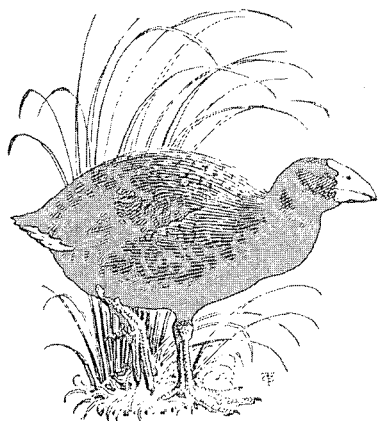


# Southern Bird

No. 4 December 2000 • ISSN 1175-1916







# Southern Bird

No. 4 December 2000. • ISSN 1175-1916

## Quotation

'Surely in vain the net is spread  
in the sight of any bird

The mist-netters' lament –  
Proverbs Ch.1, v.17

## Contents

	Page
Atlas update	3
Twitchatathon 2000	6
Rare birds	8-9
Regional Roundup	11

## Cover Photos

### Front Cover

New Zealand Robins are noted for their  
confiding nature. This one, at the Lewis  
Pass on the South Island in 1996, was  
even photographed on the cameraman's  
tripod!

Photo: Peter Harper

### Back Cover

A Wandering Albatross comes in to land  
at Kaikoura. This image is one of the  
finalists at the AGM and conference  
photographic competition in Napier in  
June

Photo: Brian Tyler

## Publisher

Published on behalf of the members of the  
Ornithological Society of New Zealand  
(Inc), P.O. Box 12397, Wellington, New  
Zealand. Email [osnz@xtra.co.nz](mailto:osnz@xtra.co.nz)

Edited by Tony Crocker, 118 Cones Road,  
Ashley, RD2 Rangiora. Tel (03) 313  
4995, fax (03) 364 2057, email  
[t.crocker@cont.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:t.crocker@cont.canterbury.ac.nz)

We welcome advertising enquiries.

## From the President's Desk



### OSNZ – a way forward

The future direction of the Society was discussed at some length at the combined meeting of Council and Regional Representatives held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting in Napier in June last. Tony Crocker, Kerry-Jayne Wilson, Lloyd Esler and David Melville were appointed to consider discussion at that meeting, and to formulate proposals for consideration by Council. Those people subsequently met over two days in Kaikoura and presented their proposals to Council, whose members considered them in detail at their meeting in Wellington in October.

Members of the discussion group believe that the current strength of the Society lies in an active membership, a large body of data, and other assets which the Society has not capitalised on. They recognise that in New Zealand there are many different organisations working for and with birds, and that there are substantial elements of ornithological expertise in other quarters, for example in universities, the Department of Conservation, and Crown Research Institutes.

Nevertheless, they believe that the Society has been and remains the premier repository for knowledge about birds in this country, but believe this is increasingly either not being recognised, or is forgotten, or is overlooked. They consider that the Society needs to determine what it is which makes it unique in this regard, and to investigate why other people and organisations do not recognise it as such. The Society needs to regain pre-eminence in the eyes of other people. OSNZ must again become *the* ornithological society of New Zealand.

Accordingly, members of the discussion group recommended that we need to work toward a position where **OSNZ will be recognised as the number one authority on birds in New Zealand.** Council has accepted this recommendation.

The discussion group put forward a number of goals which must be met in

order to achieve this objective, together with a list of items which they considered to be pertinent and necessary to the attainment of each goal. These have also been accepted by Council. In doing so, Council recognises that there is no point in either setting goals which are unattainable, or in setting unrealistically short timeframes for their attainment.

Members of the discussion group consider the Society must -

- **advance knowledge about birds through study** by, *inter alia*, research activities, schemes, monitoring, education, grants, projects assistance, training and, possibly, observatories.

- **become more relevant to conservation** by, *inter alia*, becoming involved in conservation from a scientific rather than an emotional perspective through such things as education, a publicity officer, spokespeople, advocacy, monitoring, warden schemes, and publications particularly about the status of species.

- **enhance the dissemination of knowledge about birds** by, *inter alia*, creating a national database, publishing more results, establishing on-going relationships with other relevant organisations, being pro-active in disseminating both published and unpublished information about birds to relevant people and organisations, and ensuring that *Notornis* becomes *the* place to publish work on New Zealand birds.

- **make birds and bird study more enjoyable** by, *inter alia*, examining the social aspects of birding, making better provision for younger people, creating special interest groups, publishing results in a timely fashion, making results more relevant to conservation outcomes, and enhancing skills, for example, in bird photography.

The discussion group further recommended that a number of initiatives need to take place now. Those recommendations have also been accepted by Council. They include the need to-



## REMINDER

~  
Subscriptions  
for 2001 are  
now due

- **work towards** the creation and implementation of a business plan.

- **set up** a Scientific Committee which will, *inter alia*, oversee the establishment of a Projects Officer and investigate a funded national monitoring database.

- **establish** other committees to examine Society finances (including funding) and structures, and liaison with other relevant organisations in New Zealand.

- **consider** the introduction of a regular forum for Regional Representatives on aspects of the Society's work now and in the future.

- **establish** closer liaison with Birds Australia, and investigate Australasian ornithological conferences in which the Society and its members play a leading role. Council, as the elected body responsible for administration of the Society, has already taken the initial actions required to set up a Scientific Committee with the intention that it be in place and functioning by the 2001 Annual General Meeting. Council has also taken steps to ensure that the accepted goals and immediate initiatives recommended by the discussion group will be properly looked at by appropriate members in the near future so that action toward their implementation can be commenced as soon as possible.

No doubt you will hear more about progress toward implementation of these proposals as time goes by. In the meantime, Council would welcome any constructive comments you may have on any aspect of what I have said. Those comments can be sent either to the Secretary or to myself.

I hope everybody is having an ornithologically pleasant and productive summer.

DAVID MEDWAY  
President



## Atlas Scheme Update

The new bird distribution atlas scheme started in December 1999. Over the past 12 months over 150 OSNZ members have sent in completed atlas forms. So far at least 3000 sheets have been received by the convenor. Some regions and members have taken the scheme on board and completed hundreds of 10 x 10 km map squares in the past 12 months. Overall, I am very pleased with progress to date.

Coverage is obviously most complete closest to metropolitan centres and in the upper half of the North Island. All members who get a chance to visit less populated parts of the country in the next four years should take the opportunity to fill in atlas squares during their visit. Information on how to complete atlas sheets and copies of the blue sheets should be obtained from regional representatives in the first instance or from the scheme convenor. The atlas scheme runs for 4-5 more years so hopefully the current enthusiasm for the scheme will continue (and grow) to enable a full coverage of all map squares by the close of the scheme.

In the past 12 months I have been distributing large numbers of atlas sheets and compiling a list of observers. I have also started to collate which squares have been visited, season of visits and how many species have been observed per record sheet. These initial summaries will enable us to start producing maps showing which squares have been visited and how many species have been noted in the square. The aim is to begin producing maps by the March issue of *Southern Bird*.

A number of regional atlas convenors and OSNZ members have contacted me in the past 12 months to clarify issues about filling in record sheets. I will try and summarise some of these issues here so that they are applied consistently throughout the country.

The main difficulty has been with definitions of habitats. In general people are making this more complicated than it needs to be. The purpose of the tick boxes on the front page of the atlas sheet is to help people decide which of the broader habitat categories the birds belong to. People should only tick the boxes for those habitat types that they actually visited to record bird species. The back of the atlas sheets (the species list) only requires you to put the species into the broad habitat classes. The list of habitat tick boxes on the front sheet is obviously not exhaustive. Use common sense and your own judgement to apply the unlisted habitat types into the most appropriate broad habitat class. The purpose of recording habitat data is to allow us to determine the extent to which bird species live in different habitat classes throughout the country, e.g. do NZ pigeons inhabit residential zones everywhere in New Zealand? do kingfishers live in the alpine zone? etc.

However, there are some difficult

habitats that merge between the main categories.

1. Gorse, broom or bracken/tree-ferns that occur in farmland where grazing stock roam should be considered 'rough pasture' (under Farmland). Gorse etc. that is growing in reserves that are not actively grazed and are regenerating into native forest should be included as 'shrubland' under Native Forest. Gorse etc. that is part of a planted forest should be placed under Exotic Plantation.

2. Alpine is usually defined as vegetation or bare ground above the natural tree line. This varies in altitude throughout New Zealand but, if in doubt, assume that tussock grasslands and shrublands above 1000 m asl are Alpine, and below 1000 m asl put these habitats into Native Forest (shrublands) or Farmland (tussock).

3. Grassy clearings or open areas in otherwise forested areas are probably best treated as Native Forest (other) if the clearing is small (less than 1 ha) and covered in predominately native grasses, sedges and shrubs. If the forest clearing is larger and obviously kept open by domestic grazing mammals, then include this in Farmland (rough pasture).

4. Lakes, rivers and other freshwater waterways have a margin or edge. If the birds are obviously waterbirds and sitting on the shoreline (within 20m of water) include them in the Wetland habitat. The same applies to sea- or shorebirds on coastal margins. Only if the birds venture well away from the water into farm paddocks, or parks should they be included in another habitat type. Birds on large braided rivers present something of a problem as the river habitat type may include water, ponds, bare rock and shingle, grassy flats and shrublands. If the birds are seen on the river flats in the zone normally contained by flood banks then include them under the Freshwater Wetlands habitat.

5. Note that 'harbour' refers to all enclosed areas of open sea. Tick 'at sea' when referring to birds in open coastal waters.

6. Residential habitats have been a problem for many people. They are meant to include cities, towns and small villages (not farm homesteads or huts in bush country) but also include open parklands and small areas of planted native forest or exotic vegetation within city boundaries. If there is a large area of exotic trees in the city area (>5 ha), include these under Exotic Plantation. Where the city boundary merges with natural (unplanted) native forest, common sense should prevail. If the birds are using the native forest but houses occur amongst the forest, then put the records under Native Forest. If the birds are using open areas and gardens around the houses, put these records under Residential.

