



No. 29 March 2007 + 155N 1175-1916

Brown Teal Bouncing Back

Charles Fleming's Cape Expedition Diary

Carlos and



QUOTATION

...The world is a mist. And then the world is minute and vast and clear. The tide is higher or lower. He couldn't tell you which. His beak is focussed; he is preoccupied,

looking for something, something, something. Poor bird, he is obsessed! The millions of grains are black, white, tan, and gray, mixed with quartz grains, rose and amethyst.

Sandpiper by Elizabeth Bishop

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COVER PHOTOS

Front cover: Bellbird

Back cover: Auckland Island Pipit

Both photos by Ian Armitage

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, and identification. Illustrations are especially welcome, though they must be sharp. Copy deadlines are 10th February, May and August, and 1st November.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The year began on a high note with a welcome acknowledgement of the importance of work on birds and the voluntary efforts of OSNZ members in the inclusion of three of our members in the New Year Honours List. Congratulations to Tenick Dennison and Adrian Riegen for their M.N.Z.M.'s (Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit) for services to conservation and to Barry Hartley for his Queen's Service Medal for public services (including, of course, conservation). This is due and welcome reward for services these members have given the country and it is heartening to see long-term efforts rewarded in this age of instant gratification.

On the OSNZ front, things are moving along, with much activity duck-like beneath the surface but hopefully just smooth progression apparent topside. By now you will have seen the advertisement for the position of Executive Officer on the OSNZ web-site. It is printed also elsewhere in this issue of *Southern Bird*. Even before the advertisement went out, I had received genuine enquiries about the position, so the signs are good that we will have a strong field from which to choose the Society's bosun for the next three years. Whoever signs the contract will have an exciting time underpinning OSNZ's efforts to take its proper role in what promises to be a challenging century for birds and ornithology in New Zealand (and elsewhere, of course).

There are still many opportunities to contribute to the Society's activities and outputs. I have not yet heard from any member keen to take on the job of Editor of *New Zealand Bird Records*. That is an important position, devoted to bringing the observations and records of the membership into the literature, and it would be an ideal way for a postgraduate student to be introduced to the world of scientific publication or for a retiree to wile away the evening hours, immersed in the latest information on our birds and their habits and habitats. We are still looking for someone to be our contributor to Ornithological Worldwide Literature (OWL), which is:

"a compilation of citations and abstracts from the worldwide scientific literature that pertain to the science of ornithology. A major attraction is its coverage of the 'grey' literature, which are not abstracted by commercial databases such as Zoological Record or the Science Citation Index. OWL deals chiefly with serial publications such as periodicals but also announces new and renamed journals and provides abstracts of other serial publications, conference proceedings, reports, and doctoral dissertations. Papers dealing exclusively with domestic and pet birds and their husbandry are excluded unless they are applicable to non-domesticated birds. OWL was previously known as the Recent Ornithological Literature (ROL) or as Recent Ornithological Literature Online (ROLO). The scope of OWL will be more than just the 'recent' literature of ornithology. Eventually, the online database will go back 50 or more years to acquire citations to the serial literature. OWL will proceed well into this century with a database of the current worldwide literature that would be of interest

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Publisher

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Birds Australia. The database is kosted by the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, based in the Zoology Department of Oxford University, UK.⁴

Obviously, this is a marsellours and worthwhile resource backed by major organizations and the OSNZ OWL contributor would be making a significant contribution as well as getting to know a variety of publications that are probably not on everyone's reading list, when maybe they should be. Anyone interested should contact any member of the Scientific Committee or me, and see can get you started.

Members can make contributions of even greater impact for other members. Shortly, when the terms of reference have been developed, the new Projects and Activities Committee I mentioned in the December issue will be ready to provide an stutlet for the ideas and energies of members who are dedicated to such things as developing training media for members, and reintroducing and running the field courses that increase expertise and encourage interactions and friendships that can only benefit the Society This Committee would ideally be composed of non-Council members dedicated to getting projects and activities under way and run efficiently. It will form, along with the Administration. and Development Committee (charged to keep us in operation and financially above water), and the Scientific Committee Seho maintain standards and underpin the scientific integrity of contracts, projects, and programmen), the essential tripod of support for Council, the IRs, and membership.

This and other initiatives are part of the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan, but all things have to be itimidered on the way forward, and in accordance with the Motion passed at the 2006 AGM, Council at its November 2006 meeting considered the institution and use of a briefd name for the Omithological Society of New Zealand, Inc. After a full discussion of the issues, Council's decision, encapsulated in a allatement in the Minutes, that referred to the Strategic Plan which has been adopted by the Society, and noted that OSNZ aims to be biologrased as the leading authority in birds in New Zealand. Coursed progrised the need to better market the Society to achieve this objective and noted that a number of factors were involved in the neuraitment and retention of members. Council noted the progress that is being made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, in patticular the decision to employ an Evecutive Officer in 2007. The Executive Officer would have a pivotal role in generating future publicity and media work, and promoting membership. Council expressed concern at the additional financial costs that would be associated with any branding exercise and noted the uncertainty of the result of such action in terms of costs and benefits. Council determined not to proceed with the adoption of a brand name at this time.

Finally, the new Atlas will be lausched in August. The content layout and over all design are in the final stages. The slight delay should give everyone time to get their letterboxes in order, so that this substantial – and colourful – block of fundamental knowledge will not damage them when it arrives. It is of course not the end of the Atlas story but the beginning of its use as a fundamental document in research on, and the enjoyment and conservation of, our remarkable avitaura. Things are always changing, and benefines are vital to our understanding the estent and direction of the changes and the trends in bird distribution under the effects of the changes we are making to the landscape and biota directly (e.g., dairying, vineyards, urban sprawl) and indirectly to g, climate change, introduced organisms). There will always be a need for sound information on our birds, and OSNZ is the key organisation in the field.

Good birding, and see you at the AGM!

Richard

FOLLOWED SOUTH

The southward migration of two species of waders starting their journeys in Alaska and travelling across the Pacific Ocean seas monitored fairly successfully for the first time in 2006. The flights of five Bar-tailed Godwits and nine Bristle-thighed Curleses were followed as they flow south from their Yukon-Kasikolosim staging area.

All nine carleses were tracked to the general area of French Dilynesia and the southern Line Islands. Battery failure prevented tracking of the godwits to their final destinations, but three were tracked most of the way. One was followed to within 1,500 km of New Zealard lovell past Fiji when it was still flying strongly at over 80 km/h, another was followed to within 2,500 km of Queensland, and another was followed for a gruelling 96 days non-stop flight as strong beadwinds near Hawaii and Fiji made its progress difficult. It eventually made an abrupt right-hand turn and took teltage on New Caledonia.

The above success has spurred the team of US and New Zealand researchers involved in the study to attach transmitters to birds caught whilst on their New Zealand wintering grounds in an effort to discover the specific staging areas they use on their north-bound migration.

The researchers are very interested in sightings of their transmittered birds. Each has a black flag with a two digit/letter code. There will probably also be an aerial visible poking out from its lower back or under its tail. Please send sightings to David Melville david.melville@stra.co.nz , Adrien Riegen riegen@stra. co.nz or Phil Battley philbattley@goicksilver.net.nz .

Source APSN (Asia Pacific Shorebird Network) Wader News



5. Moher Birds Australia Western Australia 167 Perty Lokes Drive, Florent, WA 6014, Australia

Email: aoc2007@birdswa.com.au Telephone: +61 8 93896416

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Orrathological Society of New Zealand (Inc.) is seeking applications for the position of Euceative Officer, whose role will be to enhance the efficient running of the Society The EO will be responsible to the President and their daties will include: handling correspondence and media enquiries ensuring timely communication within the Society (between Council, Committees, Regional the Society (between Council, Committees, Regional Representatives and Scheme Coordinators) and providing administrative support, day to day management of contracts, and exploring funding opportunities to further the Society's objectives. The successful candidate is espected to have some general ornithological background, but strong organisational and communication skills are essential. They will be a team player, but he a self-statter and able to work independently, and will be able to travel within New Zealard to attend meetings and promote the Society's objectives. Society's objectives.

This will be a challenging position which is likely to evolve over time. It therefore expaires a sarge of skills, adaptability, and flexibility in attitude

The appointment will be by contract and may be either a full-time or half-time position.

Applications should be made in writing, with CV, and marked 'OSNZ Executive Officer'to:

David 5. Melville Chair, Administration and Development Committee Omithological Society of New Zealand, Inc. Dovedale, R.D. 2 Wakefield, Nelson 2099 Phone: 0-3-545 3628

from whom further information may be available. Applications close on 30th April 2007.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Judy Albertsen (Auckland); Mrs Booth (Carnerbury); C Carter (Bay of Plenty); James Crowe (Mananuto); Sue Davy (Auckland): Eleaner Daff (Auckland): Lisa Foster (Auckland): James Fraser (Northland); Anne Gamham (Wellington); Elizabeth Job (Auckland); Rosemarie Keen (Auckland); Isabelle Kember (Auckland): Helen Kingston (Nelson): Yoonne MacKenzie (Canterbury): Iann McPherson (Canterbury): Ross Martin (Volcanic Plateau); Sioux Plowman (Auckland); Jennifer Rickett (Auckland): Amanda Rogers (Auckland): Rebecca Short (Bay of Plenty); Owen Spearpoint (Wellington); Jamie Steer (Wellington); Raymond Taylor (Australia): Kristina Thompson (Otago): David Wilson (Aarkland)-

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

Dorothy Allos, David Booth, Steve Braunias; Kenneth Buchanary, Rhys Buckingham, Bill Campbell, Clinton Care, Anthony Carey: William A. Cook; Ilrian Darlow; Jack Davidsor; Maj De Poorter: Michael Fitzgenald, Cluis Foremarc Stephen Gemmill, Arthea Goodwin: Michael E. Hermansson: Feter Hoteden: Jim Jolly; Ted Kirk; Marion A. Macbeth; Mr R.S. Macdonald: Audrie McKenzie; Glenys Mather; Mr R. J. Meadows; Frank Mirschart; Maureen Moore: Katherine Morris; Staart Nicholson; Mrs G. Norman; Caroline Parker; C. John Ralph; Lyn Reid; Rob Schuckard; Betty H. Seddon; Heather Smithers; Joy M. Soper; Mr D M Stracy; Andrese Styche, Wayne Taylor, Spencer Unthank, Gillian Vaughary, Mr G. W. Wells, Jill West; Steve Wrattere, Mr DJ Wright.

