

# OSNZ news

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for the members of the Ornithological Society Of New Zealand (Inc.)

Please note that sightings recorded in this Newsletter are subject  
to confirmation.

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Note: Deadline for the June issue will be 20th  
May.

## RAOU Congress and Campout, Queensland, 1985

Nine New Zealanders attended the 86th Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union Congress held at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Toowoomba, during the weekend of 27-29 September. These were Beth and John Brown, Pat Crombie, Brian Gill, Hazel and Tom Harty, Mary and Ralph Powlesland, and Hugh Robertson.

The Congress was opened by Professor Jiro Kikkawa, who is well known to many New Zealanders for his studies of Silvereyes and other passerines. Papers covered a broad spectrum and were presented in sessions starting on Friday afternoon and continuing until noon on Sunday. Three New Zealanders participated — Brian Gill, Ralph Powlesland and Hugh Robertson — and all were well received. In the displays, a poster session was popular, as was a comprehensive selection from booksellers of books on birds of the world. Communal meals gave us welcome opportunities for discussion and included a Saturday evening barbecue, held indoors since the day was cool. Members of the Toowoomba Bird Club led an enjoyable early morning birdwatching outing to a choice of three locations. Toowoomba itself had just held its annual flower festival and gardens everywhere were ablaze with many varieties of flowers, both Old World and Australian.

The Campout from 30 September to 4 October was at Bullamon Plains Station, about 400 km west of Toowoomba, near the town of Goondiwindi, close to the NSW border. The move brought a considerable change climatically, from the fresh uplands to the dry country. The days sped by as we took part in bird surveys, photographic sessions in a hide set up at the bower of a Spotted Bowerbird, and also when small birds were being netted, weighed, measured and banded. We visited nests of Tawny Frogmouth, a confiding Yellow Robin, and various raptors. Each evening the species list grew as it was read and answered by those around the nightly campfire. Toowoomba

Bird Club members provided a succulent barbecue of spit-roasted station meat, vegetables in foil, and fruit salad for about a hundred of us — no mean feat in field conditions.

Highlights of birdwatching were Emus, Brolgas, the many Bee-eaters, Dollarbirds, White-winged Choughs, Apostlebirds, and thousands of woodswallows, especially White-browed and Masked. These handsome nomads had arrived to breed. Great flocks rose chattering from trees and at times it seemed that almost every stem of the small plants held a courting pair and every tree was being searched assiduously for nest sites.

The area was ideal for camping. Spacious sandy flats beside the Moonie River were scattered with Moreton Bay Ash and Red River Gum trees. In addition, wildflowers were in bloom and there was plenty of space for the many tents and campervans. Often at night a Willie Wagtail would sing softly in the moonlight. No alarm clock was necessary since Galahs, Kookaburras and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos made more than adequate substitute. And yes, a snake was seen, when it shot between the feet of two of the New Zealanders as they walked in file to view a nest. In all, a total of 141 bird species was recorded, and many of these were breeding.

All of us enjoyed the trip and the friendly company of the RAOU members.

BETH BROWN

## Sea-watching

On 24/11/85 I completed a sea watch from 10.30 to 12.30 at Waverly Beach, North Wanganui. The cliffs here are about 12 m high.

About 3 km offshore there was a steady stream of prions moving quickly southwards and numbers were as follows: 10.30-11.00, 450 birds per minute; 11.00-12.00 no prions recorded; 12.00-12.10, 400 birds per minute; 12.10-12.25, 350 birds per minute; 12.25-12.30, 400 birds per minute. This totals about 24,750 prions but as a steady stream of birds was already passing when I arrived, many more birds may have been present along the Wanganui coast. However, it is also possible that the birds were flying in a broad clockwise loop beyond the horizon, thus being counted several times.

At 11.00 Sooty Shearwaters appeared and were recorded until bad weather prevented observations at 12.30. The shearwaters soon formed a dense stream, also moving southwards. Numbers were as follows: 11.00-11.40, 400 birds per minute; 11.40-11.50, 200 birds per minute; 11.50-12.00, 400 birds per minute; this gives a total of about 22,000 Sooty Shearwaters. After 12.00 large flocks started to wheel around, which made counting no longer feasible.

Other birds seen included 3 Gannets and a Giant Petrel. None of the prions and shearwaters was visible without a telescope. Obviously, sea-watching can be very profitable at times, and so why not get out to your nearest headland and do a sea-watch now.

PHILIP BATTLE

## Labour Weekend Camp — Hawkes Bay

Members are invited to take part in a dotterel count on Hawkes Bay rivers during Labour Weekend 1986. This is a second attempt at such a count. The first was in 1985 but had to be cancelled because of the wet weather. Full details will appear with the June issue of *Notornis*, and we hope to have a good muster of members.

KATHLEEN TODD

## OSNZ Rare Birds Committee

The Rare Birds Committee intends to publish a series of 3 articles to help members with the reporting of rare birds in New Zealand. The first, published below, is the list of species for which descriptions are required before records can be accepted and included in the checklist.

This article will be followed with an example of a completed Unusual Bird Report form, showing how a bird should be well described to assist with its acceptance.

Finally, we plan to publish a few notes to help inexperienced observers in their approach to bird identification.

JOHN FENNELL, *Secretary*, Rare Birds Committee

## OSNZ Rare Bird Recording — 1

The following list includes bird species recorded in New Zealand up to 1985. For some of these and for *any species not on this list* (i.e. species *new* to New Zealand and species currently assumed to be extinct) descriptions are required before records can be accepted.

### Recording

Descriptions should be done on Unusual Bird Report forms (UBRs), copies of which are held by Regional Representatives. Descriptions are required for both live and dead birds (e.g. beach-wrecked seabirds).

### Species of national level rarity

These are marked on the list in bold type, followed by N.

National level rarities are reviewed by the Rare Birds Committee (RBC) and accepted records are forwarded to the Checklist Committee for inclusion in the New Zealand list. Details are retained on file by the RBC Secretary.

### Species of local level rarity

These are marked on the list in italics, followed by L.

Local level rarities can be reviewed by the Regional Representative (RR) or Regional Recorder, and completed UBRs with RR comments are forwarded to the RBC for filing. In some cases (e.g. in the event of an inadequate description or a first record for the district) the RR may prefer to get an additional comment from the RBC. The Checklist Committee is advised of the acceptance of records.

### Other cases where reports are required for birds on the NZ list

(OUR) = Out of usual range (as given in the 1970 Checklist and its 1980 amendments). For seabirds this usually means away from their known breeding grounds (and this includes beach wrecks).

