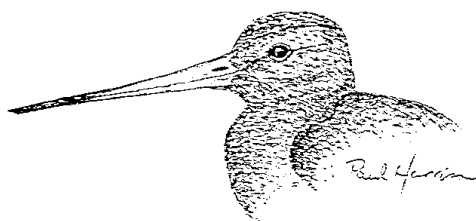


KUAKA

Newsletter of
South Auckland Branch
Birds New Zealand
Te Kahui Matai Manu o Aotearoa

Mahuru 2021

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Tena koutou *Kuaka* readers. If you missed our Zoom hui this week this newsletter provides an overview of an entertaining and informative evening.

This newsletter was produced during Te-wiki-o-Te-Reo-Māori. Apologies for any mis-spellings or incorrect use of the Te Reo.

MONTHLY HUI: Here is a synopsis of what you missed by not joining us on-line last Turei (Tue).

- ✚ Our Facebook page now has 291 followers - are you one of them?
- ✚ The kuaka are on their way back. Check out Adrian's posts on the Pukorokoro Facebook page or website.

✚ **Ruru Project.** Wendy G reported that we have received 72 completed ruru report cards; only 15 of these were from members. The majority were from members of Predator Free Franklin (PFF). 143 ruru sightings from 72 locations were reported; no barn owls so far. Most people reported tahi (one) or rua (two) ruru, but there were exceptions. Areas where long-term predator control has been carried out such as at Whiriwhiri where Andy Saunders (from PFF) reported iwa (nine) ruru.

The main goal of the project was to enhance the number of night counts on eBird within our rohe. We achieved this with not only ruru but also plover, pukeko, kuihi (geese), toreapango (VOC), poaka (stilts), mallard, peihana (pheasant), quail, tauhou (silvereye), pikake (peafowl), one kaka (Twilight Rd), and a tete (grey teal).

Sue and Wendy are entering the reports onto eBird.

The plan is repeat the exercise in Aperira (April) when the young birds will have left home.

SIGHTINGS reported included:

- ✚ Tony W is fairly certain he saw a karearea (falcon) in the neighbour's tree
- ✚ Bruce P reported that the torea (SIPO) that had been visiting his paddocks regularly over the past few weeks have now gone – presumably to Te Wai Pounamu.
- ✚ Bruce also reported that the white-faced heron that set up a nest in the top of the large leafless tree has survived all the rough weather of recent weeks and appears to be brooding eggs.
- ✚ a large flock of chaffinches have taken up residence in Bruce's garden. He believes it is the best year for some time for mallards with large broods seen moving from nesting place to pond. Wendy G saw a hen mallard leading 15 chicks across the paddock towards the horse feeding troughs (for left-overs).
- ✚ Wendy and Nigel (they are in level 2+ so can move around!!) reported several pipiwharau (shining cuckoo) sightings on Te Tara-O-Te Ika a Maui, (the jagged barb of Maui's fish, but also known as Te Paeroa-a-Toi (Toi's long mountain range) – known to most of us as Coromandel Peninsula).
- ✚ Wendy H reported toru (three) kiwi heard on a farm that does not undertake predator control. The kiwi will be a spill-over from a nearby reserve.
- ✚ Ian reported not only large numbers of rapeti (bunnies) from Burt Rd but also possible breeding poaka and a pair of tuturiwhatu (NZ dotterel).
- ✚ David has had a large flock of greenfinches in his garden for a few days.
- ✚ Bruce P, who lives on a farm, mentioned that house sparrows are becoming less common. Wendy G who lives rurally agreed. Others who live in urban areas disagreed.

KAIKORERO MATUA (guest speaker): Daria Erastova from Ak Uni spoke to us on the topic of backyard sugar water feeding of birds.

Daria is studying the influence of garden sugar feeders on tui behaviour and health, and whether feeders alter the contribution tui make to pollinating indigenous plants. Her work investigated whether sugar feeders transmit potential avian pathogens and if such a year-round practice can lead to changes in tui social structure.

Sugar water feeders were located in the gardens of 15 volunteers in north and west Auckland. Details recorded included: how long the manu took to find the feeders; which months they used them; which concentration of sugar was preferred, 10 or 20%; preferred type of feeder; other species using the feeders; transmission of disease.



