



# Southern *Bird*

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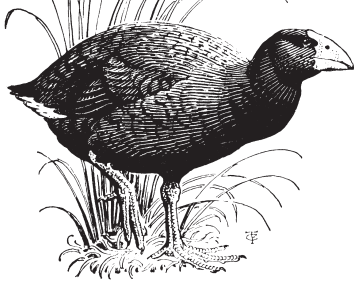
Fiordland Kakapo Search

Murder on the Mount

Annual Report







## Quotation

*I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.  
Inaction, no falsifying dream  
Between my hooked head and hooked feet:  
Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat.*

**Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes**

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## Cover Photos

**Front cover:** *Salvin's Mollymawk adult at nest with small chick, Snares Western Chain, November 1976.*

**Back cover:** *Antarctic Tern, adult in breeding plumage, North East Island, The Snares*

**Both photos by P.M. and J.L. Sagar**

We welcome advertising enquiries. Free classified ads are available to members at the editor's discretion. Articles for inclusion in *Southern Bird* are welcome in any form, though electronic is preferred. Material should be related to birds, birdwatchers, or ornithologists in the New Zealand and Pacific region, and can include news on birds, members, activities and bird study, literature/product reviews, letters to the editor, birdwatching sites, identification. Illustrations are especially welcome, though they must be sharp. Copy deadlines are 10th February, May and August, and 1st November.

## THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

### ANNUAL REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL FOR 2005-2006

It is my pleasure to present this report on behalf of Council to the 67th Annual General Meeting of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand to be held in Wellington on 3rd June 2006.

#### Council

Council met formally on two occasions in 2005, the first being in Hamilton on 3rd June 2005 in conjunction with the 2005 AGM, and the second being in Wellington on 15th October 2005.

#### Council elections

Nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer were called for in accordance with the Society's constitution. Two nominations were received for the position of President. They were for Stuart Nicholson and Richard Holdaway. After the voting papers were sent out, Stuart Nicholson withdrew his nomination. Therefore, an election for the position of President was not necessary. Richard Holdaway, as the remaining nominee, automatically becomes the next President for a term of three years from the conclusion of this Annual General Meeting. Only one nomination was received for each of the other positions. As a result David Lawrie, Claudia Duncan, and Mark Nee are elected to the positions of Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, for a term of three years from the conclusion of this Annual General Meeting.

#### Membership

There was a small increase in membership of the Society during the year. Paid-up membership was 919 as at 7th May 2006. It consisted of ordinary members (660), family members (99), life members (56), student members (29), institutional members (72), and fellows (3).

#### Notornis editor

Murray Williams replaced Richard Holdaway as editor of *Notornis* from 1st July 2003. The position has now gone full circle. Murray retired recently as editor and Richard generously agreed to assume that role again. The Society is grateful to Murray for his editorship of the journal. *Notornis* continues to be one of the major contributions by the Society and its membership, both professional and amateur, to knowledge of the birds of Australasia, Oceania and Antarctica, with particular emphasis on the birds of the New Zealand region.

Our international reputation as an ornithological society is judged in large measure by the standard of presentation and content of our official journal. Council requests that

## Publisher

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We welcome advertising enquiries. Free classified ads are available to members at the editor's discretion. This magazine and archives of it and the Society's Journal *Notornis* are available on the internet at [www.notornis.org.nz](http://www.notornis.org.nz).*



### Special *Notornis* issue

Separate mention must be made of "A celebration of Kakapo". This is the appropriate title of the March 2006 issue of *Notornis* that is a special volume devoted entirely to the Kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*). The dearth of published literature relating to this critically-endangered endemic New Zealand parrot was recognized by Murray Williams who, while still editor of *Notornis*, conceived and edited this special edition of the Society's journal. The Society is grateful to Murray for ably remedying the literature defect by organising the preparation of a wide-ranging series of papers and notes relating to the Kakapo, written by authorities in the field, and for arranging the funding for, and overseeing the publication of, this invaluable collection as a special issue of our journal.

### Southern Bird

*Southern Bird* is much appreciated by the membership. The Society continues to be grateful to Nick Allen, who became its editor in June 2003, for his continuing efforts in maintaining the standard and popularity of this publication. It is hoped that members will continue to supply Nick with copious amounts of interesting and informative material for publication.

### Australasian Ornithological and Shorebird Conferences

These conferences were undoubtedly the ornithological highlight of the year. The Australasian Ornithological Conference, a joint OSNZ and Birds Australia initiative to promote ornithology in our region, was held in Blenheim from 6-10th December 2005. The Australasian Shorebird Conference, hosted by OSNZ in association with the Australasian Wader Study Group and the New Zealand Wader Study Group and focusing on wader research and conservation, was held in Nelson from 11-13th December 2005, immediately following the Australasian Ornithological Conference. Each conference attracted a large number of participants, including many from New Zealand and Australia and some from much further afield. Participants were treated to excellent programmes of informative and very ably presented plenary lectures, papers, and posters on a wide variety of topics relating to the avifauna of the Australasian region in particular.

The opportunity presented by the Australasian Ornithological Conference was also availed of to hold a separate workshop at which the possibility of a landbird monitoring scheme for New Zealand was discussed by ornithologists from both here and overseas who have a special interest and expertise in the formation and operation of such a scheme. Society members will hear more about this in due course. In addition to the formal sessions of the conferences, many participants availed themselves of opportunities to take part in field excursions that included birdwatching off Kaikoura, in the Marlborough Sounds, at Nelson Lakes National Park, and at Farewell Spit. This is the first time these two important international conferences have been held in New Zealand. Together, they constituted the biggest ornithological gathering in this country since the International Ornithological Congress held in Christchurch in 1990. Credit for their undoubted success must go to all the many Society members and other persons who were involved in whatever way.

### Miranda Naturalists' Trust

The OSNZ Column concerning our Society and its activities has appeared regularly in *Miranda Naturalists' Trust News*. Since my last Annual Report, the following have been the subject of articles in that column: the OSNZ Bird Distribution Mapping Scheme (May 2005), the OSNZ 2005 Scientific Day (August 2005), electronic availability of New Zealand bird literature (November 2005), the Australasian Ornithological Conference (February 2006) and the special Kakapo issue of *Notornis* (May 2006).

### Appreciation

Council thanks all other members who have contributed in many ways to the management and well-being of our Society during the past

and short notes to the editor of *Notornis* for publication in that journal. membership secretary, members of the *Notornis* Editorial Board and contributors to regional newsletters, convenors and organisers of the Beach Patrol Scheme, Nest Records Scheme, Moulting Scheme, Atlas Scheme and Twitchathon, members of the Rare Birds Committee, the Scientific Committee, and the Checklist Committee, our librarians and webmaster, those members who have made generous donations of various sorts to the Society, and many other members particularly at a regional level. Council also thanks all those members and others who ensured that our 2005 AGM weekend in Hamilton, with its associated Scientific Day and field trips, was both enjoyable and productive. As I have said several times before, it would not be possible to run our voluntary Society without the goodwill and willing assistance of all these people, and the continuing support of the general membership itself.

DAVID G. MEDWAY

President

8th May 2006

## Treasurer's Report for the 2005 Financial Year

The annual accounts attached highlight both the Statement of Balances and individual accounts and outline overall a most satisfying year's activities.

The balances show an increase in investments, due to much work in progress, and funds held to meet these items. The General Account shows an overall surplus of \$7,003 due to subscriptions increasing from \$43,135 to \$54,256 because the 2004 year increase in the subscription rate applied in 2005.

In addition costs were largely held, apart from an increased write-off of plant items and sale items. While there will be minor sales in future it is pointless to list items separately, and plant depreciation should be lower in future.

Apart from the General Account the individual accounts worthy of note are the Plant Purchase Replacement and Maintenance Reserve (no.3) which was set up to fund larger computer-type expenses, and which now appears unnecessary as most members have their own personal computers. Therefore, next year I propose to add this back to our General Account.

The remaining accounts balances are adequate, apart from the Meadows Atlas Memorial and Contracts Accounts (nos. 8 and 10) which have funds in hand (i.e. in the bank) to meet 'works in progress' such as the *Notornis* Kakapo issue just received, and the Atlas which Chris Robertson largely funds with grants and sales. In the main contracts are seasonal efforts with field work in summer, writings in winter, and as stated above to have funds in hand is a quite unique feature in my experience.

Overall the accounts are satisfactory and thanks are due to firstly our loyal membership and many individuals who work both at regional and national level. The Accounts disclose only 'iceberg costs' and give no value to the skill and time and no doubt transport costs of all who take part in our recording and written activities. In addition the AOC Conference and projects with David Melville have been completed, but with accounts to be completed.

With the conclusion of David Medway's term as President I wish to thank him for steadfast support and knowledge together with Councillors and Roger Sharp, and also Murray Williams and Nick Allen as Editors (and one a fund raiser of note!). Murray's Kakapo issue is a highlight to me for more reasons than one.

Chris Robertson also helps and funds his activities in more fields than just the Atlas. The Hartys, Betty Seddon, the Hamilton AGM team and the Bells in Blenheim and all Regional Representatives have all helped in many varied ways.

Although we are not a large body we punch well above our weight of numbers and the Department of Conservation's assistance with funding for research projects continues to be beneficial to us both.

I recommend the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2005 be adopted.

MARK NEE

Treasurer 4th May 2006



I have audited the financial report on the following pages. The financial report provides information about the past financial performance of the Society and its financial position as at 31st December 2005.

#### Council Responsibilities

The Constitution of the Society states that the administration and management of the Society shall be vested in the Council. The Council is responsible for the preparation of an annual report and audited statement of accounts for the year to 31st December 2005.

#### Auditor's responsibilities

It is my responsibility to express an independent opinion on the financial report presented by the Council and report the opinion to you.

#### Basis of opinion

An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence to the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. It also includes assessing:

- The significant estimates and judgements made by the Council in the preparation of the financial report and
- Whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Society's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.
- The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in New Zealand. The audit was planned and performed so as to obtain all the information and explanations which were considered necessary to give reasonable assurance that the financial report is free from material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming the opinion the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the financial statements was also evaluated.

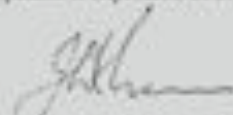
#### Qualified opinion

In common with other organisations of a similar nature, control over income and cash expenditure, prior to it being recorded, is limited and there are no practical audit procedures to determine the effect of this limited control.

A physical stock count of assets was not completed at year-end and there were no practical alternative auditing procedures that could be applied to confirm the assets. Accordingly the existence of Society library and assets of \$41,280 in the balance sheet was unable to be verified.

Subject to the matters noted in all the above paragraphs, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the society as at 31st December 2005 and the results of its activities for the year ended 31st December 2005.

The audit was completed on 2nd May 2006 and my qualified opinion is expressed as at that date.



John Khouri, B Com, ACA, Auckland

## THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2005

	NOTE	2005	2004
General Account		(44,892)	(51,891)
Life Membership Reserve		16,586	13,949
Plant Purchase, Replacement & Maintenance		15,388	15,688
Library Reserve		2,686	2,443
Members Funds		(10,232)	(19,811)
Sir Robert Falls Memorial Award		4,369	4,087
AT Edgar Junior Memorial Award		4,286	3,978
Project Assistance Fund		102,903	99,701
Meadows Memorial		94,964	65,002
Contracts Fund		86,076	15,000
<b>Restricted Funds Liabilities</b>		<b>292,798</b>	<b>185,768</b>
<b>Total Members Funds &amp; Liabilities</b>		<b>282,476</b>	<b>165,957</b>

Accounts Receivable	3	8,171	7,011
Advances		430	800
Society Materials Stock	4	0	3,358
Goods & Services Tax Due		0	8,312
Investments BNZ		30,000	130,000
Investments Auckland Mortgage Trust		298,000	30,000
Library & Assets		41,280	45,489
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>318,825</b>	<b>198,497</b>
<b>Less Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	5	2,050	2,530
Subscription in Advance		25,447	30,000
Goods & Services Tax Due		8,072	0
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>35,569</b>	<b>32,530</b>
<b>Net Total of Assets</b>		<b>283,256</b>	<b>165,957</b>
M.P. Nee, Treasurer			