NOMINATIONS FOR REGIONAL

REPRESENTATIVES 2008 Each RR serves for a one-year term, starting 1st January;

though incumbents can be re-nominated for an unlimited namber of terms.

Nominations for the RR of each region close with the Secretary (P.O. Box 12397, Wellington) on 31st July 2007.

The nomination paper for each RR must be signed by two financial members of the Society from that argion and must be consented to in writing by the person nominated, who must also be a member of the Society.

17the Secretary receives more than one valid nomination a postal ballot will be held among the financial members. of the region. If no nomination is received from a region, Council may appoint an RR for the 2008 year.

FALLAMEMORIAL AWARD & A.T. EDGAR JUNIOR AWARD 2008

Norsinations are called for the above awards and should be with the Secretary (PO: Box 12397, Wellington) by 30th June. Nominations should be on the standard forms, which are available from RRs and the Secretary.

The Awards Committee will consider all nominations. and its recommendations will be forwarded to Council for consideration at its spring morting

Contact your RR for further information on OSNZ award procedures. They are set out in the RR's Manual.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Barbura Lovatt has taken over the reins as Wairarapa Regional Rep from Miles King. Many thanks to Miles for his many years in this role. Barbara's contact details are 4 Claza Anne Grove, Greytown. Phone (06) 304 9946. email arriving@paradise.net.rul

After more than long enough in the job the editor has passed the job of Regional Rep for Carterbury to someone more capable of doing the job, and with a little more time to devote to it. Many thanks to Jan Walker for taking up the challenge. Jan's contact details are 305 Kennedys Bash Road, Halowell, Christchurch, Phone (03) 322 7187, email shesagreer/#gmail.com

VACANCY FOR REVIEWS EDITOR

The Society is urgently seeking a Reviews Editor to replace Ros Batchelor who has done a great job for a manther of years. This is your opportunity to get to see books and other publications before your friends and to gain satisfaction from organising reviewers and reviews. Interested? Contact the Secretary at oura@stra.co.nz. or via P.O. Box 12397, Wellington.

INTRODUCTION

A small-scale trial garden bird survey was undertaken in July 2006 based on similar surveys overseas, such as the Big Garden Birdwatch (www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/) in the UK, Great Backyard Bird Count (www.birdsource.org/gbbc/) in the US and Canada, and Backyard Birds Survey (www.birdsinbackyards.net/) in Australia.

The basic format of these surveys is that people spend a specified, short, length of time (e.g. one hour in the UK survey), at least once a year (e.g. a specified weekend in winter), watching birds in their home gardens, school grounds, or public parks, and record the largest number of each species they see at any one time.

When repeated over a number of years (garden bird surveys have been undertaken annually for 25 years in the UK), they provide valuable information on changes in bird distribution and population trends. The surveys are very popular, with more than 470,000 people participating in the 2005 UK survey. The trial New Zealand garden bird survey had restricted publicity, so had restricted participation.

METHODS

Participants were asked to spend one hour during the period 15th–23rd July 2006 watching birds in their home garden, local park, or school ground, and record the highest number of each bird species they saw at any one time. They could work as individuals or as groups (e.g. a family or a school class) but were asked to return only one form for each garden.

Participants were advised it was best if they could sit outside (e.g. on a veranda or garden seat) to watch birds but if it was too cold they could sit inside (e.g. in the living room at home or classroom at school) and look out the window. It was suggested that if they had a bird feeder or water bath in their garden they may like to watch an area of their garden that included that feature. Participants were provided with instructions, a data recording sheet and an Excel spreadsheet, with the option of returning their results by post, fax, or email.

RESULTS

People participating

Fourteen people or groups of people surveyed 16 gardens, ranging from Turangi in the north to Invercargill in the south. Most surveys were done in the Wellington region. Most were done by one person working alone, but three were done by two people working together. Seven people returned their results by post, four by email, and three by fax.

Comments received included,"This was an interesting exercise","I found the format to be simple to use", "Definitely wouldn't like to be confined to counting from indoors", and "Murphy must have come by in the night – not one bird have I seen – in any part of my garden, all day!"

BIRDS RECORDED

Twenty-two species of birds were recorded (Fig. 1). The average was 6.5 species per garden (range 0 to 16). Blackbirds were recorded in nearly 90% of gardens, Silvereyes 81%, House Sparrows 56%, Dunnocks (Hedge Sparrows) 50%, and other species less than 50% of gardens.

House sparrows were recorded in the greatest number at any one time (average 7.7 per garden) (Fig. 2). However, the average was exaggerated by one garden with 84 house sparrows and another with 12. In both these gardens birds were fed bread, grain, and/or scraps. Silvereyes were the second most abundant species (average 6.3 per garden). This included gardens with up to 33 Silvereyes around sugarwater feeders. The average number of California Quail was boosted by one garden that had 24 California Quail.

Birds were fed in half the gardens surveyed, with more than one type of food in some gardens (sugar-water in three gardens, seeds and grain in three gardens, bread and scraps in two, fat in one, and fruit in one). More birds were recorded in gardens where food was put out.

DISCUSSION

The results of this trial garden bird survey are affected by the small number of people participating and the limited area of the country covered. They should not be regarded as typical of New Zealand gardens. Nevertheless, the trial was a useful demonstration that the methods work. Some positive comments were received but no negative



Fig. 1. Percentage of gardens with species present, July 2006



Fig. 2. Average number of birds of each species per garden, July

ones, though this may have been because people were just too polite.

A number of instruction details need to be finalised. For example, should participants be encouraged to record birds only from inside their house (as in the UK) or outside (as most did in this trial)? Being inside the house is like being in a hide – birds cannot see you. When you go outside birds often fly off. Thus, you might see more birds from inside than outside the house. However, having to remain inside on a nice sunny day may be too much for some people. Being on a patio or veranda might be a compromise.

A second question is should participants include birds flying over (e.g. gulls and harriers)? It could be argued that most birds flying over are likely to be identifiable as such from the data sheets so there is probably no harm, and maybe some benefit, in recording them.

A more difficult question is should participants include birds heard but not seen? The argument against recording birds heard only is that the ability of participants to recognise birds by sound probably varies more than their ability to recognise birds by sight, and if recording from indoors then only nearby birds with loud calls will be heard. The results might be more consistent if nobody counted birds heard only.

Another question is should people be given the option of counting annually, bi-annually, quarterly, or monthly? Some people may wish to participate more or less often than others, so giving them an option may increase the number participating. Finally, how can administration of the survey be supported financially? If large a number of people participate then resources will be needed for data storage, analysis, and reporting. Your comments on these questions are welcome. The questions and any comments received will be considered by a multiagency working group.

Once details of the method have been finalised the next step will be to promote the survey nation-wide. The real value of garden bird surveys comes from mass participation over a number of years, providing long-term information on garden bird distribution and population trends, as well as enjoyment for participants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Richard Gregory and Richard Bashford (RSPB) for assistance with devising the survey instructions, Nick Allen, Ian Armitage, and Mike Bell (OSNZ) for promoting the survey, and the people who volunteered to do the survey.

> ERIC B. SPURR spurreb@slingshot.co.nz



This feature contains unducted reports. Some eightings require conformation by the OSNZ Rare Einds Committee

The second Great Spatted Kiwi chick known to have been produced by the re-introduced population at the Rotolli Mateland Johnd hatched in January, hopotally demonstrating that the birds are settling in well to their new surroundings. The Rotolli kisel population stands at 15 adults and two chicks, though a further new arrival from a pair throught to be incubating, may occur. All birending attempts so far have been by the birds translocated from the Gouland Downs area of Kahuanegi National Park in May 2004.

The 500th Royal Albateous chick to batch at the Tataroa Head (Oragei colorey did so on 29th January, about 70 years after Orago naturable Lance Richdale started protecting and observing the Northern Royal Albatrosses them. The chick has been named Toroa and has the added distinction of being the progeny of the male albatross that was the last chick of the famous 'Grandma'.

In a first for Prevalence petrols in New Zealand a translocated Chatham Petrol chick has been produced from a new colony in the predator-free Ellen Elizabeth Proces Conservation Covenant (Catavan Bush) on Piti-Island. Two bundled Chatham Fetral chicks were transferred from Rangatina over froat years, and so far four of these birds have retarned and one pair bred.

A record 13 Chatham Island Talke chicks had fielded by late May, taking the population to an estimated 320-350 individuals. The soccess is put down to sustained predator control at the Talko brending area on Chatham Island.

The first broading by Fairy Prices translocated to Marca Island occurred last year. A pair of the species bred on the island last year, but they were not translocated there and were probably attracted by calls broadcast from a sound system on the island. A total of 280 chicks some translocated to the island between 2002 and 2008, and the pair that bred some both three-year-old birds.

In August DoC curried out its third and final release of **Campbell Island Teal** onto Campbell Island, infeasing 54 birds to add to those released in 2004 and 2005. The binds were sourced from caption breeding, programmen at the Isaac Wildlife Trust's Dracock Springs Wildlife Park and DoC's National Wildlife Centre at Pakaha Mount Brace. Programme manager PeterMcCelland said the release should be the final-step in the teal recovery programme, which started in 1987 after four birds were transferred to Mount Brace from their last refuge on the 26 ha tast-for Dent likand-rel the Campbell Island coast. It appears that the species is establishing and breeding well on Campbell Island post rat-madication, and this release should give it an extra boost by transferring birds at additional sites to those of the first two releases.

The first mainland population of **Takabe** on the North Island in being established at Masangatautant in the Wakato. Swo sub-adult Indufrom Mana and Mana Islands were transforred into the predator-proof ecological bland.

Two Black Stilts clock and another disappeared in mid-Jane following, the collapse of an avary at the brending centre near Totael date to deep wet snow collecting on it. Under the pile of twisted metal, setting and firshurow 24 Black Stilts were trapped and amazingly most survived, some after surviving under snow-laden metting for six bours.

Following their transfer in April 2005 Snares Island Snipe are doing, well on Putaultinu Island off the south west coast of Stewart Island, with birds being encountered over most of the island during the muttoribirding, source last year.

Research is presently under way to try to explain the rapid dodine in the manihers of **Black-billed Galls** nesting in Southland. The species is new considered by some authorities to be the most threatened species of gall in the world. In 1977 there was an estimated 150,000 lineeding binds on the Winna, Aparima, Oroti and Matanza rivers and 20-colorsies. In 2005 nambers had dwindled to 10,000 binds and nine colorian. As Southland supported an estimated 80% of the birds' breeding population, this dramatic drop in mambers is of significant concern.

