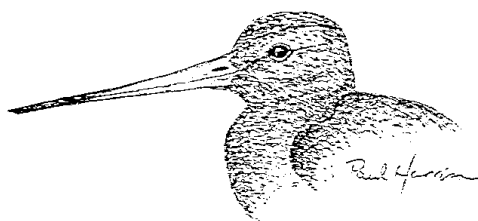


# KUAKA

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

November 2021

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Greetings *Kuaka* readers. November was another Zoom meeting and a review is set out below, together with a review of progress on the NZBird Atlas. Unfortunately, there were no field trips during the month, thanks again to lockdown.

**MONTHLY MEETING:** Here is a synopsis of what you missed by not joining us on the Zoom meeting last Tuesday.

- ✚ We had 18 people at the meeting
- ✚ All field trips remain cancelled
- ✚ We are hopeful that we will be able to proceed with our Christmas BBQ in December but this is yet to be confirmed. We will send a separate email with the details
- ✚ The Firth of Thames wader census was last weekend and Keith reported that, despite most of us being unable to join in due to Auckland's lockdown, the day went well. 8000 odd godwits were counted. The highlight of the day was sighting a pectoral sandpiper
- ✚ The Manukau census on Nov 21 will go ahead

## SIGHTINGS

- ✚ Shining cuckoo are still being reported from around our rohi – could be a good year for breeding if they can track down those grey warbler nests.
- ✚ Bruce reported that the heron who was nesting in one of his trees had the nest blown apart during the storms last month. The pair are re-nesting and he believes they now have chicks (the nest is too high to be certain).
- ✚ David has been out to Kidd's a couple of times and has spotted the godwit that had spent some time in Queensland before arriving in NZ, together with two other satellite transmitter fitted birds.
- ✚ David has also been to Port Waikato where there is a banded dotterel chick. David and Tony intend to return and band the chick.
- ✚ A marsh crane has been spotted at the Mangemangeroa reserve in Sommerville Rd.
- ✚ Sue reported five kaka from Ness Valley Road.
- ✚ Anna reported there are up to 200 white-fronted terns at Pokura Gap and that the resident pair of VOC are yet to nest this year. There are also big flocks of yellowhammer among the rough pasture.

**BEACH PATROL** Wendy and Sue managed a socially distanced beach patrol in late October and although the weather had been a bit rough a few days before, there was almost nothing to be found. The haul consisted of: 1 pukeko, 1 gannet, 1 sooty shearwater, 1 white fronted tern, and a prion sp.

**SPEAKER** Tonight's speaker was Tony Crocker from Warkworth talking about the **birds of the Tropical South Pacific**.

Tony pointed out that avian families, genera and species thin out as one heads east across the Pacific. Serious challenges to bird movement across the Pacific include distance, the trade winds that, generally, blow east to west, and sea currents that flow in a similar direction.



More recently there has been loss of species as humans spread across the Pacific. Up to 2000 species could have been exterminated by human activities, the majority of which were flightless species. Expiration and extinction of species within the Pacific continues today. Hawaii suffered the biggest destruction of its avian flora along with New Zealand. In both countries endemic/native species have been replaced by exotic species, many introduced by humans. With the exception of several pelagic species that roost on small offshore stacks, Rapanui (Easter Is) has no native/endemic birds remaining at all – all six land bird species (including house-sparrows) have been introduced since European discovery of the island.



Pacific Imperial Pigeon

On a more positive note, Tony discussed species still to be found through out the Pacific such as pigeons, fruit doves, honeyeaters, kingfishers, and rails. Species which have evolved, through 'deep endemic' time into endemic species; such as the Pacific Imperial Pigeon. Originating from India, the Imperial pigeon spread across the Pacific evolving over time into the Pacific Imperial Pigeon and other species of Imperial Pigeon.

Likewise, fruit doves and kingfishers have spread across the Pacific and evolved into several species, some limited in range to individual smallish islands. Many of these are now extinct, such as the Pitcairn fruit dove and the Rapanui fruit dove.

Interestingly rails have colonised Pacific Islands, including New Zealand, relatively recently and there is not a lot of genetic change. The buff banded rail/banded rail can be found from Indonesia and the Philippines, through Melanesia, Australia and western Polynesia.



Pacific kingfisher (F)

Finally, Tony touched on the white tern. Several forms have been recognised and some recognize two different species. The form *candida* breeds at the Kermadec, Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands and widely throughout the tropical Indian and Pacific oceans.

Interestingly the white tern lays its egg on bare thin branches in a small fork or depression – there is no nest. Eggs do get dislodged in heavy winds but if the egg does get to hatch the chicks have well developed feet and claws to allow them to hang on.





We have had several reports of bittern sightings and booming. Sue heard two calling near Pokeno.

The most recent report was of a bittern spotted, and photographed, at Seagrove last week.