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2005

### 1. GENERAL ACCOUNT

<b>Income</b>			
Annual Subscriptions New Zealand		40,231	31,709
Annual Subscriptions Overseas		14,025	11,426
Donations		2,050	2,691
Sales		0	1,270
Notornis & Southern Bird Rebonds	6	7,651	4,342
Annual Meeting		1,659	782
Interest		765	680
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>66,386</b>	<b>52,900</b>
Transfers From			
Life Membership Rev Annual Contribution		1,393	1,488
Contract Account Fees		0	4,500
Meadows Atlas Memorial Administration Fees		2,375	1,544
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>3,778</b>	<b>7,532</b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>70,164</b>	<b>60,432</b>
<b>Less Expenditure</b>			
Printing Notornis		22,633	20,787
Printing OBNZ News		10,749	10,270
Packing & Postage above		8,465	5,421
Council Meetings		3,436	3,617
Printing & Stationery		913	364
General Expenses		1,592	1,048
Travel Expenses		3,617	4,877
Postage & Tolls		862	1,302
Audit		300	1,320
Advertising		0	1,190
Insurance		1,024	732
Rare Birds/Checklist Commissions		88	455
Library		1,165	0
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>54,814</b>	<b>51,583</b>
Transfer to:-			
Library & Asset Account Depreciation		5,910	2,736
Sale Stock Write Off		2,429	0
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>8,339</b>	<b>2,736</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>63,153</b>	<b>54,319</b>
Surplus / (Deficit) Income		7,001	6,113
Plus Balance as at 1st January 2005		(51,891)	(58,004)
<b>General Funds</b>		<b>144,892</b>	<b>(51,891)</b>

### 2. LIFE MEMBERSHIP RESERVE

	2005	2004
<b>Income</b>		
Interest	963	559
New Life Members	3,967	0
	4,930	559





<b>Less Expenditure</b>		
Transfer to General Funds		
Annual Contribution	1,395	1,488
Surplus/(Deficit)	2,637	(929)
Plus Balance as at 1 January 2005	13,949	14,876
Balance as at 31 December 2005	16,586	13,947

**3. PLANT PURCHASE REPLACEMENT & MAINTENANCE RESERVE**

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Repairs	300	45
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>45</b>
Surplus (Deficit)	(300)	(45)
Plus Balance as at 1 January 2005	15,688	15,733
Balance as at 31 December 2005	15,388	15,688

**4. LIBRARY & ASSETS ACCOUNT**

<b>Income</b>		
Library Exchanges	1,700	2,000
	1,700	2,000
<b>Less</b>		
Transfer to General Funds		
Annual Depreciation	5,910	2,736
Surplus/(Deficit)	(4,210)	(736)
Plus Balance as at 1 January 2005	45,490	46,226
Balance as at 31 December 2005	41,280	45,490

**5. SIR ROBERT FALLA MEMORIAL AWARD FUND**

<b>Income</b>		
Interest	282	149
Surplus/(Deficit)	282	149
Plus Fund Balance as at 1 January 2005	4,087	3,938
Balance as at 31 December 2005	4,369	4,087

**6. A T EDGAR JUNIOR AWARD FUND**

<b>Income</b>		
Donations	143	18
Interest	275	143
Income	418	161
Plus Fund Balance as at 1 January 2005	3,978	3,817
Balance as at 31 December 2005	4,396	3,978

**7. PROJECT ASSISTANCE FUNDS**

<b>Income</b>		
Royalties Penguin Field Guide	4,523	4,637
Interest	6,061	3,754
Projects Reversed	1,230	1,230
Total Receipts	11,814	9,621

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Projects; Grants made	7A 0	1,991
Projects; Grants Approved	7B 1,230	1,230
Regional and Petrol Grants	4,916	2,373
Advance Conference Nov 2005	0	1,406
Advance State of Birds	2,466	0
Transfer		
Meadows Atlas Memorial Fund	0	2,529
Total Expenditure	8,612	9,529

Surplus/(Deficit)	3,202	92
Plus Balance as at 1 January 2005	99,701	99,609
Balance as at 31 December 2005	102,903	99,701

**MEMORIAL FUND**

<b>Income</b>		
DoC Atlas Project	46,000	50,000
Sales	4,470	569
Donations	660	336
Interest	6,963	2,585
Transfers from:		
Project Assistance / Atlasing	0	2,529
Income	58,093	56,019

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Atlas Plans/Mapping	22,562	16,395
Data Entry	1,194	1,575
Transfer to General Account		
Administration Charge	2,375	1,544
Expenditure	26,131	19,514

Surplus/(Deficit)	31,962	36,505
Balance as at 1 January 2005	63,002	26,497
Balance as at 31 December 2005	94,964	63,002

**9. LIBRARY AUCTION RESERVE**

<b>Income</b>		
Adjustment as 2004 charged in error	831	0

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Paper	588	831
Surplus/(Deficit)	243	(831)

Balance as at 1st January 2005	2,443	3,274
Balance as at 31 December 2005	2,686	2,443

**10. CONTRACTS ACCOUNT**

<b>Income</b>		
Wader Report	0	17,000
Notornis Kakapo Issue	15,000	0
Wader Report	6,576	0
Wader Surveys	52,000	0
	73,576	17,000

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Kakapo Issue	2,500	12,500
Transfer to:		
General Account		
Administration Fees	0	4,500
	2,500	17,000

Surplus / (Deficit)	71,076	0
Balance 1st January 2005 Wader Report	15,000	15,000
Balance 31st December 2005	86,076	15,000

**NOTE TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2005**

**1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**General Accounting Principles**

The general accounting principles recognised as appropriate for the measurement and reporting of earnings under the historical cost method of accounting have been adopted by society.

**Particular Accounting Policies**

Particular Accounting Policies which materially affect the measurement of the excess of income over expenditure and financial position have been applied as follows:



Subscription in arrears have not been included in income. Subscriptions in advance have been excluded from income.

#### **b. Royalty Income**

Sales of *Field Guide of the birds of New Zealand* (Falla, Sibson, Turbott) have ceased. Royalties from *The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand* (Heather & Robertson) are credited to the Project Assistance Fund.

#### **c. Interest Earned**

Interest earned by investments of funds has been credited to respective funds at a rate of 6.2%. This rate is calculated by apportioning the total interest received over Restricted and General Funds, with a deduction for administration.

#### **d. Depreciation**

Depreciation is charged at an annual rate of 15% diminishing value. The library is not depreciated but retained at cost price and cost of Journals exchanged with other Societies and Institutions.

#### **e. Goods & Service Tax**

Income and expenditure are stated exclusive of goods and services tax.

### **2. RESERVES**

#### **a. Life Membership**

The life membership reserve consists of life membership subscriptions and interest less annual transfer of 10% of balance to General Funds.

#### **b. Plant Purchase**

The Plant Purchase Replacement and Maintenance Reserve, was set up in 1992 to ensure provision for replacement and maintenance of plant and is not currently funded as it is considered the Reserve is more than adequate.

<b>3. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Royalties Penguin	1,800	2,000
Interest BNZ	617	1,815
Auckland Mortgage Trust	1,481	0
<i>Notornis</i>	2,514	940
<i>Southern Bird</i>	100	163
AGM refund	1,659	781
Posting Refund	0	957
Nelson OSNZ	0	981
	<u>8,171</u>	<u>7,637</u>
<b>4. STOCKS OF SALES ITEMS</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Final Statement	0	3,358
	<u>0</u>	<u>3,358</u>

### **9. LIBRARY, ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION**

ITEM	YEAR PURCHASE	COST PRICE	BOOK VALUE TO 31/12/04	TOTAL DEP.	DEP. 2005	TOTAL DEP	BOOK VALUE TO 31/12/05
Library		29,963	29,963		1,700*(1)		31,663
Computers	1992	12,385	992	11,393	992	12,385	
Computers	1994	10,033	2,190	7,843	330	8,173	1,860
Computers	1997	7,736	2,066	5,670	310	5,980	1,756
Computers	1998	3,122	848	2,274	848	3,122	
Computers	1999	5,251	2,186	3,065	328	3,393	1,858
Computers	2001	4,638	2,776	1,862	416	2,278	2,360
Display	1989	1,311	152	1,159	152	1,311	
Display	1990	1,000	130	870	130	1,000	
Scales	1991	2,700	378	2,322	378	2,700	
Callipers	1992	1,350	217	1,133	217	1,350	
Telescopes	1991	7,265	1,074	6,191	1,074	7,265	
Tripods	1991	2,426	266	2,160	266	2,426	
Boxes	1992	410	67	343	67	410	
Nest Records	1995	7,000	1,717	5,283	257	5,540	1,460
Glasses *(2)	1995	1,467	380	1,087	57	1,144	323
Fax	1996	355	88	267	88	355	
		<u>98,412</u>	<u>45,490</u>	<u>52,922</u>	<u>7,610</u>	<u>58,832</u>	<u>41,280</u>

\*(1) Library Exchanges \*(2) Heather Memorial Glasses

1. *Notornis*. In the past it was policy to print extra copies of the quarterly journal to be held for eventual sale to libraries, institutions and new members.

Holdings are now reduced to only nominal value. This year values reduced to nil as they are all old stock items.

2. The account shows income from sales mainly of older holdings at AGMs, pens and surplus *Notornis*. It is anticipated sales of up to \$800 will be made annually.

<b>5. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Projects Assistance Grants Unpaid	1,230	1,230
Audit Fee Accrued	800	1,300
	<u>2,030</u>	<u>2,530</u>
<b>6. NOTORNIS &amp; SOUTHERN BIRDS REFUNDS</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
Notornis/Library Exchanges	1,700	2,000
Papers in Notornis	5,776	2,178
Southern Bird adverts	175	164
	<u>7,651</u>	<u>4,342</u>

### **7A. PROJECT ASSISTANCE FUND GRANTS MADE**

04.01 Moults Scheme	0	1,991
Transfer to:		
Medows Atlas Memorial Fund	0	2,529
Regional and Petrol Grants	4,916	2,373
AOC Conference	2,466	0
	<u>7,382</u>	<u>6,893</u>

### **7B. PROJECTS APPROVED**

<b>Various</b>		
98.01 Southland Black-billed Gull Banding	480	480
98.02 R. Keedwell's Study	350	350
99.01 Hawkes Bay Stopwatches	400	400
	<u>1,230</u>	<u>1,230</u>

### **8. CASHFLOW STATEMENT**

A cashflow statement has not been prepared. The provisions for differential reporting under Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, specifically Exposure Draft No.62 "Framework for Differential Reporting" allows entities of the size of The Ornithological Society of New Zealand Inc. be exempt from the completion of a Statement of Cashflow.

## CSN records

Despite CSN being in abeyance at the moment members should send in details of their sightings to the regional recorder for their region by 31st July.

The Classified Summarised Notes year runs from 1st July to 30th June, so now is the time to extract all those observations from your notebooks, scraps of paper, and computers.

Vagrant, uncommon and threatened species are the focus of CSN. For common species, census counts are useful (especially if the censuses are carried out regularly and any trends or unusual numbers are highlighted). Unusual behaviour, such as calls, displays, diet, and flocking, as well as abnormal mortality are of interest to CSN. Generally speaking distribution records are not of interest unless they are outside the known range of the species and therefore extend our knowledge, or are from localities seldom visited by ornithologists/birdwatchers.

Usually the following data should not be submitted for CSN: nest records, beach patrol records, and banding records. These sorts of records are best submitted to the respective scheme convenors, or the banding office. There are exceptions to this rule if the sighting was unusual or interesting, and supporting information is sent with the record.

## New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

William Abbott (Auckland), Kay Collyer (Canterbury), Rosemary Cotman (South Auckland), Karen Denyer (Waikato), Lala Frazer (Otago), Peter Frost (Wanganui), Kevin Hedge (Marlborough), Malcolm Ives (Nelson), Eleanor Lancaster (Waikato), Malcolm Lightband (Hawkes Bay), Kirsten Olsen (Manawatu), Ben Paris (Waikato), Robert Peeters (Waikato), Patricia Percy (Wairarapa), Jennifer Punter (Auckland), Michael Punter (Auckland), Tim Robinson (Far North), Alex Rutherford (Nelson), David Shackleton (U.K.), Bill Smith (Far North), Ian Smith (Hawkes Bay), Norma Smith (Hawkes Bay), Pauline Stephinson (Far North), Rose Thorogood (Auckland), Fran Willis (Wellington), Mahe Winikerei (Volcanic Plateau).

We also thank the following members for their generous donations to the Society:

Jane Ashby, Harry Battam, Tony Beauchamp, Gerry Brackenbury, Rhys Buckingham, Mary Craven, Jean Creighton, Mr G L Don, Dr R. E. Fordyce, Mark Fraser, Ian Jamieson, Jim Jolly, Paddy Latham, Tim Lovegrove, Mr R.S. Macdonald, Alan Miller, Dr P. L. Munns, Bernadette Russell, Paul Scofield, Gillian Vaughan, Janet Vaughan, Mr W. A. Watters, John Woods.

## Wanted Papers on New Zealand bird species

All citations, reprint copies or photocopies of papers on, or relating to, any New Zealand bird species that have been published in a scientific journal or general magazine other than *Notornis*. These papers or citations will be made available to all members, and a list of these publications will be published annually in *Notornis*.

Please send to the Secretary, Claudia Duncan, PO Box 12397, Wellington, or c.duncan@clear.net.nz

## Grey-faced Petrels are facing mounting pressure on Mauao/Mount Maunganui.



■ Mauao from the Southeast side (Paul Cuming)

Since 1989, members of the Ornithological Society have been studying the Grey-faced Petrel *Pterodroma macroptera gouldi*, otherwise known as the North Island Muttonbird, on Mount Maunganui, now known as Mauao. The aim was to obtain knowledge about the stability of the colony, the extent of predation and/or poaching that occurred there, and breeding success.