Otago University researcher Bachel MicCallan is leading the investigation, with the assistance of DoC, Moridian Energy and Erstromment Southland. She asks that people look for and report bunded Back-falled Galls. Information so gained could help explain why the population in currently being devastated. Reports can be made to Rachel on 5274 068 472 or michel.mccleflami/sima.co.ms. By August over 1,300 Black-Hilled Galls had been colour banded in Southland, with preveiles



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most concern. Of the 400 promile galls banded in 1997/8/9 and 2008, only 13 have been re-sighted.

Orange-fronted Parakeets and Yellowheads on threatened again by a super breech must even tin many of the areas they still exist in the South Island. This follows a high density of highly fertile beech seed produced over the summer of 2000/s across the whole island. Serious rat control therefore vosung into place at four Operation Ark sites in the South Branch of the Harunai River, the Hawdow/Poulsei Valleys (both Canterbury), the Dart/Caples Valleys near Queenstown and in The Catlins (south Otagri). Control using bait stations was being tried, but avail broadcast of 2000 crenal baits was necessary in spring in some of the areas, as the former two largely unsuccessful in achieving knock-down of tat numbers there.

A new generation of **Orange-fronted Parakeets** from founder caption-brending programme birds approach to have established successfully on Chalky Island. Un-banded birds have been noted attending a rest hole and the specim has spread over the entire island. It is good news for the species that is struggling for suminal in its remaining tirty targe in the South bland. Individuals may be transionated to Maud Island in the future to hopefully found a second population on a predator free island.

North Island Rabins have wasted to time starting a new population on Matia/Somes Island. Two chicks batched on the island on September 20th, just five months after 21 birds were relocated there from Kapiti Island. Five other north were discovered by DoC staff monitoring the birds. DoC Poreke Area Manager Role Stores said the successful hereding was an indication of the ficuriahing state of the island's native vegetation and circlit for this should go to the volunteers who have spent counties hours planting tors over the part 25 years.

Stitchbieds orburned to the Acakland mainland in fate February with the release of birds from Taritet Matangi into the Ack in the Park, an area of 1,000 ha of mature lorest in the Waitakere Ranges. It is the first reintroduction to an area of the mainland not protected by a predator-proof lonor and it is hoped the interesive use of predator traps and poison built stations in the area will allow the species to thrive there as they did over 125 years ago.

Saddlebacks have been re-introduced to the Wangamai area tollowing the successful pronouncement of predator-free status of Bushy Park reserve, protected by a 3.8 km long predator-proof brien. Forty bushs were transferred from Mokoia Island in Lake Rotona in May and build in aniaries prior to release. The reserve is also being used as a critche for North Island Brown Kowi.

SHORT REPORTS

A Vellaw-mosed Mollymarck was noted north of Adderman Islands off Whittanga on 25/7. A Great Shearwater circled the Benceleari 400 nm from East Cape on 30/9 with others off Pitt Island 31/12 and off the Western Bard of the Chathams on 25/1. A Soft-plansaged Peterl was reported from a craise ship in heavy seas several hours out of Hiellington heading worth down the east coast in safty January. From November to at least late Edmary a Brown Booley was in the D'Urville Island area, coesting on the troy Staart Island. Moulting pergains technicel a Snares Crested and a probably Erect-crested at Cape Saunders (Orago) in early February, with another Erect-crested on Kalanara Perinsula at the same time and another off Wellem Rock (Orago Harbour) CM(2). A Royal Pengato was reported from reat Cape Paliser on 19-202.

A possible Darter was seen from Falls Road, Whangamatino on 2h/2, Little Egrets were reported from Besley Wetland. (Ouristchareli) in late June, and one was at the regular site of Maddy Creek near Clive on 167. In early October another Little Egret was reported from Papakowhai, and the one mut Clive was still present at the same time. Another of the species was at Monikazaka Priori, Pasatahama Inlet, Porinaa on 3/13, and this or maybe another individual was a short way up the coast at the Walkamae Estuary on 22/11 and early Jamany-February. An **Intermediate Egret** was seen at Watatama Wetland Reserve in Remaina, Auduland Bornwardy November Single Glossy Blore were reported from the Walana Lagoorn (was Benheten) and the Besley/Tawie Wetlands (Christchards) internationaly most of the winter tenarring early March3, with the Walana individual present throughout.

An amazing five Plasmed Whistling Ducks were on a private pondmear Wood-tile from mid-Tehmary to early March at least. Also somewhat out-of-sange, a Cape Barren Goose was killed near Sworth-utor NW of Kaitaia late June or early July. One of the instances of the summer was an influx of Chestnat-breasted Shelducks with up to five at Hooper's Lagron (Otago Peninsuka), three at the relatively nearby Kaikonai Estuary, new at Ahurin Lagron (Napier), two on Enderby Island (Auckland Islands). single fock at Gevenpark Sands (Lake Ellevinenci). The less-than-subdivious, but easily vieweed Hokitika Sewage Fords held at Australian Wood Duck in late January and early February. Stukes Ford their Watesrup held a pair of Chestant Teal on 21/1. A female New Zealand Scarp with a pale went at Hamarana Springs, Rotorna on 17% illustrates that this is not a safe single character to use to identify vaguant Hardheads.

The accordingly cramipresent Walhopst Valley (near Bierdseim) Black. Kite was seen interestitiently throughout: A Nankeen Kesteel or two have been present in the Far North since April, with one mar Kaitata Airport in July and August.

A By-over Crasse species was seen over Moetapa Bay (Marborough Sounds) on 43%. A highly obliging Marsh Crake paraded ansard in the open at Taxis Wetland in Christoliusch between late September and mid-October allowing may binders to gain unusually good views of this invetenate skulker. A possible Dasky Moerhen may have been in the Gray/killey (West Coard) in early December.

What imay have been a **pratincele** was seen briefly at Lake Grassmuss on 31/L Austraa Boy (Southland) hold a **Large Sand Dotterel** on the wienter wader count on 10%, with two at Kataka in December, one at the Manawata Estuary on 2071 and one at Minarda (EV2). For completeness of the species pair a **Mongolian Dotterel** was also at Assaraa (M1 and 4/3) and Kataka 17-79/L Pour **Shere Florers** from a total of 15 brids transferred to Centre Island in Foreaux Strait earlier this year made it across to the mainland in early September, with these together at Wakapato Boach near Colac Bay, Gale-Force winds may have played a part in their movement. At least one was still present in February Another or one from the same group was at the Rakata River Mouth (Centerbury) on N1.

What may have been the long-staving Hamilton Japanese Snipe paying a return visit was glimpsed on Forest Lake in October, and another probable was at Lake Waiturapa (2012) and a definite at Whangamarino from mid-January: A Great Knot was at Clifton Beach, Whitford on 29%. The Manawata Estaaty also hosted one of this species on 8/10-15/10 and probably 14/1. Asvenue has held a wintering Sanderling on the winter court of 10th, and this site and the neighboaring Invercesgill Tetuary held at least four different Sanderlings in early November. Four were also present in Assarua Bay on \$7. Two that were probably this species seen on Farewell Spit on 16/2. The long-staying Dunlin was still at Kauka (Manukau Harbour) on 11.9, but could not be located later in the winter: A. Baird's Sandpiper was reported from Georgrath Sands (Lake Elesiment) in early January, but could not be relocated. Please he on the lookout for colour-bunded Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. The birds were banded in Alaska and have a blue band above a green flag on the tibla lupper legt and a coloar band on the tamas. A Raff was among a good selection of other waders from early December into Jamaary.

Single Black-tailed Godwits have bequented the Mitunda area and the Ashlay Estuary (Canterbury) probably throughout the period, though the latter bird almost certainly spent some of the summer at the nearby Arm-Heathcote Estuary Hudsenian Godwits were present at the Manawata Estuary on 200, Kataka (Manakasi Harbour) in mili-August. Miranda in November/December, Part Waikato (11/12) and Greenpark Sands, Loke EDesenere (January/February). Two Siberian Tattlers were present at Karaka at the same time as the Hudsonian Godwit; with one into September at least. The long-staying Aburiti (Napier) Siberian Tatiler was still present on 279. Others were present in Assarua Bay on 1/11 and Miranda on 2011 and 5/1 A Wandering Tattler was at Kanaka on 10/9 and \$12, with another on Kalkours Peninsula on 3/11 and 38/2. A tabler not identified to species was at Pourerere Brach, north of Porasigahau Estuary (Hatekan Bay) on 10/11. A Generashank was at the Kataka roost on and off up to 2019. Generopark Sarshi, Lake Elestnesse had a Marsh Sandpiper on 6-5% with one also at the more regular sites of Miranda in November and Little Halts Issid-December), increasing to two later that month, Big Sand Island, Tapota (Kaipara Harbour) produced two Terek. Sandpipers on 157, with one still present mid-August. That regular site for the species, Maursla, held another Terek Sandpiper on 2011-5/1. another was at Kasaka in December and yet another at Little Walls (2011). Farewell Spit also produced one on 16/2. Two Red-necked Phalaropes graced Lake Grassmere (Marlhorough) throughout, with one bird, obviously with a faulty internal dock, gaining stunning breeding planage over the Austral summer.

A Long-tailed Shua was seen on a Far North pelagic from Houburn to north of North Cape on 1/10. A full-breading-plantaged Whitewinged Black Tern was on the Waimakariti River (Canterbury) several follometres above the Epite confluence on 16/11, with others reported on the Rangitata River near Arandel and up the Waima River in Madhonough. Two Arctic Terms were in a flock of fooding White-fronted Terms just of Huff (Auckland), Kariotabi Beach neur Waisku (2011) and at the Rakaia-River Mouth (Casterbury) in mid-Decomber. A White Term was reported at the Ohiwa Harbour entrance on 26/11.

A Crested Pigeon was reported from Rotowaro (near Hantly) on about W11. This would represent the first record of the species for New Zealand if accepted and not deemed to be an escape. An intertife male Kakapo was displayed in a special enclosure on Ubu bland-loft Stewart bland) from August 12th to at hear October 20th, the first time this species has been on view to the general public in a natural environment. The Whataroa River Mouth (Mistland) held an **Oviental Cackoo** in mid-December: A **Long-tailed Cackoo** was seen in the unusual location of Cable Street outside in Papa in Central Wallington on 30/10. The relatively difficult to reach Motifi fiderid was genered by a **Channel-billed Cackoo** in markly January, but was gone before a heard of resitchers could get there and then gave them the ran-anisand of nearby Tausanga, only bring seen by non-birder residents during its stay. Platmoon Bay (Stewart Island) township hosted a **White-throated Needletail** on 9 and 10/11.