The other issue raised by people is to do with the effort spent searching for birds

in each square. If people live in a square, put the records into the 1-3 months box as you are potentially able to pick up species at any stage even if you didn't realise you are bird watching at the time! If you visit a square briefly on one or several occasions, then put the actual hours or days you were bird watching in the relevant tick boxes.

There are three things people can do when filling in sheets that will help with later loading of the records. Firstly, can people count the number of species they observed and put this number in a circle just to the right of the 'full list' box on the front page of the sheet. Secondly, can people use a black pen or heavy black pencil for circling records. Blue pens or light pencils can be hard to read. Finally, if a mistake is made when entering a species, rule a line through that species. If the wrong habitat is circled, put a cross through the circle. Some people have rubbed out pencil marks and it is difficult to determine if the record is lightly pencilled in or deleted.

The number of record sheets being received is far greater than I originally envisaged and I am having difficulty keeping up when the basic task of recording sheet numbers for the *Southern Bird* summary. If any person or persons are keen to volunteer as an administration assistant, please contact me at the scheme address (P.O. Box 12397, Wellington) or at my email address [gtaylor@actrix.gen.nz](mailto:gtaylor@actrix.gen.nz). Access to a PC computer with a recent version of Excel would be an advantage.

GRAEME TAYLOR  
Atlas Scheme Convenor

## Wrybill national census

In 1994 OSNZ members and friends conducted a national census of Wrybills. Any endemic species with a small population is potentially at risk. However there is currently some concern about the population of Wrybills, especially in the light of declining rabbit numbers on the breeding grounds, and predators which have subsequently switched to different prey, including Wrybills.

We have therefore decided to repeat the census, covering all of the 1994 sites plus any new ones which people are able to identify. The date is Saturday 26 May 2001.

RRs will be sent further details about the census, as well as details of the 1994 sites. If you would like more information, please contact your RR, or either of us at the following:

ADRIAN RIEGEN  
[riegen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:riegen@xtra.co.nz)  
231 Forest Hill Rd  
Waiatarua, Auckland 8  
PH/Fax 09-814 9741  
or JOHN DOWDING  
[dowding@voyager.co.nz](mailto:dowding@voyager.co.nz)

## Miranda Naturalists' Trust: 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary

During the year the Miranda Naturalist's Trust has marked its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of events, several of which have involved inviting overseas specialists as guest speakers. For the Autumn Migration open day in March the Trust brought Dr Pavel Tomkovich from Moscow. Pavel is a leading authority on several arctic breeding wader species. For the Welcome to the Birds open day on 22 October, the keynote speaker was Robert Gill, a biologist with the United States Geological Survey in Anchorage, Alaska.

For the past 25 years Bob Gill has been studying breeding waders in Alaska, and one of his specialist areas is the breeding biology of Bar-tailed Godwits. Given that virtually all godwits reaching New Zealand are from Alaska, the Trust felt it was highly appropriate to invite Bob to this country. It was with not a little relief that the Shorebird Centre manager, in his part-time role as travel agent, saw Bob arrive uneventfully at Miranda following his long migration tracking the path of the godwits.

For the Welcome to the Birds day the Trust was also delighted to host the Minister of Conservation, the Hon. Sandra Lee. The main pretext for her visit was to mark the ratification by New Zealand of the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species. Thus the presence of both of these guests, not to mention the newly arrived godwits out on the shellbanks, was most fitting.

Bob gave two talks illustrated with splendid slides. In the morning he focused on the biology and migration patterns of Bar-tailed Godwits. The text of this talk is published in this issue. The evening talk focused on Bristle-thighed Curlew, another of Bob's specialist species. In addition he gave his audience some flavour of just what being a field biologist on the Alaskan tundra can involve. A variety of transport ranging from snow shoes to frail looking small boats to large helicopters and float-planes were illustrated. A variety of spartan dwellings was shown, insignificant objects within the monumental vastness of land and elements. Moreover there were one or two indications of potential hazards, such as a graphic photo of bear prints at one of the godwit staging sites. To this observer at least, the bear prints appeared to be very large indeed.

The formal proceedings finished with the Minister and Bob unveiling three new display panels for the Shorebird Centre. These feature a single-panel introduction to migration, and a double panel which describes the life-cycle of migrant waders.

There followed the traditional pilgrimage to the shoreline to view the birds. In calm, sunny conditions a variety of waders duly disported themselves before guests and other visitors. Bob Gill's talk follows:

KEITH WOODLEY

## Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy & Grant

This award was established several years ago by American Teacher, Dr Tony Reiger of Alaska, in memory of a relative, and is funded by him and an associate, Dr Steven Messerschmidt, who also lives in Alaska. Dr Reiger was an early life member of Ducks Unlimited New Zealand and also the first life member of the National Wetland Trust.

The award is offered to schools and is intended to encourage New Zealand students to plan and participate in wetland projects with their schools and their sponsoring teacher. The project should:

- a. create a wetland
- or
- b. enhance or improve an existing wetland

and incorporate a plan for the future sustainability of the wetland. The grant is for a sum of \$1000.00 plus the trophy which will be held by the school for a 12 month period. It is intended to encourage school children into appreciating the value and benefits that accrue from wetlands.

The grant is administered jointly by the National Wetland Trust and Ducks Unlimited New Zealand and applications for the 2001 grant should be made by the end of March 2001. Further details can be obtained from the following addressees, who will also receive applications.

National Wetland Trust, C/- D Lawrie, 52 Mill Road, R D 2, Pukekohe.  
DU New Zealand, C/- A Wilks, 73 Wood Street, Greytown, 5953.

home: 07-856-2866  
email: [sitnz@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:sitnz@waikato.ac.nz)  
web: [www.sit.edu](http://www.sit.edu)





## The Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc)

### Nominations for Council

Under the provisions of the Constitution, the following Council members retire in May 2001, and nominations for a three year term are hereby called for, to fill the vacancies created.

**Tony Crocker**

**Bev Woolley**

and two co-opted councillors –

**Lloyd Esler**

**Peter Schweigman**

Nominations close with the Secretary on 28 February 2001, and must be signed by two financial members and consented to by the person nominated. Retiring officers are eligible for re-election.

### Notices of Motion

Notice of any motion to be considered by the 2001 Annual General Meeting must reach the Secretary before 28 February 2001 in writing and must be signed by the mover and seconder.

The 2001 OSNZ Annual Conference and AGM will be held in Rotorua on Saturday 2 June 2001.

**CHRISTINE REED**

Hon. Secretary

P.O. Box 12397

Wellington

For several years now we have known that godwits nesting in Alaska migrate to New Zealand. One bird in particular made the trip for at least nine years between 1990 and 1998, migrating from its breeding area on the Seward Peninsula to and from its nonbreeding home here at Miranda. For those wanting some quick math, that is a mind-boggling minimum distance of 240,000 kms over its lifetime

The really intriguing question to many of us godwitphiles, including your own Adrian Riegen, is one of not only which route the birds take but also how they are able to accomplish the ultra-marathon of avian migration. Based on numerous lines of evidence, many put forth by Mark Barter and Adrian over a decade ago, the route south is nonstop, directly across the Pacific Ocean, a distance of 11,000 kms. Consider, for example, that 1) no marked birds have been seen during southward migration along the East Asian coast, 2) the timing of departure from Alaska coincides within a few weeks of arrival in New Zealand, 3) nowhere in Oceania are there sites where hundreds let alone thousands of godwits have been recorded, save for Fiji which is on a direct line between Alaska and New Zealand, but at which only a few hundred birds are ever recorded, and 4) the prodigious amounts of fat put on by godwits in Alaska.

The other compelling bit of evidence concerns the departure of birds from Alaska and large-scale weather systems that birds appear to avail themselves of to aid their flights. Is it a coincidence that the Bar-tailed Godwit begins and ends its annual migration in two of the world's most notorious zones of weather, the Roaring Forties of the southern hemisphere and the Aleutian Storm Track of the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska? The frequency, intensity, and predictability of the storms in the southern Bering Sea are such that birds departing from Alaska on a direct flight to New Zealand would benefit from tail winds of 60-90 km/h over the first 1,000-3,000 kms. Thanks to fortuitous events a little over two weeks ago, we now have four documented departures of godwits from Alaska linked to signature storms and known arrival periods in New Zealand.

Using dynamic flight models in which we input values for the bird's mass, fat, aerodynamics, flight speed, wind speed, and altitude, we can determine if birds departing Alaska under various scenarios can successfully reach New Zealand. It appears most can do this without aid of winds, but that all can do it with minimal assistance from winds such as occur at departure. Refining these model outputs is what will occupy my time over the next 4-6 months. During this period you'll enjoy the presence of the same Bar-tailed Godwits that, along with me, were in Alaska only a few short weeks ago.

**ROBERT GILL**  
US Geological Survey  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503, U.S.A.

## The Bar-tailed Godwit Primer:

### Alaska to New Zealand

For millennia the arrival and departure of the Bar-tailed Godwit heralded the change of seasons for both the Yupik Eskimos of western Alaska and the Maori of New Zealand; both incorporating the species into their subsistence lifestyles but neither aware that they shared the same population of birds. Indeed, the godwits kept this secret from even modern science until well into the twentieth century. My talk this morning will focus on what the godwit does during those six months most of the population is gone from New Zealand. In a godwit's life this entails four principal events: 1) its arrival in Alaska, 2) nesting and raising young, 3) staging for migration, and 4) the southward migration itself.

The Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica baueri* is now thought to nest exclusively in western Alaska where, over the core part of its range, arrival is correlated with percent snow melt. Godwits nest both in coastal wet meadows, such as occur throughout the Yukon Delta, and in gently rolling montane areas of Northwest Alaska, east to the central Brooks Range. On the core Yukon Delta nesting area the bulk of the birds first arrive the second week of May; clutches are usually completed between the third week of May and the second week of June. Throughout its range the godwit seldom nests in densities of more than a few pairs per square kilometre.