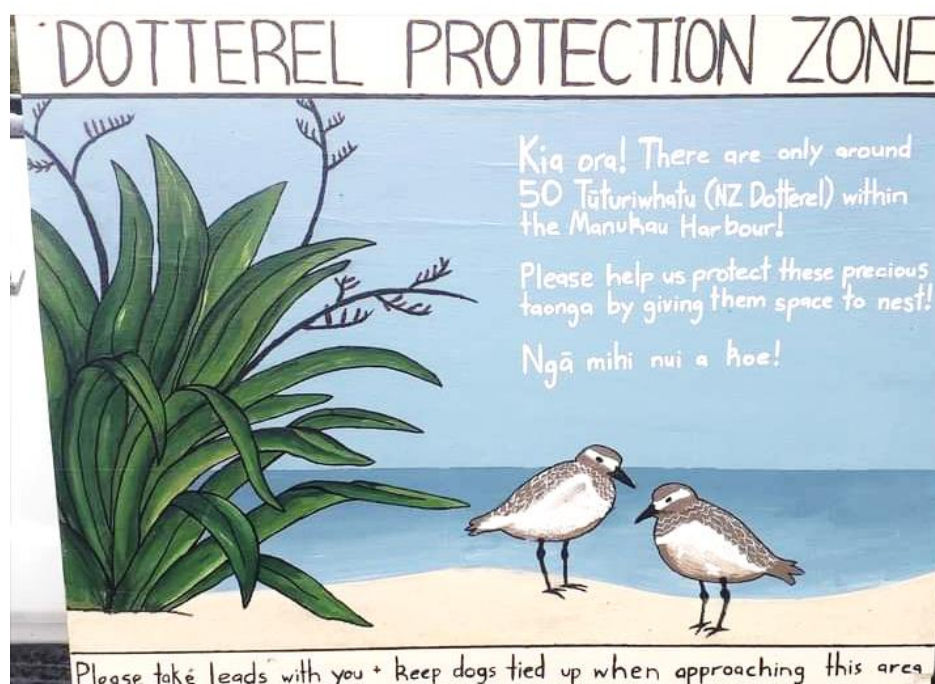
## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS — BOOKS FOR SALE

Our member, Stuart Chalmers, has the following for sale: a small number of new copies of updated **“Birds of NZ – Locality and Identification Guide”** – 400 pages - fresh of the press at \$30 a copy.

Also **“Bird Places”** – 200 pages - at \$25

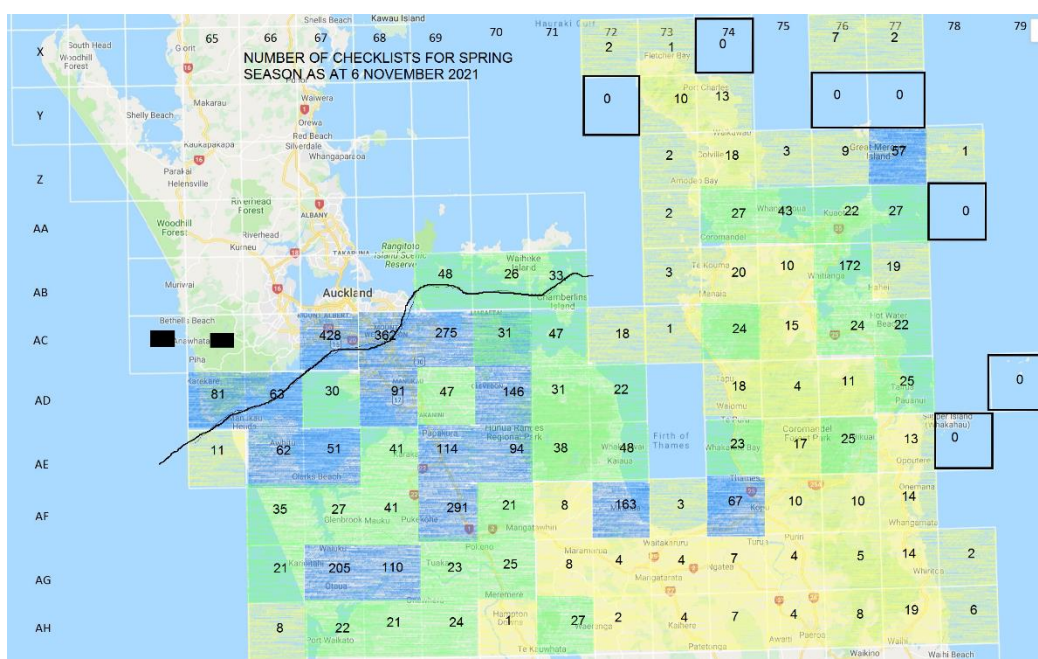
and **“Birds of NZ – Colour Guide”** 380 pages at \$30.

If anyone wants copies as Xmas presents, I will provide my bank number for payment. All are updated and freshly printed and still very interesting for beginners. Contact Stuart via your editor at the address on the email this newsletter was attached to.