Tui, bellbird, house sparrows and tauhou (silvereyes) were the main users of the sugar feeders; kiore (rats) and paihamu (possums) would also use a more open type of feeder. To exclude sparrows and tauhou Daria used commercial tui feeders which can only be accessed by birds with longer beaks. The mammals could still access the sugar water by using their tongues, so this needs to be taken into account when placing the feeder. In addition, the feeder needs to be placed so that ngeru (cats) cannot catch manu using it.

Sugar-water should be put in the same category as junk food and whilst it may help the birds through lean periods, it should not be made available when other food sources, such as flowering trees, are available. Habitat restoration projects would benefit from including some exotic plants to help ensure nectar is available throughout the year.

Plain water should be provided from mid-koanga (spring) to the end of raumati (summer). This would ensure that the pollination services provided by the manu are not affected.

Daria found no evidence of her feeders transmitting pathogens but she did ensure good hygiene standards were applied by the volunteers.



TATAHI PATROL (beach patrol): The Akuhata (Aug) and Hepetema (Sept) tatahi (beach) patrols were victims of Covid. A contact out Karioitahi way has advised that recently there were two kuaka (diving petrels) and a korure (mottled petrel) found on the tatahi.

The next tatahi patrol is scheduled for Oketopa (Oct) 22

**Come join the tatahi team for a pleasant walk up the tatahi, even just on a one-off basis
If you are interested, please contact us.
We go out rain-or-shine.**

FOR YOUR DIARY



The Great Kerekeu Count is NZ's only large-scale citizen science project dedicated to the kereru.

**Come together for 10 full days of fun from 17th to 26th Hepetema (Sept) 2021
make this the biggest kereru count yet!**



A further reminder that Matuku Link are developing a database of boom onset with the goal of establishing whether there is a regional difference in onset of booming but over time may also increase awareness of matuku presence generally and add to knowledge of their site preferences.

When and where did you hear the first matuku of the 2021 season?

Email your first boom to matukulink@gmail.com

OSNZ NEST RECORD SCHEME You will find the full details on how to take part in this citizen-science project on the BirdsNZ website.

If possible, searches for nests should be made from the earliest time that birds are thought likely to be nesting right through the season until all species have stopped breeding. Contributions from rural, forest and island habitats are very useful because most records are from around people's homes.

Although cards are needed for all nests regardless of the number of visits, the most valuable information is from nests visited more than once. Even two observations on a nest have more than twice the value of a single one, even if the nest is totally destroyed the day after it was first found. It is not necessary to visit nests daily, especially if no change in contents is expected.

A few well-planned visits can provide maximum information. For instance, for most birds, two afternoon visits during laying enables one to get the date of the first egg and the laying sequence (not necessarily every day); a visit during incubation gives the clutch size, after which a couple of visits around hatching time will give the approximate incubation period and hatching success. A few visits during the nestling stage will give details of growth, nesting success and fledging periods. If you can, try to follow the successive nesting attempts of each pair as far as possible throughout the whole breeding season.

Each observer must exercise a sense of responsibility, always putting the welfare of the bird first if a visit might endanger the nest. Basically, there are three potential risks: a) accidentally damaging the nest; b) **causing desertion or premature fledging of young**; c) revealing the nest to predators. So, take care.

There are some helpful guidelines in a PDF entitled OSNZ Nest Record Scheme, available on line with a search for "osnz nest record card". The Nest Record Cards are also available online, along with guidelines on completing them.

There are also guidelines for completing cards for bird colonies

You can download the Nesting Scheme cards from the BIRDSNZ website or refer back to last month's newsletter.