Initially, Mauao was the only site visited, but between the mid 1990s and early 2000s, the nearby offshore island of Motuotau (Rabbit Island) was also visited as a comparison. Motuotau was our control island, and a good example of a seabird island, with thousands of birds using the site, whereas Mauao was one of the last few remaining mainland colonies of the species.

Motuotau is no longer visited. However, in 1999, 30 chicks were transferred from there to Mauao as part of a DoC initiative to illustrate the potential of transfers of the much scarcer Taiko. The Taiko is a critically-endangered close relative of the Grey-faced Petrel, and if ever there comes a time when the Chatham Island petrel species needs to be transferred, techniques need to be in place with more common species as to how to perform the transfer. Two chicks from the transfer have been caught on Mauao in the last two seasons.

The Grey-faced Petrel studies involve visiting sites beginning at the outset of the breeding season in April. These trips are to band adults returning to the colonies, and last though to September. In the November to January period, the trips are to band chicks – and any adults that get in the way!

Mauao faces a battery of pests, some of which are controlled easily (rabbits), and some which are not easily controlled (stoats, rats). Possums and cats from the nearby urban areas also seem to be constantly re-invading the site. There are few signs of poaching, or 'muttonbirding', but it can't be ruled out.

So we come to the current 2005/6 season for the project, fifteen years since the project gained momentum at the kind behest of Graeme Taylor and Alan Tennyson. Since the halcyon days of 1999-2002, when up to 36 chicks were banded during each season, we were faced with the rather grim scenario of two chicks, possibly, fledging this past breeding season.

This story is to illustrate the obstacles with which we are faced as a bird study organisation left with no birds to study. It is not intended to accuse or blame organisations which are charged with programmes and procedures which affect the populations of wild birds. It is a story of a battle between one of the native species of this land and an awesome killing machine in the form of a mammal.

In a nice twist of fate, the 2005/6 season got off to a very thankful start, for on 1st October 2005, Hugh Clifford and I were re-mapping



■ A chick occupying an artificial burrow on Mauao. Note hatch and lid behind (Hugh Clifford)



burrow the sight hove into view of a large bundle of down in the form of a chick!



■ Note back of head missing in this young chick (Paul Cuming)

The good news was not to last. An article in the *Bay News*, a local free newspaper, a few weeks after we found the live chick in the artificial burrow stated that "one tonne of rabbit poison had been placed on Mauao, starting on 1 November, and the kill rate was 95-98%." It also stated that stoat control was starting, with "about 15-20 traps placed on Mauao, checked daily and moved on a regular basis". This was good news for the petrels if the control persisted, because if there were 95-98% less rabbits, stoats were perhaps more likely to switch prey. However, the actions were of little use as there were to be few chicks throughout December found alive. The evidence of pests in the colonies presented itself with broken eggs and piles of feathers in burrows, culminating with the first body on 2nd December in one of the colonies closest to an urban area.

Over the course of the next five December nights, we were presented with body after body. Dave Wills was able to identify some features on the bodies as being due to predation, with some injuries confirmed as being typical of stoat predation. Some bodies had the backs of their heads missing, a sure sign of predation. We also kept seeing rats, for example on 23rd and 30th December, and could not rule these out as being part of the problem.

At the conclusion of the season's work on 12 January 2006, the last two chicks left at the colony were found dead outside their burrows. All in all, a total of 13 chicks were found dead, 11 before we could band them, and there were three burrows with unknown outcomes with chicks in them never seen again. I hope that they fledged. They included the chick in the artificial burrow.



■ Paul Cuming with petrel (Hugh Clifford)

Naturally, we were concerned at the results of the season's work, knowing that we put a lot of effort in for very little reward. Outcomes as to the future of the project were raised with several of the governing agencies managing Mauao. In short, we can say that we are now part of a group of people working toward a holistic approach to the long-term survival of the bird on this important mainland site.

With our aims well documented, and achieved, over the years, we are now poised for new phase of the project; one that will hopefully see a continued presence of the birds on the site for our descendants to visit and enjoy. In May two groups of 20 children toured the site at night with the Kiwi Conservation Club. It is pleasing

to see that, after two initial 2006-7 season nights under our belt this month, 55 adult birds have been captured, and the activity in the colony with the adults continues apace.

Thank you to all the many volunteers from the various groups involved with the monitoring of the birds over the summer: DoC, Tauranga City Council, OSNZ Bay of Plenty and Waikato, Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and Forest & Bird. Thanks go with warmest regards to Hugh Clifford, my mentor and main whip-cracker, for allowing the use of the photo of the artificial burrow chick, and for the leadership he provided whilst leader of the Grey-faced Petrel Project. The reason I'm still doing it, really!

PAUL CUMING



## Flagging Milestone

The East Asian-Australasian wader leg flag scheme notched up its 10,000th sighting report on 14th March with a Brisbane-flagged (green) Bar-tailed Godwit seen at Karaka on the Manukau Harbour by Tony Habraken.

This 10,000 does not include all those flags seen in the region where they were flagged, as these are not entered into the Australasian Wader Study Group database but are kept locally – in New Zealand by Adrian Riegen and Rob Schuckard.

The AWSG is still learning about wader movement through flag sightings so please keep reporting them, no matter how often you see the 'same' birds.

In New Zealand alone there have been 1,850 Bar-tailed Godwit flag reports and 1,370 Lesser Knot reports.

Adrian Riegen would be glad to receive any flag sightings. He can be contacted at 231 Forest Hill Rd, Waiatarua, Auckland 8 or [riegen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:riegen@xtra.co.nz)

## Discoloured Bands

Some of the white darvic bands and flags on the tarsus of birds banded around Tasman Bay have become severely discoloured. Many now look cream, and in a few cases almost yellow. Please check all 'odd' coloured bands carefully - anything looking cream or pale yellow is more likely to be discoloured white than faded yellow. Please add notes as necessary to OSNZ reporting forms.

## Personnel Changes

Jamie Wood has taken over as RR for Southland. His contact details are c/- Geology Department, Otago University, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin. His email is [larusnz@hotmail.com](mailto:larusnz@hotmail.com). Many thanks to Phil Rhodes for looking after Southland for a good number of years.

Katrina Hansen has a new email address: [katrina.hansen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:katrina.hansen@xtra.co.nz)

## Peter Bull

Sadly Dr. Peter Bull, a long-time member and fellow of OSNZ died on 23rd April, aged 85. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Peter's family and friends.

## First transmitters fitted to New Zealand Storm Petrels

A terrible week weather-wise delayed our planned trip into the Hauraki Gulf to catch New Zealand Storm Petrels until Thursday 5th January. Six of us: Richard Griffiths (DoC), Halema Jamieson (DoC), Avi (local Iwi), Rohan Clarke, Brett Rathe (skipper) and I headed out early on Thursday morning.

We headed to a point where Brett expected to find the birds, based on the prevailing conditions. After 45 minutes or so we had still not seen one, so motored a short way towards the Hen and Chicken Islands. At this second chumming location we struck gold and had up to three birds around the boat at once. Over the next few hours we tried and tried to catch one, until finally we managed to get a bird onboard at 1430 hours. It was pretty fantastic to finally have one in the hand after first seeing the bird off Whitianga on 25th January 2003; something I'd dreamt about!



and headed off to the east. Another few tantalus hours were spent trying to catch others of the same species around the boat, but they all evaded attempts.

We headed to the Mokohinau Islands to anchor for the night, but being quite rough we were unable to scan the islands after dark. The following morning we headed out again to a similar chumming location and this time had a bird turn up after my predicted 1 minute 30 seconds, (alright I had been a little out on the previous day!). We ended up with up to six birds around the boat at once, and at 1240 hours managed to finally catch another of the species. This bird was similarly processed and released with a transmitter. It also flew strongly, this time towards the Mokohinaus. We attempted to catch another storm petrel, but with 25 knot winds and a two-metre-plus swell rising, we decided to call it quits mid-afternoon.

An ecstatic crew headed back to Great Barrier and Sandspit, hoping that over the next few days some of our questions on the nocturnal movements of the birds might be answered, with two birds now carrying transmitters. I suspect nobody on board had expected the outcome we managed when, by Wednesday, the weather was still looking bad. Catching two birds was just fantastic. It took a few days for me to stop fizzing!

Other unusual species seen during the trip included two Black-winged Petrels, Pycroft's Petrel, Little Shearwater, at least 17 Grey Ternlets (on Maori Rocks), and a Long-tailed Skua. What a trip!

**BRENT STEPHENSON**

## Bird News

*This feature contains unchecked reports. Some sightings require confirmation by the OSNZ Rare Birds Committee.*

The first two **North Island Brown Kiwi** chicks conceived in the wild at Mount Bruce were released into the wild in early May after being hatched in incubators and reared to a release weight of 1200 g. A further 13 captive birds from around the country will be released into the area in the coming months including the two kiwi currently in the nocturnal house at the nearby National Wildlife Centre, which will be replaced by two other captive-reared birds.

A **Haast Tokoeka** hatched in Christchurch under Operation Nest Egg is doing well on Centre Island in Lake Te Anau. One month after being placed on the island in April the chick had gained 200 g, and was well on its way to the 1 kg weight when it could be safely returned to the Haast Tokoeka Sanctuary in South Westland.

The first **Great Spotted Kiwi** chick from a re-introduction project has been found in the Rotoiti Nature Recovery Project in Nelson Lakes National Park. The chick was found in a burrow with both its parents, Kahurangi and Awaroa, the only pair to breed last year. The species was first re-introduced to the area in May 2004. This year two pairs laid eggs as evidenced by shell fragments, though another two pairs probably nested, with transmitter-fitted males remaining stationary for long periods. This usually indicates incubation, but their burrows could not be located.

**Fluttering Shearwater** is the third species of seabird to be translocated to Mana Island (following transfers of Common Diving Petrel and Fairy Prion). The birds were transferred from Long Island in the Marlborough Sounds by helicopter, installed in artificial burrows and fed sardine smoothies until they fledged. Of the forty birds transferred one died, and ten fledged soon after transfer, leaving 29 to fledge successfully. In future birds will be transferred earlier to prevent them leaving before forming a bond to their new home, and larger amounts of food will be organised as the birds ate more sardine than it was thought they would. It is expected that another 200 shearwaters will be translocated to Mana in the next two years. The first translocated chicks should start returning in 2008 and breed in 2011. A sound system that lures all three species of re-introduced tubenoses back to the island will continue to be used, and a second, this time focussing on Fluttering Shearwaters, is due to be installed.

The Kaikoura Peninsula received another 86 **Hutton's Shearwater** chicks in early March, following on from last year's transfer of ten birds. The aim is to establish a new breeding colony of the species, which currently only breeds in two sites high in the Seaward Kaikoura Range. Their new site is on land owned by Whale Watch Kaikoura on the south-eastern end of the peninsula. It is planned to move another hundred chicks each year for the next two years to establish the colony, but the project is still at the trial stage, and it will not be known for a number of years whether it is successful.

Following the eradication of Kiore almost two years ago, **Cook's Petrels** have had a second successful breeding season on Little Barrier

island. Two years ago the birds were being caught by the lights of the island and became disorientated by the lights of the city and were handed into bird rescue centres.

A record number of **Chatham Island Taiko** chicks have been produced in monitored burrows this year, with 11 alive in late March. Two more non-breeding burrows were also discovered in the Tuku Nature Reserve in November using telemetry carried out by the Chatham Island Taiko Trust. Thirty-five active burrows are now known in the nature reserve, and of 12 birds caught by telemetry this year, seven were unbanded suggesting that pest-control operations around known burrows are benefiting as yet undiscovered burrows in the vicinity. The Taiko Trust this year built a predator-proof fence to secure a safer breeding area. Funding for the fence came from the Lotteries Board and Biodiversity Condition Fund.

Eleven **Blue Ducks** were released into the Rolling River (Wangapeka catchment, Nelson) in early March, boosting a depleted population already in the area. The eggs for the release came from pairs in the Rolling River and the nearby Pearse River, and were hatched and raised at Peacock Springs, Christchurch as an 'Operation Nest Egg' project. The Pearse River pair went on to produce another five chicks. In concert with stoat trapping, the captive-rearing of young is expected to boost the Blue Duck population in the area, with 28 individuals on the Rolling River after the release. The goal of the Wangapeka project is to achieve a self-sustaining Blue Duck population of 50 breeding pairs that will continue to be supported by DoC with stoat trapping.

**Campbell Island Teal**, re-introduced to Campbell Island in 2004 and 2005 appear to be breeding well with five age ranges of ducklings found late this summer on a three-week expedition by DoC workers to the island. Unbanded adult birds were also found, which will be last year's ducklings.