The four-egg clutch is incubated by both members of a pair and within a couple of days after hatching the chicks are able to follow the adult over several hundred metres of tundra to areas, usually on mountain ridges, where other adults have moved their broods. Here the broods form loose aggregations that are guarded by a few adults, the other adults having departed for the coastal staging grounds. Usually by early August the juveniles have found their way to the staging grounds where they join flocks of adults.

On the staging grounds the diets of both adults and juveniles shift from having been mostly insects during nesting to marine invertebrates, especially small clams. The extensive intertidal mud and sandflats of the Yukon Delta and Alaska Peninsula estuaries become the godwits' home for the next two months while they begin body moult and fatten for migration. During this period it is common for birds to double their body weight, with over 50% of this weight gain being fat. Indeed, these fat loads are the highest recorded to date for any migratory bird. The reason for this becomes apparent when we look at the southward migration of the godwit.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> National Twitchathon 2000

Sixteen teams from Auckland to Otago participated in the second national twitchathon held in October 2000. A collated total of 128 species were heard or seen, similar to last year's 130.

Yet again, the Plains Wanderers, based in Canterbury identified the greatest number of species (82 – four fewer than last year). They therefore retain the *Porphyrio mantelli* Mantelpiece Monstrosity, and the dubious honour of finding enough space to display the trophy – a larger than life depiction of a Takahe with binoculars raised ready for action.

The prize for the first team to submit a list of more than 65 species goes to the Kapiti Kiwi Kounters, whose recorder was Colin Miskelly. Just rewards for burning the candle at both ends, and working on bird censuses for part of the 24 hour period.

The rarest species submitted was the Cape Gannet found somewhere in the North Island by Brent and Sav (Brent Stephenson and Ian Saville), who covered a large portion of that island in their day, and in doing so found the second highest number of species.

Species not reported by any team included Yellow-eyed Penguin, Blue Duck, Banded Rail, Curlew Sandpiper, Yellow-crowned Parakeet, and Little Owl. Again, only two teams saw a species of the national bird, though the Kapiti Kiwi Kounters managed to find two species – Little Spotted Kiwi, and Tokoeka; the Wairoa One Day Wonders found Brown Kiwi.

I hope everyone who took part had an enjoyable and rewarding day, and are planning how to improve their species counts for next year.

Team name	Home region	Team recorder	Species total
Hibiscus Coast F&Bird	Auckland	Colleen McKerrrow	27
The Questing Quattro	Auckland	Gillian Eller	58
Corny Crakes of Waikato	Waikato	Barry Friend	57
Lake Taupo Twitchers	Volcanic Plateau	Patrick Buxton	40
Waiongana Wanderers + 2	Taranaki	Julie Fryer	57
Wairoa One Day Wonders	Gisborne/Wairoa	Geoff Foreman	63
Kath's Spotters	Hawke's Bay	Rita Cox	38
Barbara's Birders	Hawke's Bay	Mary Craven	27
Brent & Sav	Manawatu	Ian Saville	75
Whiteheads	Manawatu	Peggy Mallalieu	51
Waiohine Gorge Birders	Wairarapa	Jenny Doring	34
Kapiti Kiwi Kounters	Wellington	Colin Miskelly	66
Woeful Weather Wanderers	Wellington	Ralph Powlesland	74
Plains Wanderers	Canterbury	Sheila Petch	82
Dunedin Yeppers	Otago	Francesca Cunningham	52
Mum and Dad's Day Out	Otago	Abby Smith	53

### Collated List of Birds:

Brown Kiwi	Mallard	Australasian Bittern	Southern
Tokoeka	Grey Duck	Royal Spoonbill	Black-backed Gull
Little Spotted Kiwi	Grey Teal	Mute Swan	Red-billed Gull
Australasian Crested Grebe	Brown Teal	Black Swan	Black-billed Gull
New Zealand Dabchick	Australasian Shoveler	Canada Goose	Black-fronted Tern
Australasian Little Grebe	New Zealand Scaup	Cape Barren Goose	Caspian Tern
Antipodean Wandering Albatross	Australasian Harrier	Feral Goose	White-fronted Tern
Gibson's Wandering Albatross	New Zealand Falcon	Paradise Shelduck	New Zealand Pigeon
Royal Albatross	California Quail	Barbary Dove	Rock Pigeon
Black-browed Mollymawk	Brown Quail	Spotted Dove	Grey Warbler
Salvin's Mollymawk	Pheasant	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Fantail
White-capped Mollymawk	Peafowl	Kaka	Tomtit
Sooty Shearwater	Wild Turkey	Eastern Rosella	New Zealand Robin
Short-tailed Shearwater	Weka	Red-crowned Parakeet	Silvereye
Fluttering Shearwater	Spotless Crane	Shining Cuckoo	Stitchbird
Hutton's Shearwater	Pukeko	Long-tailed Cuckoo	Bellbird
Westland Petrel	Takahe	Morepork	Tui
White-chinned Petrel	Australasian Coot	New Zealand Kingfisher	Yellowhammer
Cape Pigeon	Pied Oystercatcher	Rifleman	Chaffinch
Antarctic Fulmar	Variable Oystercatcher	Skylark	Greenfinch
Southern Giant Petrel	Pied Stilt	Welcome Swallow	Goldfinch
Northern Giant Petrel	New Zealand Dotterel	New Zealand Pipit	Redpoll
Fairy Prion	Banded Dotterel	Dunnock	House Sparrow
Blue Penguin	Black-fronted Dotterel	Blackbird	Starling
Australasian Gannet	Wrybill	Song Thrush	Myna
Cape Gannet	Pacific Golden Plover	Fernbird	Kokako
Black Shag	Spur-winged Plover	Whitehead	Saddleback
Pied Shag	Turnstone	Brown Creeper	Australian Magpie
Little Black Shag	Lesser Knot		Rook
Little Shag	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		
Stewart Island Shag	Red-necked Stint	NICK ALLEN	
Spotted Shag	Eastern Curlew		
White-faced Heron	Bar-tailed Godwit		
White Heron	Siberian Tattler		
Reef Heron	Marsh Sandpiper		
Cattle Egret	Arctic Skua		

The following were letters received by Nick Allen from participants. They are published without even thinking about seeking permission. Ed.



## Kapiti Kiwi Kounters

In achieving our modest total of 66 species, we decided to go for quality vs. quantity. Most of the species (54) were seen on or from Kapiti Island during the quarterly five-minute bird counts undertaken on 14-15 October. The remainder were at Waikanae Estuary immediately before our departure from Paraparaumu Beach.

We recorded 25 endemic species plus a further 11 endemic subspecies, including representatives of 10 endemic genera. We would be surprised if any other team managed to record two species of kiwi in a 24-hour period.

The twitching was complicated by the need to complete c.5 hours of solo real ornithology (each team member completing a series of 5-minute bird counts out of voice contact). As a consequence, we missed one species (Redpoll) that was not seen when we were together, and had to work hard to re-sight Brown Teal. We compensated for this shortened twitch time by reducing time wasted by sleeping – returning from Tokoeka/Sooty Shearwater/Brown Teal twitching at 0100 hrs, and up again at 0430 hrs for Kokako and Stitchbird. The latter two were both recorded ten minutes before the 24 hours was up!

The most surprising record was four lethargic Short-tailed Shearwaters rafting among Black-backed Gulls to within 5 metres of the shore (and us).

COLIN MISKELLY

## Mum and Dad's Day Out

Abby Smith and Hamish Spencer (a.k.a. "Mum and Dad's Day Out") tried out this twitching competition for the first time. They spotted their first tick (Kereru) in the garden before dropping the children off at school and nursery. Just eight hours were available before pick-up, so they rushed off to Ross Creek to spot a few bush birds. Most of the usual species here were most cooperative and they saw a bonus species, a lone Barbary Dove, on Tanner Road. Going over the hill to Whare Flat added various farmland birds, finches and Brown Creeper, and the western side of Lakes Waipori and Waihola produced most of the waterfowl.

By lunchtime at Taiari Mouth, a few waders had brought the total to 42, but the species were getting harder to spot. Kaikorai Estuary had nothing new and it wasn't until they reached Aramoana that the numbers grew again. The calm day meant that few seabirds were around, but one that was a real thrill: a pure white Southern Giant Petrel flying around the *Monarch* as it cruised below the Taiaroa Head albatross colony. Another brown giant petrel (presumably the same species, but not close enough to rule out a Northern) was flying around about 200m out to sea.

A drive around the Peninsula after dinner gave the last species, kingfisher, in the fading light. In the end they saw or heard 53 species. The ones that got away (but not next year, they hope!): Rifleman, Eastern Rosella, Black Shag, Yellow-eyed Penguin, and worst of all, Royal Spoonbill. We had a great day.

HAMISH SPENCER

## Consultancy work and Information Provision

One of the several laudable objects of the Society is to assist the conservation and management of birds by providing information from which sound management decisions can be derived. During the many years of its existence, the Society through its members has built up a great body of invaluable information about birds and their habitat use. It continues to do so with its various national and regional activities and the activities of individual members. Much of the information it possesses, or which is available to it, is now no longer obtainable, or cannot be obtained elsewhere, or has not been published.

The Society clearly is however, and will continue to be, the premier repository for knowledge about birds and their habitat use in this country. In addition, the Society contains the largest body of people in this country who, both amateur and professional, are eminently qualified and able to undertake independent and unbiased surveys of birds and their habitat use. Much accurate and valuable information has been obtained, and is still being obtained, from such surveys. This sort of factual and impartial information would undoubtedly be of great assistance in enabling other organisations or administrative bodies to make sound management decisions which affect both the habitats in which birds live and the birds themselves.