eBird News

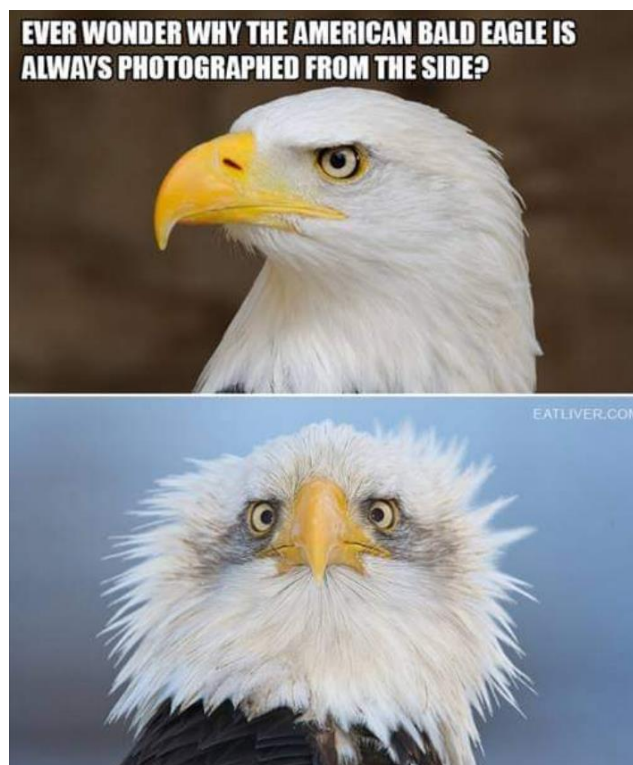
A monthly newsletter from Team eBird at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The Cornell Lab
**OCTOBER
BIG DAY** ✓
9 OCT 2021
ebird.org/octoberbigday

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* © Suzie McCann - Macauley Library