**Weka** have been re-introduced to Totaranui in Abel Tasman National Park. Nine birds were translocated from Long Island in the Marlborough Sounds in mid-May. The birds will be kept in an aviary for a month to adjust to their new environment. Weka were formerly abundant in the Abel Tasman National Park, but the last was seen at Totaranui in 2001. Around 90 stoat traps have been installed in the Totaranui area to protect the new inhabitants. If the Weka stay in the area and do well another dozen or so birds may be translocated from Long Island. The species is being taken off this island prior to the re-introduction of Tuatara there.

For the first time backpack-mounted transmitters have been attached to **Black Stilts** released into the wild. Previously these had only been attached to captive and wild hybrid birds. After several years of testing with no apparent effect on the health of the birds involved they should enable more successful tracking of released birds in comparison to the somewhat unsatisfactory results obtained from tail-mounted transmitters. Being able to locate birds more readily helps with the monitoring of released individuals, and likely cause of death in those that don't survive, in order to implement management techniques to increase the survival rate of the species. Another potential advantage of the new transmitters is being able to track the birds from the air.

Captive-bred **Orange-fronted Parakeets** have been released on predator-free Chalky Island in Fiordland. Sixteen birds were released in December and fifteen in February, all birds from successive clutches raised at Peacock Springs/Isaac Wildlife Trust in spring and summer this past year. Tracking the birds using tail-mounted transmitters found most of the birds alive and well after the release, and settling in well to their new natural surroundings. In their remaining natural range four nests were found this breeding season in the South Branch of the Hurunui River, with things a bit quieter in the Hawdon and Poulter Valleys, each providing only one monitored nest each. Of the captive birds a first occurred with one pair laying a third consecutive clutch.

**North Island Robins** were released onto Somes Island in Wellington Harbour in early April. The birds were sourced from the healthy population present on Kapiti Island, with the transfer being carried out by OSNZ members and DoC. The birds join the Red-crowned Parakeets re-introduced to the 25 ha island in 2003 and 2004.

The re-introduced **Kokako** population at Mount Bruce is probably only one good breeding season away from being self-sustaining. The population stood at 20 individuals at the end of the 2005-6 breeding season, and with good recruitment this year and the forest in good condition it is hoped that the 20-pair mark recognised as forming a sustainable population might be reached soon. Re-introduced birds came from Mangatutu and Mapara in the Waikato, and don't recognise each other's song dialects, but chicks should, after hearing both dialects, develop a local Mount Bruce dialect, bringing greater genetic diversity to the population. A small number of South Island Kokako may still be present up the Big River valley in southern Fiordland. Fifty calls, which were ascribed by members of the South Island Kokako Investigation Trust to being of the species, were heard on one afternoon in January.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

# FIORDLAND KAKAPO SEARCH



Members of the Fiordland  
Kakapo Search 2006. Photo: K. Nilsson



Looking down the Fierstein Valley. Photo: K. Nilsson





■ The transport used to get on and off Mairangiwa Peaks. Note masting of tussocks. Photo R Nilsson



■ Campsite on Mairangiwa Peaks looking past South Island Alps. Photo R Nilsson



■ 'Kakapo Castle' near 'Lake Lir'. A rope led to a hide on the ridge at the top. Wildlife Service workers climbed this after dark! Photo R Nilsson



■ Looking down the Transit Valley from 'Lake Lir' Photo R Nilsson

permitted a search for Kakapo in late January. Supported by money from the Department of Conservation, Cmaulco and the donation of flying costs of some of the helicopter operators, the searchers consisted of teams of Kakapo-workers past and present and volunteers new to looking for the species. Any Kakapo found would be a valuable addition to the gene pool, as the current population with the exception of one male (Richard Henry) is mostly comprised of, or derived from, closely-related Stewart Island birds.

It was hypothesised that the masting event should make any Kakapo still present more active and vocal, and therefore easier to detect. Areas where Kakapo were found in the 1970s by the Wildlife Service, but for which permission for translocation was not forthcoming were to be checked to see if the long-living birds were still present.

Techniques used were listening for the booming calls (which carry for up to three kilometres from ridge-top track and bowl systems), checking for the track and bowl systems themselves, and looking for feeding signs on favoured plant species such as *Dracophyllum*. 'Skraark' calls were also listened for. This call is normally given early in the night, and birds respond to each other, and to tapes of this call, which were also played. Later at night booming males on ridges on the steep valley sides would attract females to climb up to them from the valley floor.

Long days for searchers were the norm, from about 11am to 1am the next morning, with nights spent camped high on exposed ridges; the birds often lived at 3,500 feet, above sheer cliffs. As well as Kakapo, Southern Tokoeka and Little Spotted Kivi were also listened for and tapes played to elicit responses.

In all, 35 sites were searched for signs of Kakapo. A huge amount of helicopter flying was involved. Thankfully the weather was good – for Fiordland, with long spells of dry, settled weather. Between individual site searches teams regrouped and dried out at Te Anau.

Often sites had almost pristine vegetation, with little or no sign of browsers such as Red Deer/Wapiti or Chamois, and ideal for vegetarians such as Kakapo. Despite this the birdlife was often scarce, with Blue Ducks and other scarce species gone, the work of Stoats and rats. Sometimes decent-sized populations of Southern Tokoeka were found, plus Weka and good numbers of Rock Wrens, but areas with a good avifauna were in localised patches.

Unfortunately no Kakapo were found, and any sign remaining was at least 20 years old. Thus the Kakapo found on the Wildlife Service expeditions to the area were likely to be the last vestiges of an entirely male population in Fiordland. The closest this year's expedition came was Kakapo-like chewing sign that was found to be caused by young Koa.

Deer are beginning to make a comeback in parts of Fiordland after the end of helicopter hunting and control, with one search site producing 55 sightings of this pest over three days. Thankfully 35 of these were shot, providing participants with all the venison they could possibly want. An increase in deer is likely to destroy the remaining biodiversity Fiordland has left in places; its relatively pristine vegetation.

In the presence of hindsight it must be regretted that permission was not granted by the Government departments involved at the time 20-30 years ago to remove more Kakapo from Fiordland. Of five birds translocated only one survived to breed. If it had been possible to remove 10-15 birds the species might not be in the genetically narrow position it is today.

Based on a presentation by RON NILSSON

■ Main Picture: 'Lake Lir' with 'Kakapo Castle' in the left background. Three Kakapo males had track and bowl systems in the area in the 1970s. Right of the outcrop it is a 3,000 foot sheer drop to the Transit Valley below.



## Short Reports

The **Australasian Little Grebe** seen intermittently on Wharariki Dune Lake (near Puponga) for the past few years was seen again in late March. At the same time a **New Zealand Dabchick** was on a private pond near Takaka. A **Streaked Shearwater** found dead by Derek Christie on Kawhia Beach on 25/2 will be a first record for New Zealand if accepted by the Rarities Committee. Small numbers of **Glossy Ibises** have come south for the winter with birds reported from Wairau Lagoons near Blenheim (2/4), Travis Wetland/Bexley Wetlands in Christchurch (two), Okuru (South Westland) and at the Piako River Mouth (Firth of Thames). Their rarer (in New Zealand), larger relative, an **Australasian White Ibis** was reported from Okuru, South Westland by a visiting Scottish birder on 17/4. The long-staying Renwick **Black Kite** was still present at Easter. In March a **New Zealand Falcon** was reported on several occasions at the unusual haunt of Puketutu Island near Auckland Sewage Works. The confirmed sighting follows reports from truck drivers of a probable falcon flying across the causeway to the island late last year. Four **Black Stilts** (two of them colour-banded) were together at Matahui Point, Tauranga Harbour in mid-April. Papakanui Spit held two **Large Sand Dotterels** on 16/4, with another or one of the same at Kirks Mudflats, Manukau Harbour on 18/4. Awarua Bay hosted a **Mongolian Dotterel** in early March. A **Sanderling** was found at Maketu, Bay of Plenty on 5/3, with four on the same day on the roost at Awarua Bay, Southland. Another was on Mason Bay, Stewart Island in May, keeping company with 103 New Zealand Dotterels of the rare southern race. A **Dunlin** was seen at Kirks Mudflats in Manukau Harbour on 18/4, moving to nearby Karaka on 21/4, and showing a fair amount of diagnostic black-bellied breeding plumage. The decent total of fourteen **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** was at Miranda on 5/3. Two **Pectoral Sandpipers** had also been present at this site over summer, and another at Uretara Paddocks, Bay of Plenty on 28/2. Two **Black-tailed Godwits** spent the summer at Miranda, with another, sexed as a female seen intermittently at the Ashley Estuary, Canterbury. This latter bird was colouring-up well when seen in March. The **Hudsonian Godwit** was seen after a couple of months' absence at the Manawatu Estuary at the farewell to the birds on 4/3. Another of this species was reported from Otago and the long-staying individual remained at Miranda, moulting into 50% breeding plumage by early May. Two **Terek Sandpipers** spent most of the summer at Miranda, and three were at Big Sand Island, Taporā on 2/4. Personnel on the New Zealand Storm Petrel-catching expedition into the Hauraki Gulf in early January were also lucky enough to see a **Long-tailed Skua**. A **Whiskered Tern** was reported from the Lake Grassmere inlet area on 26/2. Two black-and-white terns, reported as **Sooty Terns** were seen at Southshore Spit, Christchurch on 9/5.



■ Streaked Shearwater. Both photos by Derek Christie.

Sources: What's Up DoC? Website newsletter, @DOC Canterbury Conservancy email newsletter, Birding-NZ email group.

## Blackbird Attacking Rat

The letter from Kimberley Parlane under the heading 'Robin Attacking Mouse' printed in the December 2004 issue of *Southern Bird* has reminded me of an event I witnessed about a year ago. I watched as a rat ran at high speed 40 m down my lawn with a Blackbird in hot pursuit constantly pecking viciously at the root of the rat's tail. I have no idea what the rat did to raise the bird's ire, but it really gave the rat a rough time and the rat did not pause to argue. I eventually lost sight of the pair as the rat dashed out of sight into a distant hedge with the Blackbird still in pursuit.

DAVID FISHER



## Unusual Foraging People

During summer 2004/5 I gave a lift to a hitch-hiker who turned out to be an American who had worked for many summers at bases in Antarctica. The talk turned, naturally, to birds, and I found his comments about the South Polar Skua (*Catharacta maccormicki*) particularly interesting. Apparently this species used to forage about the dump at McMurdo Station. Eventually the Americans cleaned up their act, preventing the skuas gaining access to the rubbish. Since then some skuas have adopted a new form of behaviour. Some of the people prefer to eat in their own quarters, and carry their meals across open ground from the mess. The skuas dive-bomb these people, causing them to drop their meals in panic, which allows the skuas to drop down and carry off the food. This would seem to be a combination of a common skua feeding behaviour of harassing other birds until they drop or regurgitate food, and their defensive habit of dive-bombing intruders that stray into their nesting territory.

CHRIS PETYT

## Long-beaked Starling

Last winter a Starling with a grossly overgrown and slightly sideways-curved beak visited the garden bird-feeding station of Doreen Fraser in Mount Pleasant, Christchurch. By comparing the length of the beak on photos obtained of the bird in profile with the width of the fence paling it was using as a perch, the length of the beak was calculated to be 82 mm. The lower mandible was shorter than the upper.



■ Long-beaked Starling by Doreen Fraser

Despite the impediment of such a long beak, which would have hindered the preening of at least part of its plumage, the bird's feathering appeared well-groomed and no different to other Starlings. It often appeared with one other Starling, and only occasionally with or on the outskirts of the main flock. After cessation of feeding in spring the bird was seen less frequently, then not at all.

Such bill deformities are caused due to damage to, or malformation of, the horny plates which comprise the beak. Normally these plates are continually growing and wearing off at the tip at a similar rate, keeping the beak at an unchanging length.

## Scavenging Kea

Early in the evening on December 25th 2005 I was driving between Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers when I flushed what appeared to be a Kea off a dead possum on the road. As I had never heard of Kea scavenging road kills before it was quite a surprise.

To be scientific about it there are a couple of uncertainties, namely was it a Kea and what was it doing to the carcass? As it was the end of the day I mostly saw a silhouette and there is a chance that the bird was a Kaka but my immediate thought was of Kea and we had just seen two birds back in the Franz Josef township. As to what the bird was doing, this can only be guessed at, as I had no chance to observe its actions before it flew up off the possum. The idea that it was collecting fur to line a nest crossed my mind but it wasn't the right season for that.

TONY WILSON



Reading Stella and John Rowe's 'visible migration of White Heron in the March 2006 issue of Southern Bird jogged a memory I have of seeing a White Heron cruise past above me as I stood on the ridge above the Rainbow Ski-field, Nelson Lakes.

