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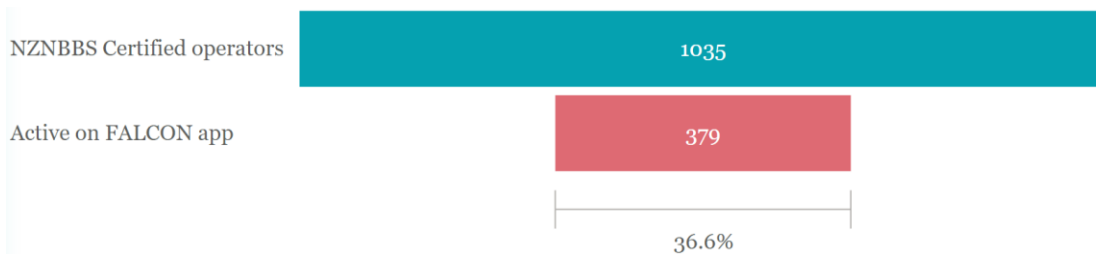
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Are you active on FALCON?

The Banding Office keeps a curious eye on what is happening in the FALCON System through customised Power BI Dashboards. For instance, less than half of NZNBBS certified operators are currently active on the app, but those that are represent 294 organisations and include 118 Project Managers.

If you have not yet received or activated your FALCON login, please get in touch at falcon@doc.govt.nz



382
Active Users on
FALCON

118
Active Project
Managers

184
Active Team
Members

Achieving the “O” in FALCON

Want to build your own [FALCON System](#)? The code repository (thousands of lines of source code) has been Open-Sourced – keep an eye out in the media for an update. This does not include any data, only the recipe for spinning up a version of FALCON.

Feeling batty - 2021 NZ Bird of the Year: a bat!?

While we are officially named the New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme, we cater to all bat and bird marking operators (which includes marking techniques of banding, transponder insertion and wing tag application).

Every year since 2005 Forest and Bird has run a New Zealand "Bird of the Year" (BOTY) competition, where members of the public vote for their favourite avian species. This year's champion is the Pekapeka – tou-roa (Greater Long-tailed Bat). Naturally this has been a point of discomfort for avid avian enthusiasts, who were backing their favourite bird. So, who is this Greater Long-tailed ~~bird~~ Bat?

Facts about Greater Long-tailed Bats:

- Conservation status: In serious trouble!
- Insectivorous (eat moths, beetles, mosquitoes, and other "yummy" insects)
- Hunt using echolocation
- As small as a human thumb, with a wingspan of a human hand
- Weigh about as much as a \$2 coin (8 to 11 grams)
- Fly up to 60 km/hour
- Home range of 100 km²



Covid-19 notices

With any luck this will be a short-lived column.

Shipping and production delays

Our main metal band supplier is experiencing a backlog of up to ~18 months of production. Please be patient with us as we do our best to cater to your banding requirements and balance our limited stock. We may request, if possible, that part of your order is shipped at a later date. Please also ensure that you are ordering bands well in advance of your banding project. Giving less than a month's notice does not guarantee that we will be able to have the items processed and shipped by your requested date. **Please also note that additional processing and shipping delays occur in December and June, so please plan your ordering to avoid these months.**

Vaccination passes at DOC

As you know Covid-19 has made some significant changes to our way of life.

DOC hut and campsites require all individuals aged 12 years 3 months and over to be fully vaccinated; further information can be found at: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2021-media-releases/people-need-to-be-fully-vaccinated-to-use-doc-accommodation/>

A similar requirement is in place for anyone wishing to visit DOC visitor centres and offices: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/issues/covid-19/>

Fun FALCON fact:

Cuckoos!

There are 195 records of banded cuckoo in the FALCON Bird Banding Database (174 Shining Cuckoo records, and 21 Long-tailed Cuckoo records). These banding records range from 5th October 1954 to the most recent record which is 29th January 2020.

According to old wives' tales from the Northern Hemisphere the state of health you are in when you first hear the cuckoo is how you will remain for the rest of the year. Wishes made upon hearing the call of the first cuckoo of spring are also supposed to come true.



Dell the Tūi prescribes to 5+ a day!

A bemused member of the public (Alister Hubbard) observed a banded tūi land on a hand and proceed to consume the lunchtime orange. The tūi had no metal band, just a solitary red alpha-numeric band.