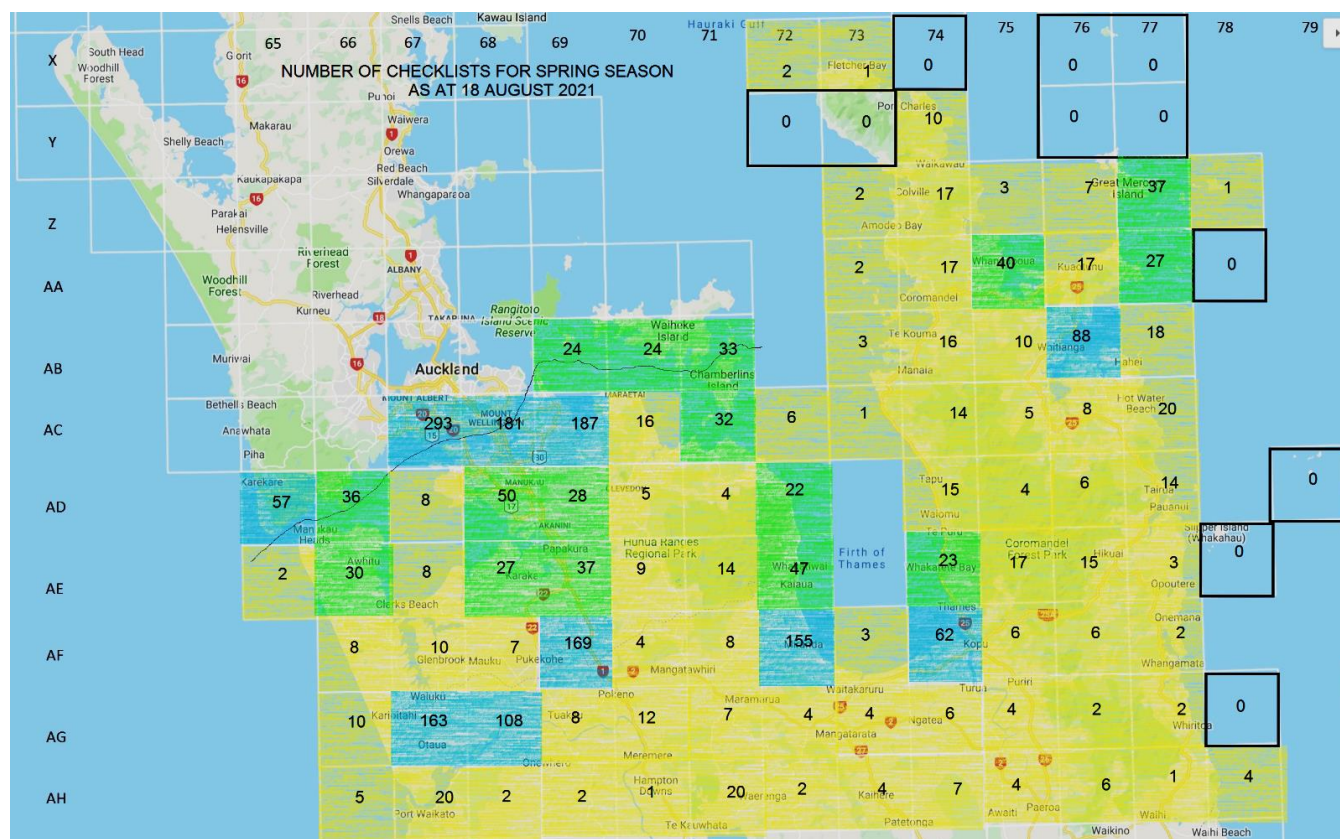
October Big Day—9 October 2021

October Big Day is only a month away. Wherever you are on 9 October, take a few minutes to join the world of birding by submitting eBird checklists. What new birding heights can we reach together? Every list counts!



ATLAS REPORT

The attached mapi shows the situation for koanga (spring). It was produced before the season started, so there may have been a few changes since then, as some of you have been out atlasing close to home during lockdown. Koanga covers the months of Hepetema (Sept), Oketopa (Oct) and Noema (Nov).



Please note:

- the figures include koanga 2019 and 2020 checklists
- The kowhai (yellow) squares have had between 1 and 20 checklists submitted. The kakariki (green) squares 21 to 50, and the kikorangi (blue) squares 51 or more
- Blank squares are confined to the islands, and square Y72 and Y73 near the top of Coromandel. I see that Wendy and Nigel have recently been able to get to the small headland in square AG78.

There are a lot of kowhai squares that need attention this season. If you need some suggested locations or a topo map of a particular square, let me know.

I haven't produced a final mapi for tekurua (winter), but the lockdown meant that there were about 30 squares that still had only 1-20 checklists, plus a few squares that had none, so hopefully we can catch up with those next year.

I have attached some data showing which species were counted in the greatest number of squares during the last three tekurua (winter) seasons. There are figures for our own South Auckland rohe, as well as Aotearoa as a whole. Nice to see native species taking the top rua (two) spots in our rohe. The other chart shows which squares in our rohe had the highest number of different species counted during tekurua.

Which species do you think has been reported from the most squares in tekurua, throughout Aotearoa? the manu pango! (blackbird). [Probably because it's not only in backyards but also in the wao (bush)].

NZ top species for tekurua (winter) seasons 2019-2021

Species	No of grid squares	Rank
Manu pango <i>Turdus merula</i>	1804	1
Piwakawaka <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	1791	2
Pahirini <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	1724	3
Kahu <i>Circus approximans</i>	1663	4
Riroriro <i>Gerygone igata</i>	1638	5
Australian Magpie <i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	1636	6
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	1576	7
European Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1563	8
Silvereye <i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	1557	9
Paradise Shelduck <i>Tadorna variegata</i>	1535	10
Spur-winged Plover <i>Vanellus miles</i>	1504	11
Welcome Swallow <i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	1394	12
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	1381	13
European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	1358	14
South Black Backed Gull <i>Larus dominicanus</i>	1281	15



not on SthAKL list

not on SthAKL list

So, what species occurred in the most squares in our rohe in tekurua? We have 100 squares. Yes, the manu pango was there but only ranked 4th, recorded in only 87 squares. The species reported from the most squares is the tauhou (silvereys)!! Occurring in 89 squares it just out ranked the piwakawaka, reported from 88 squares.

South Auckland region top species for tekurua (winter) seasons 2019-2021

Species	100 squares	Sth Ak Rank	NZ rank
	Total		
Tauhou <i>Zosterops lateralis</i>	18	1	9
Piwakawaka <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	13	2	2
Kahu <i>Circus approximans</i>	19	3	4
Manu pango <i>Turdus merula</i>	9	4	1
Riorio <i>Gerygone igata</i>	10	5	5
Welcome Swallow <i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	18	6	12
Australian Magpie <i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	20	7	6
Spur-winged Plover <i>Vanellus miles</i>	16	8	11
Common Myna <i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	28	9	not on NZ List
Sacred Kingfisher <i>Todiramphus sanctus</i>	28	10	not on NZ List
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	83	11	7
European Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	83	12	8
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	82	13	3
European Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	82	14	14
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	80	15	13



Joy Glasson ▸ Birds Auckland 12 September at 17:10

At the Zoom meeting Nigel mentioned the widespread distribution of the spotted dove in our rohe. I checked the atlas and can report that for tekurua (winter), they were counted in 66 squares, and for the year as whole they were reported in 81 squares.