It is therefore not surprising that the Society, usually at regional level, has recently been receiving an increasing number of requests from others, either for existing information about birds and their habitat use, or for assistance with surveys to obtain that information. Those requests are welcome and should be encouraged. There is little doubt that they will continue. Indeed, they are likely to increase in the future as other people and organisations begin to realise that the Society is in fact the pre-eminent authority on birds and their habitat use in New Zealand, and the premier repository of knowledge on the subject.

The professional provision of information about birds and their habitat use, and the undertaking of surveys for that purpose, is entirely consistent with the Society's objects. Furthermore, if done properly and widely enough, so-called consultancy work and the provision of information will over time undoubtedly

enhance the general image of the Society and help to make it again become widely and rightly recognised as the pre-eminent authority on birds in New Zealand.

However, Council has not yet been able to formulate policies covering each of the many and varied ways in which the Society, either directly or through its regions, might become involved in consultancy work for, or the provision of ornithological information to, persons or organisations outside the Society including professional consultants, district and regional councils, the Department of Conservation, and others. Consideration needs to be given to the potential ramifications in some cases for the Society and for individual members if they do get involved, such as whether they are likely to end up being witnesses before local authorities or the Environment Court. There are also many other issues which are yet to be sorted out, like the need in some cases for reports to be peer-reviewed if they are to be provided in the name of the Society, who that will be done by, and so on. It may well be that the proposed Scientific Committee will have a role to play in this context.

The Society is not a source of cheap labour or free information. It is only right and proper that an appropriate charge should usually be made for information provided or consultancy work done by the Society or by members on its behalf. Many persons who seek information of the Society are being paid very good money to provide it.

The charge to be made by the Society for such consultancy work or information will undoubtedly vary from case to case depending on the circumstances, but costing is an issue which has not yet been specifically considered by Council.

Obviously it will be some time before firm policies can be put in place which will adequately provide for every potential situation. Those policies will probably need to be gradually formulated as we work our way through various 'test cases' as they come up. In the meantime, I am happy to discuss particular situations as they arise.

DAVID MEDWAY  
President

## Donations

A very big thank you to those Northland members whose time and effort in selling OSNZ greeting cards netted \$700 to support the inclusion of colour in *Southern Bird* for 2000. I also wish to extend the sincere thanks of members to the donor, who wished to remain anonymous, whose most generous cheque for \$1000 for the support of same was gratefully received.

TONY CROCKER





# Rare Birds Committee – 6 monthly report

## Species to be reported to Committee

An interim list of species to be reported to the Committee, and an Unusual/Rare Bird Report form, are now on the Society's web page at [www.osnz.org.nz](http://www.osnz.org.nz)

## 1999 reports

The following sightings included in the report which appeared in *Notornis* 47: 64-70 have been accepted by the Committee:

**UBR 12/99 - Stilt Sandpiper** at Lake Ellesmere on 26 September and 20 November 1998 (Nick Allen). These sightings may have been of the bird described in **UBR 98/14** which appears to be the first New Zealand record of this species - see *Notornis* 47: 70 and *Southern Bird* 2: 8.

**UBR 15/99 & 15A/99 - Pink-footed Shearwaters** off Kaikoura on 14 December 1998 and 27 February 1999 (Gary Melville). These appear to be the third and fourth New Zealand records of this species.

**UBR 16/99 - Kermadec Petrel** off Kaikoura on 25 January 1999 (Gary Melville). A photograph of this bird appears in *Parkinson Field Guide to New Zealand Seabirds* (New Holland, 2000: 71).

**UBR 17/99 - Soft-plumaged Petrel** off Kaikoura on 2 February 1999 (Gary Melville). A photograph of this bird appears in *Parkinson Field Guide to New Zealand Seabirds* (New Holland, 2000: 75).

**UBR 25/99 - Arctic Tern** at Manawatu Estuary on 2 April 1999 (Ian Saville *et al.*).

The suspected **Bridled Tern** reported in **UBR 18/99** is still under consideration.

## 2000 reports

The following sightings included in the report which appeared in *Southern Bird* 2: 8 have been accepted by the Committee:



Presumed (subject to a Rare Bird Report!) Japanese Snipe in late 2000. This is probably the same bird as **UBR6/00**, having returned from the northern hemisphere to Manawatu Estuary. Photo: Alex Scott

**UBR 6/00 - Japanese Snipe** at Manawatu Estuary between 12 December 1999 and 9 January 2000 (Ian Saville). Photographs of this bird by Alex Scott appeared in *Forest & Bird* (May 2000) and *Miranda Naturalists' Trust News* (May 2000).

**UBR 9/00 - Common Tern** at Manawatu Estuary on 21 January 2000 (Ian Saville).

**UBR 10/00 - Fan-tailed Cuckoo** near Culverden, North Canterbury on 13 December 1999 (Geoff Tunnicliffe). An account and photograph of this bird appeared in *The Press*, Christchurch on 2 August 2000, page 40. It also featured in *The Wrybill* (September 2000). This appears to be only the fifth accepted record of the species in New Zealand, and the first time it has been photographed live in this country.

**UBR 14/00 - Hudsonian Godwit** at Lake Ellesmere between 3 and 11 October 1999 (Colin Hill).

**UBR 15/00 - Ruff** at Lake Ellesmere between 1 December 1999 and 31 January 2000 (Colin Hill, Sheila Petch & Kathleen Harrison).

**UBR 16/00 - Little Curlew** at Lake Ellesmere on 30 January 2000 (Colin Hill).

**UBR 20/00 - Kermadec Petrel** off Kaikoura on 25 January 1999 (Lysle Brinker). This sighting relates to the same bird reported by Gary Melville - see **UBR 16/99**.

**UBR 21/00 - Suspected Brown Noddy** at Waimarama Beach on 12 April 2000 (Dave Bell). This sighting has been accepted as being of an *Anous* noddy, but indeterminate as to species.

**UBR 22/00 - Common Sandpiper** at Farewell Spit on 6 February 1992 (Willie Cook). This appears to be the first record of the species at Farewell Spit.

The following sightings included in the report which appeared in *Southern Bird* 2: 8 have not been accepted by the Committee:

**UBR 3/00 - Suspected Common Terns** at Walker Island, Rangaunu Harbour on 14 November 1999.

**UBR 17/00 - Suspected Black Falcon** at Gillespies Beach, South Westland on 2 January 2000.

It has not been possible as yet to determine the specific identity of the 'atypical White-fronted Tern' reported by Nick Allen in **UBR 19/00**. The matter remains open.

The following seventeen reports have been received by the Committee since preparation of the report which appeared in *Southern Bird* 2: 8. The current status of each is indicated.

**UBR 24/00 - Report** from Jim Moore of a suspected **Common Tern** seen by himself and others at Manawatu Estuary on 23 January and 5 & 19 March 2000. These sightings have been accepted as being of a **Common Tern**. They may have been of the same individual reported by Ian Saville in **UBR 9/00** which was seen at Manawatu Estuary on 21 January 2000. The sighting of 5 March 2000 was also reported by Tim Kastle & Nancy Pachana under **UBR 30/00**.

**UBR 25/00 - Report** from J.L. & M. Moore of **Shore Plover** seen by themselves and Ian Saville at Manawatu Estuary on 3 January 2000 (This is the same bird to which **UBR 7/00** refers).

**UBR 26/00 - Report** from J.L. & M. Moore of a suspected **Japanese Snipe** seen by themselves and Ian Saville at Manawatu Estuary on various dates between 12 December 1999 and 2 April 2000. These sightings have been accepted as being of the same **Japanese Snipe** to which **UBR 6/00** relates.

**UBR 27/00 - Report** from Bruce Keeley of a suspected **Great Knot** seen at Turanga Estuary (Clifton Beach), near Whitford on 20 March 2000. This sighting has been accepted as being of a **Great Knot**.

**UBR 28/00 - Report** from Ricardo Palma of a specimen of **Newell's**



**Shearwater** found dead on Dargaville Beach by David Crockett on 13 November 1994. This specimen, the skin of which is in the Museum of New Zealand under Reg. no. 25004, has been accepted as being a **Newell's Shearwater**. It appears to be the first New Zealand record of the species, and as such will be fully written up for publication in *Notornis* in due course.

**UBR 29/00** - Report from Ricardo Palma of a specimen of **Bulwer's Petrel** found dead on Te Horo Beach, Horowhenua by Jean Luke on 8 January 1998. This specimen, the skin of which is in the Museum of New Zealand under Reg. no. 25739, has been accepted as being a **Bulwer's Petrel**. It appears to be the first New Zealand record of the species, and as such will be fully written up for publication in *Notornis* in due course.

**UBR 30/00** - Report and photographs from Tim Kastle and Nancy Pachana of a suspected **Common Tern** seen by themselves and Jim Moore at Manawatu Estuary on 5 March 2000. This sighting has been accepted as being of a **Common Tern**. It relates to the same bird reported by Jim Moore under **UBR 24/00**.

**UBR 31/00** - Report and photograph from Graeme Taylor of a suspected **Sooty Albatross** seen by himself and others at Anchorage Bay, Antipodes Island on 3 November 1995 and on several days thereafter. These sightings have been accepted as being of a **Sooty Albatross**. This is the third accepted record of the species in the New Zealand region. The previous records are referred to in *Notornis* 47: 64-70.

**UBR 32/00** - Report from Graeme Taylor of a specimen of **Leach's Storm Petrel** found dead on 90 Mile Beach by Leigh Honnor and others on 17 October 1998. This specimen, the skin of which is in the Museum of New Zealand under Reg. no. 25797, has been accepted as being a **Leach's Storm Petrel**. It appears to be the seventh New Zealand record of the species.

**UBR 33/00** - Report and photograph from Barry Hartley of a suspected

**Common Sandpiper** seen by himself and Myk Davis on 15 June 1998 at Hawera Oxidation Ponds. This sighting has been accepted as being of a **Common Sandpiper**.

