



*Newsletter of the Northland Region of the  
Ornithological Society of New Zealand - trading as Birds New Zealand*

## **October 2020 Amokura 129**

(Published in February, July and October of each year)

**MEETINGS** of the Northland Branch of Birds New Zealand are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER. TIME: 7-30p.m.

**VENUE:** Founders Room, Alzheimer's Society, 148 Corks Road, Tikipunga, Whangarei.

**COST:** A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of Hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

Or you can pay an Annual fee of \$30.00 to the Northland Branch bank account **12-3099-0614160-00**. Payment Due after the AGM

**Be sure to include your Surname and the word Sub in the details.**

**ALL WELCOME**

### **PROGRAMME TO FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **NOVEMBER**

- 12** MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760  
**17** EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **DECEMBER**

- 10** MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760  
**15** EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **JANUARY**

- 14** No Meeting.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760  
**19** EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 11** MEETING – 7-30p.m.  
WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760  
**16** EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

|                                |                        |                 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE</b> | <b>Anne McCracken</b>  | <b>438-1145</b> |
| <b>SECRETARY</b>               | <b>Heather O'Brian</b> | <b>437-0085</b> |
| <b>TREASURER</b>               | <b>Bev Chitty</b>      |                 |
| <b>REGIONAL RECORDER</b>       | <b>Tony Beauchamp</b>  | <b>436-2224</b> |
| <b>REGIONAL REPORTER</b>       | <b>Vacant</b>          |                 |
| <b>AMOKURA EDITOR</b>          | <b>Hilton Ward</b>     | <b>946-0074</b> |

Previous Issues of Amokura <https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/publications/regional-newsletters/>

**Health and Safety** – It is a request from the Birds New Zealand Council that:

- Any incidents that result in harm need to be notified to President and EO immediately, so they can be acted on.
- Don't hesitate to call 111 in incidents, even if they appear minor.
- Safety briefings need to be held on all field trips.

**JULY:** Well worth being at our meetings. There was an interesting talk by Ayla about the fairy Terns, their nesting habits, numbers and external pressures and the work D.D.C Rangers do toward the Terns protection. They certainly go beyond the normal call of duty,

**AUGUST**

**SEPTEMBER**

## **Stories - Adventures – Yarns – Sightings**

### **Taurawhata Grey Faced Petrels**

Trail camera monitoring on two burrows shows that the eggs hatched on August 22 at one burrow and between August 30<sup>th</sup> and September 4<sup>th</sup> for the other. Just over 90 days to fledging.

### **Australasian Gannet – Startup Colony**

Changed the recording to one taken at the Poor Knights. Correct dialect.... No visitors since lockdown! Could the young birds still be in Australia and not able to leave. I don't think they know about Covid.

**Anne McCracken's Walkabout:** 16<sup>th</sup> August: stepping out for a walk on a (rare) clear sunny morning I heard my first blackbird song for the season; just a short phrase, and thinking, *that's* not a thrush I spotted him on my neighbour's roof. And as if surprised to be caught out, he flew off.

Being such a lovely early morning, many other species seemed to be enjoying the sunshine: I heard or saw green finches, chaffinches, goldfinches, sparrows, starlings, mynas, tui, rosellas, skylarks, grey warblers, fantails, and magpies noisily mobbing a harrier and then spur-winged plovers doing the same to the magpies, as well as the ever-present spotted doves cluttering the soundscape.

