



Birds New Zealand
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Otago Region Newsletter 10/2021

October 2021

Online Meeting,
Wed 27 October at 7.30pm
First item under Otago Branch News

Unite
against
COVID-19

Ornithological Snippets

Sue Odlin reported a **Mallard** duck with 14 very young ducklings on Lake Waihola on 25 September. The first **Shining Cuckoos** were on the 24 September at Waitati, and on the 28 in Dunedin. Sue Odlin heard them on several mornings from 29 onwards in NE Valley. **Long-tailed Cuckoos** put in an early appearance this year, with the first at Papatowai on 6 October, another record there on 9 Oct, on which date there was also one at Waitati 9 Oct; another was reported from Lake Hayes on 18 Oct.

A **Marsh Crane** was seen again at Lake Hayes on 18 October, and 9 **Wrybill** were at Warrington on 5 October, with 2 staying until at least 9 Oct. Finally, a **White Heron** was seen at Tautuku on 2 October.

Please send any interesting reports to cluthaphotos@gmail.com **Richard Schofield**

eBird News

Global Big Day

With other events taking place this weekend, no coordinated effort was made to get a big count in Otago on 9 October. However, 18 observers took part on the day, recording a total of 60 species from 72 unique checklists. Among the highlights, Morepork was recorded in 5 different squares (good to see we're getting into the nocturnal surveys!), while there were early Long-tailed Cuckoos at Waitati and Papatowai, and Wrybill & Red Knot on Warrington Spit. By comparison, NZ as a whole had 137 species from 97 observers, while worldwide there were 7288 species recorded.

Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com

BirdsNZ Otago Branch News

Online Virtual Meeting for Wednesday 27 October at 7.30pm

We are again holding this meeting online instead of meeting in person, as we are most likely to be still at level 2. Over 30 members logged on last month including several out-of-town members so that was a positive. We are hoping you will plan to login again for the October meeting when Rachel Hickcox will be talking about her research on the foraging habits and movements of Hoiho which has used the latest tracking technologies. She has discovered some really interesting things about these birds. Rachel has wide experience with penguins, first for her Masters degree when she studied African penguins and did fieldwork with the penguins on Bird Island, South Africa. Then she had a year as an intern at Mystic Aquarium in USA, looking after the penguins and running the outreach educational programme. She already has a lot of experience presenting her work at international symposiums, but this is the first online webinar for her. Please do make the effort to link in, support Rachel, and enjoy the meeting from the comfort of your home.

If you are new to Teams Meeting you will get three options; I chose "continue in this browser" and it worked OK. I'll also email you again early next week to remind you and include the active link again.

Here is the link

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+64 4-280 8090,391222726#](tel:+6442808090391222726) New Zealand, Wellington

Phone Conference ID: 391 222 726#

Mary

Summary Notes of AGM held online on 22nd September 2021

33 members participated via online with 4 out-of-town members

Mary Thompson re-elected as RR; proposed Lala Frazer, seconded Rowena East

All other appointments confirmed.

Finance: Moved that the account statements be accepted (Sue Odlin); seconded Lala Frazer

Support expressed that we award "Student Conference Support" for 2022 conference in ChCh.

May need to think about fund-raising options to fund this.

Current Projects

Progressing well with expert leadership and enthusiastic participation by members.

Publicity

Maybe monthly nominate a topic/bird as subject of a Press Release to ODT/Star, rather than providing our newsletter, which has personal content, to ODT; "we want to be able to manage the story from our point of view".

Possible new projects

Rifleman nest boxes in Ross Creek area- being followed up by Oscar, City Sanctuary and DCC.