After a bit of investigation, it was discovered that the bird had been taken to Ngā Manu Nature Reserve, Waikanae, as a chick in 2015. It became imprinted so was kept at Ngā Manu and named Dell. Unfortunately, in 2018 its cage was vandalised, and the bird escaped to the wild where it has stayed ever since. It is often seen around Ngā Manu enjoying the duck food.

Just goes to show you never know who's eyeing up your lunch, and it's not just other humans you should worry about!

Have you met a fugitive?

What is frequently seen but rarely reported? Captive banded birds! Hidden in plain sight at a Pūkaha Mount Bruce aviary, was "Kahurangi" (E-82226) the hand-reared kōkako. She managed to evade the FALCON Bird Banding Database for 17+years. However, once she realised "the game was up", Kahurangi willingly "turned herself over", coming right up to the mesh where her band combination was easily read by the reporter, although sources close to Kahurangi insist she was just being friendly.

Maximum longevity

Little known, perhaps 20 years

Captive birds can be useful where data does not exist for wild individuals. This screenshot is taken from the [New Zealand Birds online webpage for the North Island Kōkako](#). Now we can say with certainty that NI Kōkako (given ideal conditions such as captivity) can live a minimum of 17 years.

Now that we've managed to catch up with her and her banding data, we would like to encourage you to report any banded captive birds you come across, even if it's at the zoo or other captive facility. If it were not for the reporting of Kahurangi then the Banding Office would still not be aware of her and her valuable data; she is possibly the oldest known living kōkako in the world!

Have you seen Kahurangi? It would be a fun to know how many NZNBBS banders may have walked straight past and never reported her!

Syd the SIPO continues Australian vacation

Australia's only banded South Island Pied Oystercatcher (SIPO; ABBBS band 101-41798), nicknamed 'Syd the SIPO', was sighted again in February 2021 at Manning River Estuary, New South Wales. South Island Pied Oystercatchers are occasionally found in Australia as rare vagrants from New Zealand.

[ABBBS Flightlines Newsletter - Number 36, September 2021](#)

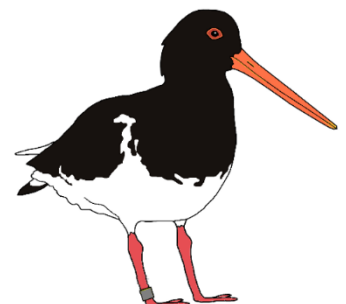


Dell helping himself to Scott Hines' lunchtime orange.

Image credit to: Alister Hubbard.



Kahurangi the kōkako. Image credit to Annemieke Hendriks



@mieke_masterpieces

Even more egg-citing titipounamu news!

In the [October 2021 BirDBanD](#) edition newsletter we shared some news that there were a pair of *Zealandia titipounamu* who had escaped the sanctuary and were living it up in Te Ahumairangi Hill.

Not only have the pair on Te Ahumairangi successfully built a nest, incubated chicks and fledged their first clutch (4 females and a male), but they have already built a second nest and looking to hopefully rear a second clutch of chicks!



The father (**AE-0926**) is banded (Left), the 5 chicks (right)
Image credit to Melissa Boardman.

The local community are continuing to ensure that predation in the urban area is reduced, so that we might have a Te Ahumairangi population of titipounamu!

Titipounamu take home security seriously! – Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group



The Titipounamu trapinator nest.

Thanks to our awesome volunteers and landowners the titipounamu/ rifleman are having a cracker breeding season this year. We've found 40 nests in our annual nest box census, over double the number from this time last year!

Not all the nests are in our purpose-built nest boxes though, one daredevil pair managed to build an entire nest and lay 4 eggs inside of a SET TRAPINATOR!! It's the ultimate in-home security. We had to make some modifications to the entrance hole, it felt very strange to be working hard to keep the possums OUT of a possum trap. All 4 chicks successfully fledged on 4 December 2021.

The Trapinator is now back in service in its original function – catching possums, so let's hope that the scent lure of nestlings tempts one in.

"Pulli"-ing on the heart strings – Rachel Hufton

Over 200 black-billed gulls have been successfully banded so far and all data uploaded to the FALCON database. The colony is doing well with many birds now close to fledging with full feather development imminent. This year appears to be a good year for braided river birds (multi-species) on the Makarora and we look forward to gaining a better insight on the movements of black-bills within the region in future years.

