lodge's classic dormitories before venturing out before sunrise for the dawn chorus. With skilled bird identifiers on hand, you'll have the chance to hear to over 20 species welcome in the day.



A restorative hot breakfast will be served before more intriguing flora and fauna insights will be shared. The event wraps up with a late morning tea at the Project's kohanga.

Held on Friday 18 & Saturday 19 September 2020, the event costs \$60 per person (includes meals and accommodation) and is suitable for adults only. Numbers are very limited, so visit <https://aongateteforest.org/event/breakfastwiththebirds2020/> to book your Breakfast With The Birds ticket today.

Upcoming Live Birding Sessions Online from Around the World

Swarovski Optik Birding has teamed up with andBeyond Travel to have live birding sessions on Facebook in the coming days and weeks covering all 5 continents. Within each continent, birders will share views of birds live through their scopes at various locations.

The dates for the 5 continents are as below:

1. Africa (22 August, Saturday, NZ time 2am)
- looking out for Quailfinch, Goliath Herons, Lesser Flamingos, various Hornbills, Wattled Cranes and Fish Eagles
<https://facebook.com/events/s/birding-live-on-location-afric/1182708805437507/>
2. Europe (23 August, Sunday, NZ time 7.30pm)
- visiting the knot spectacle at RSPB Snettisham, Griffons in Extremadura, White-headed Ducks in Valencia, Dotterol in Austria and seabird cliffs in Shetland
<https://facebook.com/events/s/birding-live-on-location-europ/3480494221970242/>
3. North America (27 August, Thursday, NZ time 2am)
- birders live in the field from Arizona, Georgia, Minnesota, Ohio and Texas
<https://facebook.com/events/s/birding-live-on-location-north/698437347407396/>
4. Asia (1 September, Tuesday, NZ time 7.30pm)
- 8 birders coming live from China, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Taiwan
<https://facebook.com/events/s/birding-live-on-location-asia/946629722505119/>
5. Latin America (4 September, Friday, NZ time 2am)
- live birding broadcasts from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama
<https://facebook.com/events/s/birding-live-on-location-latin/800349574046189/>

I hope everyone is keeping well. I am back in self-isolation again with the resurgence of COVID-19 in NZ, and these online birding sessions will help to keep me sane. I am especially looking forward to the one for Latin America as we just had our recent Birds NZ Talk last month on the birds of Panama by Hamish. Take care everyone, and please feel free to share my email with anyone whom you think may be interested as I don't have everyone's emails. Hopefully Swarovski Optik Birding will record these birding sessions, so that those who have missed them can still view the videos at the Facebook page when the live sessions are over.

Ivan Lin ivan.lin.xiaohui@gmail.com

Birding bycatch on Warrington Beach

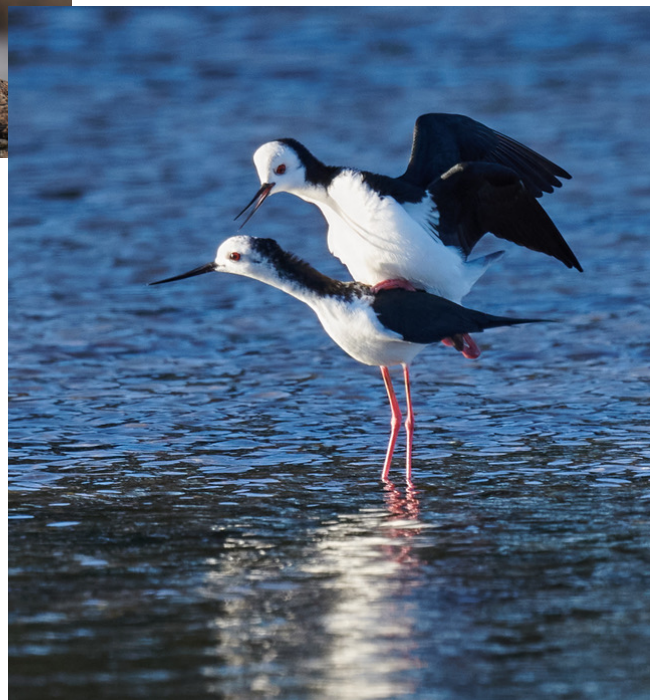


Nick Beckwith

Spring must be close



Nick Beckwith



Programme 2020

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

At the meeting shared cups will be available to use but you are welcome and perhaps encouraged to bring your own mug for tea or coffee.

Wed 26 August CANCELLED

Sat 29 August Robin monitoring Contact gpickerell@outlook.com

Sun 6 September Atlas Field Trip Lawrence/Beaumont area

Meet at Bunnings in Otaki St for car sharing at 9, then Lawrence at 1015, just over the bridge in Gabriels Gully Road. Contact me (027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com) to register interest, so that any changes can be advised.

Sun13 September Birdwatching Walks at Botanic Garden, 10 to 11am

We will be guiding groups of 10 or so, helping members of the public to spot and identify birds. Contact: Suzanne Middleton smiddleton7@yahoo.co.nz ph 022 601 8579 if you can help

Wed 23 September Bruce McKinlay

Findings from the Town Belt bird survey

Fri 18 - Sun 27 September The Great Kereru Count

<https://www.greatkererucount.nz/>

Wed 28 October Susan Walker from Landcare

Insights for native bird conservation from the Bird Atlas projects

Sunday 29 November Summer Wader Count. High tide at 16.09 of 1.9m.

We need counters for harbours and estuaries around Dunedin area and Catlins. New counters most welcome. Please contact Maree Johnstone to be allocated to a team and survey area.

mareej@kinect.co.nz

Offers and suggestions for talks or topics for Indoor Meetings would really be appreciated, please contact Mary birds.otago@birds.nz.org.nz

Please send all contributions for the September newsletter to: Sue Odlin
sodlin@gmail.com

Many thanks to all who contributed.

Final date for copy for next newsletter: **16 September**