Continue kereru count -too hard to organise/ analyse

Banded dotterel – please report nesting via eBird

The talk on the Birds of the Town Belt was recorded and can be viewed here

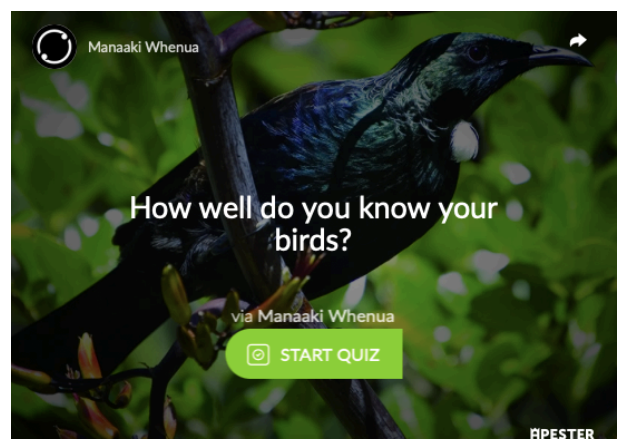
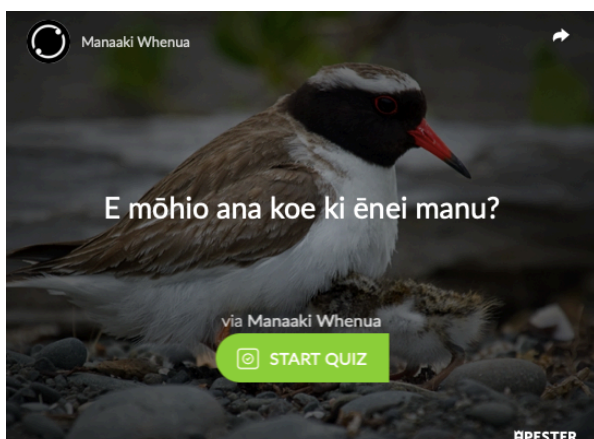
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ryq4dqobyqsk3an/Birds%20NZ%20Otago%20Region-20210922_194657-Meeting%20Recording.mp4?dl=0

Bird Quiz Night, Wednesday 24 November

For our end-of-year November meeting, we will be getting together in person, either at the Benham (if Level 1) or at Maori Hill Community Hall on Highgate near the Drivers Road round-about if still at level 2.

The plan is to have a light-hearted fun bird quiz night; we will set up teams of three or so; if you would like to be sure to know the answer to at least 1 question you are invited to submit a clever/quirky question (we will have powerpoint slides) to be considered for inclusion, before 5 November.

There will be the usual festive supper to follow.



Report of Counting Birds in the Town Belt

Sunday, 10 October was a stunning day in between two stormy days so the 25-30 folk who turned up at 9am to learn 5 minute bird counts and enjoy spotting birds in the Town Belt had a splendid time.

Bruce introduced our project and how to do a 5 minute bird count and we split into groups around the Moana Pool Carpark to do a test 5 minute bird count and report back. About 10 folk went with Mary, Petrina and Katie to Prospect Park and walked back along Queens Drive and did 5MBC at 4 count stations and practised spotting birds and identifying calls while walking between stations. We were lucky to record a brown creeper calling, and along the walk came across a small flock of at least 3 brown creeper accompanied by silvereyes and grey warblers. This was a special treat. We also saw several kereru close-up and a black fantail.

Bruce and Georgina took their group to count stations near Moana Pool and generated a good deal of interest in the project.

Prospect Park Count Station



Spotting brown creeper along Queens Drive



Warrington Beach Surprises

Bar-tailed godwits were returning to Blueskin Bay and Hoopers around 15 September

Nick has been walking the beach in the inclement weather during October and came across 9 wrybill very actively feeding among the seaweed at the high water mark on Tuesday 5 October during the easterly storm.

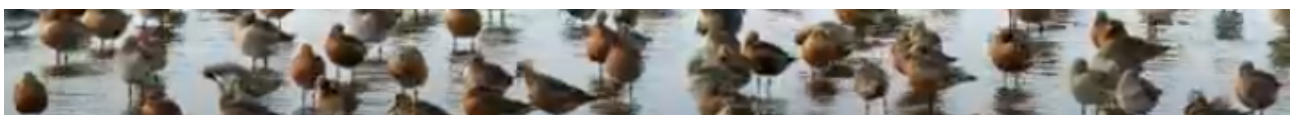
Georgina and Petrina went with Nick on Wednesday and they were still there.



