



Southern *Bird*

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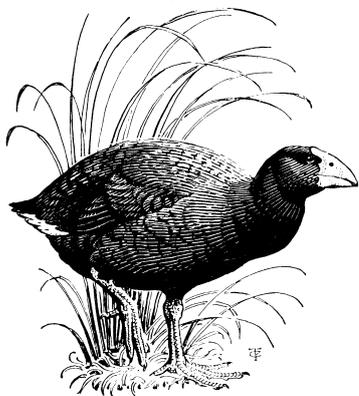


Shining Cuckoo and New Zealand Fantail Interacting

Whio Monitoring and the Tongariro Power Scheme

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QUOTATION

*It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in my blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep...*

The Kingfisher by William Henry Davies (1871-1940)

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COVER PHOTOS

Front cover: *Shining Cuckoo* by Paul Gibson, one of the birds seen at Gordon Park near Wanganui interacting with a Fantail, see behaviour note on p 6

Back cover: *By way of contrast the underparts of a Shining Cuckoo*, photographed by Paul Gibson on Great Barrier Island

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.

Publisher

Published on behalf of the members of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc),

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FROM THE 31 MAY 2008 THE OSNZ HAS A NEW BUT FAMILIAR SECRETARY: **PETER GAZE**

Peter joined Ecology Division DSIR in 1971 to assist Peter Bull with the original Atlas and had no choice but to then join OSNZ. It was a rapid and enjoyable immersion into the workings of the Society and its members, including a stint as national secretary under Fred Kinsky and then Brian Bell. In the late 1970s he transferred to Nelson and continued to work on a range of forest birds and has now been with the Department of Conservation for 20 years, mostly trying to provide assistance for local conservation work on birds, reptiles and frogs. He is experiencing a certain *deja vu* to once again be wrestling with minute books and notices of motion, but looks forward to working with a great bunch of members and those on Council.



Peter's contact details are: Peter Gaze, 48 Brooklands Road, Atawhai, Nelson. Email: gaze@slingshot.co.nz

FREE ATLAS **EXTENDED**

The offer of a free Atlas for new members has been extended to 31st December 2008.

UPDATE ON OVERDUE **NOTORNIS** ISSUE

We apologise for the delay in recent *Notornis* issues and any inconvenience that this may have caused you.

You will start receiving the late issues in due course. The June 2007 issue *Notornis* should have been received by members at the end of May. The rest will follow at four- to six-weekly intervals until the backlog has been cleared, so publishing should be back on schedule within the next few months. Please note: completed papers will from now on be uploaded onto the *Notornis* web site at the end of each month, in advance of the paper publication. This new system will ensure greater efficiency in future publications.

RICHARD HOLDAWAY (President)

JIM BRISKIE (new Editor *Notornis*)

BIRD PEOPLE

Kath Todd passed away in March at the age of 89. Many members attended her funeral. She was a stalwart OSNZ member, a conservationist before her time, and was an RR for a number of years. South Auckland member John Brown also passed away recently.



THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND INC. ANNUAL REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL FOR **2007-2008**

I am pleased to present this report on behalf of Council to the 69th Annual General Meeting of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand to be held in Kaikoura on 1st June 2008.

COUNCIL

Council met formally twice in 2007. The first meeting was in New Plymouth on 1st June 2007 in conjunction with the AGM; the second meeting was held in Christchurch on 13th October 2007. Considerable additional business was conducted via email.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Nominations were called to fill vacancies on Council arising from the completion of David Pye's completing his term, Claudia Duncan's resignation as Secretary, and to fill vacancies arising from the expiration of the terms by co-option of Bruce McKinlay and Phil Battley. Nominations were received by 28th February 2008 for Bruce McKinlay and Phil Battley for Council, and Peter Gaze for Secretary. As there were insufficient nominations to necessitate an election, Bruce McKinlay and Phil Battley are declared as elected to Council for full terms of three years, and Peter Gaze has been declared elected to the position of Secretary. Peter resumes this position after an interval of several years and the Society warmly welcomes the return of his experience and expertise to the position.

The Society thanks David Pye and Claudia Duncan for their service and contributions to the Society over their terms on Council and as Secretary, respectively. It is essential to OSNZ's well-being that members continue to put themselves forward to contribute at all levels of the Society's activities.