Any species *newly* breeding in New Zealand, including assisted immigrants and escapees from captivity, should also be reported with full descriptions and proof of breeding.

### Museums

Museum ornithologists can assist considerably with this scheme by providing details of birds brought into the museums. Where a specimen has been identified in the museum and has been preserved (e.g. as a skin), the additional details needed are date, locality, finder, museum reference number and other evident points of interest (e.g. plumage condition, age, sex).

### Addresses

The addresses of all RRs and the Secretary of the RBC are published on the inside covers of *Notornis*.

## SPECIES LIST

N = National list      L = Local list

OUR = Out of usual range

Brown Kiwi			
<b>Little Spotted Kiwi</b>	N(except Kapiti Is.)		
Great Spotted Kiwi			
<i>Emperor Penguin</i>		L	
<i>King Penguin</i>		L	
Yellow-eyed Penguin			
<i>Adélie Penguin</i>		L	
<i>Gentoo Penguin</i>		L	
<i>Chinstrap Penguin</i>		L	
Blue Penguin			
White-flipped Penguin			
<b>Royal Penguin</b>		N	
<b>Macaroni Penguin</b>		N	
Rockhopper Penguin	(N <i>moseleyi</i> )		
Fiordland Crested Penguin			
Snares Crested Penguin			
Erect-crested Penguin			
<b>Magellanic Penguin</b>		N	
New Zealand Dabchick	(L South Island)		
<i>Australian Little Grebe</i>		L	
<i>Hoary-headed Grebe</i>		L	
<i>Southern Crested Grebe</i>	(L North Island)		
Wandering Albatross			
Royal Albatross			
Black-browed Albatross			
Grey-headed Albatross			
<i>Yellow-nosed Albatross</i>		L	
<b>Black-footed Albatross</b>		N	
Buller's Albatross			
Shy Albatross			
Salvin's Albatross			
Chatham Island Albatross	N(OUR)		
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross			
Antarctic Petrel			
Antarctic Fulmar			
Southern Giant Petrel			
Northern Giant Petrel			
Cape Pigeon			
<b>Snow Petrel</b>		N	
Grey-faced Petrel			
White-headed Petrel			
<b>Providence Petrel</b>		N	
<b>Juan Fernandez Petrel</b>		N	
White-naped Petrel	N(OUR)		
<b>Phoenix Petrel</b>		N	
Mottled Petrel			
<i>Soft-plumaged Petrel</i>		L	
<b>New Caledonian Petrel</b>		N	
<b>Chatham Island Taiko</b>		N	
Kermadec Petrel			
Cook's Petrel			
<b>Chatham Island Petrel</b>		N	
<b>Stejneger's Petrel</b>		N	
Pycroft's Petrel	N(OUR)		
Black-winged Petrel			
Kerguelen Petrel			
Blue Petrel			
Thin-billed Prion	L (wrecks)		
Broad-billed Prion			
Antarctic Prion	L (wrecks)		
Salvin's Prion	L (wrecks)		
Fairy Prion			
Fulmar Prion	L (wrecks)		
Grey Petrel			
Black Petrel			
Westland Black Petrel			
White-chinned Petrel			
<b>Cory's Shearwater</b>		N	
<b>Pink-footed Shearwater</b>		N	
Buller's Shearwater			
Wedge-tailed Shearwater			N(OUR)
Flesh-footed Shearwater			
<b>Christmas Island Shearwater</b>		N	
Sooty Shearwater			
<i>Short-tailed Shearwater</i>		L	
<b>Manx Shearwater</b>		N	
Hutton's Shearwater			
Fluttering Shearwater			
Little Shearwater			
<b>Leach's Storm Petrel</b>		N	
<i>Wilson's Storm Petrel</i>		L	
<i>Grey-backed Storm Petrel</i>		L	
White-faced Storm Petrel			
<i>Black-bellied Storm Petrel</i>		L	
<b>White-bellied Storm Petrel</b>		N	
Common Diving Petrel			
<b>South Georgian Diving Petrel</b>		N	
<i>White-tailed Tropic Bird</i>		L	
Red-tailed Tropic Bird	L(OUR)		
<i>Australian Pelican</i>		L	
Australasian Gannet			
<i>Brown Booby</i>		L	
Masked Booby	L(OUR)		
Black Shag			
Little Black Shag			
Pied Shag			
Little Pied Shag			
King Shag			
Stewart Island Shag			
Bounty Island Shag			
Chatham Island Shag			
Campbell Island Shag			
Auckland Island Shag			
Spotted Shag			
Pitt Island Shag			
<b>Darter</b>		N	
<b>Greater Frigate Bird</b>		N	
<b>Lesser Frigate Bird</b>		N	
White-faced Heron			
<i>White-necked Heron</i>		L	
White Heron			
Little Egret			
<b>Intermediate Egret</b>		N	
Reef Heron			
Cattle Egret			
<b>Nankeen Night Heron</b>		N	
<b>Little Bittern</b>		N	
Australasian Bittern			
Glossy Ibis			
<i>White Ibis</i>		L	
Royal Spoonbill			
<i>Yellow-billed Spoonbill</i>		L	
<i>Plumed Whistling Duck</i>		L	
Mute Swan			
Black Swan			
Canada Goose			
<i>Cape Barren Goose</i>		L	
<i>Chestnut-breasted Shelduck</i>		L	
Paradise Shelduck			
Mallard			
Grey Duck			
Grey Teal			
Brown Teal			
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>		N	
New Zealand Shoveler			
Blue Duck			
Scaup			
<b>White-eyed Duck</b>		N	
<b>Wood Duck</b>		N	
Australasian Harrier			
<i>Nankeen Kestrel</i>		L	
<b>Black Falcon</b>		N	
New Zealand Falcon			
Red-legged Partridge			
Chukar			