I remember my surprise at seeing a bird of this species fly over, and the beauty of its flight against an unloaded ski. Unfortunately, due to having terminally misplaced my bird notes of the early 1990s I have no record of the date or year (though it has to be between 1990 and 1992), nor can I vouch for the direction in which the bird was flying. It was, however, at some stage during the ski season as I was at the time taking a well earned rest before I 'skied' back down the slope (I use inverted commas advisedly as I hardly think an activity consisting of unsuccessfully attempting to remain both upright and mobile for more than two consecutive seconds can be described as skiing, regardless of the apparel I was wearing at the time). The bird's behaviour was possibly indicative of it being on return migration to Otaru.

If this is the case and looking at a map of the South Island, and how the Rainbow Ski-field and the Lewis Pass lie relative to Otaru, it is also not beyond the realms of possibility that this bird was using a similar flight path to the bird Stella and John Rowe saw.

PETER FIELD

## reviews



**Brown, Kerry (ed). 2004. Restoring Kapiti - Nature's Second Chance.** Dunedin University of Otago Press. ISBN 1 877276-66-9 128pp Soft cover. \$29.95.

Kapiti Island is widely recognised as a nature reserve of major importance and, in recent times, as the location of some spectacularly successful pest eradication programmes. This attractive and compact book sets the recent eradications and species transfers in their historical context. The 17 chapters have been contributed by 19 specialist writers each discussing succinctly their area of expertise. The first group of chapters deals with the early impact of humans (and their animals and fires) on the island's flora and fauna. Then follow separate chapters on seven threatened bird species. The importance of Kapiti to these species varies from major (as with Little Spotted Kiwi) to minimal (as with Takahē).

The final group of chapters discusses biosecurity and the changing attitudes to conservation and restoration - e.g. should the island be restored to its pre-human condition? This would mean the removal of all species, such as Pohutukawa, that did not occur there naturally.

With so many authors it is not surprising that there is a variety of writing styles but all are clear and readable. The photos are mostly excellent. Sadly, current management policy means that visitors to the island can no longer enjoy the spectacle of masses of feeding Tai as shown in the photo on page 121. The tables are informative and the book is almost completely free of typos. An index would have enhanced the book's usefulness.

All in all, this is a worthwhile publication that deserves to be read by anyone with an interest in ecological restoration in general, or Kapiti in particular.

ALLAN MUNRO

**Thomas, Chris and Torley, Frank. 2004. Wetland and Wetlands.** Scientific & Wildlife Films, 11 Hanover Street, Wadestown, Wellington. Video. 75 mins.

This video is beautifully photographed by Chris Thomas and well-narrated by Frank Torley. The script is somewhat dry when the facts for a particular species are given; a bit like reading a field guide! However, the photography makes up for it.

The video focuses on birds that live on the water in wetlands, so it covers swans, geese, and ducks rather than rails, shags, and waders. Fifteen species are dealt with in detail. However, this reviewer counted 18 other species seen and/or heard (I'm still winding down from the Atlas project).

The aim of the video is to promote wetlands; a neglected and abused habitat ('the least appreciated part of our natural environment'), so that more people may 'appreciate their value'.

The video has been sponsored by Ducks Unlimited, the East and Central Community Trust, and the Pacific Development and Conservation Trust. A rationale for hunting is given and some of the work of Ducks Unlimited is shown, such as creating ponds in farmland.

There are a few minor errors - for example the 'traditional route of geese to New Zealand via China' is at least a confusing statement to make. While describing the nesting behaviour of Grey Duck, a female Australasian Shoveler is clearly shown... and did I see a Grey Teal with ducklings in tow when Grey Ducks were being talked about?

This video is well worth the \$30 it costs to put it in the collection of a New Zealand library for the enjoyment of the birds and to broaden our view of the neglected and threatened habitats on which they depend.

STUART NICHOLSON

**Hatching, Gerard. 2004. Back from the Brink. The Fight to save our Endangered Birds.** Penguin Books (NZ), Auckland. ISBN 0 14 301948 1. Soft cover, 160 pp, black-and-white and colour photos, index.

Back from the Brink is, in the words of the author Gerard Hatching, 'an unashamedly good-news book'. Hatching, a former editor of *Forest and Bird* magazine, has produced a book which will have wide appeal with the general public, rather than being a specialised, scientific publication. Readers wanting further information can refer to references, which are supplied for some but not all the endangered birds detailed in this book.

After an introductory chapter on the management of endangered birds in New Zealand, each of the remaining 30 chapters is devoted to the management of an endangered New Zealand bird species. There is a blend of information on the biology of the birds, their management, and human-interest stories of the scientists and conservation staff working on maintaining and enhancing the bird populations.

A major strength of this book is the illustrations, most of which are in colour. They have been well-chosen to complement the text. The book could have been enhanced by some more careful editing and the inclusion of maps describing visually the locations where the threatened species occur.

GEOFF DELISLE

**Lockyer, John. 2005. My Kiwi.** Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd. ISBN 1 86948 521 1. 32 pp soft cover.

This children's book is about a kiwi family that lives in the bush behind the boy's house. Every night the boy went to the creek to see his precious kiwi, and then discovered his kiwi had found a mate. They nested in the roots of a Kauri tree and raised a chick. Late one afternoon the boy's mum said that she had seen a Stoat down by the creek. Sadly, the boy arrived just in time to see the Stoat kill the father kiwi who was defending his chick. After the boy trapped the Stoat, the kiwi's chick returned, and it had a mate!

This book is beautifully illustrated by Dave Gannon and is good for children from ages 5-8. My dad says that Stoats don't kill adult Brown Kiwi but often eat kiwi chicks. However, it is still a nice okay book.

JESSICA ROBERTSON aged 8

**Fija, Natasha. 2005. New Zealand Birds Pakaka.** Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd. ISBN 1 86948 552 1. 32 pp soft cover.

This book tells you all about Pakaka, one of our more colourful and interesting native birds, and a bit about Takahē, their older cousin. Pakaka live in big families which helps them with nesting and chasing away predators. The book describes where Pakaka live, their communication, behaviour, nesting, what they eat, and their predators.

This book is full of wonderful photos taken by Rod Morris showing Pakaka doing their stuff. The book has heaps of information, but I think it contains too many facts, so it is a bit boring.

JESSICA ROBERTSON aged 8

Of all the islands in the Hauraki Gulf, Tiritiri Matangi Island, just off the end of the Whangapoua Peninsula north of Auckland city, is perhaps the most well-known with over 33,000 visitors a year. Extensive media coverage has provided regular updates to the goings-on from this open sanctuary, the first of its type in New Zealand.

However, the story of this unique project has not been told in detail, in one book, until now. In Anne Rimmer's *Tiritiri Matangi: a model of conservation*, Rimmer, a long-time Supporter of Tiritiri Matangi (SOTM), guide on the island and resident of Auckland's North Shore, provides a highly conversational and easy-to-read text peppered with anecdotes and photographs. The extensive network of contacts she has obviously built up in the course of writing the book is obvious.

The cover is a colourful shot of the island which is instantly attractive and sets the standard for the material inside, which is presented in landscape format with double columns of text and accompanying photographs. The font is easy to read, although quite small.

Rimmer attracted a high standard of candidates for the forewords to the book, with both the internationally renowned David Bellamy, the 'jolly green giant' of the conservation revolution, and Graham Tarbot, former president of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand, contributing.

The book "aims to include all the essential scientific and historical facts about the island", and we are soon into the body of the text, starting with a clearly-labelled timeline. What follows is a fascinating insight into a mostly unknown world of early life on the island, with particularly detailed accounts from the lighthouse keepers and their families. What is interesting is that Rimmer has researched stories of not only the sometimes clouded history from early Maori occupation to 19th century daily life on the island, but also of the dangerous side of living on a remote (for that time) island. This was far from any hospital or helicopter of today's world. One particular quote sticks in my mind; "...but it wasn't all china cups and dollies!" Other logbook entries from the keepers detail violent or crook chickens in a delightfully urbane way.

Tiritiri Matangi is an island full of birds, but it wasn't always like that, and the older photographs tell a story of woe as fire, pests and farming took its toll on the island. To reverse this damage, thousands of New Zealanders and visitors have, over ten years, planted over 280,000 trees and thus "as a result of this remarkable effort, [those] thousands of New Zealanders feel they have a stake in this Open Sanctuary".

Birdwatchers will be pleased with the interesting range of photographs of the birds that can be found on the island. There is also a list of all the translocations of birds to the island provided in a handy table. Good explanations in coloured boxes highlight different species, names and behaviours of each bird. Each bird has a special anecdote, but the Kaka and the newly built nest boxes bears repeating: "a pair arrived, made an inspection, and left. Vic Hunter, who built the boxes, felt like handing out a questionnaire on their failings."

A myth surrounding the transfer of Red-crowned Parakeets is cleared up, while OSNZ member Morag Fordham's Crakeless Spot on the Spotted Crake page is extremely funny.

Takabe have had extensive media coverage - who can forget Ray's memorable photograph of being bitten by ♀ upon her delivery to the island splashed all over the New Zealand Herald? Sir Peter Blake has had a Takabe named after him (Blakie), the bird sporting red bands as a tribute to Peter's red socks. David Bellamy even had a Takabe chick named after him, so he is forever associated with the island. Mr Blue, the island's most famous Takabe, gets plenty of tales written about him. Takabe behaviour seems to be most interesting, with the stories of Brown Quail, Fantails and even Harriers coming to grief upon encountering one.

Plants have played an enormous part in the current makeup of the island, and a comprehensive chapter dealing with the plantings and the nursery is included. The efforts involved are summed up in the book with a humorous anecdote from the HGMP (Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park) newsletter of 1986: "Ray is looking forward to sowing you on the end of a spade this winter".

The 'non-birds' chapter details the small animals that have either been transferred to Tiritiri or have survived the rigours of

way - including a Saddleback!"

The chapter named 'Support' fills in the background details of those faces you may recognise but whose names you may not know. Stories abound, a good example being one Shawn Danning, a popular young man about the island in the 1990s, enjoying (mostly) positive coverage!

Whilst birds, plants and animals take up a good part of the book, the chapter entitled 'Tuition' recognises some of the leading figures from the early days as an open sanctuary. No conservation award from all the efforts that have gone into the sanctuary is more appropriate than the Loder Cup, one of New Zealand's premier conservation awards. Personalities included in this chapter are Mel Galbraith, Simon Fordham, and the supreme efforts undertaken by Ray and Barbara Walter, to name but a very few.

Ray's comments in the *Pacific Way* magazine in 1993 summed up the overall picture of the island when he mentioned that it is "an aviary in reverse" (An Island Wild, Tamara Martin, in *Pacific Way*, Air New Zealand's in-flight magazine, Summer 1996). His knowledge is recognized in the book, which quotes his dedicated knowledge as "...knows when his birds turn right and when they turn left".

It isn't all smooth sailing on the management side of the story, with several instances of conflict between senior DoC management and the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi, with the sometimes strained relationship showing through. However, this only goes to show that Rimmer speaks her mind and perhaps these truths should be more widely known.

I disagree that "this book presents a snapshot, recording Tiritiri Matangi as it is at the start of the millennium". I think the book needs to be held up as a near-to-definitive history and wonderful memento for all who have been involved with and/or inspired by the Tiri story.

Finally, the book finishes with a superb appendix of all the birds, flora, lighthouse keepers, Chairs of SOTM, key people, sponsors, extensive notes and index, and a handy list of websites.

Tandem Press have presented the book very professionally, and as a librarian I can recommend the binding, presentation and format as being of a high standard, although limp bound books always are less durable than hardbacks.

Some of the photographs are not as high in quality as Geoff and Lynette Moon's basic *The Singing Island* (Godwit Press, Auckland, 1998), but the purpose of this book is not just to show off the birds, but to bring the whole story of the island, or near as can be, to the average adult reader. The price at \$40 is fair, and reflects the amount of work and quality of the book.

PAUL CUMING

## Notornis and Southern Bird now online

All issues of *Notornis* and its predecessors *Reports & Bulletin* and *NZ Bird Notes*, as well as *Southern Bird* and the former *OSNZ News* are now available on the internet at [www.notornis.org.nz](http://www.notornis.org.nz).

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand launched a new website on 3rd June 2006. This site will provide online access to all the journals and reports of the Society since its inauguration in 1959. While the website is still undergoing further development until the end of 2006, all material including current issues of *Notornis* and *Southern Bird* will be available in full for this limited period. The Society will take over full ownership of the site from the developers early in 2007. From 1st January 2007 the immediate past three years' material (except for abstracts) will only be available by password for those persons who are financial members of the Society. From that time all prior issues will be free online to members and non-members alike. Members are encouraged to use the site over the next six months to test the system and report any difficulties to the listed webmaster (Jon Sullivan) who has been developing the site.

CJR ROBERTSON and MURRAY WILLIAMS





Arnold, Wayne; Faaborg, John; Wallace, George; Garrido, Orlando. December 2004. *Biomatrix of Birds Throughout the Greater Caribbean Basin*. Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, California 93012. ISSN 0511-7930. Soft cover, 33 pages, CD ROM, literature cited, table. Received from the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology February 2005.