By Thursday when Nick took Mary, Adrienne and Paul only 2 wrybill were found, but 785 bar-tailed godwits with nine actively feeding juveniles. These young birds, who have flown directly from Alaska, have very crisp, strikingly marked wing feathers and looked quite different from the 'tatty' adults.

On Saturday 9 October Nick reported 2 knots, one still with some breeding plumage, had turned up.

Mary



Moeraki Pelagic Saturday 16 October

Another successful Moeraki Pelagic on Saturday with Ezifish Charters, with Sunday's unfortunately cancelled due to winds picking up. Had a solid mix of birds including stunning views of Broad-billed Prion, Black-bellied Storm-Petrel and Grey-backed Storm Petrel sticking close to the boat. Oddities were 3 Shovelers and a Yellowhammer quite far from shore heading back toward land.



The marine mammals were showing off too with a pair of big male Orca and 4 Shepherd's Beaked Whales very close to us. Next trip is scheduled for **Tuesday 28th December**, please email me at oscarkokako@gmail.com if you are interested in joining.

Species estimates:

- korora/Little Penguin - 1
- hoiho/Yellow-eyed Penguin - 1
- Wandering Albatross sp. - 1
- Southern Royal Albatross - 40 (22)
- Northern Royal Albatross - 3 (1)
- Black-browed Albatross - 1
- Campbell Island Albatross - 1
- White-capped Albatross - 50 (30)
- Salvin's Albatross - 100 (70)
- Northern Giant Petrel - 12 (6)
- Cape Petrel - 200 (100) (including several of the Antarctic subspecies)
- White-chinned Petrel - 40 (20)
- Westland Petrel - 8 (3)
- Wilson's Storm-Petrel - 1
- Black-bellied Storm-Petrel - 4 (1)

Grey-backed Storm-Petrel - 10 (3)
 Fairy Prion - 50 (20)
 Broad-billed Prion - 5 (2)
 Unidentified Prion - 20
 Hutton's Shearwater - 4 (2)
 Sooty Shearwater - 10000
 Short-tailed Shearwater - 5 (2)
 White-fronted Tern - 2
 Red-billed Gull - 20 (6)
 South Black-backed Gull - 25 (8)
 Otago Shag - 400
 Spotted Shag - 8
 Pied Shag - 4
 Little Pied Shag - 2
 Australasian Shoveler - 3
 Yellowhammer - 1
 Orca - 2
 Shepherd's Beaked Whale - 4
 Dusky Dolphin - 1
 New Zealand Fur Seal - 1



Campbell Island Albatross

Outside brackets = day total sightings, inside brackets = high count at one time



Broad-billed Prion



Shepherd's Beaked Whale

Programme for 2021

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

- 23-25 October **Weekend Atlas Field Trip**, Labour weekend based at Alexandra. We have booked accommodation for 8 people (twin share, \$45 each per night) and this will be our base at the Alexandra Holiday Park. You may wish to book other accommodation at the park or in town.
More info from Richard cluthaphotos@gmail.com
- Wed 27 October **VIRTUAL ONLINE MEETING**
Rachel Hickcox.
Where hoiho go foraging at sea and why – results of research mapping and modelling hoiho presence and preferences.
- Sun 14 November **Wader count**. Volunteers needed. High tide (2.01m) at 1.18pm. Back up day Sun 12 December in case of bad weather. Contact Maree Johnstone mareej@kinect.co.nz to be assigned to a team.
- Wed 24 November **Will be held at alternative venue**
Members night..
Bird Quiz night and festive end-of-year supper

Suggestions of locations for field trips and atlassing trips, and offers to help lead trips would really be appreciated, please contact Mary birds.otago@birdsnz.org.nz

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

Final date for copy for next newsletter: **17 November**

Birds of Tomorrow

Interstellar Albatross

With a special pouch adapted for breathing in space, these giant birds can periodically leave Earth and wander through space for decades of their long lives.

Jenny Kroik October 2021



THE
NEW YORKER