If you are interested in reading further about this black-billed gull project head over to the [November 2021 newsletter by the Otago Birds NZ branch \(Page 12\)](#).



One of the very cute 200 birds banded.
Image credit to Rachel Hufton

Art of Lianne Edwards

Lianne Edwards:

“For the past several years I have been using bird bands in my artworks. More specifically I have been using both plastic and metal bird bands collected by DOC scientists researching Antipodean wandering albatross. With my works I am aiming to highlight both the beauty and life cycle of the albatross and also factors such as fisheries and climate change that have contributed to the decline in bird numbers. I view these bands as ‘treasures’, as poignant signifiers of the life and death of our most endangered native seabirds. Further information about me and my work can be found at whitespace.co.nz”

Kath Walker: (Wildlife Biologist, Wandering albatross researcher & bander)

“Seeing the working apparatus of albatross research transmuted into something beautiful has been both enlightening and enriching. At the simplest level there’s the immense satisfaction of recycling materials and thinking of the great distances those materials have travelled. And of course, there are the things art can do for the survival of the natural world, which even the best conservation science cannot. A scientific report on the parlous state of the populations of Antipodean wandering albatrosses will only reach a small audience, but art can reach an entirely different set of people.

Beyond all these is the wonder of seeing research tools transformed into things of beauty, in their own right, of seeing them through an artist’s eyes. The delicate filigree nets Lianne has fashioned into white shawls are so reminiscent of the soft white feathered underwings of wandering albatrosses, yet different. The metal bands that we treasure for their information on bird identity, the passage of time and of distance, have become in Lianne’s hands objects of art, formed into new and unexpected patterns and ideas.

Wandering albatrosses, the subantarctic islands they breed on and the wild and windy southern oceans they roam over are marvels of our world, but few people are able to experience them firsthand. I’m so happy that artists like Lianne can translate the ideas, the problems, the joys of these places, in ways that photographs never can.”



Left: Of Albatross and Ancient Rimes 1800mm x 930mm
Materials: wandering albatross bird leg bands (plastic & stainless steel), plankton net, perspex.

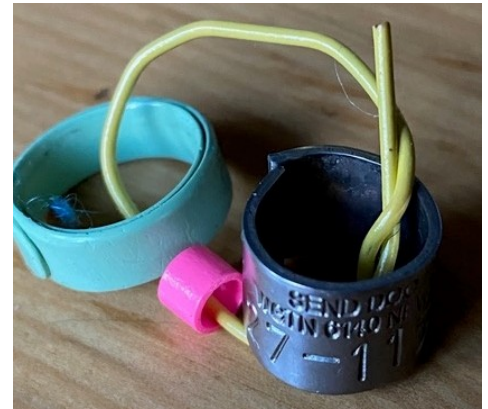
Above/ right: *Antipodean Wanderers* 850 x 1490mm
Materials: Plankton net, Stainless steel bird leg bands (Antipodean Albatross Chicks, Antipodes Island), deep-water squid beaks, twigs & seeds (retrieved from albatross chick bolus), resin, fishhooks & t shirt material (representing items retrieved from albatross chick bolus in the past). *Antipodean wanderers* tracks the life of the nationally critically endangered Antipodean albatross. The work contains material found in a chick’s bolus (regurgitated food), such as squid beaks, twigs, etc from the sub-Antarctic Antipodean islands. The adult albatross forage over the continental shelf edge and deep water across the South Pacific Ocean.

Images supplied by artist.

What's up DOC? Staffers (past and present) should keep an eye out for bands to report! – Shirley Vollweiler

By sheer chance I was reading the [BirDBanD newsletter \(Sep 2020\)](#) and saw the request to report bands not being used on birds. I have one! In fact, I have three samples, but two of them are coloured bands of different sizes, rather than numbered metal bands.

The story behind this is that I worked on BioWeb as a systems analyst for DOC from 2006-2011, including working on the digitisation project for bird banding c 2010 (i.e. from paper records into BioWeb). When I left DOC I was presented with the bands by the Bird Banding team (Delia, Mala and Graeme Taylor). The metal band is 27-115082.



The gifted bands.
Image credit to Shirley Vollweiler

From the archives

Blackbird D-69755 had been fighting all morning with another Blackbird for possession of a small rhododendron bush beside a fishpond. By 2 pm the younger bird had driven D-69755 into the pond and drowned him. The victor didn't use the bush as a nesting site ...! In 1967 said bird was banded as a female, was re-trapped in 1968 as a male and when drowned was in full male plumage. When dissected there was no sign of testies (sic) or ovaries. Bird was drowned on 6th August 1970.