*Philations using Mist Nets*. Cooper Ornithological Society, c/o Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, California 93012. ISSN 0-043610-61-3. Soft cover, 211 pp., tables, figures, literature cited, list of authors. The contents are in three sections: 1. Breeding season evaluations; 2. Evaluation of mist netting outside the breeding season; 3. General considerations. There is valuable information for anyone involved in regular mist netting.

## Far North

Indoor meetings of OBNZ in the Far North continue to attract good attendances. In March 17 came to hear a presentation on seabirds by Chris Gaskin of Kiwi Wildlife Tours, then in May 18 came to listen to Greg Blunden from Aroha Island Ecological Centre talking on predator control in the Far North and the progress made in this direction by the Kiwi Foundation.

Late autumn and early winter is Kiwi-monitoring time in the region. Once again many members will be doing counts in the Kerikeri area, including Puerua and Puketiti Forest, over the next couple of months. Hopefully more people will be involved this year than in previous years. A mid-May count in Puketiti Forest at five spots produced nearly 30 calls in two hours (with a maximum of 13 at one site). Another count a few nights later at one site on Puerua recorded 55 calls in two hours. The more open habitat at this latter site means that calls can be heard over greater distance, but the two counters involved guessed they were hearing at least 10 pairs.

Several members will be involved in a bird survey at Takou Beach in the late May, another site where intense predator control is being undertaken. Some members enjoyed a Far North weekend pelagic in early March, cruising north-east of North Cape. Good numbers of albatrosses were seen including an adult Northern Royal, and also several Black-winged Petrels, a New Zealand Storm Petrel and a Brown Skua.

Future events include an ambitious plan to spend one or both days of a weekend in the remote Whararua Forest. This is expected to be in either September or October.

DETEP DAVIES

## Northland

Monthly beach patrols continue to be carried out on west and east coast beaches, organised by Prue and Pauline. The regular group of fairy tern volunteers: Den, Audrey, Claire, Marie, Jean, Diana, Prue and Janet, helped by the Department of Conservation have been monitoring the Fairy Terns breeding at Waipu and Mangawhai again this summer. There was a great result this year with six chicks fledging from the regular Northland sites, three each from Waipu and Mangawhai. Some post-breeding monitoring has been carried out in conjunction with wader surveys around Whangarei Harbour and east coast beaches, and several Fairy Terns, including one of the seven chicks from this season, were seen at Whangarei Harbour and Mangawhai. Several colour-banded Wrybills, Bar-tailed Godwits and Lesser Knots were also seen in the wader surveys on the harbour, and also a few rare waders (still awaiting confirmation).

The first meeting this year involved discussions of field activities we would carry out during the year. Over and above the harbour and lakes surveys, we plan to carry out some more Banded Rail counts, re-survey shag roosts and continue Royal Spoonbill counts (as long as we can find their roost sites as the port ponds are overgrown now).

At the April meeting Tony Beauchamp gave an interesting summary of the various types of methods used for determining territoriality. This was put in an interesting context for the members as we had to map our own territory-use the weekend prior to the meeting, by recording where we were each hour: e.g. in the kitchen/lounge/garden, at the shops etc. Tony explained the advantages and disadvantages of the following methods: convex polygon; outer boundary of chronologically-linked observations; grid cell; and the field-worker method. Examples of each method were provided based on North Island Brown Kiwi studies in Waitangi forest. It was a very informative evening.

For the May meeting Jean Hawken showed us fabulous photos from her January trip to the Subantarctic islands, including Macquarie, Campbell, Bounty, Auckland and The Snares Islands. She got to go ashore on Enderby and Campbell Islands, and saw a great range of birds both ashore and from the boat, including Royal, King, Gentoo and Snares Crested Penguins, Snares Tomtit, Antarctic Tern and a juvenile Campbell Island Teal. It was a fantastic trip and seeing the photos is enough to make us all want to go...

KATRINA HANSEN

## Regional Roundup



### South Auckland

Recent speakers have included the father and daughter Galbraith team (late last year), with Mel speaking one month on New Zealand biogeography and Josie speaking the next on the Black Stilt programme. Geraldine King's talk on her recent birding in Alaska was punctuated with photos of the keels of many birds. Whilst there she may have conducted the most northerly beach patrol performed by any South Aucklander. The first speaker of this year was one of our resident experts, Dick Veitch, who gave an excellent review of the change in Pied Oystercatcher numbers over the years.

Regular beach patrols are on-going, however the beach patrol team is currently suffering numerically with some members out due to injury whilst others have not made themselves available for selection, deciding that coming back from overseas trips to do one days beach patrol isn't quite worth it. Anyone interested in joining the regular Karitahi walk should contact the organiser, Wendy Goad or KR David Lawrie. Members who don't attend meetings are still welcome on the Beach Patrols.

To prove that the South Auckland is not all about waders, in March many of our members were involved in a series of Weka counts at Kawakawa Bay organised by long-term member Ian Southey, and one of our newest members Rosemary Cotman. The re-appearance of Weka at Kawakawa Bay came as a surprise some time ago and a preliminary count was carried out in August last year. This year a more comprehensive count of the area was carried out to try and find the number of birds in the population and the extent of their range. With a push from the local community, and the help of OBNZ members, three counts were carried out and a population of at least 50 birds was counted. As yet their range appears limited to the Kawakawa Bay area, but with reports of Weka from further afield we are looking forward to the species being a regular part of the South Auckland landscape.

In April Sue Moore led a group of about ten 'keen beans' up into the Huron Ranges to look for Kokako and other forest birds. In a very successful trip the group found most of the usual suspects including a Robin and beautiful views of a family of four Kokako. Possibly the surprise of the day was the lack of Kaka.

Local harbours have produced their regular crop of waders, some common and some less so. Highlights of the summer were a Rail at Miranda early in the season and a Dunlin on the South Matakau Harbour at the end of April. The appearance of the Dunlin led to the usual crop of twitchers appearing from around the country. Sadly I was not one of them as I was counting waders at Yalu Jiang, China. I have tried to convince those that saw the Matakau Dunlin that my flock of nearly 21,000 Dunlin is equal to their single bird but no-one seems to take me seriously.

Wrybills are currently of increasing concern to us. The regular roosts at the old sewage ponds are at best sporadically maintained, leading Wrybills to find other roosting areas. One of these is the Auckland Airport. Wrybill vs. aeroplane is bad for both birds and planes and the situation needs resolving soon.

GILLIAN VAUGHAN

### Waikato

The most exciting bird record for Waikato so far this year is a little out of date – 40 million years in fact. The discovery, by Chris Tompler and a group of Hamilton Junior Naturalists, of a giant penguin fossil eroding out of a sandstone platform uncovered at low tide near Te Waiwera (on the southern side of Kawhia Harbour) received a lot of attention, and no wonder. Te Papa's Alan Tennison says the find could be internationally significant. The completeness of the Kawhia specimen makes it very

A New Zealand Falcon was released in early March on Kakepuku Mountain just south of Te Awamutu. The one year old female, a captive-bred bird from the Otorohanga Kiwi House, was taught to hunt by the Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust before being released. Laurie and Jan Hoverd, in conjunction with the New Zealand Raptor Association and the Kakepuku Conservation Society, are involved in a three-year project in which it is planned to release more young falcons. Laurie reported a number of sightings since the release. The Falcon has already been seen to take a Blackbird, two House Sparrows, two Mice and a Rabbit.

The Japanese Snipe, seen in Hamilton City at Forest Lake from September last year, appears to have moved on. It was last reported by Brian Challinor on 12th February but had gone by the March census. The lake will be eagerly scanned next summer to see if it returns.

Our beach patrol 'bird of the year' for 2006 is a Streaked Shearwater, found by Derek Christie on Kawhia Beach on 25th February. This is believed to be the first New Zealand record for this species.

The Waikato OSNZ committee has again risen to the challenge of running the region in the absence of a Regional Rep by delegating tasks among members. For instance, our monthly evening meetings are to have a new look with each having a different chairperson who takes responsibility for all aspects of his or her meeting. Meanwhile, lake surveys, beach patrols, etc. are continuing seamlessly under their several dedicated and experienced convenors.

**DAVID RIDDELL and STELLA ROWE**

### **Bay of Plenty/Volcanic Plateau.**

This summer has provided many of us with an opportunity to explore our region and find interesting things out about our surroundings. The Grey-faced Petrel Project is still carrying on under Paul Cuming's leadership, with Hugh Clifford now in a technical role, still based in Hamilton. Read a report of the project elsewhere in this issue.

The various Tauranga harbour-care groups held an identification workshop day in April to assist with their resource consents, namely the fieldwork required to identify different bird species as part of the monitoring side of their consents. The day was organised by Robyn Skelton, and conducted by Paul Cuming. Paul sacrificed his umbrella in the name of getting a Fernbird to show at the Te Maunga settling ponds on a horrendously wet and windy field day. Approximately 35 to 40 people turned up, with a follow-up theory and PowerPoint session at DoC's Greerton office.

Marsh bird surveys continue to be conducted at a Te Puna estuary, Waikaraka. Good numbers of Banded Rails and Spotless Crakes continue to be found by Sally Greenaway and Dave Lind, who belong to the group managing the estuary for mangroves.

Tim Barnard continues to survey the estuaries of Maketu and Little Waihi on a regular basis. The latest updates are always handily reported in the Birding-NZ email news group. Highlights of April and early May included 30 Royal Spoonbills and 49 Banded Dotterel at Little Waihi, and 47 Royal Spoonbills and six Little Terns at Maketu. Banded Dotterels were also present in good numbers at Maketu (39), and up the road at Kaituna Cut (35), along with a Pacific Golden Plover.

Royal Spoonbills also continue to pop up in Tauranga Harbour, with two seen in May at very close quarters in Welcome Bay by Jan Asher. She and new member Richard Arlidge are regularly reporting the activities of these graceful birds.

Eila Lawton spent April 'hunting' birds of prey, seeing two New Zealand Falcons over headlands between Ohope and Kohi Point. In the same month she also gained the rare sighting of two Robins near Sentinel Rock in the Kaimais. Her Katikati bush-margin property has also produced regular sightings of two Kaka, and up to eight feeding New Zealand Pigeons.

Four Black Stilts were also seen in April at Matahui Point, Katikati. Brian Chudleigh and Paul Cuming were the lucky viewers. Brian also managed to see a few colour-banded Bar-tailed Godwits, one with white and green flags on one leg. Also in April Chris Gaskin was over visiting the Volcanic Plateau, seeing many rarities including Blue Ducks at four separate places in the Whirinaki Forest. Also seen were a few Kaka and Yellow-crowned Parakeets.

In March, John Groom conducted a New Zealand Dotterel survey at Ohiwa Spit, finding 61 birds, all in non-breeding colours. Also seen were over 200 Bar-tailed Godwits and Variable Oystercatchers, 13 Pacific Golden Plovers and 30 Banded Dotterels.

Brian Chudleigh continues to amaze the local membership with his remarkable images of the Uretara Wetlands, Katikati. The intentionally-flooded paddocks are a haven for all sorts of waterfowl, and have

and White-faced Herons 'dancing', chasing fish. Brian and Paul Cuming have contributed major sections to a booklet being launched on 20th May called *Birds of Tauranga Harbour*. It is hoped that harbour groups will embrace the guide and educate themselves on what birds are in their backyard estuaries and streams. Paul has written the text, while Brian has contributed all the excellent bird photographs. It also covers plants, pest control and conserving bush corridors around the region. New member Sally Greenaway has been instrumental in launching this initiative, and has also contributed some text and cover artwork.

There was an unconfirmed report of a Bobwhite Quail on Mauao/Mount Maunganui in February, but this has to remain unconfirmed. There are plenty of Californian Quails on the mountain.

**PAUL CUMING**

### **Taranaki**

A typical Taranaki summer morning greeted those of us who participated in the inaugural pelagic trip from Port Taranaki on 18th February. The weather was fine, calm and warm, with enough breeze and swell to provide ideal flying conditions for oceanic birds. Highlights included hundreds of Australasian Gannets working over schools of fish, White-fronted Terns, Buller's and Flesh-footed Shearwater, and a Reef Heron and New Zealand Fur Seals around and on the Sugar Loaf Islands. Nothing extraordinary was seen, but it was a great way to spend the morning. The skipper was somewhat bemused that we only wanted to chase around after birds but then it didn't take him long to clean up his boat at the end of the trip. One person suggested that the next trip should be held in a 30 knot southerly! Any starters out there?

The following weekend members headed inland to the Hutuwai Forest for a two-day trip. Numbers of common birds were down but North Island Brown Kiwi were heard and Fernbird seen. Meanwhile Julie and I were visiting the Far North where we saw Marsh Crake, Brown Kiwi and Brown Quail. Aroha Island (near Kerikeri) is a must-visit location on any birding trip to that region.