The lighthouse area of Territri Matarugi attracted a Fairy Martin on 27 and 28/10. Tacalypts in the northern part of Kapiti Island held a Blackfaced Cuckoe-Shrike from 11/11 to at least 20/11. A freshly dead male Masked Woodswallow was picked up on a bash track in Otatara (near Inversagell) on 16 October.

Source: What's Lip DoC small unselector. Event and Bird a-Neuro, BridLije Neuro Alert, Birding NZ smarl group, Colin O'Donnell, Don Golder.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND TARANAKI REGION

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in New Plymouth during Queen's Birthday weekend 2007.

> Thursday 31st May Registration

Friday 1st June Council and RR's meetings

> Saturday 2nd June Tield trips Dinner and AGM

Sunday 3rd June Scientific Day Conference diamer

Monday 4th June Morning field trip

Please refer to your registration form sent with the last issue of Southern Bird for more details

> Conference address: OSN2 AGM, PO Bos 315 New Plymouth.

CORRECTIONS

The phone number for Roger Sharp (Membership Secretary) was printed incorrectly in the last issue of Southern Sird and is (09) 413 8580.

Field trip less appeared twice in the OSNZ conference registration form sent out with the December publications. Please disregard the field trip cost in Section A and use Section C to complete the field trip details.



BOUNCING BACK

[OANNA SIM and JASON ROXBURGH (for the Pateke Recovery Group)

> PHOTOS TAKEN BY JOANNA SIM ON GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

I family of lister Teal in the Akspons Stream antilde the DoC office in Post Fittrey.

hown lea

DISTRIBUTION & POPULATION

The Brown Teal (Anas chloritu) or Pateke is endemic to New Zealand and was formerly widespread and common in lowfand habitats throughout New Zealand. However it is now nationally endangered. Remnant populations occur primarily in eastern Northland (Minnishangata), on Great Barrier Island (Aotea), and in the Northern Coromandel (Moehau). The Moehau population has been supplemented by four years of captive-bred hird releases. Other populations occur on several predator-love islands and managed mainland sites.

Historic population decreases may have been related to combinations of habitat loss, overhunting, disease and introduced predators. The current agents of decline have been identified primarily as introduced mammalian predators. Predator control on Actea and Minniwhangata since 2000 appears to have arrested the overall decline. Meanwhile, releases of captive-bred hirds into a predator-controlled area have been carried out at Moehau, with the objective of establishing and securing a third large population.

HABITS

Brown Teal are unique little cryptic creatures that are primarily nocturnal, with some interesting quirks. They are omnivorous, monogamous teal that fit into a unique ecological niche – that of wetland rodent and have evolved in the absence of native rat or mice species. They are quite able fliens but seemingly often relactant to thi appearing to prefer to walk. Scene have been observed thying to feeding areas from their daytime roosts, while others waddle.

Prok breeding tends to occur in the winter months, usually from May through to September. Pairs are estremely territorial but, if food is available, they can breed year mund. Nexts are typically hidden well within thick vegetation, such as Kikuya, and Jancos, Carer and Cyperso species. Incubation is about 28 days and is done soliely by the hen. She leaves the next briefly a couple of times in the night for a quick feed. Brood rearing appears to be a joint esercise involving both parents.

Although they are usually more active and leed at sight, they can often be seen during the day, especially in the summer months. Many that not all) are social in the summer, and congregate at flock sites where they can be seen sunbathing, squabbling and dabbling together. It is thought that flocking is fundamental for justeniles, both socially and physically, after they have been kicked out of the natal territory by their parents.

GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

Actea supports the largest semaining stronghold of Brown Teal in the world. Whangapoua is in the northern part of the island and at least half the island's population in found





Above: Three baby teal were rescaed as stage two ducklings after the mother was killed by a reaming dog. They were successfully raised by Karen Vialker (Bird Rescue) then donated to the captive breeding program at Reawat.

Below: Caught in a stramp on private property, this older male is most likely a territorial bird not attending a flock site.



wetlands, with freshwater streams and tidal creeks draining into a large saltmarsh and estuary.

Okiwi station situated within the Whangapous basin is managed by DoC and also leased as a running farm with matual benefits to cattle and teal. For example, wetlands are specifically grazed and carefully managed to keep weed species down and to maintain open sort seeps for teal foraging.

DoC undertakes intensive monitoring mainly in the form of monthly and annual flock counts, and telemetry. This latter technique allows data on survival, mortality, breeding and dispersal to be collected and measured. Any dead binds that are found are always scrutinised carefully at the scene of death then sent off for autopsies to vets at Massey University.

Great Barrier bosts a different suite of predators to that of materiard as the island is free of mastelid species such as Stoats, Visusels and Ferrets. Norway Rats and Hedgebogs are also absent, but Ship Rats, Kiore, cats, dogs, Pokeko and Harriers are present. Cat and Pakeko control are presently the main focus for predator control, while Harrier and rat numbers are monitored. Historically dogs have been a problem as tral are almost irresistible to excitable canines. However, dog advocacy and dog esercise areas have helped greatly reduce the threat dogs pose.

Unfortunately mad kill is a major problem on Great Barrier Island. Presently the Department is trialling a fence that will direct teal into culverts under the road.

MOEHAU

In 2002, the Pateka Recovery Group decided on Port Charles as the site to establish the third large Brown Teal population. The area was already receiving intensive mastelid control to protect North Island Brown Kowi, and contained approximately 50 wild Brown Teal. Since 2003, five releases of 280 radio transmittered Brown Teal, along with rat, Pukeko, and Mallard control, have seen a population establish, and start spreading to suitable habitat to the south.

Whicle kills have become an issue as the population has increased, but the installation of hazing fences in key sites, and a lot of advocacy from the landowners to the community, has reduced this significantly.

All the land containing the Brown Teal habitat is privately owned, and the Currently the predator control and telemetry monitoring are done by landowners, on contract to DoC.

The project is now entering a phase of habitat restoration, with funding from Ducks Unlimited and Barrock Station Wines. The landowners have entered into this whole-heartedly.

FUTURE DIRECTION

An audit of the Pateke Recovery Programme in 2000 provided the basis for refocusing and improving management direction for Brown Teal. Since 2000 targeted management and monitoring programmes have been implemented at key sites on Aotea and in eastern Northland. Meanwhile, releases of captive-mared birds began on Coromandel Peninsula in 2005.

The short-term goal of the Pateke Recovery Programme is for Brown Teal to be secure in the seld with a combined protected population of more than 2,000 birds at managed sites by 2010. The long-term goal is for Brown Teal to be no longer threatened and for the species to be a national icon of wetland and forest ecosystem health and sustainable farming practises.

THE PREFERRED OPTION FOR RECOVERY

The preferred option for recovery of Brown Teal is to manage large populations in NorthlandandAotea, and reintroduceBrown Teal to former sites (initially Coronandel), all supported by the maximum practicable threat and predator control.

GOALS FOR THE FERIOD OF THE RECOVERY PLAN

- Brown Teal are secure in the wild with a combined protected population of more than 2,000 birds at 5 – 10 managed sites by 2010.
- Community-based protection of weld linearn Teal is supported and contributing to goal 1 throughout the life of this plan, and beyond.
- Proven successful predator management prescriptions for Brown Teal are readily available to conservation managers (DoC and community) on mainland New Zealand by June 2008 and on Actea by June 2008.
- Proven successful Brown Teal neintroduction prescriptions are readily available to conservation managers by 2010.



This flock is on private property (Mabey's Farm) in north Okioci, and over summer con number more than 100 individuals. They seem quite adjusted to the comings & goings of sheep, cattle & working dogs.



Over the dry nummer months some heal in Okiari feed at this estuary at low Tide (regardless of time of day). Interestingly enough, I am confident these birds fly in from Burrill's Drain, a couple kilometres north of the estuary, whereas there are other birds roosting closer that don't appear to feed on the estuary flats.



The flooded pasture here either side of the Assana Stream is typical good feeding habitat for teal. The photo was taken while paddling down the stream as part of the annual flock counts.



Burrill's Drain has the distinction of being the largest flock site on Great Barrier Island with approximately 250 birds currently using it. It is a modified deep drain, dag out years ago by farmers trying to farm the streampy/marshy environment.



AUCKLAND ISLANDS 1942 - 1943 Edited by MARY MCEWEN

Charles Firming (1916 – 1987) was one of New Zealand's preeminent Twentieth Century scientists. A geologist, palaeontologist and ornithologist, he later added biogeography, entomology, and the history of science to his specialist subjects. Charles had dreams of visiting the subartarctic islands ever since, as a boy, he mad of the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury's 1907 expedition. He therefore accepted with alacrity Falla's suggestion that he become a coast-watcher there during the highly secret wartare Cape Expedition. In 1942 he was sent to the Auckland Islands for a year, arriving there on 5th March 1942.

He kept a detailed and highly illustrated diary, recording the scientific work he undertook while not on duty in the lookout at No. 2 Station in Carnley Harbour.

The underlying theme of the diary is a description of the day to day lives of the coast watchers, living in an extreme environment well to the south of New Zealand and serviced infrequently by small boats braving the turbulent southern coran. Radio contact with mainland New Zealand was limited and the threat of energy imasion must have played on their minds.

Interspensed in the diary are personal events, recipes and cooking information, and details of books read during the long winter nights. As such it is part of the history of New Zealand, But overlaying this history is an insight into the workings of the mind of a man who became a great scientist - the continual observation and recording of information, the gradual piecing together and revision of geological and related evidence to understand how these islands had evolved over millions of years. The same meticulous observation and recording is applied to changes in the weather, vegetation and marine life and particularly to birds.

Collection and preparation of bird and other animal specimens occupied much of Charles's time as did noting errors on the existing Auckland Island map, and mapping the geology of the Carnley Harbour area. All this was done while he was only in his mid-twenties.

A couple of estracts from the diary indicate the breadth of content:

THURSDAY, 5 MARCH

(the day they reached Auckland Island in the Tagait.)

Blue sky and low cloud, occasional sain. Wind still strong and a point or two to S. Sea moderate but increasing and becoming broken by 9.30 when believed to be approaching the tide rip area north of No. 1. Sights taken at 8 and 9 a.m. give us as dead on the course, a little to E of the group. One of the keen-eyed Polynesians claimed signs of land from the shrouds at 9. The view of the plurging boat from the shrouds is superh, tempting photography. Quite a lot of the sun seen.