**UBR 34/00** - Report and photographs from Peter Reese of a suspected **Arctic or Antarctic Tern** seen at Taumutu, Lake Ellesmere outlet on 29 February 2000. This sighting has been accepted as being of an **Arctic Tern**.

**UBR 35/00** - Report from Brian Chudleigh of a suspected **Sanderling** seen at Opoutere on 15 October, 1999. This sighting has been accepted as being of a **Sanderling**.

**UBR 36/00** - Report from Jim Moore of a suspected **Chestnut Teal** seen by himself and others at Manawatu Estuary on 2, 16 & 17 July 2000. These sightings have been accepted as being of a **Chestnut Teal**.

**UBR 37/00** - Report under consideration from Barry Hartley of a suspected **Chatham Petrel** seen at 59° 56'S, 169° 33'E, 759 nm ssw of Chatham Island, on 19 February 1998.

**UBR 38/00** - Report from Roger Radd of a suspected **Black Kite** seen at Waihopai Valley Road, Marlborough on 14 & 15 August, 2000. These sightings have been accepted as being of a **Black Kite**. They constitute the third record of the species in New Zealand. The previous records are referred to in *Notornis* 47: 64-70.

**UBR 39/00** - Report from Mike Bell of a suspected **Little Tern** seen by himself and others at Te Whanga Lagoon, Chatham Island between late December 1997 and mid February 1998. These sightings have been accepted as being of a **Little Tern**. They apparently constitute the first record of the species for the Chatham Islands.

**UBR 40/00** - Report under consideration from Paul Cuming of a suspected **Australian Tree Martin** seen at Raglan Beach on 4 December 1997.

DAVID MEDWAY  
Convenor, Rare Birds Committee

## Students for Research Projects

The School for International Training (SIT) is a US-based educational organisation that runs study-abroad programmes for third year university students in over 50 countries around the world. SIT's New Zealand programme, based at the University of Waikato, focuses on natural and human ecology, human impacts on the environment, and conservation and management issues.

As part of our core curriculum, students must complete an independent study project (ISP) conducted over a 4 week period. The purpose of the ISP is to provide the student with an opportunity to pursue, in depth, a long-standing or recently acquired interest in a particular aspect of New Zealand. The project must be of academic interest and utilise appropriate methodologies. The student's research must involve fieldwork and primary data collection. Student projects can cover a wide range of topics, including behavioural or population studies of particular species, conservation and management, predator control, human impacts, invasive introduced plants, etc.

If you are conducting field research and would like assistance in your study, or if you would like to design a study in which one of our students could participate, please contact us as we may be able to provide a field worker for your study. Projects can be short-term (i.e. the 4 week period available), or long-term (in which a succession of students over numerous semesters help collect data for a longer study). Generally speaking, the periods of time available to our students each year are from mid-April to mid-May, and from mid-November to mid-December.

As a "Project Advisor" you would be expected to help design the project, help answer any questions the student might have during the fieldwork period, provide feedback for the student during the report writing process, and evaluate the final written project. For these services you would receive an honorarium of \$250. Our students are fully funded by the School for International Training and can provide for their own room and board expenses during the study period.

If you have a particular study in mind, or if you have any further questions about the ISP or about our programme in New Zealand, please contact us at:

TODD NACHOWITZ  
& NONA MORRIS

Academic Directors  
School for International Training  
c/- Alumni House  
University of Waikato  
Private Bag 3105  
Hamilton

Office: 07-838-4926  
Home: 07-856-2866  
Email: sitnz@waikato.ac.nz  
Web: www.sit.edu



This Shore Plover is quite a traveller. From its release site in Hawke's Bay, it was photographed in Taranaki before being resighted in Manawatu. Photo: David Medway



## Seabirds on the Hook

### The Save the Albatross Campaign of BirdLife International

A Wandering Albatross flies across the Southern Ocean, far from land. It lands behind a pirate fishing vessel, seizes a baited hook, is dragged under by the weight of the longline and drowns. Farther south, an Adélie Penguin rises from its eggs, allowing them to cool dangerously in the sub-zero temperature, as it watches with raised heart beat the approach of a red-clad tourist. Far away, on an island off Scotland an introduced mink kills a breeding Common Tern, making it a dozen it has slaughtered that night. On another island somewhere in the tropical Pacific Ocean, artisanal fishers land from canoes with outboard engines and collect hundreds of seabird eggs to take home with their fish. An aging tanker with terminal metal fatigue runs aground on a stormy coast in the North Sea, spilling its cargo of crude oil that will result in the cloying death of thousands of sea ducks, auks and cormorants in the next few weeks.

The above, and other, threats facing the world's seabirds led BirdLife International to inaugurate its Seabird Conservation Programme in 1997. The main impetus was the large numbers of seabirds being killed by longline fisheries, as identified by IUCN in a resolution adopted at its first World Conservation Congress in Montreal, Canada in 1996. BirdLife International is an organisation made of national partners in over 100 countries, including New Zealand, where it is represented by the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society. BirdLife's Seabird Conservation Programme is based in South Africa where it is managed by BirdLife South Africa and hosted by the Avian Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town.

For the first three years of its existence, the programme has been funded by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the UK BirdLife partner. Longlining has been and at the time of writing remains the major project of the programme. A concerted effort, the "Save the Albatross Campaign: Keeping the World's Seabirds of the Hook" has commenced this year, with major funding coming from the proceeds of the British Birdwatching Fair, held at Rutland Water, United Kingdom in August 2000.

The Save the Albatross Campaign seeks to facilitate national actions to reduce longline mortality of seabirds by working through the BirdLife partners and representatives in selected countries. Four major objectives for the campaign have been identified. Firstly, implementation of National Plans of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries following technical guidelines adopted by the Committee on Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in 1999. Secondly, development and adoption of an inter-governmental Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels of the Southern Hemisphere, as supported by the 6th Conference of the parties of the Bonn Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. Thirdly, elimination of illegal, unlicensed and unreported "pirate" fishing, often by flag of convenience-registered vessels, for Patagonian toothfish in the Southern Ocean: a fishery that is known to have killed thousands of seabirds in its few years of existence. Lastly, to ensure that regional fishery bodies (such as the various tuna commissions) take an ecosystem approach by recognising the problem of seabird by-catch and adopting compulsory mitigation measures to reduce it.

What has been the progress to date with the above objectives? Longlining nations with seabird mortality problems are expected to have adopted their national plans of action by the next meeting of FAO's Committee on Fisheries, in early 2001. Progress has been slow initially, with seemingly very few countries taking any action last year. An exception was the United States, which released its draft national plan at the end of 1999 for comment. Australia had already adopted a threat abatement plan for the incidental catch of seabirds that goes further than the FAO's guidelines. This year, however, positive developments in Brazil, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa and the United Kingdom suggest that the impetus for producing national plans is slowly growing. New Zealand's draft NPOA-Seabirds is now under review.

The prognosis for an albatross and petrel agreement seems cautiously good. Since the 6th Bonn Convention COP, held in Somerset West, South Africa in November 1999, several breeding range states have held informal discussions and the first formal inter-governmental meeting was held in July in Hobart. A second meeting, at which it is hoped that the agreement text can be finalised, is to be held early next year in Cape Town. Importantly, the agreement is addressing the other conservation threats facing the birds, not just longlining.

Fishing in the Southern Ocean is managed by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, which for a number of years has required mitigation measures (such as night setting and the use of bird-scaring lines) to be adopted by licensed fishing vessels. At its 1999 meeting CCAMLR adopted a catch documentation scheme which is the first step towards eliminating the pirates. Serious consideration now needs to be given to listing toothfish in Appendix II of CITES (Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) since non-CCAMLR nations can continue fishing on the Southern Ocean's high seas with impunity. In contrast, very little action to date seems to have taken place within regional fishery bodies other than CCAMLR to address the issue. Fostering such actions remains a challenge for BirdLife's Seabird Conservation Programme.

The Save the Albatross Campaign wishes to work with other organisations, especially marine and environmental NGOs, to further its objectives. Approaches for collaboration are welcomed. Visit our web site at [www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/seabirds](http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/seabirds) and contact the Coordinator on [jcooper@botzoo.uct.ac.za](mailto:jcooper@botzoo.uct.ac.za).

**JOHN COOPER**  
Co-ordinator  
Birdlife International Seabird  
Conservation Programme  
Avian Demography Unit  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch 7700  
South Africa



### EUROPE MOUNTAIN TREKS A Trek in Northern Greece 2001

Join Jennie Benecke in May 2001 trekking the green islands of Thassos, Samothrake and on the mainland, Mt Olympus. We will also visit the Nestos and Evros Deltas, areas of considerable interest to ornithologists. As well as being the habitat of large numbers of flamingoes and pelicans it is a stopping place for many migratory birds. Nearby is the Dadia Forest Reserve where the largest range of birds of prey in Europe live including the giant black vulture, griffon vulture and golden eagle. Included in the tour are visits to age old Athens, Delphi & Meteora.

**Contact: P.O. Box 28 030 Christchurch, New Zealand**  
**Ph 0064 3 337 1605 Fax 0064 3 337 4405**  
**E-mail: [benecke-u-j@clear.net.nz](mailto:benecke-u-j@clear.net.nz)**



# REGIONAL ROUNDUP

## Northland

Our congratulations go to our long time member David Crockett, who was presented with the Queen's Service Medal by the Governor General at Government house on Wednesday 9 August. Each recipient had a citation read out as they walked up to the raised platform at the front. This gave brief details of why each person was receiving their particular award. In 1978, after a 26 year search, David rediscovered the Chatham Island Taiko, a bird not seen for 100 years and until then believed to be extinct. David is now a member of the Taiko Recovery Group, assisting the Department of Conservation, and has been a national councillor and vice president of OSNZ.