Continuing the things pelagic theme, at the March meeting one member told us of watching Little Blue penguin chasing anchovies when he was out in a boat off New Plymouth. A pair of Australasian Bitterns were seen during the March field trip to Nowell's Lakes in South Taranaki. Only two members and a visitor from England were there to see them. Elise Smith spoke to us about a proposal for an environment centre at Pukekura Park where groups with environmental concerns would be able to communicate with each other and the public at large. It was agreed that we should support the proposal.

At the April meeting Ron Lambert, who had just returned from a brief visit to China, informed us that it was not a good place for birdwatchers to go as there were very few birds to see. Barry Hartley reported on his meeting with the Hartys to discuss arrangements for the 2007 AGM. We then discussed ideas for tours, field trips and all the other minutiae needed for a successful event.

Beach patrols were productive with more birds found than of late but nothing uncommon. Our April expedition along the Rahiri track on the fringes of Egmont National Park to look and listen for Riflemen was undertaken in rather inclement weather. The Riflemen, having more sense, stayed in what shelter they could find and, with the majority of our members being audibly-challenged, hearing them was out of the question.

The May meeting started rather quietly with Bill Van Gorkum giving a eulogy to his late wife Jeanne and the profound influence she had on his birding observations. Amongst members' reports, a Royal Spoonbill seen and photographed at Mokau was banded at Wairau Lagoon on 7th November 2005. Seven New Zealand Dabchicks at the Inglewood oxidation ponds was less than a previous count. Eight Little Black Shags seen fishing together in the Waitara River prompted the question as to why other members of the shag family which associate with Little Black (i.e. Little Shag and Black Shag) prefer to fish alone? A Falcon has been seen around Pukekura Park and a highlight was the sighting of a White Heron at the Waiongana Stream. An uncommon visitor to Taranaki, the last reported sighting was at Barrett Lagoon around five years ago.

Barry Hartley spoke about the Sandy Bay subdivision on the South Taranaki coast, which started in 2001. Initially attempts were made to 'reclaim' the sand dunes, but now the developer, DoC and local iwi have come together with a more conservation-orientated plan.

The May field trip, held on a fine autumn day, was a two part affair. In the morning we toured Barrett Lagoon on the western outskirts of New Plymouth. Here Tui were very numerous feeding and flitting around the flowering Banksias. Some of their calls were unusual. Fantails were also very active, and Paradise Shelducks plentiful on and





Any disappointment soon disappeared on our return home to a few rounds of warm pikelets, tea or wine and polite conversation. Only the cooling of the temperature forced us to disperse; non attendees may regret missing out.

PETER FRYER

## Wairarapa

The weather forecast of strong winds failed to deter the six hardy souls who took part in the April field trip to Mataikona. The first stop was to examine Wharepourī's mark and discuss its significance. Nearby was a reminder of the possibilities of a tsunami, a pole indicated that a safe place was 35 feet above sea level.

The second stop at a beach further along the road failed to turn up any birds at all, but between there and the next stop Goldfinches flew alongside the road. The wind wasn't too bad when we arrived at the Mataikona River mouth where we saw Variable Oystercatchers, Black-backed Gulls, Paradise Shelducks and White-fronted Terns. Among nine White-faced Herons there we were delighted to find a Reef Heron, which those present watched for some time as it fished along the shallows.

At our April meeting Narena Olliver gave us a fascinating presentation on antique prints with particular reference to birds within 'The History of the Discovery of New Zealand's Natural History'. She mentioned the use of copper plate to capture images of flora and fauna by Joseph Banks on Captain Cook's voyages. One of a Tui produced in 1777 is a fine example of the workmanship involved. It seems the artists often worked from skins or reconstructed bones, which resulted in a more stylised reproduction of the birds. The colours were quite amazing.

It was interesting to note that in slightly more modern prints artists produced a more natural representation of the birds. Another artist mentioned within her talk was Edward Lear, who drew from life. Narena talked of wood-engraving and lithographs, and made reference to such publications as W.B. Oliver's 1950 book *New Zealand Birds* and Buller's *Birds of New Zealand*.

Mike Imber gave a thought-provoking presentation on the work with which he has been associated regarding Cook's Petrels. It is amazing that their chicks are abandoned by their parents ten days before they fledge, migrate to winter feeding grounds (or wherever they spend their juvenile years), feed on a food source that they have never seen whole, and catch it by methods they have never been taught. Mike's presentation was full of many excellent pictures of Cook's and other petrels.

The garden bird survey has been taken up by many members in the region, and a few non-members. There is a good deal of enthusiasm about the project, and the resulting discussion and comparisons between each garden.

MILES KING

## Wellington

March's indoor meeting was a members evening with five presentations by members of the highlights of their recent birding activities. John Geale dazzled us with photos of some of the 1,800 bird species found in Peru in the *Polylepis* forest, and in the Andes. He commented on the wide variety of birds, for example 67 species of hummingbirds, 70 different tanagers and over a hundred species of flycatchers.

Andy Falshaw described an eco-tour in a small ship from Argentina to the Antarctic Peninsula via Tierra Del Fuego, the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. Moving in an animated manner across the room, he showed us why steamer ducks are so named. His most impressive picture was of a great gathering of King Penguins on South Georgia.

David Cornick spoke about the release, and the early days of care, of Fluttering Shearwaters on Mana Island. Forty chicks were helicoptered in, installed in burrows and fed daily. In the process one Fairy Prion was also observed nesting there – a new record for Mana Island.

Geoff de Lisle described his enjoyment of a wader field course held at Miranda in January. He and others were kept busy from dawn to dusk (no time for the hot springs!). He showed us the capture, by cannon-net, of several hundred Wrybills and Lesser Knots, and just how muddy the Firth of Thames shoreline can be!

Finally, Ian Armitage wound up the evening with a report on the ongoing monthly Pencarrow Lakes to Cook Strait coastline bird survey. Thirty-five species have been recorded around the larger of the two lakes, with Paradise Shelduck, Black Swan and Mallard dominating. Along the shoreline 36 species have been recorded, with Banded Dotterels and Black-backed Gulls being the most frequently seen birds. Several species were observed offshore including a number of petrels and albatrosses. The survey will continue through to 2007.

Notes of unusual bird sightings made during the summer included a Chukor at Kingston (maybe an escaped cage bird), Reef Herons at Mahina and Shelley Bays in Wellington Harbour, many Red-crowned

Who said that Wellington is windy? To support that view several Black Swans were actually seen flying 'backwards' in the teeth of a recent and severe southerly storm. A flock of up to 50 White-fronted Terns have been seen regularly at Days Bay. Two observations were made of aggressive behaviour by Starlings; a Starling continuously harassing a Banded Dotterel in Porirua Harbour, and competition between Starlings, Eastern Rosellas and Kingfishers for a nesting hole in a beech tree in Whiteman's Valley, Upper Hutt, previously used by Kingfishers. The Starlings won the first round, nesting and fledging by mid-October. After some time, possibly enough to allow the Starling odours to disperse, the Kingfishers moved in and nested in December, fledging in mid-January. The Rosellas nested in a tree a few hundred metres away. They suffered not just a loss of territory but subsequently a loss of their brood. The raucous distress of the parents drew attention to a Harrier, seen carrying off a fledgling Rosella.

In April Paul Jansen (DoC, Wellington) told us of the progress in the Kakapo Recovery Programme since his involvement commenced in 1996. Many and diverse have been the cunning techniques used to encourage these indolent birds to breed. Paul describes their metabolism as being very similar to that of a stone, but they get themselves in to gear (it is not known following what trigger) when the Rimu masts. The female wanders about in November checking out the Rimu, but it is not known what she is looking for. The latest techniques developed for artificial insemination, based on on-site work by Carlos Blanc from Spain, is showing promise. Paul's talk was very timely with the special issue of *Notornis* having just been published.

Reg Cotter described his own personal interest and involvement in birds and their conservation at the May meeting. This started more than 40 years ago, when several earlier and prominent ornithologists in the Society introduced Reg to the observation of birds. Reg described, with many illustrations, aspects of the observations he has been involved with around Wellington Harbour, along the Cook Strait coastline, in Porirua/Pauatahanui Harbour and in the Marlborough Sounds. More recently Reg described the challenges, enjoyment and successes of his work with the conservation of various petrels and shearwaters in the Cook Strait area and in the Chatham Islands. Thanks Reg for an entertaining evening!

Once again Peter Reese held several banding sessions recently at the Wellington Zoo. Many members enjoy being involved with these sessions, which provide first hand experience in handling several of the smaller bird species. Peter's studies are also making a sound contribution towards knowledge on the ages and movements of the common birds of Wellington suburbs. More than 2,400 birds of 15 species have now been banded by the banding group.

Several members have contributed to the translocation of North Island Robins from Kapiti Island to Somes Island/Matiu in Wellington Harbour, an exercise that is likely to be both effective and popular with visitors to the island.

GORDON LEARY, STUART NICHOLSON and IAN ARMITAGE

## Nelson/Golden Bay

Mike Bell of Blenheim gave a fascinating illustrated talk at our February meeting on the eradication of cats on Ascension Island, in the South Atlantic.

In March David Melville hosted two Chinese ladies, Yang Xiuzhi from Wetlands International China Programme, Beijing, and Jia Na from the Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve, Liaoning Province. Ms. Jia spoke about the Yalu NNR with a brief illustrated account of the area, showing the types of habitat and some of the birds present. Both ladies are currently 'on secondment' to the Miranda Shorebird Centre, which has a sister relationship with Yalu Jiang. David Butler was also present and gave an update on the progress on the planned Brook Waimarama Bird Sanctuary, Nelson.

A small attendance at the April meeting was treated to an updated and enlightening version of David Melville's presentation on the history and spread of the H5N1 bird flu virus. Some members on this night had spread their 'wings' to other corners of New Zealand, including pelagic trips, or further off shore to Korea and the USA.

Willie Cook spent a week assisting the Department of Conservation with the transfer of Hutton's Shearwater onto the Kaikoura Peninsula. Willie also reported two Cattle Egrets in early April near the Waimea estuary. One was also seen in the Lower Moutere area. Numbers of these birds are much smaller than a few years ago.

Chris Petyt from Golden Bay reported a New Zealand Dabchick in late March on a small lake on a private property near Onekaka. The Australian Little Grebe is still seen from time to time on the Wharariki Dune Lake. Chris commented on 22 Turnstones in breeding plumage on

Present were the Department of Conservation, Nelson and the Tasman District Council organised a three-day educational programme on Rabbit Island to celebrate Seaweek. A round robin of activities covered seven topics including conservation of our seabirds. Three regional members of OSNZ volunteered to staff the seabird conservation station. Twenty-one classes of primary school children from the Waimea and Motueka Districts attended this event held in excellent weather in one of the finest outdoor classrooms. Each class had a 30-minute session in which the albatross family was highlighted. A tape spread to 3.5 meters representing wing tip to wing tip of these large birds allowed up to 18 children to stand shoulder to shoulder and made a lasting impression on many.

In addition to the above Pauline Samway has produced an illustrated booklet describing the birds on the Motueka sandspit, and this was the basis for a written quiz.

Feedback from pupils and teachers expressed a high percentage of very positive comments. Have we sown seeds for future members of OSNZ?

Peter Field has written a detailed description of a dark coloured raptor seen on his property near Nelson four times in the last year. It appeared out of a small copse of beech trees and missed his head by less than 1.5 metres. Remaining at eye level it flew onto a neighbouring property skirting low over the rough hillside. It was definitely smaller than a Harrier, but larger and more 'muscly' than a New Zealand Falcon. It flew in a leisurely fashion with shallow wing beats, gliding briefly with its wings tips noticeably drooped, albeit slightly. A quick sketch made of the head on profile matched that of a Black Falcon as shown in an Australian field guide.

Rob Schuckard has just returned from South Korea and reports that a total of 21 Bar-tailed Godwits colour-banded at the top of the South Island were recorded in the Yellow Sea region on their northward migration. The birds represented banding at all five sites used so far across Tasman and Golden Bay. Rob was among a group consisting of members of the Australasian Wader Study Group and Birds Korea near Gunsan, while Adrian Riegen and Keith Woodley were in Yalu Jiang and recorded 12 similar birds in their total.

**DON COOPER**

## Canterbury

The Farewell to the Godwits at Southshore Spit had television coverage this year, with TV1 featuring a short snippet between the news and weather. OSNZ members help at this event every year by showing those present the birds through their telescopes. Strangely, due to unhelpful tides in March, the farewell was held on the last day of February this year, a little before the time when the majority of birds depart.