This sign is now erected at the nesting zone on the south end of Orua Bay

**ATLAS REPORT** We are into the last month of spring, and the attached atlas map shows our progress.



Please note:

- the figures include spring 2019 to 2021 checklists
- The yellow squares have had between 1 and 20 checklists submitted, the green squares have had 21 to 50 and the blue squares have had 51 or more

In the last month, we have managed to move 8 squares from yellow to green, by increasing the number of checklists to 21 or over.

Squares inside the Auckland Level 3 boundary that need more effort are:

AC72 – Orere Pt – look out for NZ Dotterel and VOC nesting on the other side of the river

AE65 – near the top of Awhitu – not much land and only a few roads

AH66 – the bottom end of Karioitahi Beach, only accessible through a farm or by a long walk from the surf club

As you can see, there are still lots of yellow squares south of the Auckland boundary, mostly in the Hauraki district and on the Coromandel, so if any of you are lucky enough to live there, take your pick of any of those squares.

We have been very lucky to have Wendy H and Nigel putting in a lot of effort on the Coromandel while they have been stuck in NZ, but they will soon be heading back overseas to start work again. We thank them for their efforts and hopefully some of us can get over to the Coromandel over summer to boost the number of checklists there.

For the atlasers among us, check out the November challenge – submit complete checklists to 5 or more grid squares [November Atlas Challenge - New Zealand Bird Atlas \(ebird.org\)](https://ebird.org/NovemberAtlasChallenge)

For those of you who do not load your checklists into EBird, if you do advise a sighting of an interesting or unusual bird, or do a count of all the birds you can identify at a particular location, please provide the following details: Exact location of sighting, Date, Time, Species, Number of birds seen.

As the weather warms up, think about doing some night counts at or nearby your home and let me know what you see or hear, with the details above.

Hopefully we can start to travel 'south of the border' to do some birding in December.

Sue

## PROGRAMME FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021

**Monthly Meetings:** held on the second Tuesday of each month, at the Papakura Croquet Club, 1 Chapel Street Papakura. Meetings start at 7:30. Visitors welcome. \$3.00 donation to cover costs.

There are no more meetings scheduled for this year. They recommence again in February 2022.

**CHRISTMAS BARBEQUE: December 4** We are hopeful that we will be able to proceed with our Christmas BBQ but this is yet to be confirmed. We will send a separate email with the details.

**SUMMER WADER CENSUS:** Manukau Harbour, **November 21** Contact Tony Habraken 09 2385284



**Try counting this lot!**

Godwits at Ambury 9 Oct 2021 (photo: Stefan Marks)

## FIELD TRIPS

No further field trips are planned for this year, let's hope we have better luck next year.



## FROM OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

We currently have 306 followers of our Facebook page and 61 posts were made during the last month.

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



A pair of rifleman/tītipounamu have taken home security to the next level by building a nest with 4 eggs in a set possum trap! The Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group found it during a routine trap check and have since closed off the entrance and set traps around the tree.



THEGUARDIAN.COM

**Once a global conservation success story, New Zealand's black robin in trouble again**



STUFF.CO.NZ

**Interesting duck turns up in Invercargill estuary**

A Northern Pintail duck has unexpectedly arrived in the New ...



Eaglewatch NL 3 October at 21:00 · 🌐

**EASTERN CHANTING GOSHAWK** - Hunts the ground



**New Zealand Fairy Tern Charitable Trust** 2

November at 14.44 · 🌐

It was lovely to see Ruby flying around Northland the other day 🥰

You may recall last year she flew all the way to Foxton beach for her hols and thankfully returned . A huge journey for a juvenile Fairy Tern.... [More](#)



INTERACTIVES.STUFF.CO.NZ

**The Price of Fish: It's time for consumers to take more notice of where their food comes from**



**Avian Conservation & Education Network** 26

October at 17:48 · 🌐

Goodmorning world

Black-winged (shouldered) Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)  
in India by Basawant Annigeri.



Great BIG Nature 7 November at 19:33 · 🌐

I dont think its a coincidence that this stealth plane looks very similar to the worlds fastest bird. Nature can teach us many things.  
Connect with Nature!



Scott Brooks ▸ Northland Birds

18 October at 12:19 · 🌐

Wahoo!! The Whimbrel has returned to Ngunguru again 😊 If it stays around then this will be at least it's 7th spring/summer season here.



Avian Conservation & Education Network 30

October at 17:47 · 🌐

Goodmorning world

Red Bird-of-paradise (Paradisaea rubra) -male displaying- , Batanta Island, West Papua, Indonesia by Tim Laman.



Avian Conservation & Education Network 23

October at 17:07 · 🌐

Goodmorning world

Bananaquits (Coereba flaveola) in Brazil by Julio Silveira on 500px



Birds 2 October at 17:00 · 🌐

Elliot's Pheasant (Syrmaticus ellioti) endemic to China by ZW Young.



**Bitterns in Rice Project** 8 November at 09:09 · 🌐

Join us for this special event - the Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit - in Leeton, NSW from Feb 1-4, 2022. Hear about the latest research and

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.

**Happy birding!**

**Wendy and Sue**