Beach patrols in the west coast (Dargaville area) and the east coast (from Kauri Mount Beach just north of Whangarei to Waipu River south of Whangarei) have continued on a monthly basis, with a group of 17 regulars which Prue and Claire call on to gather their teams. The Whangarei Harbour census was done in July by 13 members on a fine calm morning. The greatest number of birds of a single species was South Island Pied Oystercatchers with 2228, followed by Pied Stilts at 839. The north Kaipara wader census started off on a very misty morning, but luckily it cleared so that the birds were able to be counted before the tide dropped. Once again the greatest single species counts was SIPO with 3377, followed by stilts with 1670. The totals for each site were 5217 and 5555.

Passerine banding has continued again at Wren Greechan's at Kiripaka, the same site as in previous years, over four months. Silvereyes are the main target species. A recapture of one bird banded in 1993 makes it at least 7 years old – not a bad age for such a tiny bird.

An ornithological cruise aboard the large, old and steady boat *Tē Aroha* was enjoyed on the weekend of 30 September and 1 October. The wind was blowing fairly strongly from the west, so not many birds were seen, although we did identify 19 species over the weekend. We did see a big flock of birds roosting in a sheltered area on the Arapoa Peninsula, not far from the marae, which seemed to be in a different area to where they are normally seen.

When we were drifting close to the Ranganui bridge we noticed a lot of Black-backed Gulls and White-fronted Terns flying around the area and roosting on the concrete buttresses of an old bridge just upstream from the existing bridge. The tops of these buttresses are covered in weeds and grass, with gulls and terns sitting amongst it. The skipper of the boat said that he was quite sure that they were

nesting there last season – another area to check during the harbour census. The food, accommodation and company of other passengers were just great and made for an excellent weekend.

Some of us attended an interesting and informative talk given by Andrea Booth on her trip to the Snares Islands to study Buller's Mollymawks. Such a remote place and such harsh conditions! It takes dedicated people to carry out these studies.

One of our members, Katrina Hansen, employed by the Department of Conservation, gave us an interesting talk and update on the Fairy Tern at our October meeting. More recent information has just come to hand on these little birds. Two pairs and a single tern have made nest scrapes at Mangawhai. A pair has also been seen indulging in pre-nuptial behaviour at Waipu. A team of local members will be monitoring their progress this breeding season.

Apart from three members (Ruth, Marie and Diana) who have broken legs, the rest of our team is mobile and healthy, and busy developing a programme of field activity for the mapping scheme, to attain coverage of our 120 squares. The end of year social function will be a dinner at the Onerahi Hotel on 14 December at 6.00 pm – any members travelling in the north are most welcome to join us.

We would like to thank our members who were involved in the Christmas and greeting card selling campaign, which enable our region to contribute \$700 to colour pages in *Southern Bird*.

(Janet Snell)

## Auckland

Forest-dwelling birds and the need to protect their habitat has featured strongly in our recent activities. At the September meeting Tim Lovegrove reviewed the situation at Wenderholm, the regional reserve where a small population of North Island Robins has been introduced. On 2 September OSNZ members assisted Tim with a survey of the bush which confirmed the territories of the established five pairs, without finding other birds. Reports from outside the reserve suggest that a few of last year's young robins may have moved and a case can be made for a 'top up' transfer of birds from the Tiritiri Matangi island population.

Geoff Moon featured at October's meeting 'Birds of the Forest' showing superb slides of many species with, as always, perceptive commentary on every aspect of bird behaviour. Like Dick Sibson, Geoff has discovered so much, but the theme 'what a lot we still have to learn' dominated the presentation to set his audience thinking.

Emphasising this point, Auckland's November topic was 'Waders in China' when Adrian Riegen, back from a recent

trip to remote parts, gave an update of studies of the flyway to the Arctic. His visit to the Yellow Sea bordering North Korea tallied with the presence of godwit flocks, but where were the knots? Large questions remain about the migration paths of the shorebirds wintering in New Zealand and Australia which need to be answered, in parallel with education of the local communities to appreciate the birds and conserve the coastal sites on which the migrants depend. Adrian's fascinating account of his adventures illustrated the human side of such endeavours - 'The ornithologist as International Ambassador' could have been the title of this talk.

On the local front, our mapping work proceeds and the regular schemes of beach patrol and censusing continue to be firmly supported. OSNZ was well represented at a recent seminar on the subject of 'Mainland Islands' convened by Auckland Regional Council to get to grips with the opportunities and challenges offered by this approach to land management. A timely subject, as 'Ark in the Park' will shortly be launched as a programme to enhance the fauna and flora of the Waitakere Ranges, while other regional parks - especially the peninsular sites such as Tawharanui - are to be maintained in this way.

Members joined in the annual survey of Tawharanui at Labour Weekend, while elsewhere in the region we are paying attention the nesting of Eastern Rosellas, the breeding of NZ Dabchicks at Western Springs, the unexpected presence of a NZ Scaup and a pair of Shovelers on the water hazard of Ellerslie golf course, and the wellbeing of the House Sparrow population of Takapuna shopping centre.

(Michael Taylor)

## South Auckland

The speaker at the September meeting was Adrian Riegen describing some of his wader observations in the Yellow Sea region of China. He joined Mark Barter on an exploratory trip into this region through China trying to locate the stopover points for the northward migrating waders. His trip was arranged through funding organised by the Miranda Naturalists' Trust utilising an environmental grant from Cathay Pacific Airways.

The Yellow Sea area is believed to be one of the major stopover points for Red Knot and Bar Tailed Godwit on their northward migration. The area is under tremendous pressure with approximately one third of the world's population living within a few hundred kilometres of the coastline, and virtually nothing is known of the wader movements in that area.

Since Adrian's talk, the Miranda Naturalists' Trust have also hosted Mark Barter in the last two weeks who described his experiences not only this year but over

the last two or three years during which he has journeyed into this region. It is of interest that the Red Knot stopover point has still not been located. It is suspected to be in the North Korea coastline which has at this stage not been explored.

The guest speaker at the October meeting was Bruce Postill from DoC in Hamilton, who related to us his work experience on South East Island in the Chatham Island group. This gave us a fascinating insight into this area where it is unlikely that many of us will ever get the privilege of visiting.

The November meeting was a very interesting talk by Nigel Adams who described a feeding study of penguins in southern African waters. This work was completed by Nigel while he resided in South Africa and we hope to hear more about his work with birds in that region during the coming year.

Waders are again dominating the work in this region with the return of the northern migrants. A close watch was maintained for returning birds because of the visit by Bob Gill to Miranda in October. He had been working with Bar-tailed Godwits in Alaska, and arrived in New Zealand at the same time as the major flocks which he had witnessed leaving. Of interest is the fact that he forwarded an e-mail to the Miranda Shorebird Centre advising that a large flock of godwits had just left the Alaska Peninsula area and that we should keep our eyes peeled in about 5 days. Right on cue an extra 5,000 birds appeared in the Manukau Harbour, which may of course be a coincidence, but the evidence is certainly mounting that these birds complete a non-stop migration direct from Alaska to New Zealand.

At Miranda at present there are two Black-tailed Godwits, a Terek Sandpiper, a Siberian Tattler along with a small number of Red-necked Stints, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and an Eastern Curlew. On the South Manukau Harbour there are two Marsh Sandpipers and a Broad-billed Sandpiper, all of which over-wintered. There are also six Eastern Curlews, 17 Red-necked Stints and still only small numbers of Curlew Sandpipers and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers.

The bird mapping scheme is progressing steadily, even if only a small number of people are doing the majority of the work. If there are any visitors passing through our region it would be appreciated if you could assist us by completing cards and forwarding them to the RR for processing into our detailed record system.

(David Lawrie)

## Waikato

Short-tailed Shearwaters have been the hot bird around here lately, and it seems they have been around much of the rest of the New Zealand, and in Australia as well. The poor blighters have been heading

south to their breeding colonies around Bass Strait, but perishing on the way.

The first few we found coming ashore were on 6 October, and these were fresh. From that date until 11 November we patrolled 58 kms of beach in our region. Of the 303 seabirds we found, 161 were Short-tailed Shearwaters. It appears that the majority of these came ashore during the last three weeks in October. Sooty Shearwaters would have been heading south during the same period, but were evidently not experiencing the same difficulties – we found only 6 Sooties.

Another interesting comparison was between two close relatives, Fluttering and Hutton's Shearwaters. Before this period we had plenty of Flutterers, but during it we had only eight birds. In contrast, we had 27 Hutton's which must also have struck a few problems on their way back to their breeding colonies on the Seaward Kaikouras.

The winter had not shown the usual number of beach casualties, but spring has been a bit tougher on the birds. One banded bird has been found during this period. It was a Fluttering Shearwater, found at Waikorea Beach in August, which had been banded as an adult at a breeding colony on Long Island (Marlborough Sounds) in 1988.

Our evening meetings have now finished for the year, except for the enjoyable pot-luck dinner which we look forward to in December. In August our speaker was Bruce Postill, who spoke on "Studies on endangered species on South-East Island". We enjoyed hearing about the work with Chatham Petrels and Shore Plovers, and also the living conditions and daily (and nightly) routine of the people who work in such remote situations.

"Pest management in New Zealand" was Dr Caroline King's topic in September. Always a sobering topic, for although so much is being achieved, the size of the problem remains enormous. In October Hugh Clifford spoke on "Islands of the Tasman Sea – Norfolk and Lord Howe", both very interesting places for birders, and not far away.

There was an extra meeting in October, to hear Bob Gill, Project Leader – Shorebird Research, of the Alaska Biological Science Centre. His visit to New Zealand was arranged by the Miranda Naturalists' Trust, and the Hamilton meeting was a joint one between the Trust, OSNZ Waikato, and Forest and Bird Waikato. It was great to hear results of his 25 years work on Bar-tailed Godwits at the other end of the flyway from us, and on other species of shorebirds there. Our Chatham Islands studies for the year were completed at our November meeting, aided by Tertia Thurley. She spoke of time spent on Mangere Island, working primarily on the Forbes Parakeet/Red-fronted Parakeet hybridisation puzzle.