BLACKBIRD		NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL BANDING SCHEME				S. L. LOBB,		BIRDS OF ONE SPECIES ONLY	SPECIES NUMBER:
		Wildlife Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington				GORGE ROAD,			722
		RECOVERY REPORT				No. 5 R.D.,			
Return to: Banding Officer, Wildlife Research Section, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington.		Returned by: Name:				INVERCARGILL			CODE: 0017
		Address:							
PLEASE PUT ALL RECOVERIES IN NUMERICAL ORDER									
Band Number	Date Recovered	Place Recovered	Reg	Lat.	Long	Details of Recovery (See back of form)			New Band Number
D10571	13-7-70	B/site	46	468		Band replaced			D69755
				1684					
D69755	6-8-70	"				Drowned in fish pond			

01388

D69755 had been fighting all morning with another B/B for possession of a small rhododendron bush beside fish pond. By 2 PM the younger bird had driven the above into fish pond and drowned him P.S. The victor did not use the rhodi bush as a nesting site! P.P.S. The sex of D69755 seems to be in some doubt. In 1967 it was banded as a female. Re-trapped in '68 as a male. Again re-trapped in 1969 as a male. When drowned (6-8-70) was in full male plumage but when dissected I could find no sign of either testies or ovaries.

Native bird whakatauki

“Ko te reoreo a kea ki uta, ko te whakataki mai a Toroa ki tai, he kotuku ki te raki, he kakapo ki te whenua.”

The direct translation of this Te Reo whakatauki means “The call of the kea in the inland, the albatross’ speech out at sea, the white heron is above (north), the Kakapo is below (on land)”. It is a whakatauki used to say, everything has its rightful place, and together we bring our specialist knowledge. It could be used in a group context to open a meeting and welcome visitors from other areas to acknowledge their travels and experience.

PAP is BACK (again) – Parker Jones

You may recall in the May 2021 BirDBanD newsletter we reported that “PAP” the Banded Dotterel has now completed two vacations to New Caledonia, and clearly making the most of his frequent flier points.

2020 – New Caledonia first reported: July. New Zealand first reported: August

2021 – New Caledonia first reported: May. New Zealand first reported: August

This year, I first sighted him on the 21st of August and he nested within metres of his previous nest site with his same partner PEY. Their first nest failed, but their second nest did hatch, but we have not seen him with his chicks recently. Not a great season for chicks this year. Below is an update I did in August about PAP. Attached is a screenshot of the 2020 and 2021 nesting of PAP.

PAP came back and looks to be with PEY, his partner from last year. I have had a response back from David in New Caledonia, here is what he said *"This year we only saw PAP at the start of the season and then nothing. As we had discussed we noticed a lot of disruption related to unsupervised dogs at Nakutakoin during the season. A woman was even attacked by a dog few weeks ago in this area. We went on the field but sightings of shorebirds have been rare in Nakutakoin. Birds like PAP had surely moved into the vast favourable, quieter, and inaccessible areas around the large mangroves and mudflats in the region that we cannot monitor. Fortunately, PAP is back at home! I'll send you our sightings for your work"*.

David Ugolini President New Caledonia Ornithology Society

The screenshot shows the 'Dotterel viewer' interface for the 'MIRO Dotterel Survey'. The main map area displays several nesting sites marked with colored dots and labels: EF2108 PAP PEY (blue), EF2012 PEY PAP (blue), EF2106 PEY PAP (red), EF2006 PEY PAP (blue), and EF2001 PCM PEH (blue). An inset image shows a Banded Dotterel (PAP) on a nest, with a caption 'PAP on OE 2021' and 'Image credit to Liliane Guisgant'. The 'Layer List' panel on the right contains the following layers:

Layer	Status
Dotterel Nest 2021	Checked
Kaikoura Dotterel 2021	Unchecked
Sightings	Unchecked
Eastbourn to Baring Head pest control	Unchecked
Dotterel Nest 2020	Checked
Kaikoura Dotterel 2020	Unchecked
Kaikoura Dotterel 2019	Unchecked
Dotterel Nest 2019	Unchecked
Dotterel Nest 2018	Unchecked
2018 Coastal Bird Survey	Unchecked
Dotterel Nest 2017	Unchecked
DotterelNestPublic	Unchecked
Eastbourne NestVisit2021	Unchecked
Kaikoura NestVisit2021	Unchecked