A vacancy remains on Council and Council will seek to co-opt a member for a one-year period to bring the number of Councillors up to the 10 as allowed by the Society's Constitution, after which the co-opted member must stand for re-election at the next AGM.

CHANGES IN SOCIETY OFFICERS

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Roger Sharp resigned as Membership Secretary during 2007, but has continued to provide services and assistance to Yvonne Mackenzie, who assumed the role in the middle of 2007. The changeover is now almost complete. Unforeseen computer and printer incompatibility issues caused problems with generation of postage labels and this affected the March *Southern Bird* mail-out, but these difficulties were unrelated to the separate issue of the non-appearance of *Notornis* (see under Publications, below).

Roger was instrumental in developing the Membership Database, electronic subscription notices, and a host of behind-the-scenes advances in OSNZ's ability to maintain and update membership records. The role of Membership Secretary is time-consuming and at the basis of our financial well-being: Council thanks Roger for his highly significant contribution and wishes him well in 'retirement'. He is continuing in the role of handling back numbers, and OSNZ appreciates his ongoing commitment.

EDITOR

Dr James V. (Jim) Briskie, School of Biological Sciences,

University of Canterbury, assumed the Editorship of *Notornis* and of over-seeing Editor of OSNZ publications on 1st January 2008. The retiring Editor, Dr Richard Holdaway, will see the delayed 2007 issues to press (see *Notornis* report).

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Society increased significantly during the year, reaching 1,100 for the first time in many years. The 'spike' in numbers is almost certainly related to the provision of gratis copies of *The Atlas of New Zealand Birds*. The Society must capitalise on this increase: with the present average of 100 members leaving and 100 joining annually, retention of just 25 or 50 would allow the Strategic Plan target of 1,400 members to be reached without further efforts on recruitment. The sudden increase caught us off guard with respect to printing numbers for Society publications, and the Editor and Council apologise to the Wellington members who failed to receive their December 2007 issue of *Southern Bird*, which was printed on time but with a print run at least 30 short of requirements. We are endeavouring to rectify this shortfall and print runs, which had been static because of the long-term stasis of membership numbers, are now signalled to our printers before each item is printed.

Membership lists are now supplied to Regional Representatives quarterly, and this has been facilitated by the database developed by retiring Membership Secretary Roger Sharp, and now maintained (from different aspects) by our new Membership Yvonne Mackenzie and our Executive Officer Ingrid Hutzler.

MEMBERS' SURVEY

Councillor Stuart Nicholson has completed an analysis of the responses to the Member's questionnaire on Society activities, etc. The report will be sent to Regional Representatives and will be available to Members, on request to the Executive Officer. Some of the main outcomes, including requests for more training and information, field courses, and monitoring programmes are already under way. Field courses will be beginning later this year, eBird is being launched at the Science Day as the basis for future monitoring schemes and plans are being prepared for training materials and courses. Council appreciates the time and effort put into the preparation and completion of the questionnaires, and particularly Stuart's work in collating and analysing the information and preparing the report. The Executive Officer undertook the actual collection and preliminary collation of the questionnaires, and Ingrid's contribution greatly assisted the process.

eBIRD

Negotiations to link the Ornithological Society of New Zealand with the Cornell University-based international bird recording scheme eBird were completed during the year and the New Zealand portal will be launched at the Scientific Day on 31st May 2008. The link is available to all members and allows the loading of records for New Zealand species at New Zealand sites which

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Sorrows and Joys of a New Zealand Naturalist *by H Guthrie-Smith*

First Edition, published by A H and A W Reed, Dunedin, 1936.

Signed by the author. _____

*A lively informative text, much of it about New Zealand birds,
96 photographs. In very good condition, with original dustcover,
although this is slightly damaged.*

\$150

email m_a_i_a@hotmail.com

Fetch in if Auckland, or postage and packing extra.

GARDEN BIRD SURVEY 2008

A flier for this survey is included with this issue of *Southern Bird*. It is planned for 12th to 20th July 2008 (see <http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/biocons/gardenbird>).



can be designated as bird hotspots, and the analysis and retrieval of raw data and consolidated analyses of data for species and sites, with appropriate levels of security for personal data. There is facility for up-loading archived records via a straight-forward spreadsheet format, and OSNZ will be encouraging members to seek help if necessary to organise their notebook observations and incorporate them on the system; help will be provided for those keen to do this but whose computer skills or time limitations make it difficult to do.