Birdy: The usual 4-5 D emilans, all ad. A few D cauta livibite or pale grey headed) and 1 Th. melasophrys at 8. Macronectes, 4-5. Pt. Insoni good numbers frequently present. Peloanoides 1, throng South. Prioris numerous. Puffinia assimilis 1 - a fair view but it can't be much else. Projetta odd ones and pairs. P griseus fair numbers making N. (mainly). Strange no Majapuess nor Deption.

Queer to malise when passing the 49th Parallel yesterday that all Canada lies nearer the Pole than that. The seas here, though stormy, are no worse actually than I have been in in N Auckland, nor off Chatham Is, and Captain Matheson says the Trades are as strong as this Westerly. But the birds show the Subarnaectic Zone. Most of the party still keeping below. The table, (and my bursk) blacked several agas than a through unfortunitie lapses in opening the Reveal of Subarnaectic Bakeli. A team sepali reduced visibility at 10.15. After this squad, which was a strong one, causing hering over to 45° at times, and whipping up the spray badly, when the weather cleared again, the Vikings of the Sureise at the foremast sighted land, but 15 minutes before. I saw the first sign, a Catheractic from the starboard bow which paused in our wake. A possible Physhetria landed in the wake but was lost in sunlit was before I got a good look.

Soon the land was visible from the deck - low-lying Enderby, Phal. coleresci appeared in twos and ones, circling the ship, D. exalam, D. casta, Macronectes, Pt. lesson, P. griseus (increasing), Frights (several), Prleomoides (2), Prioris (decreasing). A good view of assimilies was followed by flocks of them slightly in the lee (N.E.) of Pt Ross - flocks of 30–40. Griseus increasing notably, Odd shapp.

At 12 we are opporciating the lea, and high land has been visible behind Enderby for half an hour. A root is being put in the mainsail. By 1.30 the boat was in the lee of Enderby and put about to run towards the entrance. With Green Id to port, theseande of Priors, narrow dark tailband, were assembled, and P grises in somewhat lesser numbers, which scon increased to myriads just cutside the entrance. A Gathanacta, odd Sterna, a Daption their since New Zealand) and decreasing priors. Rafts of Phalacrocentra, Ewing bland in attractively vegetated. Enderby low and wirsdowept scrab, the columnar basalts forming less cliffs. All cliffs topped with maty red?rata or just salt-skiled tops?

First few bours' impressions are two varied to adequately sumup. Low headlands and splashes of rata flower, lighting effects on the dappied harbour, kelp-tringed islands, Dracephplice scrubtoesock, and shags, mostling perigrans, bellbird song and pipils, and most of all, a pair of Sterns rutate feeding a flying youngster. The party of three newed out to meet the boat, looking very fit on it. While some of an went ashore to see the camp, I waited and went with the sheep to Ocean Island. Eath of slags on the kelp-fraged shores. Megadytte, standing among their resulted feathers, fraged the shore. Some two dozen in all and in, I think, all stages of the process. A single Endprise constants was in the middle of the process in tooks and crevices above high take. Still had projecting tafts, smaller than any pacinelipsickas and schere I've seen.

As evening came on (c. 4-5) shage accumulated on the lowclefts; young present, and of dark necked birds, presumably adult, there were all stages between a white necked type and a collared type such as completions [completil].



A pipefish on the nocks had apparently been spewed up. Of petrel burrows them were quite a lot of P grissin, skua stripped skeletoms of which were stresses along the shore, while 'satholes' - most and vacant - seemed likely to be fritomeales, for a skull (with bowed outline) was near. Red-billed and a two Black-backed Gulls (adult and juvenile of both) were about, and the former in close attendance on the shage. A single skua came ashore and sat majortically tame near where the sheep were landed.

Offshore several S. striata had been seen. Now, close inshore, I was thrilled with a pair of S. vittata in glorious full feather, dipping over the calm kelp belt, feeding a very stripy black billed bird which can be told from striata young by its dipping flight and call. Otherwise the two terns are much of a size and at a distance vittata does not immediately assert its distinctness - is not noticeably greyer, for instance. The vittata call is different, 'twirp" twirp'. Nesonetta are believed to occur on Ocean Id, but we saw none. A few have been seen right in at the station, but not regularly. Bellbirds called frequently in the Dracophyllum-covered, goat-smelling scrub of Ocean Id, and pipits, differing superficially in no way from mainland birds except in tameness and lothness to take flight, were common along the shore.

On return to boat, we found two Daption paddling around the stern in calm water. After tea, went ashore to the station. The creek might be a scene from Rangitoto - scrub-covered lava shores, and a narrow creek winding among black boulders. The air tonight is like an Auckland mild autumn evening, sheltered from wind and calm. Bellbirds, tits and tuis are abundant, also Zosterops. Parakeets are frequently seen or heard. Sparrowhawks once, a pair. (This from the party). Mice about the house. A sea lion broached alarmingly alongside the dinghy as we pulled in. Back to the Ship at 11. The night is remarkably silent.

MONDAY, 30 MARCH

As I was cook, I got up at six and produced porridge, bacon and, an unfortunate experiment, haricot bean fritters which, though the beans were soaked all night, and though, the batter was liberally flavoured with tomato sauce, looked much better than they tasted. Coffee - the milk tends to curdle with it. Then I washed up my own dishes as a precedent, and cleaned the kitchen. I have the idea that if the cook for the day washes his own dishes, the process will be hastened, he will have water available, and it will mean a fairer sharing of the task than now when we do it haphazardly. As result of an early rise, I was finished and ready to take a watch at 9, and actually was away, after packing gear, for our day off at 9.10.

We (George and I) took my pack, containing my two cameras, tripod, binoculars, Parka jackets, pullovers, tin of herrings, two large (buttered) and a small packet of small biscuits, tin condensed milk, 2 packets chocolate, two apples, two oranges, thermos of tea. I carried my compass, Brunton, barometer, knife, lens, hammer. George took his camera and the revolver. We took turns on the pack.

The morning was fine - cloud at 1500', but broken, and a delightful almost calm sea with blue colour. We made for the scar up the first rise, and missed it. We hailed the lookout when we broke from cover at nearly 300', and found ourselves above and south of the scar. However, we made quite good time. This first slope, rising at about 300 to 500 odd feet, is covered by irregularly disposed rata bush. At times this is typical with, I think, a number of Penguin tracks. We found a moulted Megadyptes, perhaps 150' up. Alternating with the rata are strips of ?Coprosma or Muehlenbeckia, probably Suttonia divaricata? - a twiggy 4-5 ft shrub, lines of fern 4' tall, and frequent soggy streams, usually more so from pig activity; sedges cover strips. Pig rooting and wallows everywhere. At the top of the ridge, lines of rata and tussock gradually thin out but a fair spell intervenes before one is out of the scrub-dotted area. Then one reaches the first rock outcrop, c. 700? ft where we noted magnetic disturbance which was not so noticeable on peat 30' away. From here, a long gentle rise of rather poor going leads up to the second outcrop, forming the skyline ridge from camp. This point, 1,110 ft, was crowned with a 5 ft bough of Nothopanax simplex as a trig station which we had cut, with some difficulty, from the nearest bush. Here we took a panorama from Heads (E) to the head of North Arm, where the low gap allowed a lot of sea to be seen. There are 15 or so cirques on Adams visible from up here. Must have been some sight when each contained a hanging glacier. We could just see Masked Id behind Flagstaff, but the tops of Adams, Tower of Babel, etc. were covered by cloud at 1500 or so

feet. Ashley above us intermittently was covered with misty cloud. At this point we had some chocolate and apple, and got chilly before we put on pullovers. The wind was, surprisingly, East of North. Pig rootings everywhere but no pigs seen.

Not far beyond here we walked on to the D. exulans [Wandering Albatross] nest. Odd Dracophyllum here sheltered it from West. The nest is not a new one but, on the other hand, not very old. The chick, weighing 1 lb 2-4 oz, is clothed in off-whitish down, ?light grey at base, bill pinkish white. Felt light. Adult: pink bill, pink? eye-lids, eye dark brown; head with forehead patch of brownish, well vermiculated on breast. Did not seem tremendously large and I take it to be female. She preened her breast and was removing feathers frequently (?partial renewal). They were strewn around the nest. She did the usual bill clapping and head waving but was satisfied to get back onto the nest when I took the chick out.

[After this Charles often visited the Wandering Albatross chick and followed its progress for the first year of its life. According to Fleming's obituary by his palaeontologist colleague, the late N. de B. Hornibrook, the chick 'could not have received more care and attention if it had been a Plunket baby'.]

Soon after this no more shrubs occurred. Since the first outcrop, areas of open bog and short sedge had been abundant - some bare mud, and clear pools reflecting blue and cool and refreshing. Now the tussock was more open on the ridge a broad ridge, that we followed up. The going was still pretty poor - broken surface. Rosette plants began to appear. ?Plantago aucklandica? - Pleurophyllum hookeri - Also a Hebe-like woody herb, with white crenulated margins. - A very spinous Aciphylla - Colobanthus, a Ranunculus, a very small Celmisia, Helichrysum, Gentians, Thelemitra. The Pleurophyllum and other rosettes increased as we climbed.

At our lunch point a fairly big outcrop occurs, and one looks down the Waterfall Inlet divide. By this time mist was pouring over Mt Ashley which appeared only 400 yds away - a fragmented-rock strewn slope which proved to be 16 chains to the summit. However, after lunch it was clear enough to attempt it, but I surveyed as we went. After two sights, at 1,600', the first Pleurophyllum speciosum was encountered - a breathtaking plant when first seen.

Very rocky here, and I note in the field book Bulbinella (which came in 400' earlier) which are browning fast. A small dense coriaceous rosette - very compact - to which I can't put a name, and the two rosette plants, the silvery one dying off – few small Celmisia, Colobanthus - and other small cushion plants, a small sedge, much moss. I had delayed until George was well out of sight up the slope, which was now deep in mist - visibility perhaps 70 feet. So I shouted and guided him to me. We had to survey back to our pack at the lunch point, through the mist. It was not blowing strongly, nor cold, and fortunately it was not really wet till after we got our Parka jackets from the pack. At lower levels visibility was poor and non-existent by fits and starts, and real rain encountered. So, using the sights taken on the way up I paced and compassed all the way home - only about 2 3/4 miles in all. We missed the open scar on the way down as we had on the ascent and had an uncomfortable time reaching the beach through the scrub - we got home at about 4.45 p.m.

Birds: Pipits only, on the tops. Tits (rare), and abundant Bellbirds up to the tree line. No sign of burrows. There had been a Falco at the camp this morning.

And now to an appreciated wash and bed.