<b>Grey Partridge</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Antarctic Skua</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Satin Flycatcher</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Bobwhite Quail</b>	<b>N</b>	Southern Great Skua	L(OUR)	Song Thrush	
Brown Quail		Pomarine Skua	L	Blackbird	
California Quail		Arctic Skua		Silvereye	
Pheasant		<b>Long-tailed Skua</b>	<b>N</b>	Stitchbird	N(mainland)
Peafowl		Southern Black-backed Gull		Bellbird	
Wild Turkey		Red-billed Gull		Tui	
Guineafowl		Black-billed Gull		<b>Red Wattle Bird</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Brolga</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>White-winged Black Tern</i>	L	Yellowhammer	
<b>Banded Rail</b>		<b>Whiskered Tern</b>	<b>N</b>	Cirl Bunting	L(OUR)
<b>Auckland Island Rail</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>Gull-billed Tern</i>	L	Chaffinch	
Marsh Crake		Caspian Tern		Greenfinch	
Spotless Crake		Black-fronted Tern		Goldfinch	
Weka		Antarctic Tern	N(OUR)	Redpoll	
Takahe	N(OUR)	<i>Crested Tern</i>	L	House Sparrow	
Pukeko		Fairy Tern	N(OUR)	Starling	
<b>Dusky Moorhen</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Arctic Tern</b>	<b>N</b>	Indian Myna	
<b>Black-tailed Native Hen</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Common Tern</b>	<b>N</b>	Saddleback	N(mainland)
Australasian Coot		Eastern Little Tern		Kokako	N(South Island)
South Island Pied Oystercatcher		White-fronted Tern		<b>White-browed Wood-swallow</b>	<b>N</b>
Variable Oystercatcher		Sooty Tern	L(OUR)	<b>Masked Wood-swallow</b>	<b>N</b>
Chatham Island Oystercatcher		White-capped Noddy	N(OUR)	Australian Magpie	
Least Golden Plover		Common Noddy	N(OUR)	Rock	
<i>Grey Plover</i>	L	<i>Grey Ternlet</i>	L		
Spur-winged Plover		White Tern	N(OUR)		
Banded Dotterel		Rock Dove			
<b>Red-capped Dotterel</b>	<b>N</b>	New Zealand Pigeon			
<b>Red-kneed Dotterel</b>	<b>N</b>	Barbary Dove	L(OUR)		
New Zealand Dotterel		Spotted Dove			
<b>Ringed Plover</b>	<b>N</b>	Kakapo	N(OUR)		
<i>Mongolian Dotterel</i>	L	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo			
<i>Large Sand Dotterel</i>	L	Kaka			
<b>Oriental Dotterel</b>	<b>N</b>	Kea			
Black-fronted Dotterel		Crimson Rosella			
New Zealand Shore Plover	N(OUR)	Eastern Rosella			
Wrybill		Antipodes Island Parakeet			
Far-eastern Curlew		Red-crowned Parakeet			
<b>Bristle-thighed Curlew</b>	<b>N</b>	Yellow-crowned Parakeet			
Whimbrel		<b>Orange-fronted Parakeet</b>	<b>N</b>		
<i>Little Whimbrel</i>	L	<b>Fan-tailed Cuckoo</b>	<b>N</b>		
<i>Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit</i>	L	<b>Pallid Cuckoo</b>	<b>N</b>		
<i>Hudsonian Godwit</i>	L	<i>Oriental Cuckoo</i>	L		
Bar-tailed Godwit		<b>Channel-billed Cuckoo</b>	<b>N</b>		
<b>Upland Sandpiper</b>	<b>N</b>	Shining Cuckoo			
<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>	<b>N</b>	Long-tailed Cuckoo			
<i>Marsh Sandpiper</i>	L	<b>Barn Owl</b>	<b>N</b>		
<i>Common Sandpiper</i>	L	Morepork			
<i>Wandering Tattler</i>	L	<b>Laughing Owl</b>	<b>N</b>		
<i>Grey-tailed Tattler</i>	L	Little Owl	N(North Island)		
Greenshank		<i>Spine-tailed Swift</i>	L		
Terek Sandpiper		<i>Fork-tailed Swift</i>	L		
Turnstone		New Zealand Kingfisher			
<b>Ruff</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>Laughing Kookaburra</i>	L		
New Zealand Snipe	N(OUR)	<i>Broad-billed Roller</i>	L		
<b>Japanese Snipe</b>	<b>N</b>	Rifleman			
Knot		<b>Bush Wren</b>	<b>N</b>		
<b>Great Knot</b>	<b>N</b>	Rock Wren			
Pectoral Sandpiper		Skylark			
<b>Baird's Sandpiper</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>Australian Tree Martin</i>	L		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		<i>Fairy Martin</i>	L		
<b>Dunlin</b>	<b>N</b>	Welcome Swallow			
<b>White-rumped Sandpiper</b>	<b>N</b>	Pipit			
Curlew Sandpiper		<i>Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike</i>	L		
<b>Western Sandpiper</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>White-winged Triller</b>	<b>N</b>		
Red-necked Stint		Duncock			
Sanderling		Fernbird			
<b>Broad-billed Sandpiper</b>	<b>N</b>	Brown Creeper			
<i>Red-necked Avocet</i>	L	Whitehead			
Pied Stilt		Yellowhead	L(north of Arthur's Pass)		
Black Stilt		Grey Warbler			
<b>Grey Phalarope</b>	<b>N</b>	Chatham Island Warbler			
<b>Red-necked Phalarope</b>	<b>N</b>	Fantail			
<b>Wilson's Phalarope</b>	<b>N</b>	Black Robin			
<b>Oriental Pratincole</b>	<b>N</b>	Robin			
		Tit			

## Colour-banded gulls and terns

We have banded 400 Black-backed Gull chicks at the Boulder Bank, Nelson, with the combination of YELLOW over METAL on the right leg. White-fronted Tern chicks in the same area are also being colour-banded — left leg WHITE, right leg METAL.

Members are asked to check juvenile gulls and terns for colour bands and any sightings should be reported to Jenny Hawkins, 772 Atawhai Drive, Nelson.

JENNY HAWKINS

## Royal Albatrosses

This season (October 1985-September 1986) there are 10 nesting pairs and about 18 unemployed birds at the Tairoa Head colony. We have about 7 who come constantly to the Head to display, bill, and get acquainted with each other.

Grandma, aged 58, is the oldest known banded wild bird in the world, and she is still breeding. This bird was one of the original pair that Dr Richdale studied away back in the 1937/38 season. We expect a chick from her at the end of January.

SUE GUTHRIE

## Reef Heron nest

On 9/12/85 a Reef Heron nest was found on Kaikoura Peninsula. The nest was beneath an overhanging rock and shielded by *Coprosma robusta* shrubs. There were 3 chalky-blue eggs and both parents were seen at the nest. On 3/1/86 Jack Cowie, Ian Flux & Jane Maxwell returned to the nest. Two chicks were present and these were colour-banded.

There are at least 2 other Reef Herons in the vicinity.

IAN FLUX & JANE MAXWELL

## National Wader Count — November 1985

A total of 162,453 waders was counted during the third national summer wader count, completed in November and December 1985. Over 200 OSNZ members and friends participated in this very successful count. Two welcome additions to this count were reports from Gisborne/Wairoa and Taranaki; both these regions have been notable gaps in previous counts. Our thanks to Geof. Foreman and Myck Davis for their efforts in these regions.