For those of you who do not load your checklists into Ebird, if you do advise a sighting of an interesting or unusual manu (bird), or do a count of all the manu you can identify at a particular location, please provide the following details: Exact location of sighting, Date, Time, Species, Number of birds seen. If you need some suggested locations or a topo' map of a particular square, let me know.

Hopefully we can all travel further to do our birding in the near future

Happy birding! Sue

PROGRAMME FOR THE REST OF 2021

Monthly Meetings: held on the second Turei (Tues) of each marama (month), at the Papakura Croquet Club, 1 Chapel Street Papakura. Meetings start at 7:30. Visitor's welcome. \$3.00 donation to cover costs.

Oketopa (Oct) 12	Mick Clout	Kereru – a keystone species
Noema (Nov) 9	Tony Crocker	Manu of the South Pacific

KIRIHIMETE BARBEQUE: Tihema (Dec) **4** Kindly hosted this year by Terry and Pam Hatch, Pukekohe East, phone 09 2389129. Arrive from 11:00 am for lunch. BYO meat, drink and something to share.

RAUMATI (summer) **WADER CENSUS:** Contact Tony Harbraken 09 2385284

Manukau Harbour, **Noema** (Nov) **21**

Firth of Thames, **Noema** **7**



FIELD TRIPS

Heptema (Sept) **25:** Kidd's Shellbanks. Will depend on Covid level operating at the time. Phone David 09 2388407, to register your interest.



Te Wiki o te Reo Maori is a special week, putting an emphasis on learning and celebrating the wonderful Maori language. We use various names of native manu in our everyday lives: ruru, tui, kaka, kereru to name but a few but how do we describe the features of these birds in Te Reo?

Here is a challenge for you courtesy of the Rotoroa Island Trust

Can you name these parts of our manu in Te Reo?

What are the names for beak, wings, claws, feathers and tail?

Give it a go



Handsome whio (blue duck) seen near Karamea earlier this year. Photo by Michael.

FROM OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

If you don't follow our page here are some of the posts that may be of interest.

If you have some good photos, information, or links that you believe would be suitable for our site send Wendy G or David an email with the photo or link.



BirdLife International 7 September at 00:25 · 🌐

3 Last but not least, the White-headed Vulture (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*) Critically Endangered - this species has an impressive mix of colours, don't you think?

📷 Daniel Briggshaw

BirdLife International Africa #KnowYourVultures



Chatham Islands, New Zealand 7 September at 07:28 · 🌐

More of our magnificent birdlife. Pitt Island Shags.

Oscar Thomas Photography



Birds New Zealand 1 September at 17:26 · 🌐

Please use re-usable fabric face masks and wash them rather than 'disposable' ones if you can.

If you only have 'disposable', please cut the string before you bin them.



Birds New Zealand 2 September at 07:36 · 🌐

Spare a thought for Subantarctic albatross chicks in winter snow!

📷 James Crymble



Iain Urquhart 3 September at 13:59 · 🌐

Took a stroll down the Whale Bay track today to photograph Tui as the Kowhai is in full bloom right now. Out pops this little Mallard chick and runs right up to me.

30 seconds later, a Morepork/Ruru swoops down and grabs it... Takes it up to a nearby branch and starts munching on it!

Poor little guy 😞



Wendy Goad 2 September at 19:15 · 🌐

This photo is appropriate given our ruru project underway at the moment. Noel was down at the Château before lockdown and had gone for a walk through the bush.

"Saw a bird fly out of the foliage beside the track but couldn't identify it but further along the track, came across this very obliging ruru posing for me."



Wendy Goad 2 September at 20:48 · 🌐

Little cutie seen, before lockdown, near Okarito on the West Coast. Photo from Michael. Its a male tomtit.