Copies of the diary (256pp; ISBN 0-473-11384-8) are available from McEwen Associates Ltd., 12 Tisdall Street, Karori, Wellington, New Zealand. Email: mary.mcewen@xtra.co.nz Tel:+64 4 476 6163. Fax+ +64 4 476 6264

Price NZ\$40.00 plus NZ\$6.00 per copy posted in New Zealand. (Please enquire for overseas rates.)





Veainiigi Vinninnia



We are generally short of the rarer forest blads in the Far North has hope that once predator control in Paketi Forest has advanced further, we may have some re-introductions. In the meantime on November 3rd members went for a two-day search in the forest for what is thought to be the last remaining Kokako-there, the others having been removed to a safe sametsary. We were unlacky, although we could not actually confirm that it was not there as it was guite breezy on the second morning.

The November scadar count took place at the annual Far North sites. At Walker Island it has become difficult to get close enough to the birds to get an accurate count. We estimated about 3,000 Bar-tailed Godwits, 600+ Lesser Knots and 85 Tamstones. It seems that when the tide is highest all the birds leave for East Beach where they are often distarbed by vehicles. Two days later, at Patersgaringa and Kokota Sandopit, the weather was just easing after a stormy couple of days. We had few people and little time on the Sandopit so see did too find the main wader flock, however there were 27 Red-necked Stims, there Sharp-tailed Sandopiers and 32 Tarrotones.

Four Far North members went on a Pterodroma Itilagies New Year triptorhe-Chatharna, Bounties and Antipodes Islands where they enjoyed manyspeciality birds including Shore Plever, Black Robin and most of the other Chatharn endemics; impressive colories of Erect-created and Rockhopper Pengumu. Bourty-bland Shag: Porbes and Antipodes Patakorts; and of ocurse a sust array of albatrasses, petrels and shearwaters. Mammals were well represented with Common and Hourglass Dolphays, Southern Bight Whale, Orcas and Scuthern Elephant Seals.

In late January we had a return visit by the wader mist-metting group. We combined this with a wader count, which was highly successful and c 30,200 waders of 18 species were counted over five days. Furticularly noteworthy were nearly 1,000 Tarmstones, 4,775 Bar tailed Godwits, 105 Whimbrels and 3,300 Lesser, Knots. Unusual species included both Gory-tailed and Wandering Tattlers, a Carlew Sandpiper and three Gory Plovers. With the knowledge acquired in September, the mist-nets caught 62 birds (10 Bar-tailed Godwits, 38 Lesser Knots, 13 Tarmstones and our first ever Witerime(). It became evident that there is a shortage of qualified and experienced hird-handlers and banders we anyone thinking about becoming more involved in these projects should be encentaged.

DETLEF DAVIES.

Waikato

Our end of year/Christmas Otorobanga Kiwi House trip turned out to be an escellent night, starting with a stroll around the grounds and followed by a picnic dimmer After dimmer Eric Fos, curator at the Kiwi House, showed as some of the 'behind the scenes' areas where the kiwi and toatata breeding units are; and yos, the kiwi chicks are very cute! We thank Eric for showing us around it his own time.

It has been a fairly quiet summer, but now with monthly meetings starting up things are sure to start horting up again. Dick Vetch was our first speaker for the year and is talk on Lesser Kriots was well received. The associated fieldtrip to the Mangers sewage ponds to look for migrants was also enjoyed by those that attended. This trip was run in conjunction with the Azakland OSNZ group, and we hope that further joint ventures occur. We thank Susi Phillips for leading the outing.

Several recent sightings from members around the segion include: New Zealand Dabchicks- one at Tautenti Stavam (Stella and John Rowe, 11/2007) and a pair plus one javersle at Howarth Memorial Weiland (Ken-Wedgwood, 62/07); a Morepork which was heard calling in Hillcrest by Bev Woolley (12/2007); a black Fastail seen by Stella and John at Pukersokersoker (25/1/07); a Caspian Tern flying over Lake Hakaros (Hugh Clifford, 3/2007); and an impressive 52 Black Shags at Hamilton Lake (Barry Friend, 2007).

DAI MORGAN

Eas or Pientis

The big news this Summer has been the Channel-billed Cackeo, first noted on Motiti Island in early January. A hastily amenibied sortie of the oream of the twitching crop left for Motiti soon after, to no avail. The local moda picked up on the news and featated it as its 'page 2 bird', providing, Regional Rep Tim Barnard with good feedback, and locals on the ground with tantalising chases through the Tauranga shrubbery once it hit the



ony boarsary, nowever it was plan to see that it wasn't throng saturation suitable, and cleared off fairly promptly.

A White Heron has been frequenting a smaller estuary within Tauranga Harbout, just north of To Pana. Peter Callow has some fine images as a result. I just have had the opportunity of successfully releasing a Hattering Shearwater that had landed on the Oceanside Apartments (nicknamed Twin Towers) and had sperit a few nights on someone's balloon. The Hird was last seen flying strongly towards Karowa and the Alderners's.

The Grey-faced Petrol Project continues to provide statistics, though this time it was positive news. Thirty chicks were banded this season, 28 more than last. With only one recorded death, the pest control has been quite successful. Ten's son also reported a dead Grey-faced Petrol from an Eastern Rotonas road in mid January.

Maketu and Little Walls continue to provide quality birding – within three kilometres of each other this is good birding – and the records that Ten provides are invaluable. So far he has managed to spot two Marsh Sandpipers, one each of a Terek and Pertonal Sandpiper, Little Teres, and a Common Tern.

John Groom reports from Ohiwa Estuary. This January his highlights included around 2,000 Bar-tailed Godwits, with two or three orange flags. 150 Pied Oystercatchers, 10 New Zealand Duttenils (with one chick), and five Black-billed Goll chicks. He notes that Lesser Knots don't tend to visit the harbout John's main work is with the New Zealand Dotterel, and in January be counted seven chicks from six pairs at Heriepara, north of Matata. One pair had two chicks 3-4 weeks old after taising one out of first laying.

Brian Chudlergh's solio eshibition of bird photographs opened on the 14th Fobruary at the ROW Gallery in Tauranga. Entitled Wings over Water, it is his first in over 25 years. His photographs have also recently been published in a senter of booklets covering the birds of Tauranga Harbour, and he has been the subject of a feature article in the Katikari Advortiser this summer. Several OSNZ members attended the opening of his exhibition. Bean's determination to be there was admitable in the face of his serious illness. I revisited the gallery the day after the exhibition's opening and observed that 90% of the exhibits were sold; a fitting tribute in recognition to the fine body of work Brian has achieved in a lifetime of photography.

PAUL CUMING

Tarasaki

Members attending the November meeting were informed that planning, for theAGM was under control, with more speakers lined up for the Scientific day. Those present also heard reports of hearing. Shining Cuckoos in the region and David Medway reported seeing a Long-tailed Cuckoo at the Strathend Meantain Hease on 1st November, David gave us an account of his activities with the Taranaki Caving Cub during the 1960's when he was a lot pounger and more agile. Some time was spent annual the Assakino area in North Taranaki recovering sub-fossil bones of many rewestinct birds. A thoroughly fascinating topic and one we will hopefully return to as those in attendance had many related insers to docum.

Taranaki's wet and windy apring precladed any opportunity for a field trip. Beach patrolling has turned up a few birds but rothing out of the ordinary. During members reports David Medsusy gave two unusual accounts from non-members, nine Cattle Egrets in a farm paddock to the west of New Plymouth perhaps prevented from returning home by the persistent strong westerly winds, and also 14 Royal Spoortbills seen briefly at Ngamotu Beach, a heavily-used beach in central New Plymouth.

A Whimbeel was around Waiorgana until at least 19th November and five Caspian Terris took up tempotary residence there. The November field trip took place in December on a fine but windy day with four of us heading around the coast to a couple of South Taranaki braches where a variety of sea and shore birds were seen including six Variable Oystercatchers with a heast one chick and a small flock of seven New Zualand Dotterels. It was then inland to the Blue Rata Reserve to see a variety of bush birds. Beach patrols during December January produced eight Blue Penguins, one giant petrol and a White headed Petrol.

As usual there wan no indoor meeting in January but in what may become a new tradition we gathered at Walongatu in the early afternoon for a stroll to the beach and then back to the up the barbecue to enjoy a levely meal and interesting conversation followed by some const spotting later in the evening. A great time was had by all.

The first indoor meeting of the year was in February and amongst members reports some some records of late breeding, including a pair of Sciap with scauplings on Pakekura Park's Brocklands Lake. There were also five bandied-plan Pamilise Sheldocks moulting at Barrett Lagoon. Bill Messenger told us of a young Harrier going through a hay mover and coming out unbarred – physically anyway – and also photos of two downy chicks on a nest.

A round of congratulations were held first for Barry Harfley on being awarded a QSM in the New Yory' honours. It's amazing what you can puts up for fortening around braches and in patches of bash. The other was for Core and Katherine Boovers on the production of a badding orrathologist.

The night's topic was a round table discussion on that age old subject of displicating plants and mos. Was the fact that some 40% of NZ plants are divarigating due to moa browsing or other factors such as climate and soil. Our conclusion was various factors over many millennia. The outing around flarrett Lagson produced a good hird list including a Shiring Cachoo calling and reactions of Spar-wing Plover and Paketo to a stoat out in broad daylight.

Wainanapa

PETER FRYER

The Big Bird Cup-quie evening was again keerely contested between branch members from the rooth and the south of the region, with the north, once again, wresting it from the south. What began as a light-hearted-one-off event, there years ago, has become an annual lively exchange of binding, knowledge, combined with much fum and convitality.

In September Bryce and Rosemary Vanderlee presented an illustrated talk on Black-Billed Maggies and Great Horned Owls, in the Rocky Mountains of the USA, based on studies they had done at the National Wildlife Centre, near Denves Colin Miskelly enthulled us in October with The Ghost of Sie John Harsham, unravelling the mysteries of the Extinct Stawart Island Snipe'. In November Trevor Thomson brought us up to date with a talk on the Kakapo on Codfish Island/Whersan Hou.

The September field trip was a visit to Hidden Lakes, where Taiscavorted and chorfied in a nectar fest in the magnificent stands of Kowhai trees in full bloom. An earthquake in 1855 triggered a landslide which temporarily blocked the Baamahanga River, forming these lakes, at Kopuaranga, north of Masterion.

As there was a fierce wind on the October field top to the Tauberenkau-Gorge, bird sightings were minimal, but with some lateral thinking, it became a very informative betanising trip. Colm Scadden-identified some delicate orchids, and drew attention to ferms, shrubs, trons, lichens and climbers, giving their scientific names. Our November field trip was to 'Tidsloidits', where Glenys Hansen has created a very bird triendly wetland, in corparction with her bed-andbouldant business.