As for the 1983 and 1984 summer counts, participants were asked to record the numbers of arctic migrants, and those of our own wader species. The following is a preliminary report of the results of the count. **Total numbers:** A summary of wader totals by region is given in Table 1. Once again, Bar-tailed Godwits and Lesser Knots comprised the majority of the birds counted and the order of abundance of the top 5 arctic migrant species was the same as in previous years i.e. Bar-tailed Godwits, Lesser Knots, Turnstones, Golden Plovers and Red-necked Stints.

The totals for Bar-tailed Godwits, Lesser Knots and Red-necked Stints are remarkably similar to those recorded in previous counts

with 82,826 godwits in 1985 compared with 82,776 in 1984, 49,116 (1985) versus 51,935 (1984) Lesser Knots, and 172 (1985) versus 186 (1984) Red-necked Stints. The number of Turnstones counted in 1985 (4,423) was well down on the totals for 1983 and 1984 (5,514 & 5,920 respectively) but there were more Golden Plovers (548) than in previous years (368 in 1983 & 300 in 1984).

Most NZ-breeding species would still be on their nesting grounds at the time of this count, therefore only a proportion of the total population would have been surveyed. We depend upon the winter counts for more reliable information about the populations of these species. However, it is interesting to note the continued increase of Spur-winged Plovers in the North Island, with 586 being recorded. This compares with 194 in November 1984.

**Distribution:** Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted are listed in Table 2, and the general distribution of waders is shown on the accompanying map. These show the same general pattern of distribution that occurred in November 1983 & 1984 i.e. that in summer at least, most of the migratory waders are concentrated in the north (Parengarenga to Kawhia), Bay of Plenty, Nelson and Southland.

Table 2. Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted in Nov/Dec 1985

Location	Number of Birds
Manukau Harbour	32,337
Farewell Spit	24,508
Kaipara Harbour	17,726
Firth of Thames	14,664
Whangarei Harbour	7,208
Rangaunu	6,146
Parengarenga	5,599
Ohope Spit	4,061
Kawhia Harbour	3,874
Waimea Estuary	3,668
Invercargill Estuary	3,630
Bowentown Shellbanks	3,352
Henderson-Kowhai	2,921
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	2,017
Motueka Estuary	1,875
Lake Ellesmere	1,846
Sulphur Point	1,579
Awarua Bay	1,553
Aotea Harbour	1,254

Once again there were some marked annual changes in the totals for some major areas e.g. Farewell Spit 24,508 (1985), 41,896 (1984) & 28,007 (1983); Kaipara 17,726 (1985), 8,953 (1984) & 9,401 (1983). However, there is less annual variation for the NZ total — 162,453 (1985), 166,088

TABLE 1. Waders counted in New Zealand — November 1985 (\*, not counted)

	Far North Northland	Auckland S. Auckland	Waikato	BOP	Gisborne Wairoa	Hawkes Bay	Taranaki	Manawatu Wanganui	Wellington Wairarapa	Nelson	Marlborough	West Coast	Canterbury
S.I. Pied Oystercatcher	184	6,339	345	92	6	2	—	25	21	2,598	39	205	1,221
Variable Oystercatcher	517	286	5	125	9	1	8	19	32	137	11	46	2
Golden Plover	78	101	—	49	13	36	—	48	24	20	—	—	123
Grey Plover	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—
Spur-winged Plover	39	34	—	3	3	193	14	54	246	*	*	*	*
N.Z. Dotterel	235	157	8	70	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	—	—
Banded Dotterel	166	49	13	45	29	459	—	53	38	60	16	90	322
Large Sand Dotterel	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Black-fronted Dotterel	—	—	—	—	—	114	—	2	1	—	—	—	5
Wrybill	15	17	—	4	—	—	—	4	2	—	—	—	11
Far-Eastern Curlew	4	8	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	9	—	—	2
Asiatic Whimbrel	20	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whimbrel species	2	72	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	23	—	2	—
Little Whimbrel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	11,522	31,244	4,700	9,509	367	389	41	655	273	17,655	32	507	1,820
Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Hudsonian Godwit	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greenshank	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Marsh Sandpiper	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Tattler species	—	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Terek Sandpiper	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Turnstone	787	969	—	292	—	2	1	2	3	933	156	—	29
Japanese Snipe	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lesser Knot	10,299	26,237	14	114	1	30	1	214	23	11,855	—	59	49
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	15	63	—	8	4	5	1	2	4	2	—	—	26
Pectoral Sandpiper	—	2	—	1	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Curlew Sandpiper	—	3	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	59
Red-necked Stint	3	30	—	6	—	2	—	—	4	25	4	—	88
Sanderling	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	5	—	—	1
Pied Stilt	255	2,839	39	133	67	934	49	132	744	33	143	96	1,990
Black Stilt	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Hybrid Stilt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,141</b>	<b>68,466</b>	<b>5,128</b>	<b>10,545</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>2,171</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>33,364</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>5,760</b>

(1984) & 142,467 (1983 — but this total is from only 61 sites, whereas 100+ were counted in 1984 & 1985) — therefore the annual variation between sites may just reflect changes in the distribution of arctic waders within NZ, rather than changes in the total number of waders spending the summer here.

The extent of coverage in most regions is now very good, and it is hoped that counts from Taranaki & Gisborne/Wairoa continue to be reported. Once again there was a substantial effort from regions where we have few members and greater distances to travel and I would particularly like to thank participants from the Far North/Northland, Bay of Plenty, West Coast and Southland.

**Species distribution:** Once again the harbours of the Far North/Northland & Auckland/South Auckland, and the Bay of Plenty, and Nelson regions were the most important areas for Bar-tailed Godwits and Lesser Knots. Turnstones were concentrated at Parengarenga — 409, Rangaunu — 124, Manukau — 252, Kaipara — 608, Bowentown Shellbanks — 250, Kaikoura Peninsula — 127, Farewell Spit — 598, Motueka Estuary — 300, Invercargill Estuary — 569, and Awarua Bay — 591. While Golden Plovers favoured Parengarenga — 64, Kaipara — 60, Manukau — 35, Kaituna Cut/Maketu Estuary — 36,

Westshore Lagoons/Ahuriri Estuary — 31, Manawatu Estuary — 47, Lake Ellesmere — 123, and Invercargill Estuary — 26.

Among the rarer species, there were 47 whimbrels at the Firth of Thames and 24 at Kaipara; and there were good numbers of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers at Manukau (18), Firth of Thames (40) and Lake Ellesmere (23).