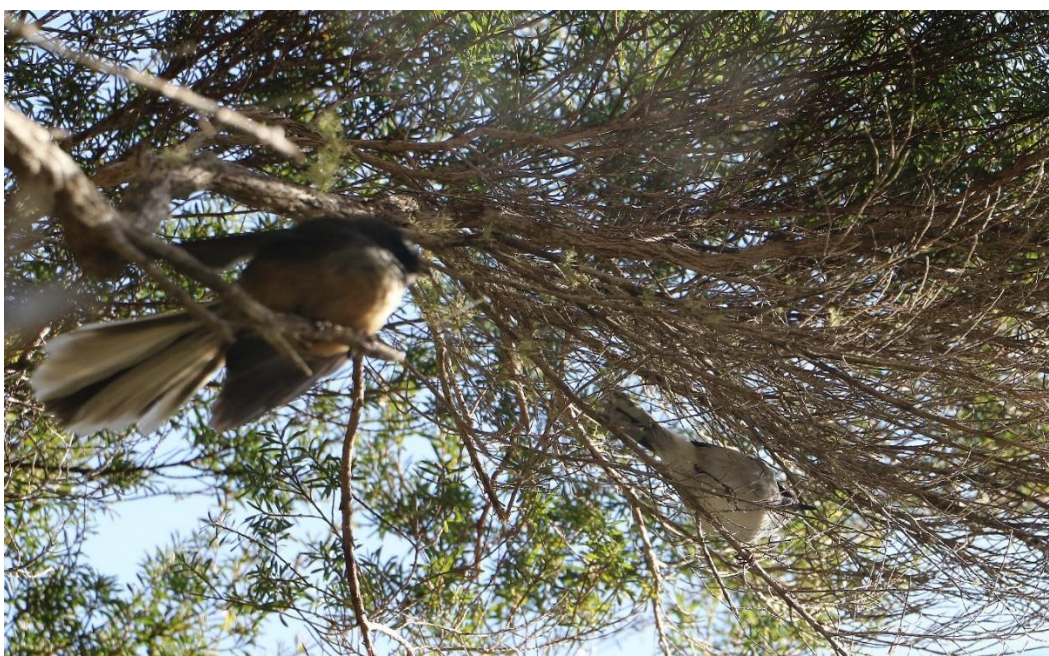
And now that we are back in Covid alert levels it was an uplifting moment to see my second kukupa aerial display for the season.

**Old Mill Ln:** This morning, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, while working with our bees at 5:30am I did an Ebird log and recorded Pukeko, Ruru and Bittern. The Bittern boomed three times but he wasn't very good at it. Weak booms. But, lovely to hear again in our wetland. Later, about 8am Dunnock was singing and singing from a poplar top. Lovely start to the day.

27<sup>th</sup> August a neighbour spotted Ruru having a Starling for breakfast on the ground. A couple of days later he watched Ruru swoop into a tree and came out with a screeching Myna that it also ate on the ground. He has also been observing a slow learning Eurasian Blackbird pull worms. The very second that it has the worm, but before it is eaten, Ruru swoops down and snatches the worm off the Blackbird.



Also from our deck it was fun to see the antics of Piwakawaka and Riroriro hanging out together.







Silvereye feeding on Coprosma flowers



**Stephen Collins** heard that Old Mill Ln was a place to see Matata. He drove over and was not disappointed. He managed his first sighting ever of one and snapped a couple of photos. He was so pleased with the site that he came back the next day and bagged these plus many more.



Stephen Collins - Photographer



Stephen Collins - Photographer

Stephen visited again with a new Nikon Camera with a 600mm lens and nailed some more fantastic Mātātā photos.









On Monday September 14<sup>th</sup> Spotless Crake started calling in the wetland while I was on the boardwalk. I recorded its call and played it back to it. It responded and came right to me and under the boardwalk. I was head down, bum up in the rushes and still did not see the little fellow! Talk about cryptic. I did get a better close up recording though.

## **eBird News** (An article by Richard Schofield copied from the August Otago newsletter.)

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](mailto:cluthaphotos@gmail.com)

## **Sightings Sheet**

| date      | Bird                                       | Place                        | Number  | Name         |
|-----------|--|------------------------------|---------|--------------|
| 9-Jul-20  | Kaka                                       | 71 Tatton Rd<br>Maungatapere |         | Tery Toohill |
| 13-Aug-20 | Dunnocks. every day<br>during July, August | 12 Old Mill Lane             | 2       | Melva Ward   |
| 28-Sep-20 | Dunnocks singing<br>territorial call       | 1 Old Mill Lane              | 1       | Hilton Ward  |
| 26-Sep-20 | Grey Warbler                               | 12 Old Mill Lane             | 3 pairs | Hilton Ward  |
| 23-Sep-20 | Mātātā (Fernbirds)                         | 12 Old Mill Lane wetland     | 5       | Hilton Ward  |
| 25-Sep-20 | Shining Cuckoo (Courting<br>calls)         | 12 Old Mill Lane             | 2       | Hilton Ward  |