In September some of our members liaised with the Greytown School, as part of the school's environmental studies. The pupils were particularly interested in the New Zealand Pigeons in Greytown, and were made aware of the Kereru Discovery Project. As a result of our contact with the school, they new receive our monthly update, and our quarterly programme.

The annual end-of-pear pot-lack dirater was held at Miles and Janet Kieg's hume. This was Miles's last gathering as our much-valued RR.

The year 2007 has began with a new challenge. In conjunction with DoC we are sorveying river estuaries in the region, and adjacent beachtroots. Bird counts are done in relation to both high and low tides. The summer count is in progress, and the winter count will be done between April and Jano.

Our February indoor meeting, held at Timick and Janet Dennison's, was the scene of a forum for a lively discussion related to the possible sightings of Black Kites on farm and river land out of Greytown. This was the colonization of two weeks of regular observations, following the local farmer's reported sightings. The farmer is also a glading instructor with the local gliding club based on his property. As a result, his understanding of thermals, updraughts, turbulence, wind speed and clouds, brought an added dimension to his bird observations. He gave of his time and his stardy vehicle for numerous salaris, and he recorded sightings on video and camera.

Interest was heightened when Colin Mokelly reported sighting a Black. Kite on the Lake Ferry Road near the Piblisatia turn-off, on February 6th. This area is only 15 minutes away, in saptor flying time, from our site. We would welcome input into definite identification of our local saptors.

BARBARA LOVATT

Wellieston

At a well-attended end of year meeting in December Lynn Adams (DeC, Wellington Region) spoke about the efforts of her team to achieve the translocation of Short-tailed Bats to Kapiti Island from the Tasana. Forest Park, Lynn explained that there are three species of but in New Zealand, of which the Short-tailed Bat has been present for far longer than the other two, more than 35 million years. The Tasana bat population is localised in the Welotune Valley and mambers only about 300 animals. It is very much smaller numerically than the population in the oriental North Island. The

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colory was probably larger but has been reduced through land churing and is now valuerable to loss altogether through animal predation and the collapse of large old beech trees. Based upon experience with translocation of short tailed bats elsewhere it is known that adults can by long distances so the aim has been to translocate juveniles and to do so using a captive intermediate stage on Kapitt Island. This has emerged as an essential feature of the process.

Translocation efforts over the past two years have been quite successful despite some mortality. Pregnant tensales were captured from the Waiobine Valley population and held in captivity on Kapiti Island until the pups were born and had been weared. The adults were then successfully returned to the Waiobine Valley. The pups were artificially taised in captivity and later released. Fortunately there has been no attempt by the youngstees to leave the island but Linn explained that a serious setback has new led to the programme bring discontinued, at least for noise. Following their selezie on Kapiti Island the young bats have developed lesions on their san that have affected their ability to savigate at right by ethic location. Despite research at the Mansey University School of Veterinary Science the cause of the an lesions is not yet clear. Tryatment with antibiotics is not fully effective. Lynn's talk was well iflustrated and was fascinating to heat.

Our first mosting for 2007 scalad 'Conservation House', the Department of Conservation's new Hoad Office – a height new sense for Weillargton members to recet in. Several members summarised their binding experiences over the summer. Monica Assauthy described her forthcoming PhD studies at Victoria University on New Zealand Pigeons in Weilington, and at the same time extended an institution for assistance from Weilington members in locating resting pairs of the pigeons that she can observe. Cheis Robertson brought as up-to-date with the rapid progress non-bring made in assembling the new mational brief distribution atlas. Chris showed as several examples of the new species maps that are being more detail, such as seasonal distribution and texported using the latest computerised mapping technology that show much more detail, to the 1985 atlas.

Using many photographs Dirvid Corrick summarised occert progress with the manufer of Flattering Shearwaters to Manu Island. David explained the intensive liveding procedure that he and several other members followed for three weeks in January being surrogate mothers' to nearly 300 chicks after their transfer to artificial burrows on the grassy top of the island. This is the third year now when translocations of Plothering Shearwaters have been supported by our members. All chicks have nonfieldged and left Mana Island and we all hope that we will see them back as breeding adults several years from now.

Gondon: Leary presented a fascinating selection of slides about birds on parts of Stewart Island and also in the Galapages Islands where he and Sheelagh visited last year. Highlights of Gordon's shifes were photos of Stewart Island Shage and a wide tinge of birds in the ecologicallyfascinating Galapoges. Ian Armitage showed a collection of photographs of breading White-capped Mollymawks on Auckland Island and Royal Alburnses on Campbell Island and described some aspects of a recent visit to the sub-Antanctic. Ian was able to approach to within about five meters of these regal and magnificent birds and could watch them in good weather conditions for some time. Finally, Ralph Drofesland described some aspects of Tahua/Mayot Island where Iand bird conservation work has been undertaken and he proposed that Wellington members may like to visit the island in spring 2007.

Recent bird observations around Wellington include New Zealand Scarap in the Perscarrow Lakes, several Falcors in the city, in nearby forests and on the Kapiti coast, Revt Herons in Wellington Harbour and at Makana, a Little Egret at Walkanae (seen by several members), a New Zealand Dubchick at Walkanae; a Soft-plantaged Petrel at the Wellington Harbour Heads and a Crimnon Rosella at Karint.

JAN ARMITAGE

Netson/Bolden Bas

Two pairs of New Zealand Falcons with young were observed in early December in Weyerbacuser Golden Downs Forest. Once again forest staff drew our attention to these birds and facilitated access to the sites anisted with maps and aerial photos. We are most grateful to the company for their support.



because of the terrible weather in November. We only managed to get in two counts rather than the three, and the numbers of birds seen and heard were 20% down on last year. This is not due to the trapping programme failing, but the wind and river noise was too loud. Let's hope we get a more normal count next year.

A White-fronted Tern colony had a second successful breeding season at the end of the Motueka Sandspit. More than 100 pairs of terns nested on a mound formed by a failed dredging attempt. Although the channel through the Sandspit did not last long, the birds have been content with the changed landscape. Joining the White-fronted Tern nesting there were two pairs of Variable Oystercatchers, 12 Red-billed Gulls, 12 Black-backed Gulls and one Black-fronted Tern. Black-fronted Terns also attempted to nest downstream from the Motueka River Bridge, but it is unclear if they were successful.

In the first week of January Peter Besier took six members on his yacht, with two dinghies in tow from Port Motueka to the Motueka Sandspit. The purpose was to cannon net Ruddy Turnstones for a Ministry of Agriculture National Bird Flu Surveillance Programme. A large flock of Turnstones had been identified in the previous 24 hours and the nets were set at this site, but an unsafe line of fire prevented a capture. A hurried retreat to the yacht to leave on the outgoing tide failed when the twin keels lodged on a sandbank! With a 12-hour wait for the next tide plans A and B were hatched. Banding the White-fronted Tern chicks at the colony described earlier was carried out. This was followed up with the capture and banding of Variable Oystercatcher chicks. It was midnight before the crew made it back to port.

Some noteworthy sightings made by Peter Field included a New Zealand Dotterel in breeding plumage on the Nelson Haven, and a Whitewinged Black Tern near Monaco. This species was last recorded in the area about seven years ago. Don Cooper saw a Pectoral Sandpiper feeding on the oxidation ponds on Bells Island; the bird was in breeding plumage and in the company of a family of Pied Stilts. It was seen over a couple of days and photographed by Peter Field.

A dead Southern Royal Albatross was found on the front beach of Rabbit Island by the caretaker during the closing of the island for the day on 19th January. It was a fine adult specimen with no sign of any external damage, and was handed to Peter Gaze of DoC Nelson. Beach wrecks are uncommon in this part of Tasman Bay.

David Melville has initiated a new study on the movement of juvenile Variable Oystercatchers in collaboration with Willie Cook. Previously Willie banded the chicks with an orange flag and metal band. The new and larger white flags now being used have pairs of black letters that are clearly identifiable at 30 m. To date nine chicks in the Waimea Estuary carry these new markings and appear to be progressing well.

A most significant event was the sighting of a Bar-tailed Godwit at Farewell Spit with a transmitter implant on the 22nd December. A group of local OSNZ members were searching for a bird known to have sent a signal from 120 km. NW of Farewell Spit.

The bird was spotted by Ingrid Hutzler and Rob Schuckard close to a flock of 2,000 other godwits. The transmittered bird, a female, had a black flag on the right tibia marked Z7. It was one of the birds that departed Alaska on 31st August 2006 and contact was lost on 7th September while passing Fiji. It is believed that this is the first record of an implant on a 2006 bird in New Zealand and Australia.

The sighting of the above bird encouraged the US scientists involved with its transmittering to come to New Zealand and repeat the procedure on the wintering population of Bar-tailed Godwit prior to their departure for the northward migration along the East Asian Flyway.

A second bird with a transmitter was located on Farewell Spit on 4th February 2007 by Bob Gill and Willie Cook. Bob Gill, a scientist with the US Geological Survey was in the joint study team that had just successfully completed the capture and fitting of transmitters to eight Bar-tailed Godwits at Totara Avenue, Golden Bay. Four male adults had solar panel backpacks fitted and the females had implants. Within a few hours the base in Alaska had signals from all the birds and began plotting their movements around Farewell Spit and Westhaven Inlet.

The Joint Study Team for the movement of Large Waders through the Pacific comprises:

Bob Gill (USA); Dan Mulcahy (veterinary surgeon, USA); Brett Gartrell (veterinarian anaesthetist, Massey University); Nils Warnock (Point Reyes Bird Observatory, USA); Auckland University; Massey University; and the New Zealand Wader Study Group and OSNZ in a less formal relationship. Peter Besier made his bach at Totara Avenue available for the base to do his family would never have envisaged in their quiet hide-away! It is hoped Phil Battley, David Melville and Rob Schuckard will write a detailed account about this project for a future edition of *Southern Bird*.

Alec and Marion Milne report on new trapping initiatives in the Cobb Valley aimed at retaining remnant Blue Duck, Kiwi, and Kaka: 'Bush and Beyond' (Bill Rook) set the ball rolling last spring with a trap line, Trilobite to Chaffey's Hut, and now a second line has been put in by a newly established group called Friends of the Cobb (contact person Chris Petyt). Both groups plan further lines in the Cobb Valley in the near future which may eventually link through to the Friends of the Flora trap lines. DoC is planning a 1080 drop in the area this winter, so they hope to follow this up with the trapping work.