**Future counts:** A further winter count is planned for June 1986. Once this is completed we will have information from 6 counts — 3 each from summer and winter. Then a detailed analysis of all counts will be prepared for *Notornis*. Such an analysis will give us much valuable detailed information about the distribution and numbers of arctic migrants in NZ, and about the population size and winter distribution of NZ-breeding waders. In addition, such an analysis should show the many gaps in our knowledge of waders in NZ and provide suggestions for future projects.

Meanwhile, the future of the National Wader Counts will be discussed at the RRs meeting in May 1986, and so if you have any comments to make about the future of the project now is the time to contact your RR. I too would be interested to receive comments from members.

PAUL SAGAR

## What's in a Name?

Well, how did you get on with this ornithological teaser? Correct answers are: Abbot's Booby, Audubon's Oriole, Buller's Shearwater, Cook's Petrel, Costa's Hummingbird, Darwin's Rhea, Donaldson-Smith's Nightjar, Eleanor's Falcon, Franklin's Gull, Gould's Frogmouth, Humboldt Penguin, Iherings's Antwren, James' Flamingo, Kittlitz's Plover, Lilian's Lovebird, Livingstone's Turaco, Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, Moreau's Sunbird, Newton's Parakeet, Orlag's Tyrannulet, Perrin's Bush-Shrike, Queen Victoria's Riflebird, Ross' Goose, Speke's Weaver, Temminck's Courser, Upcher's Warbler, Verreaux's Eagle, Wallace's Fruit Dove, Xantu's Murrelet, Yersin's Laughing Thrush, Zenker's Honeyguide.

HUGH ROBERTSON & PAUL JAMES

## Birding Howlers

May we devote an occasional few lines to such unintentional gems as 2 birds of passage which recently lightened this record-keeper's darkness? In Checklist order they are:

Charadriidae  
Double-breasted Dotterel  
Columbidae  
Turtle-necked Dove

BETH BROWN

## New ICBP publication

The International Council for Bird Preservation advises that the following new publication is available.

*Conservation studies on raptors*, edited by I. Newton & R.D. Chancellor (492pp).

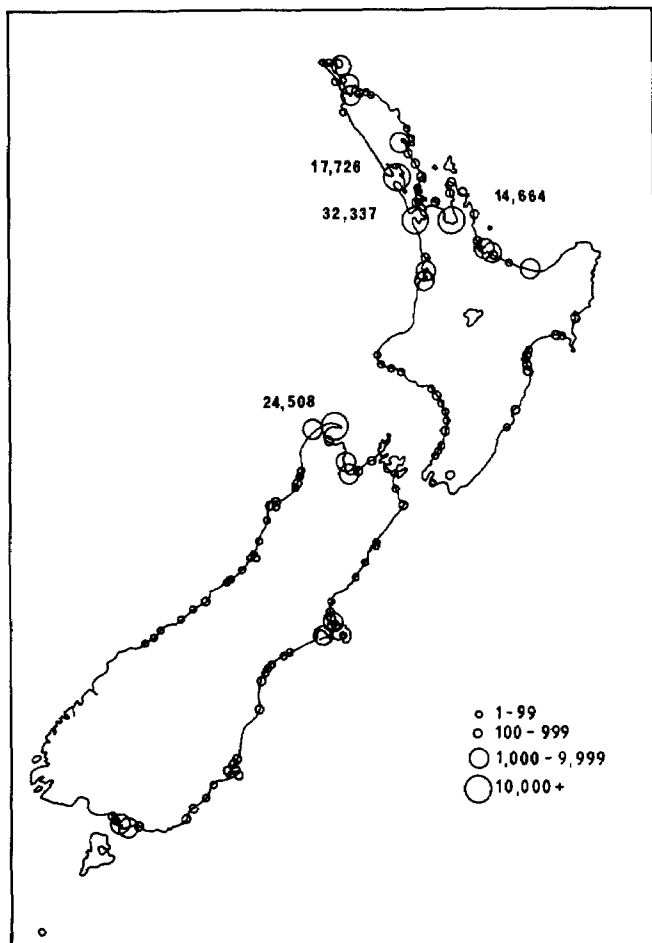
Birds of prey are an awe-inspiring and fascinating group of birds. Their status and conservation are of special concern because of their value as bio-indicators. What harms them is likely to threaten us in the future.

Papers by experts from all over the world are included in *Conservation studies on raptors*, which is fifth in the Technical Publication Series from ICBP. Special attention is focussed on the plight of raptors in the Mediterranean. Sections are also devoted to Tropical Forest Raptors, and Migration of Raptors. Eight papers are devoted to the Peregrine Falcon. In addition to these studies, a major section deals with Management and Conservation issues.

*Conservation Studies on Raptors* is the result of the Second World Conference on Birds of Prey held at Thessaloniki, Greece, in 1982, organised by the ICBP World Working Group on Birds of Prey. Included in the volume are the proceedings of the Workshop on the Biology of Vultures. The price is £25.50, post free.

Orders and payment should be sent to: International Council for Bird Preservation, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, England.

Otago	Southland	Outlying Islands	TOTAL
705	1,298	—	13,080
21	—	—	1,219
3	53	—	548
—	4	—	8
*	*	—	586 *
—	—	—	473
5	44	—	1,389
—	—	—	1
—	—	—	122
—	—	—	53
—	13	—	40
—	—	—	23
—	2	—	105
—	—	—	1
962	3,150	3	82,829
—	—	—	2
2	—	—	2
—	3	—	4
—	—	—	2
1	4	—	12
—	—	—	8
2	1,247	3	4,426
—	—	1	1
—	220	—	49,116
—	2	—	132
—	—	—	5
—	8	—	76
—	2	—	164
—	1	—	8
393	156	—	8,003
—	—	—	3
—	—	—	12
094	6,207	7	162,453



Distribution & number of waders in NZ, November 1985

## Regional Roundup

**Auckland:** Observations of the Caspian Tern colony at Mangawhai, mentioned in the previous issue, continued through to January. The largest count of sitting birds — 140 — was made in early November, and overall we estimate that between 60 and 120 young reached fledging, making this the best season in this refuge for a decade. The colony was visited at least 15 times over the 3 months, and as each visit normally involved a 200 km round trip from Auckland members are to be commended for their efforts in seeing this project through successfully. Although the region's other traditional colony, at South Kaipara Head, was again vacant there are encouraging reports of a new colony on a sand island in Kaipara, off Shelly Beach.

A pair of Cattle Egrets was still present at Jordans Peninsula, Kaipara, on 7/12/85, and a flock of 7 was reported from Mangere in early January. We look forward to hearing more about Cattle Egret facts and theories at our May meeting, to be addressed by David Blaeker who has studied this species in South Africa.