Legend for nesting status:

- Failed (Red dot)
- Nesting successfully finished (Blue dot)
- Occupied (Green dot)
- Other (Black dot)

Answer to: “He aha tēnei?” - internal serials



LN bands were internally stamped like this in an attempt to avoid Whio wearing off the band number against rocks (e.g. see worn SN Whio band to the right). However, internal stamping meant that you could only ID a banded bird when the band was removed, and there were still issues with the bands becoming unsuitable and causing damage (e.g. sharp/ uneven dagger edge of right-most image). Ultimately, banding of Whio was deemed harmful, and the birds are now PIT microchipped (i.e. “transpondered” instead of being banded). Please report the location and details of any banded Whio you see on your travels.

Photo credit: Annemieke Hendriks (Left two images) Gemma Hunt and Glen Newtown (Right two images).

“He aha tēnei?” - Real life puzzles from behind the scenes: KA bands

The mysteries continue. In FALCON, and even in the Bird Bander’s Manual there is mention of a mysterious KA band. However, in the Banding Office price list there is no “KA” sized band for sale. What was this band for? Why is this no longer for sale? Do you know; can you guess? All will be revealed in the next newsletter.

Puzzled: Cracker comedy

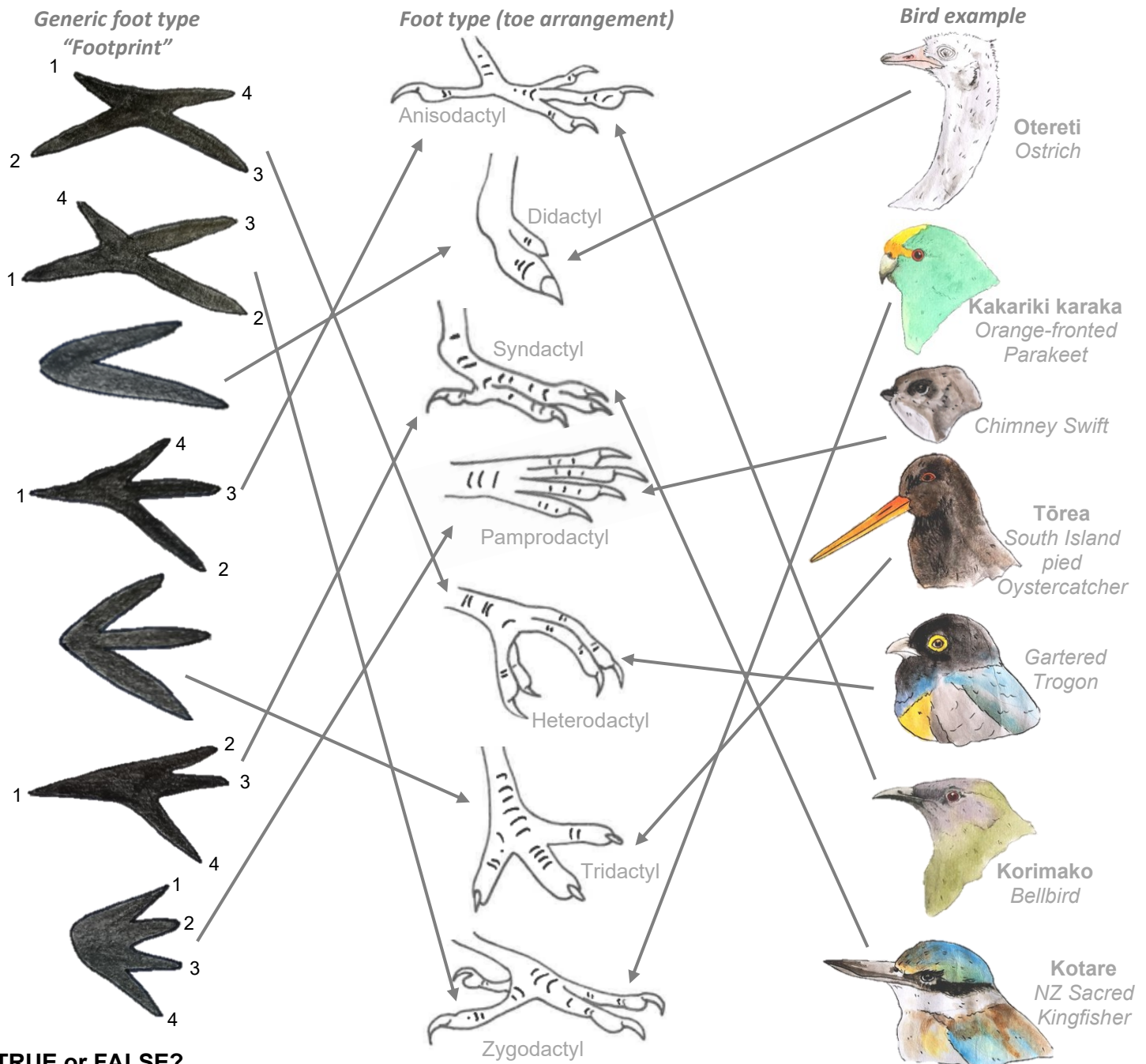
In case you want to spread some (mostly) NZ bird-related “joy” at the dinner table:

1. Which side of a takahē has the most feathers?
2. Why was the chicken in a band?
3. What do you call a titipounamu in a shell-suit?
4. What do you get if you cross Santa with a Pūtangitangi (Paradise duck)?
5. Why are Whio bad at ball games?
6. What kind of bird can write?
7. What is a Pateke’s (brown teal) favourite snack?
8. What Wellington pub is a favourite for related female Whio?
9. What is the NZ bird of the year (2021) good at reciting?
10. What do you get if you cross a hen with a bedside clock?
11. What did the eel say when it swam into a wall?
12. Why did Kotuku’s (white heron) cousin get arrested?
13. What do you call one Paradise duck?
14. What did the sea say to the albatross?
15. What Ruru (morepork) is a great rock-and-roll singer?
16. Why are other birds scared of Subantarctic Skua?
17. What did the Ruru request at dinner?
18. How do you describe a bird who likes beer?
19. What do you get if a Godwit flies under a rain cloud?
20. What do you get if you cross a wader wrangler with a nursery rhyme?
21. Why should you not go to an alpine parrot with your issues.
22. What is the problem with inviting ratites to dinner?

Answers: 1. The outside, 2. He was the only one with drumsticks, 3. An egg, 4. A Christmas quacker, 5. Instead of catching, they duck!, 6. A pen-guin, 7. Quackers and cheese, 8. The whistling sisters, 9. The alpha-bat, 10. An alarm cluck, 11. Dam, 12. For storking someone, 13. A dise duck, two birds are a pair, 14. Nothing! It just waved, 15. Owl-vis Presley, 16. They don’t want to end up on the barbeque, 17. More pork!, 18. A bird with a high moult (malt) score, 19. A bird who is under the weather, 20. Twinkler, twinkler little star, 21. They don’t Kea (care), 22. They always want moa (more).

Puzzled: Answers to Put your best foot forward

1.) Match the footprints and bird to a foot type



TRUE or FALSE?

- 2.) Welcome swallows have pamprodactyl feet. FALSE
- 3.) Parea have the same foot type as kererū. TRUE
- 4.) There are native species with heterodactyl feet in Aotearoa. FALSE – only occurs in Trogons, none in NZ.
- 5.) Kiwi have tridactyl feet. FALSE – they have a residual 1st digit
- 6.) Kākāriki have a different foot type to kākāpō. FALSE – they are both Zygodactyl
- 7.) Emus have the same foot type as ostriches. FALSE – only Ostrich is Didactyl
- 8.) The zygodactyl foot type is the second most common toe arrangement after anisodactyl. TRUE
- 9.) In pamprodactyl feet the 1st and 4th toes can move so that they look like they face backwards, giving birds with this foot structure a good ability to grip onto tricky surfaces. TRUE
- 10.) Moa had anisodactyl feet, just like kiwi. TRUE!

BONUS Qs:

- 11.) What foot type does a hoiho have? Tridactyl – don't be fooled by the webbing, toe arrangement is independent of webbing.
- 12.) If Jeff's comic was a scientific illustration of a kākāpō what would be wrong with the anatomy of the feet? Feet have not been drawn as Heterodactyl (i.e. they seem to be missing a toe)

Hoiho
Yellow-Eyed Penguin foot