Last year's translocation of Marlborough Sounds Weka into Totaranui by local DOC staff has been followed with interest by local members. Birds quickly paired up with successful clutches reared. Predation by stoats within the stoat controlled areas and predation of birds wandering out of the trapped zones has been an ongoing issue, but it is still hoped a stable population will be established centred on the trapped area at Totaranui.

Three local members assisted with a Rock Wren programme in the Murchison Mountains in November. Twenty nests were located and two were predated. In the Henderson Basin six nests were seen, but a very wet summer didn't help the follow up.

Notable sightings made during the summer census of wader birds on Farewell Spit included the following species: Terek Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Sanderling, Pacific Golden Plovers (46), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Little Tern, Eastern Curlew, Whimbrel, and possibly a pair of Hudsonian Godwits. One of the Bar-tailed Godwits with a transmitter was also sighted, and at the base of the spit six of the eight godwits carrying transmitters were identified in one group. A Long-tailed Cuckoo appeared in the pine trees alongside the house near the light just before we departed and good close-up views of it were obtained for about 15 minutes.

The local OSNZ group accepted an invitation from the Tasman District Council to celebrate World Wetlands Day in February, held at Sandeman Reserve. The theme was the life on the Waimea Estuary, its margins and tributaries. About 100 people attended.

We did a photo display focusing on the Banded Rail and its habitat, and also the high tide roosts with reference to the Wrybill. Many groups were present with speakers making short addresses. Willie Cook spoke on behalf of OSNZ and emphasised the need for a Management Plan on the Waimea Estuary.

DON COOPER

Otago

Despite there being no formally organised programme over the summer months, our members have been out and about and reporting many interesting observations, keeping us all busy following these up. The highlight of the season has been the sighting of at least seven Chestnutbreasted Shelduck near Dunedin. The first report of them was sent in by a visitor from UK on a three-week birding trip to New Zealand. On a detour *en route* to Taiaroa Heads to see Royal Albatross he spotted two female Chestnut-breasted Shelducks in a small side lagoon off Hooper's Inlet on the Otago Peninsula. Local OSNZ members followed up this sighting and four birds, three female and one male, were seen together by Paul Davey and Hamish Spencer.

Three days later Peter Schweigman saw two males and one female of the above species feeding at the Kaikorai estuary, and five weeks after the first report a male was still at Hooper's Inlet. They are very easy to spot amongst the Paradise Shelduck and make a striking sight with the evening light on the chestnut breast.

Another out-of-towner, Brent Stephenson, while on the trail of the shelducks, came across the nest of a Black-fronted Dotterel at the Kaikorai estuary. This is the first confirmed breeding of this species in the region away from Central Otago and Outram. The last sighting of Black-fronted Dotterel at Kaikorai estuary was back in 1990.

There have also been more reports of Great Crested Grebes on southern South Island lakes this year than previously. Several were seen on the headwaters of Lake Wanaka; one was seen daily over the New Year period on Lake Manapouri; and a successful breeding pair and chicks seen on Lake Te Anau, a photo of which appeared on the front page of the Southland Times. A Black Stilt and a hybrid were resident at the Kaikorai estuary, and groups of Royal Spoonbills, up to 17 at a time, are often seen feeding in the lagoons around the inner Otago Harbour.

MARY THOMPSON



score) recreational area not far from Invercargil Airport is steadily taking shape. With a solid wooden bridge now linking the two ends of the converse and the Roger Sutton Boardwalk almost completed, visitors can walk, nur or blor the full loop track around this lagoon adjoining the estuary. There are some excellent spots for viewing waders, ducks and spoonbills etc. and the council is looking at design plans for a bird bide and interpretive paniels.

The Southland region of the OSNZ along with the Southland Natural History Field Club and Forest and Bird Southland have been invited to have some input into the bird hide and the interpretive panels. It has been mentioned that Roger Sutton's work on this lagoon will be highlighted in one of the panels. Roger was a former OSNZ Southland regional representative and also heavily involved with the Fish & Game Council and a member of the Southland Conservation Board. of the Invercangill Waste Transfer Station. In particular Tom Generorood, Council Roading and Waste Manager, has been the driving force behind the enhancements that will make the lagoon an important recreational area for locals and visitors alike. We hope all OSNZ members will take the opportunity to visit the lagoon when they are resit in Invercargill.

Other neises from Inversargill was the discovery of a freshly dead Masked Woodowallow in Otatana before Christmas. A pair of Falcores was spotted at Lake Manapouri by Peggy Snorp and there have been a reamber of reports of Bioe Dack seen in the Fondland area around Monkoy Creek in January and February. The escapee Shore Plovers still had a representative at Whakapata Boach in January.

PHIL RHODES

What's on

Far North

Detlef Dastes, 180 Landing Koad, Kerikori 0470. Ph (09) 407 3874. Email detletdastes@yabox.com

Northland

Kabina Hansen, 3 Harbour View Road, Onerabi, Whangarei.

Ph (19) 430 2133. Email katrina hanservilhits.co.nr.

Evening meetings, second Thursday of the month, ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954. Hest coast brach patrols ph. Prae Coarns (09) 437 7760. East coast brach patrols ph. Padine Senith (09) 435 3060. Whangarei Harbout wader coart ph. Tory Beauchamp (09) 436 2661. North Kaipans wader coart ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954.

Buckland

Suzi Philips, 36 Brulah Avenue, Rothesay Bay, North Shore City, Auckland, Phone (09) 479-5395. Ernail suztifidialogus.co.nz

Meetings are held on the first Taesday of each month leworpt January) at 7.45pes at Natural Science Building 23. Unitee, Point Chevaller.

South Reckland

Duvid Lawrie, 32 Mill Road, R D Z, Pakeloite, Auckland. Ph (19) 238 8407. Email lawrie@ps.gov.na

Evening recettings are held at the Papakaza Crospet Clubrosoms, 5 Chapel Street, Papakam, on the second Baesday of each month (Feb-Nos) at 7.45 pm. Beach patrols ph. Wendy Goad (09) 292 7838. Manukau and Firth of Thames censuses ph. Tony Habraken (09) 238 5284

Waikata

RR's position vacant. Contact person Martin Day, 9 Contrad Place, Cambridge 2051. Phone 407) 827–3047, vinail industributive court Evening investings, every third Wednesday 7.30pm, DoC Area Office, 5 Northway Street Gill'Se Rapa Road), Hamilton.

Beach patrols ph. Hagh Clifford (07) 855 3731. Hamilton Lake census ph. Barry Friend (07) 843 6729. Forest Lake census ph.

Brian Challinor (07) 855-2563. Cambridge Lake ornsin ph. Hugh Chillord. Bird sightings: Regional recorder, Dai Morgan dev/00bws/kato.ac.ne

Bay or Hesty/Volcanic Plateau

Tian Barnard, 23 Terreyson Drive, Owbata, Rotonaa. Ph (07) 345 3433. Email tim barnard@vtia.co.nz

Gisborne/Wainsa

RRs position vacant.

BOUNC'S BOY

Murray Jeffries, 2a Colden Road, Naplex 4005. Ph (Di) 834-3865. Email mojeffries@htta.co.na

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

Tanasahi

Barry Harley, 12a Ronald Steer, New Plymouth. Pb (16) 757 8444. Email: Barry, MarbyWeleacost.rs.

Evening meetings - first Reeday of the month (ssc Jar) 7.30 pm. Faild trips on first conducive weekend thereafter.

Wassansi

Tom Trandale, 33 Patorium Street, Aramoho, Wangamai 5001. Ph (06) 343 9992. Email tuasdale family@clear.nst.nz

Evening meetings – fourth Taesday of the month, Davis Lecture Theatre, Viangarua Regional Museum (Watt Street).

Mananada

Ian Saville, 23 Duke Street, Feikling, Ph (06) 323 1441. Email biness/Welear.net.ne

Evening meetings – second Wednesday of Feb, May, Aug and Nov. Lado Centre, Fark Steert, Palenerston North, 8pm. Beach patrols – first Wednesday of each eventh and also at other inregular times.

Wairarapa

Barbara Lovatt, 4 Class Anne Grove, Greytown, Ph (96) 304 9948. Email arriving@panalise.net.net

Evening meetings held on the second Thursday of the month less Jani 7.30 pm, venue alternating between Masterton and Greytown. Field trips are the following weekend. Contact Barbass Lovatt for harther details.

Witheston

lan Annitage, 50 Ranat Terraor, Tawa, Mellington, Ph (04) 232 7478. Email san annitage@utra.co.ro

Evening mortings - first Monday of the month, Coreservation House, ph. Ian Antribage 1040 232 7470. Mattu/Sorines Island surveys, ph. Rod Ouarge 1040 473 1912. Mist metting and passerine banding at The Zoo, various Saturdays, ph. Peter Reese (04) 387 7387. Beach patrolis, ph. Joan Lukar (04) 904 1704.

Neisai

Steve Wood, Huridhouse Steert, Lower Moutere, R D J Upper Mouton, Nelson 7152, Ph 03 528 6438, Essail utopia.landscapes/ficlear.net.net Evening meetings – usually first Monday of the month, 7.15 pts upstains at 50 Halifax Steert, Nelson, Ph. Stove Wood (03) 528 6428 or Don Cooper (03) 544 #109.

Mariboroush

Mike Bell, 42 Vickerman Street, Grovetown 7321

Phone (03) 577 4018 or 321 734 602. Email mikeardworthilingshot.co.na Lake Grassmere count - third Sunday of month.

Ph. Brian Bell (03): 570–2230. Passenne handling each weekend during February and March, at Jack Taylor's farm, Hand, contact Miko Bell Ph (03): 577-9818.

Casterburs/West Daast

Jan Walker, 305 Kernedys Bash Road, Halowell, Christcharch. Ph (03) 322 7187. Ernal shesagreen#graaLcore

Evening meetings last Monday of the month, Spreydon Bowling Club, Domain Tenace, Christicharch. Monthly field trips – dates vary. Ph. Jan Walker (03) 322 7187

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Mary Thompson, 197 Balmarstwee Road, Balmacewert, Dunedin, Ph (25) 464 0787. Email mary thompson/Patonebow.otago.ac.ne

Evening meetings bi-monthly on the South Wednesday at 8.00pm in Benham Sentinar Room, Zoology Department, 340 Great King Street. Contact Mary Thompson (03) 464 0787

Southand

Janie Word, cl- Goology Department, Otago University, PO. Box 56, Dunedin, Ersal Januar/#botmail.com

Eventing mostings (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 (00) 213 1228 or Lloyd Eiler 001 213 0404.

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