The continued presence of a few Bitterns was an encouraging aspect of the survey of the Muriwai dune lakes, organised by Gwenda Pulham on 9/2/86. However, despite the wet summer both the lakes themselves and the numbers of Dabchicks which they support continue to decline. In contrast, the numbers of Paradise Shelducks are increasing at several locations in the region; a flock of 330 at the small Orewa sewage ponds on 12/2/86 is a striking record. However, we do not yet appear to have encountered any Chestnut-breasted Shelduck in the Auckland area.

Despite the assorted weather in recent months, members have worked hard on the regular programme of schemes and censuses, and have taken part — or attempted to — in joint field activities in Hawkes Bay, Taupo, Far North, and elsewhere. A planned trip to **Tapora (22-23/2/86)** to watch waders and terns, and to seek crakes and kiwis, has regrettably had to be postponed . . . but at least this allowed the RR time to compile this report. (Michael Taylor).

**South Auckland:** This summer has been one of interesting records. On New Year's Day Don Stracey, visiting from Wellington, saw what he believes was a Great Knot at Karaka. Among a great number of other birds were c30 Whimbrels and c50 Golden Plovers. Other records from Karaka include a Large Sand Dotterel, 10,000 Knots and 8,000 Bar-tailed Godwits on 17/11, and a possible Sanderling on 16/11. A Mongolian Dotterel appeared later, and a single Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit on 10/1, was followed by 3 on 21/1. Farther west, at Camp Morley, 8 Sulphur-crested Cockatoos were noticed in early November. These are probably a

breakaway group from the main resident flock at Wairamarama.

The Firth of Thames also had some surprises. On 7/12, Robin Child and John Dowding counted 25 skuas chasing White-fronted Terns from the Access Bay colony. The census on 15/12 revealed 47 whimbrels at Piako, a record count. Other sightings included 4 Black-tailed Godwits on 2/1 and 2 on 18/1, apparently Asiatics; 27 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, 7 Little Terns and 2 Terek Sandpipers on 27/1; a Grey Plover; last season's albinistic godwit, looking even whiter; 10 Far Eastern Curlews; 1 tattler (?Wandering) and 1 Mongolian Dotterel. There were 3 possible Sanderlings reported early in the summer.

No Reef Herons were reported in South Auckland during the summer counts and this does not bode well for the future of this species in our region. A Black Stilt, with a metal band on its left leg, was seen on the mudflats near the Opoutere Youth Hostel on 10/2. This bird needs to be checked carefully for colour bands. The counts for the summer National Wader Count went well but more is still needed from the Coromandel Peninsula. Two members from other regions were kind enough to send in their records from trips to the area.

As usual, a barbecue took the place of our December meeting. It was held in the delightful garden of Josie and Gus Dreissen's home on Manurewa Hill. At our February meeting Dave Garrick's close involvement with the Otorohanga Zoological Society's work came through effectively as he told us of the work being done by this remarkably successful group in breeding native birds in captivity (Beth Brown).

**Waikato:** The end of last year was marked with a variety of activities. Well attended evening meetings included an account by Roy Dench of the status of the Blue Duck, a showing of our bird slide collection, an address with video by Peter Lapwood on the introduction of the Red-legged Partridge, and a very successful end-of-year meeting at the Otorohanga Kiwi House.

Field trips included a wader study trip to Miranda, and a trip to Little Barrier, both of which were very much enjoyed by all participants.

Even though a proportion of our 'regular' members were still away on holiday, this year started well with a Members' Evening, to which many members contributed. The first of this year's Hamilton Lake surveys was completed by 4 members. Mercia Barnes reports that Black Swan numbers are down significantly on last year, while the other species frequenting the lake, such as mallards, Australian Coots and shags, were present in their usual numbers.

On 19/1/86 Peter de Lange saw a Nankeen Kestrel in the upper Waitomo Valley. The bird was seen hovering in characteristic fashion. Peter was alerted to its presence by

local farmers, who reported seeing an 'albino falcon' (Folkert Nieuwland).

**Nelson:** The last half of 1985 provided some interesting field trips. In October some local members assisted Marlborough and Canterbury members in a 3-day survey of the Wairau River. The weather was good and there was a lot of birds, although the going was fairly strenuous at times, especially for those who had to climb bluffs. Provisional results included 1,300 Black-fronted Terns (nesting all along the river), 900 Banded Dotterels, and 16 Black-fronted Dotterels.

For our final meeting of 1985 we were fortunate to have Peter Newbery, a reserves manager with the RSPB. He gave us a very good talk about how the RSPB functions and it was interesting to compare conservation in England with that in NZ. Peter illustrated his talk with some beautiful slides.

Jon Jackson and Robin Child have both seen Wandering Albatross in Tasman Bay, on separate occasions. Jon has also seen skuas in the harbour during December and January. Andrew Crossland, from Christchurch, saw 7 Far Eastern Curlews on the Waimea Estuary in December, and 7 Golden Plovers at the Riwaka Rivermouth. There has also been a Little Tern at Motueka (Jenny Hawkins).

**Canterbury:** The 1985 end-of-year evening meeting took the form of an informal get-together. This gave members an opportunity to chat, while enjoying liquid refreshment and a substantial supper, most of the latter thoughtfully provided by the RR. Such gatherings are always enjoyable and are likely to produce a useful exchange of ideas.

Lake Ellesmere was the scene of much activity over the summer months. Arctic migrants included a Greenshank, a Little Whimbrel, and a record number of Golden Plovers (123) for the lake. Since January, a lot of time has been spent looking at dotterel legs. Generally, this has been well-rewarded and many colour-banded birds, from all over the southern half of the South Island, have been recorded.

A members' evening got the 1986 activities underway, and this provided an opportunity for everyone to recount their summer's activities. In addition, there was a wide selection of excellent slides shown.

A visit to Lake Ellesmere at the end of February was disappointing from the aspect of arctic waders, with 3 Bar-tailed Godwits comprising the total number seen. However, there were good numbers of Banded Dotterels (1 colour-banded), Wrybills and Pied Stilts. Highlights were a hybrid stilt and 18 Royal Spoonbills. Were the latter from the Otago breeding island? (Paul Sagar).

**Otago:** I'm happy to be able to report 3 breeding pairs of Black-fronted Dotterels on the Taieri River, between Allanton and Outram. One pair raised 2 young, another

pair was seen with 2 1.5 week old young, and the third pair hatched 2 eggs. It appears that this species is now well established on the lower Taieri River.