LIVESCIENCE.COM

Gruesome, flesh-eating centipedes hunt and kill thousands of baby birds a year on this remote island



LIVESCIENCE.COM

Tortoise hunts baby bird in slow-motion, crushes its skull in shocking video



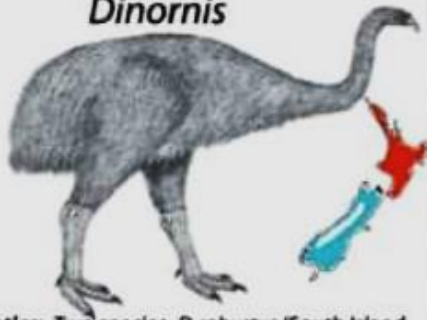
BIRDNOTE.ORG

Vulturine Guinea fowl | BirdNote

An odd-looking bird that lives in cliques.

Family: Dinornithidae

Dinornis



Systematics: Two species *D. robustus* (South Island, blue) and *D. novaeseelandiae* (North Island, red)
Dimensions: 56-249 kg and 90 to 200 cm - significant reversed sexual dimorphism females are up to three times the mass of males.
Habitat: Browsing generalist - has been found in upland, lowland and open forest habitats. The larger forms occupied the low rainfall areas.

Family: Megalapterygidae

Megalapteryx



Systematics: Monotypic South Island species, *M. didinus*.
Dimensions: 28-80 kg and 65 to 95 cm. Pleistocene specimens are significantly larger than Holocene forms.
Habitat: Subalpine scrub, grassland and high country forests (usually >900m).

Family: Emeidae

Anomalopteryx



Systematics: Monotypic species, *A. didiformis*.
Dimensions: 26-64 kg and 50 to 90 cm.
Habitat: Non-coastal lowland forests with a continuous canopy.

North Island

Cook Strait

Southern Alps

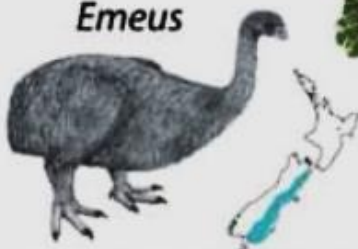
South Island

Euryapteryx



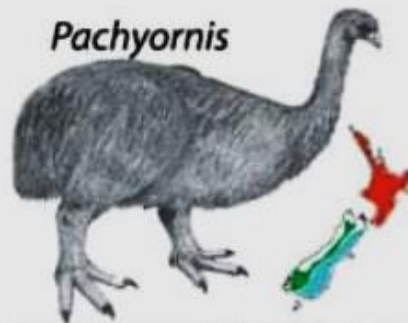
Systematics: Monotypic species, *E. curtus* (formally *E. gravis* and *E. geranoides*)
Dimensions: 12-109 kg and 51 to 103 cm.
Habitat: Drier climates - typically lowland open forest and coastal sites.

Emeus



Systematics: Monotypic South Island species, *E. crassus*.
Dimensions: 36-79 kg and 73 to 99 cm.
Habitat: Preference for lowland forest (usually <200m) and swamps.

Pachyornis



Systematics: *P. geranoides* (North Island), *P. elephantopus* (blue) and *P. australis* (green)(South Island)
Dimensions: 17-163 kg and 54 to 121 cm.
Habitat: *P. australis* occupied subalpine grassland, *P. geranoides* and *P. elephantopus* preferred lowland forest edges and wetland vegetation.



Crying buffalo 28 May 2020 at 00:00 · 🌐

Recently, scientists and researchers noticed something extraordinary... Yellow-billed ox-peckers between the hind legs of a giraffe – not eating parasites, but roosting! These are the birds we often see on... [More](#)



Avian Conservation & Education Network 15 August at 16:09 · 🌐

Goodmorning world
Indian Golden Oriole (Oriolus kundoo) by Bhavik Thaker



Great BIG Nature 18 August at 09:44 · 🌐

The Devil Owl.
I think its plain to see how this owl got its nickname. Found throughout the Caribbean and Central / South American regions, locals believe the Stygian owl can turn itself into a witch and has... [More](#)



Great BIG Nature 13 August at 06:54 · 🌐

Not a leaf to be found... only green parrots!
Connect with Nature!

Happy birding!

Wendy and Sue