Our annual summer harbour census was carried out in early November. The results at our three harbours, Raglan, Aotea, Kawhia, could be described as "normal", in relation to numbers of

godwits and most species. There were some interesting aspects though. At Kawhia a sandbank, which is usually the main wader roost, was disappointing. A strong team was put ashore there as usual, but the sandbank had been reduced in height and didn't hold so many birds. What's more, about 700 godwits took off straightaway to join the main flock on a nearby island. Our strong team was left on the sandbank with very little to count, but they did have a good distant view of much of the hard work being done by another strong team on the island!

We seldom record Red Knots or Turnstones at these harbours, but this time had four knots at Kawhia, while there were two Turnstones at Aotea and six at Kawhia. There must be a good topic for research here – why have we plenty of godwits but hardly any knots?

The Royal Spoonbill situation was interesting too. In the last issue we reported on the increasing numbers we have been recording at Kawhia in our winter census since their first appearance in 1989. In summer censuses their first appearance at Kawhia was in 1990, and the figures for each summer are: 1990 – 6; 1991 – 0; 1992 – 0; 1993 – 3; 1994 – 7; 1995 – 2; 1996 – 11; 1997 – 2; 1998 – 14; 1999 – 0; 2000 – 19. The increasing numbers make us wonder when some birds will decide Kawhia is their home rather than just a holiday destination, and start breeding there. There have been a few sightings of Royal Spoonbills at Raglan Harbour lately too, though none were seen there on census day. It seems likely that the Raglan birds are visitors from Kawhia, 16 being seen on 16 October, 19 on 24 October, and 8 on 6 November.

Birds of a feather don't always flock together. An interesting sight during beach patrols has been of a lone godwit feeding on an ocean beach. One such bird was seen at Taharoa on 6 October, but was not seen there on the next patrol on 3 November. On 20 October one was seen at Waikorea, and again on 7 November one was seen there. Any such sighting is most unusual. Were all three sightings of the same bird, or at least the last two sightings? The straight-line distance between the southern sighting at Taharoa and the northern sightings at Waikorea is about 62 kms. But in between these two points are three harbours, Kawhia, Aotea, and Raglan. In the November census these contained about 3,400, 2,200 and 700 godwits respectively. How could the lone bird have missed these harbours with their birds, or why did it choose not to join them?

For another mystery, we can turn to the Cattle Egret. Our annual survey of them was scheduled for 26 August, but checking with the farmers at the three sites beforehand revealed that they were not there, though they had been there earlier. A query to RRs to see whether there was the same experience in other regions produced a mixed response, the situation ranging from similar to ours, to normal, or to unknown. Much later, on 21 October, there were 11 birds at one of our sites, and



at present we're not sure what to think about what has been happening.

The National Twitchathon did not seem to capture the imagination of our members, and only the Paul Cuming/Barry Friend team carried the Waikato banner. Their tally was 57 species, which we think is pretty good even if it might be a long way from a winning total.

Work on atlas squares continues and over the period of the first two quarters we submitted sheets for 138 of our 183 squares. Many of the 45 squares not visited up to that time will be very difficult to reach of course. An interesting aspect in the period was that our members submitted results for nearly as many squares outside our region as in it (150 sheets for Waikato squares, 137 for squares in other regions). Now if members of other regions are doing the same in Waikato, maybe all our difficult squares will already have been done? The spring quarter will soon be over, and it looks as though we will be submitting more sheets than in either of the previous two quarters.

By the time the next issue of *Southern Bird* appears, Paul Cuming will have had a few months as our Regional Representative. On 31 December Hugh Clifford will join the ranks of our ex-RRs. There will then be five ex-RRs still actively engaged in the affairs of OSNZ Waikato, both in enthusiastic field work and on the committee. We consider ourselves a fortunate region to have this degree of continuity and experience within our ranks.

(Hugh Clifford)

## Taranaki

At our August meeting Barry Hartley discussed with members the importance of keeping accurate records, including those of common birds which are often overlooked. We seem to have large numbers of common birds, due to the dry mild winter. In September Barry gave an interesting talk about the various shag species found about our coast, with a collection of photographs. On 4 September Little Shags were observed in a large pine tree in Pukekura Park – late in the month up to 12 nests and 16 birds were in residence.

In October David Medway gave a run-down on the beach patrol scheme. He outlined the possibilities of rare and unusual Antarctic species being found, so it is important that species be identified correctly. Three beach patrols in August produced 28 wrecks, mostly prions. A Yellow-eyed Penguin from south Taranaki was banded – as a chick at Moeraki in February. It had travelled 750 kms to our coastline.

In August a trip was made to the Puniho Track, on the western side of Egmont National Park. 10+ species were seen, including Redpoll and NZ Pipit. A “coastal crawl” north was the September

outing. Many Tui were observed feeding on *Banksia* flowers on an Urenui walkway, and a NZ Falcon was seen flying just inland at Waitoetoe Beach, with godwits in the same area.

Following reports of kiwi calls on a Tarata property in mid October, four members went out, stayed overnight and played a tape which attracted a most unusual kiwi call. On the second visit the only response to the tape was from frogs and Moreporks.

Some aggressive behaviours of late: a sparrow chasing Welcome Swallows, a magpie chasing Blackbirds, two Starlings locked in mortal combat for a lengthy period, a Bellbird chasing off a feeding pigeon, and Tui chasing pigeons everywhere!

(Rosemary Messenger)

## Wanganui

Not much has been happening in this neck of the woods. Except our last outing to see Nankeen Night Herons. There were thirteen of us including two visitors; Brent Stephenson, Hawkes Bay and Ian Saville, Manawatu, who had just finished the Twitchathon.

We drove to a site that had not been visited for several years but where several birds had been seen previously. We set ourselves up on the road-side overlooking a small valley and a stand of cypress trees where we hoped the elusive birds might emerge. As the light began to fade so too did our confidence in seeing the herons. A Nankeen Night Heron was then spotted by one of the group as it moved out from its roost in the dense foliage in preparation for a night's foraging, its black cap and rufous upper parts clearly distinguishable. Not long after another bird appeared close by. The light at this stage was diminishing fast but another two birds were confirmed.

The first pair took flight and with rapid beats of their rounded wings soon followed by the other two. It was a brief encounter but a most rewarding sighting of this rarely seen species and highlighted the difficulty in obtaining information on their current status.

Birds have been seen at various locations along the Whanganui River but we know nothing of their numbers. Are they evenly distributed along the river between the extreme locations of records? Hopefully the outcome of the trip will be the generation of more effort being invested resulting in more records.

(Tim Holmes)

## Manawatu

Last year's Japanese Snipe has been found again - on the very early date of 16 September, though it is proving a

little elusive with only another two sightings by the end of October. There can be little doubt that it is the same bird, because it still has the habit of occasionally running about on the sandspit in a most un-snipelike manner!

Another Chestnut Teal was at the Manawatu Estuary during July, this time a nearly full plumaged drake, making possibly three individuals this winter. The long staying Little Egret was also seen, on and off, through to the middle of October at least.

The rest of the winter and early spring at the estuary brought very little except for the expected few good days of seawatching whenever there was a decent westerly blowing. Unusual seabirds off Foxton Beach included Royal, Grey-headed and a possible Yellow-nosed Albatross, Brown Skua and Cape Petrel.

There were two early Red-necked Stints from 3 September, and the first Pacific Golden Plover was seen on 2 October, by which time Bar-tailed Godwits and Red Knots were beginning to arrive in decent numbers. During the last weekend of October an Australian Little Grebe was present at Foxton Beach sewage works, representing a first record for the Foxton area, and probably only the second for the Manawatu Region. Finally, and just in time to not be counted for the Twitchathon, the Manawatu Estuary held two Sharp-tailed and Curlew Sandpipers, and a Little Tern on 4 November.

(Ian Saville)

## Wellington

Four pairs of Brown Teal are the latest newcomers to the Karori Sanctuary, where 20 Little Spotted Kiwi were released earlier. On Mana Island the teal have produced one duckling. Also on Mana, Common Diving Petrels in their six nests care for four chicks and two eggs, and a White-faced Storm Petrel was discovered in a burrow – a first for the island.

An Australasian Little Grebe was sighted at Foxton Beach, a Glossy Ibis near Carterton and a group of Short-tailed Shearwaters just offshore at Kapiti Island (with 11 of this species washed up at Petone).

Rough seas have forced the postponement of the field trip to Kapiti Island planned for 9 September. Hopefully this will take place in February. In the meantime DoC proposes an annual shorebird count there, which members will join on 2 December.

At our September meeting Wee Ming Boon explained the molecular evolution of the New Zealand kakariki species. In October Hugh Robertson reported results of the two year survey of Wellington Harbour, and also on the Kakerori of Rarotonga.

Four individual members in

November took up the invitation to tell us about their favourite waders. Stuart Nicholson presented tattlers (Siberian and Wandering), Sally Truman spoke on the Caspian Tern, Ralph Powlesland on the Variable Oystercatcher and Brian Tyler on some of the migrants at Miranda in the Firth of Thames.

This was by way of introduction/revision before the annual trip to the Manawatu Estuary. The following Sunday good views were had of 12 Pacific Golden Plovers, two Red-necked Stints, a Wrybill and the Japanese Snipe. Much energy was focused on a rumoured Curlew Sandpiper but to no avail.

The "Fernbirds for Mana" project is at present on hold, while access to the source population in the Manawatu is investigated. Meanwhile training in handling skills has continued at the zoo, where a total of 294 birds of eight species have been banded.

Training is also available for those who are grappling with the mapping scheme. On the second Sunday of each month, our coordinator has arranged for an hour's observation, followed by an hour's learning to record on the atlas sheets. A different convenient location will be visited each month.

In addition to all this springtime activity, the branch had acceded to requests for help from various public bodies. For example, a monthly "walking count" for the Whitireia Park Board, and a survey of Matiu/Somes Island and the other harbour islands. There are other such requests – perhaps highlighting an important role for OSNZ?