Tony & Anne Hocken saw 3 Far Eastern Curlews at Papanui Inlet on 22/1/86, a Siberian Tattler was still in residence too. John Darby received a report of a dying Giant Petrel at Moeraki. This bird carried a Paris Museum band, and further details of banding location and age will be given when they come to hand.

I saw an Asiatic Whimbrel at Karitane on 5/1/86. The whimbrel was a much darker bird than the pale 160+ Bar-tailed Godwits, still in winter plumage.

The Royal Spoonbills from Moeraki began feeding at Hawkesbury Lagoon in January, when there were 7 on 8/1 & 11 on 10/1 (Peter Schweigman).

**Southland:** A total of 6 members completed a survey of the Aparima River, from the Waterloo Burn to Gummies Bush (some 100+ km), in late October. Highlights included 24 Black-fronted Dotterels, 50,000+ Black-billed Gulls (in 4 colonies), 50 Welcome Swallows and 8 Grey Ducks. Since then Maida Barlow & Roger Sutton have confirmed that Black-fronted Dotterels are breeding on the Oreti River, and Kim & Jenny Morrison saw at least 6 birds on the lower Mararoa River in early November.

Recent sightings include Wrybills at the Upukeroa Estuary (Lake Te Anau) and the Invercargill Estuary; Welcome Swallows nesting near Te Anau; a Chestnut-breasted Shelduck on a pond by Sinclairs Rd., and more on Lake Thomas; what is thought to be a record total of 117 Golden Plovers at the Invercargill Estuary; 2 sightings of a Snipe at Lake George; and 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers at the Riverton Estuary (Wynston Cooper).

## Band and Tag

The 1985/86 banding year closed on 31 March and we would like to remind banders that schedules covering this period are now due. Please forward any outstanding schedules, together with banding totals lists, as soon as possible to the Banding Office.

At this time of year quite a few permits will expire, and so please check your permit and if this applies to you, forward it to us with the application for renewal form. If your permit is due for renewal now, we request that you re-evaluate your programme and check whether your permit meets your specific requirements. Requests for alterations or extensions of the permit should be made clear on the application form.

## Banding Reports 1983/84 and 1984/85

Reports on the 1983/84 and 1984/85 banding years will be available in April. If you are interested in the reports, please forward your name and address to us as soon as possible and we will put you on the mailing

list. The reports give information about the number of birds banded per species for both years, and grand totals for all years. The reports also list totals by age and sex for each species, summaries of recoveries processed, and tables with the number of birds per species banded under each permit.

## New Bands

Shortly we expect delivery of a new aluminium band with a diameter of 2 mm (size AA). The band will be suitable for Rifleman, Grey Warbler and perhaps other small species. We would like to receive recommendations for species that may benefit from these smaller bands (together with leg measurements, please).

A new flipper band was designed for use on Rockhopper Penguins and a run of about 500 bands is now undergoing field trials on Campbell Island. The bands seem to be much better than the old design, but it will be at least another 8 months before any conclusive statements can be made.

A newly designed flipper band for Yellow-eyed Penguins is also under trial (in Otago) and appears to shape up quite well. Both flipper bands differ largely in size, but for the time being they are still prefixed 'J', and so please ensure that you order bands for the correct penguins species.

## Colour-dyed Waders

Our Australian colleagues requested us to bring the following schemes to your attention.

During their southward migration in September Knots, Red-necked Stints, Curlew Sandpipers, and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers will be dyed yellow with pyric acid solution. Please keep a look out for these birds and report sightings to the Banding Office.

Of interest, but not of direct relevance here in New Zealand, is that in April all waders caught on their northward migration in NW Australia will be dyed yellow, while those caught near Perth, Western Australia, will be dyed red. If you are overseas during this period and happen to come across any of these birds, please report them to us.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

## Banding Mail Bag

In our contribution to the December 1985 issue we reported the recovery of a Black-browed Mollymawk banded by the French. We now have received details from France, which are as follows:

C.F.-24674, Black-browed Mollymawk, banded on 28/1/85, as a chick in the Kerguelen Islands (49°20'S, 70°15'E). The bird was found dead on 27/10/84 at Whangamata Harbour beach.

Another overseas banded bird for which we recently received information is a Northern Giant Petrel (band number 957605), banded on 26/1/85 at Marion Island (46°54'S, 37°45'E) by the South

Africans. The bird was found dead at Karekare on 27/10/85.

Two Banded Dotterels banded in Australia were found nesting in the South Island. 041-01361 was banded on 31/5/81 at Werribee Sewage Farm, Victoria (38°03'S, 144°32'E) as an adult of unknown sex. The bird was found nesting near Alexandra on 27/10/85. 041-09885 was banded at Queenscliffe, Victoria (38°15'S, 144°40'E) as a juvenile of unknown sex. It was found nesting near Alexandra as well, on 20/10/85.

A Gannet with non-prefix band no. 44424, rebanded in 1971 from a partly illegible band, which places the original banding date between December 1955 and January 1956, and the location as either Mahuki Island (off Great Barrier Island) or Bush or Horuhoru Islands in the Hauraki Gulf. The bird was almost certainly banded as a chick. It was found dead at Whatipu Beach north side of Manukau Harbour on 17/11/85.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

## Eyes bigger than their belly

On 22/9 at Uretiti Beach, south of Whangarei, we found a Blue Petrel with a fish tail protruding from its bill. When we pulled on this, out came a 230 mm long marine eel — quite a mouthful for a Blue Petrel.

On 3/11 at Ocean Beach, Whangarei Heads we found a Buller's Shearwater, also with a fish tail protruding from its bill. This fish had deteriorated somewhat but appeared to be a yellow-eyed mullet — again, quite a mouthful for a Buller's Shearwater.

PAT & KAREN MILLER

## Crested Grebe in flight

On 13/8 Gerry Kennedy and I were involved in a survey of grebes on Lake Mapourika. We saw a bird, which appeared to be a grebe, near the middle of the lake but it was too far away to identify positively. As we approached, the bird took off and flew towards Jetty Bay until it disappeared from view. We continued into Jetty Bay and on approaching the boat ramp spotted a Crested Grebe in the corner of the bay. I am quite sure that this was the bird we had seen previously.

As we watched, the grebe took off once again and flew across the bow of our boat, about 12-15 m over the water. Once again it disappeared beyond the entrance of the bay, a distance of about 1 km. In flight, the grebe left the water very rapidly, without using its feet, in a similar manner to that of a duck. Its wing beats were short and rapid, and its flying speed was similar too or slightly faster than that of a Grey Duck.