Bexley Wetland, part of the green edge of the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, and right next to a residential development hosted a new species (in recent years at least) in late January in the shape of an Australasian Bittern. This site also held a Glossy Ibis in April. Both of these species are regular winter visitors at nearby Travis Wetland. Bexley Wetland is a great place for photographing wildfowl and common waders, with a path enabling close views of birds habituated to passing walkers. Those other winter visitors, Cattle Egrets were seemingly late arriving, but did so eventually in late May near Waikuku with 24 being found, continuing the increase of 2005.

Cape Barren Geese continue their wanderings, with birds further to those reported in the March issue seen at Ki-Wainono Lagoon (coastward of Waimate) where two were present in early March, one at the upland Lake Georgina in mid-May, and two at residential Westlake in suburban Halswell in early May.

A Yellow-eyed Penguin that moulted near Kaikoura in late summer has continued to return to its small cave to the present date in late May. The bird was banded as a chick on Otago Peninsula four years ago. Kaikoura resident Alan Shaw continues to check on the bird. In Lyttelton Harbour Kerry-Jayne Wilson reported a wandering Reef Heron at Camp Bay in early May. Unfortunately this species is very scarce in the region these days.

Sheila Petch, Jan Walker and others continue to diligently check for banded godwits at the Southshore Spit roost on a regular basis. They received some interesting news in March when one of 'their' birds was seen on northward migration at Chongming Dao, a large island at the mouth of the Yangtze River downstream of Shanghai.

Up to 75 Red-necked Stints finally chose to use Greenpark Sands, Lake Ellesmere just before they were due to leave. It is a bit of a mystery where the majority had hung out for the summer, as previous

lower numbers may be due to poor breeding success in recent years.

Following the report of the stray Eastern Curlew at Lake Ellesmere in the March regional roundup, a further unusual record of the species was received of a long staying individual, later joined by a second, at the Avon-Heathcote Estuary wader roost. The species is only occasionally recorded at this estuary. A Whimbrel was also seen on a few occasions about the same time.

Christchurch City Council ranger Andrew Crossland provided the worrying news that ten New Zealand Pigeons were known to have died in the city since November, seemingly after eating a plant either poisonous to them, or which made them drunk so that they flew clumsily into solid objects. Hopefully the source of the problem can be found and eliminated to keep the species in the city. A partial leucistic New Zealand Pigeon with very patchy plumage has been frequenting the Mount Thomas area in the foothills between Oxford and Loburn.

The February members evening had a distinctive Australian feel to it, when Ann Sherlock presented great photos of scenery and birds produced during an epic trip across the Top-end. Phyllis Paltridge showed pictures from Cairns, an area familiar to many Canterbury members. Jill West presented a thought-provoking short report on the problems of birds causing flashovers on power-lines and the means employed in preventing damage both to birds and the power network – generally putting wires further apart and further from earthing structures, and protecting other susceptible components.

California-based globetrotting kiwi birder Carol Donovan provided an insight into the competitive and ever-changing world of bird-listing in March, providing mouth-watering slides showing examples of species from bird families worldwide. As mentioned in the last issue of *Southern Bird* she recently achieved the goal of seeing at least one example of every bird family currently extant.

In April Ron Nilsson gave a report of the recent Fiordland Kakapo expedition, with digital photos graphically showing the spectacular ruggedness of the landscape, the difficulties of access and weather, and the exposed nature of some of the campsites used. A search for the South Island Kokako was added on to the expedition, following up reports from a GNS scientist in deepest Southern Fiordland. Good numbers of interesting loud calls were heard in the few hours after arrival, but typically the birds refused to call on an atypically tropical day following this, and then the team had to leave once again not pinning this most elusive of birds down. A follow-up pair of expeditions is planned, subject to funding, to hopefully prove the species is still alive, if rather poorly, in the South Island.

Field trips have visited the Hawdon Valley and SH73 lakes in April, finding all the expected birds, but missing the scarce Yellowheads and Orange-fronted Parakeets in a very quiet Hawdon forest, probably due to the visit taking place during the moult. The Yellow-crowned Parakeets, Robins, and Australasian Crested Grebes were nice to see anyway. The waders were farewelled on 1st April, when most of the godwits seemed to have already departed. The finding of an Eastern Curlew was a bonus, as were the flights of oystercatchers and godwits coming to roost at dusk. May saw a small band of members visit the Flea Bay area of Banks Peninsula as part of the regional reserves presence/absence project. Tomtits were found in good numbers in a fairly impressive Red Beech remnant, but Rifleman and Brown Creepers present elsewhere in similar habitats on the peninsula were absent. Francis and Shireen Helps extended great hospitality to members by showing their impressive trap-protected White-flipped Penguin colony, and a couple of hundred of this species rafting on the waters of Flea Bay in late afternoon.

**NICK ALLEN**

## Otago

A recent highlight for many Otago members has been involvement with the OSNZ/DoC project to catch and individually band and flag migratory shorebirds. In preparation several members regularly surveyed the estuaries around Dunedin for suitable catching sites, checking the roosting habits of the birds on certain tides, etc. David Melville and Rob Schuckard included Dunedin in their South Island trips on two occasions recently. The first cannon-netting attempt in October caught only two Bar-tailed Godwits. The second in early March was much more successful, catching an additional 37 godwits. Both catches were at Warrington Beach, which has proved to be an ideal site. This was the first time most Otago members had experienced cannon-netting; helping with setting up the net, camouflaging, weighing birds and recording bands and flags.

The highest count of godwits around the Otago Peninsula this year was 1,829 during the summer wader count. Several flagged birds from other areas and countries have been recorded. After the winter wader





For seaweek in March the Otago region of ONSZ was asked by DoC to set up telescopes at Aramoana so that visitors to a special event held there could look across the mouth of Otago Harbour to the Royal Albatross and Scaevola Island Shags on Taiaroa Head. Four members braved the very inclement weather but unfortunately very few visitors were out and about. Despite the weather our volunteers enjoyed the barbeque put on only DoC staff!

The first indoor meeting for the year attracted a record turnout of curious members and friends to hear Hattie Spencer tell of his experiences birding in Alaska. He was able to combine a conference trip to Fairbanks with visits to Kodiak Island and Denali National Park. His talk was illustrated with superb photographs supplied by his bird photographer companion.

At the April meeting we heard from Catherine Graebet, a zoology post-graduate student, on the topic of genetic diversity of Takahē.

pingy now number 85. The population remaining in Fiordland is about 170. Catherine has analysed DNA samples (from fathers) from all banded birds to study their genetic variation, and her results will inform future conservation strategies.

Jim Wilson runs an Otago email list for bird alerts. We are pleased to report some fairly rare sightings for our area of Reef Herons, Pied Shag, Hudsonian Godwits and Turnstones. Of special note is a Black Stilt (a fully black bird that successfully bred this past spring with a Pied Stilt in a swampy area behind Brighton on the coast just south of Dunedin. This bird appears to be resident. In addition, the usual bird 'menu' of New Zealand Pigeons, Tui, and Bellbirds, with the occasional Tōmōtī, Brown Creeper and Rifleman, is always a delight to Otago birders.

MARY THOMPSON

## What's on



### Far North

Detlef Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 0470. Ph (09) 407 3674. Email detlef.davies@yahoo.com

### Northland

Katrina Hansen, 3 Harbour View Road, Onerahi, Whangarei. Ph (09) 430 2133. Email katrina.hansen@xtra.co.nz

Evening meetings, second Thursday of the month, ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954. West coast beach patrols ph. Pyae Cozens (09) 437 7760. East coast beach patrols ph. Pauline Smith (09) 435 3060. Whangarei Harbour wader count ph. Tony Beauchamp (09) 436 2661. North Kaipara wader count ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954.

### Buckland

Suzi Phillips, 36 Beulah Avenue, Rothsay Bay, North Shore City, Auckland. Phone (09) 479 5385. Email suzi@dialogue.co.nz

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month (except January) at 7.45pm at Natural Science Building 23, Unitec, Point Chevalier.

### South Buckland

David Lawrie, 52 Mill Road, R D 2, Pukekohe, Auckland. Ph (09) 238 8407. Email lawrie@ps.gen.nz

Evening meetings are held at the Papakura Croquet Clubrooms, 5 Chapel Street, Papakura, on the second Tuesday of each month (Feb-Nov) at 7.45 pm. Beach patrols ph. Wendy Goad (09) 292 7838. Marukau and Firth of Thames censuses ph. Tony Habaken (09) 238 5284

### Waikato

RR's position vacant. Contact person Martin Day, 9 Conrad Place, Cambridge 3351. Phone (07) 827 3047. email mday@wave.co.nz

Evening meetings, every third Wednesday 7.30pm, DoC, 73 Rostrevor Street, Hamilton. Beach patrols ph. Hugh Clifford (07) 855 3751. Hamilton Lake census ph. Barry Friend (07) 843 6728. Fossil Lake census ph. Brian Challinor (07) 855 2561. Cambridge Lake census ph. Hugh Clifford. Bird sightings: Regional recorder, Dai Morgan dco300 waikato.ac.nz

### Bay of Plenty/Volcanic Plateau

Tim Barnard, 25 Tenyson Drive, Owhata, Rotorua. Ph (07) 345 3433. Email tim.barnard@xtra.co.nz

### Gisborne/Wairoa

RR's position vacant.

### Kaohē's Bay

Murray Jeffries, 2a Cobden Road, Napier 4001. Ph (06) 834 3865. Email mcjffries@xtra.co.nz

Indoor meetings are held on an irregular basis, but field trips are organised regularly. Please contact Murray Jeffries for details.

### Taranaki

Barry Hartley, 12a Ronald Street, New Plymouth. Ph (06) 757 8644. Email Barry.Hartley@clear.net.nz

Evening meetings - first Tuesday of the month (exc Jan) 7.30 pm. Field trips on first conducive weekend thereafter.

### Wairarapa

Tom Teasdale, 33 Paterson Street, Aramoana, Wanganui 3001. Ph (06) 343 9992. Email teasdale.family@clear.net.nz

Evening meetings - fourth Tuesday of the month, Davis Lecture Theatre, Wanganui Regional Museum (96th Street).

### Manawatu

Ian Saville, 25 Duke Street, Feilding. Ph (06) 323 1441. Email iansav@clear.net.nz

Evening meetings - second Wednesday of Feb, May, Aug and Nov. Lido Centre, Park Street, Palmerston North. Spms. Beach patrols - first Wednesday of each month and also at other irregular times.

### Wairarapa

Miles King, Olivers Road, R D 6 Masterton 5921. Ph (06) 377 5252. Email kingsm@contact.net.nz

Evening meetings held on the second Thursday of the month (exc Jan) 7.30 pm, venue alternating between Masterton and Greytown. Field trips are the following weekend. Contact Miles King for further details.

### Wellington

Ian Armitage, 50 Ramai Terrace, Tawa, Wellington. Ph (04) 232 7470. Email ian.armitage@xtra.co.nz

Evening meetings - first Monday of the month, DoC Science and Research Centre, ph. Ian Armitage (04) 232 7470. Maria/Somes Island surveys, ph. Rod Orange (04) 473 1912. Mist-netting and passerine banding at The Zoo, various Saturdays, ph. Peter Reese (04) 367 7387. Beach patrols, ph. Jean Luke (04) 904 1794.

### Nelson

Steve Wood, Hazelhouse Street, Lower Moutere, R D 2 Upper Moutere, Nelson 7152. Ph (03) 528 6438. Email utopia.landscapes@clear.net.nz

Evening meetings - usually first Monday of the month, 7.15 pm upstairs at 50 Halifax Street, Nelson. Ph. Steve Wood (03) 528 6438 or Don Cooper (03) 544 8109.

### Marlborough

Mike Bell, 42 Vickerman Street, Greenvale 7121. Phone (03) 577 9818 or 021 774 602. Email mikeandnorth@xtra.co.nz

Lake Grassmere count - third Sunday of month. Ph Brian Bell (03) 570 2230. Passerine banding, each weekend during February and March, at Jack Taylor's farm, Ward, contact Mike Bell Ph (03) 577 9818.

### Canterbury/West Coast

Nick Allen, 65 Allin Drive, Waiwaka, North Canterbury 8254. Ph (03) 312 7183. Email nick\_allen@xtra.co.nz

Evening meetings last Monday of the month, Spreydon Bowling Club, Domain Terrace, Christchurch. Monthly field trips - dates vary. Ph. Nick Allen (03) 312 7183.

### Dunedin

Louise Food, P.O. Box 12002, Maori Hill, Dunedin. Ph (03) 467 5041. Fax (03) 467 5071.

Evening meetings bi-monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 8.00pm in Benham Seminar Room, Zoology Department, 340 Great King Street. Contact Mary Thompson (03) 464 0767

### Southland

Laurie Wood, c/- Zoology Department, Otago University, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin. Email lauraw@hotnetmail.com

Evening meetings (in conjunction with Field Club) held second Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm. Please phone numbers below for venue and further information, field trip usually on Saturday following. Beach Patrols on a casual basis, phone Phil Rhodes (03) 213 1228 or Lloyd Eder (03) 213 0434.