(Rod Orange)

## Canterbury

It has been an interesting spring for those who keep a watch on Lake Ellesmere. Steve Wratten reported that a Marsh Sandpiper – the first seen at the lake since 1989 – had been seen in the Embankment Road area on October 27 and 29 by himself, Tony Crocker, and Colin Hill. He also reported sighting Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, a Pectoral Sandpiper, a Hudsonian Godwit, Wrybills, Red-necked Stints, Pacific Golden Plovers, and Turnstones.

"The lake is a wondrous place at the moment," said Steve. "It has been a great spring so far, with recent Mongolian Dotterel and Terek Sandpiper sightings."

Regional Rep. Nick Allen had been at the lake the previous week and reported White-winged Black Terns at Cooper's Lagoon, a Glossy Ibis near the end of Wolfes Road, a Hudsonian Godwit near Embankment Road, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, and Pacific Golden Plovers. Nick said he had made a call at Prices Valley, nearby, but there was no sign of the

flock of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos breeding there this year.

There has been some bad luck with field trips during the season. A big storm took out the road to the Lees Valley in the foothills just before a field trip was planned to go into the area to do some atlassing work. The trip was delayed but the road had still not been reopened, so the atlassing work went on closer to home, on the plains. Disappointingly, another planned trip to South Canterbury had to be cancelled because not enough members signed on for it. A survey on the Ashley River had to be delayed for a day because of rain, but was the successfully completed.

Several beach patrols have taken place. Canterbury members responded to the call by southern researchers for information about the wreck of Short-tailed Shearwaters on Otago and Southland beaches. There was an immediate check on about 10 kms of coastline from Waikuku beach to Kairaki, but the bodies of only two Short-tails were found and bagged for sending south. Several more were found in patrols in the Brighton Beach area next day.

The Plains Wanderers, winners of the National Twitchathon in 1999, notched up 82 species in 24 hours for their entry this year, four fewer than their total a year ago. It was a very long day, beginning at 6am near Kaikoura, and ending at 11pm.

The evening meetings have been going very well at the Spreydon Bowling Club venue in Domain Terrace which has been used for much of this year. Meetings always start with a quick round-up from members of recent interesting sightings, and then an ornithological quiz, before the evening's speaker gets under way.

Paul Sagar told of his work with Buller's Mollymawks on the Snares Islands, 180 kms south of Bluff, showing slides of the breeding colonies and the satellite tracks of the birds heading for their feeding grounds in the Tasman and off the South Island's east coast.

Andrew Win from Lincoln University presented the preliminary findings of his masters thesis on Canada Goose damage to pasture, at the September meeting. His study area is at Lake Grassmere in the Canterbury high country.

In October, we heard from Tony Crocker, on a trip along the southern fringe of the Kimberley region in Northwest Australia, returning to Darwin from Broome by boat and exploring the coast along the way. The talk was illustrated with slides of spectacular landscapes, and fascinating wildlife.

An award for Meritorious Service to Ornithology in New Zealand was presented to 89-year-old Ron Scarlett at the September meeting of the Canterbury branch. In presenting the award, Richard Holdaway paid tribute to Ron as "a giant in ornithology in New Zealand" over a long period.

(David Clarkson)

## Southland

A Silveryeye found dead in Invercargill on 7 September had been banded in Dunedin two years before. Our most loyal flock of Cattle Egrets, around 40 birds, has spent the winter on dairy farms in the vicinity of Wallacetown.

The first muttonbirds of the year were reported by fishermen in Foveaux Strait on 5/6 September 2000. In October we had a large wreck of Short-tailed Shearwaters, with several hundred being found on Oreti Beach and elsewhere in Southland. Our weekly beach patrols have continued. Surprisingly this year we got none of the southern birds – Antarctic Petrels, Antarctic Fulmars, Blue Petrels and Kerguelen Petrels – that we usually get in August and September.

In September a party of five did our regular Mason Bay beach patrol. There were only a few birds this year including 16 juvenile Buller's Mollymawks, fewer than usual. We found four dead magpies, indicating the ability of this pest to spread. Stewart Island is presently free of them but for how much longer? It is always nice to catch up with the kiwi and NZ Dotterels there.

Work has been progressing on Southland's 432 bird squares. Any visitors to the province can help by keeping bird notes as they travel around. We are very keen to get any Southland records of grebes, coots, quail, pheasants and Cirl Buntings. All rural squares show Starlings, Black-backed Gulls, harriers, Blackbirds, magpies, Spur-winged Plovers and Mallards. These are easy to identify as you drive along with a faithful recorder with a map in the passenger seat. I am happy to provide photocopied maps with the squares already numbered for convenience. Even a single spot record of an unusual species is useful. The winning square so far is the one that includes the head of Awarua Bay with 55 species.

Our wader arrival date was on or just prior to 30 September. We seem to have had at least 500 godwits over-wintering which is an unusually high number. A winter wader count at Awarua Bay was unsuccessful as the 2.9m tide was too high and everything was pushed off the normal high-tide roost. Beautiful weather, deep, freezing water and only a handful of birds – 18 black oystercatchers, one SIPO and 20 godwits.

As in other areas our sparrow population was hit by salmonella. The plague seemed to have passed by October with numbers starting to build up.

We have recently formed the Southland Fieldclub. We felt that there were too few members of the Ornithological Society, Botanical Society and Entomological Society to make local meetings worthwhile, so we have combined forces for meetings, fieldtrips and other activities as the Southland Fieldclub. After four meetings all is going well.

(Lloyd Esler)



# WHAT'S ON

## Far North

90 mile beach patrol. Last Sunday in each month. Ph. Isobella Godbert (09) 407 8058.

East Coast beach patrol, Sunday in the middle of the month. Ph. Laurie Howell (09) 408 2084



## Northland

14 December – dinner at Onerahi Hotel.

13 January, 10 February, 10 March – west coast beach patrols.

16 January, 13 February, 13 March - east coast beach patrols.

8 February – evening meeting.

3/4 March – Pouto lakes survey.

8 March – evening meeting.



## Auckland

6 February - evening meeting, Kohia Teachers' Centre, College of Education. Geoff Moon, forest birds. Ph. David Pye (09) 410 2879

11 February - Muriwai Beach Patrol. Ph. John Simmons (09) 828-8642.

17 February - atlas trip - various destinations. Ph. David Pye (09) 410-2879.

6 March - evening meeting, Auckland's Rainbow Lorikeets.

10 March - Muriwai Beach Patrol. Ph. John Simmons (09) 828-8642.

17/18 March - Tiritiri Matangi survey. Ph. Mike & Sharon Graham (09) 817-5537.

25 March - NZ Dotterel census - west coast sites.

31 March - NZ Dotterel Census – east coast sites.

For NZ Dotterel Census, Gwenda Pulham, ph 480-5535 or David Pye, ph 410-2879.

3 April – evening meeting, Tahuna Torea Nature Reserve.

8 April - Muriwai Beach Patrol. Ph. John Simmons (09) 828-8642.

25 April - South Kaipara Lakes Dabchick Survey. Ph. Judy Bendall (09) 420-2734.

28 April - Fairy Tern survey. Ph. Gwenda Pulham (09) 480-5535.



## South Auckland

Monthly beach patrols, Kariotahi and Sunset Beaches. Ph. Rob Wheeler (09) 299 7069.



## Waikato

Evening meetings, third Wednesday of the month (except January), DoC Conference Room, London Street, Hamilton. Ph. Hugh Clifford (07) 855 3751.

Lakes censuses 10 December, 17 December.

## Bay of Plenty

14 January- Kaituna Cut and Makatu areas for waders. Meet Kaituna River Mouth at 10.30 am

17 February - Boat Trip on Ohiwa Harbour. Cost \$40 per person. Meet at 1.00 pm at the Ohiwa Harbour Wharf.

3 March - Manawahe Kokako Trust. Meet corner of Braemar Road on State HW 30 at 7.00am. There will be a BBQ at \$10 per head.

10-11 March - Miranda Shorebird Centre weekend in conjunction with autumn migration day. Contact Keith Woodley ph. (09) 232 2781

8 April - Waimana River bush birds. Meet at the corner of Bell Road and State HW2 at 10.00 am. Ph. John Brierley (07) 323 7458.

## Taranaki

Evening meetings - held at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month except January. Ph. Barry Hartley (06) 757 8644. Field trips on first conducive weekend thereafter.

## Wanganui

Evening meetings, fourth Tuesday of the month, Davis Lecture Theatre, Whanganui Regional Museum (Watt St). Ph Tim Holmes (06) 343 6808

## Manawatu

Evening meetings - held every three months at the Lido Centre, Park Street, Palmerston North, 8 pm.

Beach Patrols - 1st Wednesday of each month and on other beaches at irregular times. Ph Brian Tyler (06) 368 1489 for meeting times and places.

## Wairarapa

9 December - pot luck tea, Miles and Janet King's, Oliver Road, Masterton at 6pm.

## Wellington

Beach Patrols Jean Luke (04) 293 5601

Evening Meetings first Monday of the month at 7.45pm, DoC offices, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Wellington Central Library. Dates are 5 February, 5 March, 2 April, 7 May.

Atlassing training sessions, various Wellington localities – 1-3.00 pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of every month. Ph. Stuart Nicholson (04) 934 5940.

## Nelson

Monthly meetings on the first Monday of each month. Venues vary. Ph. David Melville (03) 543 3628

## Canterbury

Evening meetings are held at the Spreydon Bowling Club rooms, Domain Terrace, starting at 7.30pm.

26 February – evening meeting, members' evening.

26 March – evening meeting.

30 April - Bellbirds and New Zealand Pigeons on Banks Peninsula and the mid-Canterbury Plains.

Beach patrols, phone Sheila Petch 348-1889, or Bev Alexander on (03) 313-7009.

## PLEASE NOTE

Deadline for the

**MARCH Issue will be 10 FEBRUARY**