W. WOOD



## Brown Creeper Survey

Unfortunately there was a poor response to the Brown Creeper survey. Only 109 cards were received from 25 contributors. Before moving on for a rather disappointing look at the information received, I would like to thank all those who did contribute and especially Alan Cragg, who provided a comprehensive map of Westland National Park, Alan Wilson who covered Arthur's Pass National Park, and Bev Elliot, whose tramping trips are now well known to me.

The 2 maps compare the 10,000 yard squares covered in the present survey with the distribution of Brown Creepers from the *Atlas of Bird Distribution in New Zealand*. It is extremely unlikely that Brown Creepers have decreased in such a dramatic way since 1979. In fact the survey map gives a very good indication of just where observers live and where they went on their holidays.

Consequently, from the distribution and status viewpoints the survey was a complete failure. The small number of cards allowed little other information to be gleaned.

The survey did show that Brown Creepers occur from sea-level to about 1,300 m, and in a variety of habitats as the table shows.

Native vegetation	Number of records
Beech forest	30
Lowland podocarp forest	11
Other forest	10
Kanuka/manuka scrub	32
Subalpine scrub	4
<b>Introduced vegetation</b>	
Mature conifers	3
Willow, gorse & scrub	4
Other	1

If anything, Brown Creepers favour low native vegetation, especially kanuka, manuka and matagouri and are more common in beech forest than in lowland podocarp/beech forest. They are present in mature conifers and have adapted to some extent to introduced vegetation, and even occur in the Dunedin Botanic Gardens.

A final moan and an apology before I finish. Some observers used local place names without map references and these proved difficult or impossible to locate on my maps. I realise that it is not always

possible to provide a map reference, but in such cases in a survey like this, it would be very helpful to relate your position to a well-known and mapped centre, river or mountain etc. I apologise to those few who used metric maps. In 4 cases I left the squares off the map because I had difficulties in locating them on the 10,000 yard grid. In other cases the mapped square is the nearest approximation.

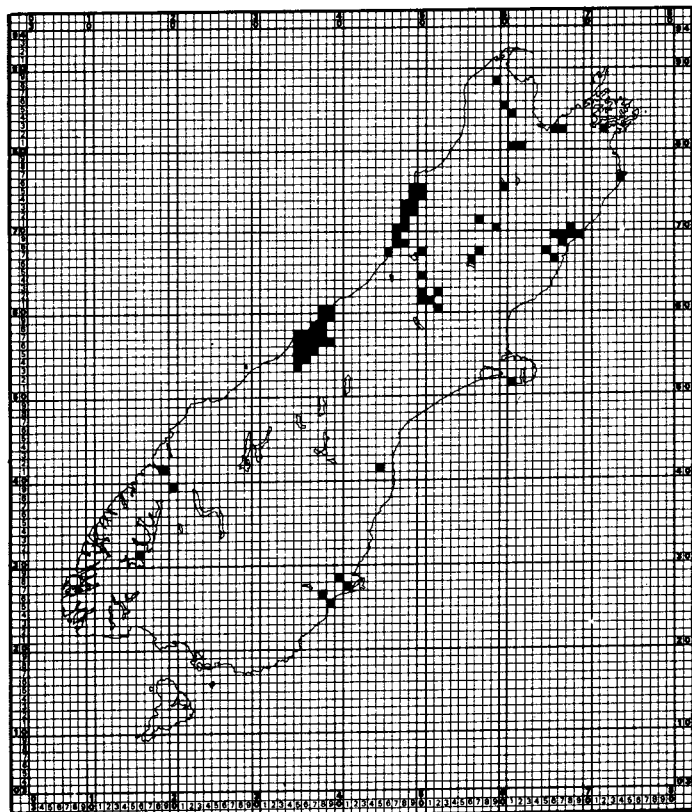
**List of contributors:** Raymond Allan (1), Alan Baker (2), Donald Bate (2), Alvin Brett (18), Allan Cragg (map), L. J. Davies (3), Bev Elliot (25), Lloyd Esler (5), E. K. Fox (4), S. E. Gardiner (2), Peter Gaze (3), V. Hamilton (2), Kay Holder (2), Pauline Jenkins (2), C. S. Lauder (2), G. Loh (2), Bruce McKinley (5), D. S. Melville (2), Alison Nevill (1), Derek Onley (7), Greg Ramsay (1), J. & B. Seddon (2), R. H. Taylor (1), Alan Wilson (17), P. R. Wilson (1).

Thanks must also go to C. S. Lauder for organising and running the survey.

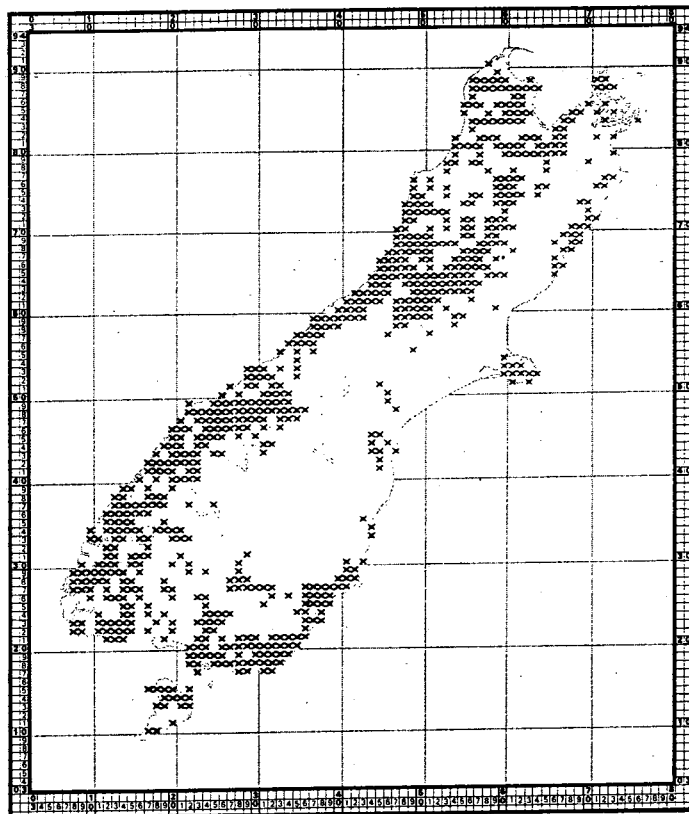
I would be interested to receive comments on why this survey was unsuccessful, in the hope that they might prove useful for future schemes.

D. J. ONLEY

10 000-YARD GRID



BROWN CREEPER



x = Brown Creeper (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*)

Brown Creepers do not occur in the North Island.

OSNZ Brown Creeper Survey 1982 - 84