The parent scheme is a major programme with guaranteed funding at the level of several tens of millions of dollars for 25 years from the United States National Science Foundation. Appropriate filters have been incorporated to suit the New Zealand environment, so that records are 'scrutinised' at input to ensure the integrity of the database.

The cost to OSNZ is a one-off US\$10,000 for joining the scheme and for setting up the New Zealand portal and associated software and filters. This cost was met from the Project Assistance Fund as a core system for OSNZ projects now and in the future. The annual cost of US\$1,000 for site maintenance is extremely reasonable in return for the levels of service, stability, and reliability of our data system.

A workshop will be held on the Scientific Day after the launch and assistance will be available for members, who should all avail themselves of this centralised and secure system for recording and monitoring New Zealand birds. The system is very 'user friendly' and is designed to assist and simplify the entering of data and retrieving various levels level of real-time analysis.

OSNZ records its great appreciation for the work put in over some years by Paul Scofield and the Scientific Committee in assessing OSNZ's requirements for on-line data recording and sifting through the complex of 'available' systems to find the one that best suits our needs. Paul's work in the development of the OSNZ eBird system and the very favourable contract with Cornell is a most significant contribution to the Society's ability to monitor and assess the distribution and status of New Zealand birds, and is the necessary follow-on to the Atlas schemes.

The Scientific Committee and Council explored several different potential avenues for providing an on-line database system. The Landcare Research team liaised extensively with Paul and the Scientific Committee on the merits of their NZBRN system, including demonstrations. Ultimately, it was decided that the eBird system gave OSNZ the stability and significantly resourced service through a straightforward, assessed-at-source interface, with a known long-term cost structure.

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

This new committee, to be responsible for planning and running field courses and other Society 'on the ground' activities, was presented to the Membership at the 2007 AGM. To date no one has come forward to take part. The Terms of Reference of this new committee will be recirculated, and members are encouraged to put their names forward so that it can start work as soon as possible. It is planned that the first field courses will be held later this year as the first of a regular series of three or four of various durations being held in each island annually, with one national event.

Several members indicated on their questionnaire a willingness to help organise and run such courses and to provide tuition in various skills, so it is hoped that this interest and expertise can be put to work immediately to increase the level of integrated activities within OSNZ, and to provide the training that was also a major request from the membership identified in the survey.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The contract for the position of Executive Officer was awarded to Ingrid Hutzler, and Ingrid has fulfilled all Council's expectations during the first months in her position. She has developed links with RRs and the membership, with Society conveners and other officers and facilitated the operation of Council and the committees. Ingrid reports monthly to Council, and as the position develops, with more of the basic database and operational tasks completed, she will be moving more into extending the Society's ability to service the requirements of the membership. The introduction of an Executive Officer to the Society's structure has been, and I am sure can only continue to be, a major step in our implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The Executive Officer is responsible, under the direction of Council and the President, for the day-to-day operation of the Society, facilitating communication between Council and the member-

ship, ensuring the smooth operation of the Society's schemes and contracts, and developing initiatives to enhance the experience of the membership. The delineation of the separate roles of Executive Officer (whose function is to facilitate the Society's activities) and the Secretary (whose role is to secure the function of Council and fulfil our responsibilities as an Incorporated Society) is nearly completed and Ingrid and Peter Gaze have already established a sound working relationship, in continuation of that worked out between Claudia Duncan and Ingrid during the initial stages after the Executive Officer's appointment.

NOTORNIS

The major problem with the Society's activities this year, as with 2006-2007 has been with the delay in publication of the March 2007 issue and with the non-appearance of *Notornis* issues for June, September, and December 2007, and for March 2008. The March 2008 issue is being prepared by the new Editor, but cannot of course be published until the preceding issues appear and the delays are entirely the responsibility of the previous Editor. As that Editor, I apologise unreservedly to Council, the membership, and especially to the authors, for the absence of the publication, and for the limited and often complete absence of more than the briefest communication from the editorial desk. The circumstances surrounding the delays reflect the reliance for Society publications on volunteers who have the time and expertise to undertake the ongoing commitment: when circumstances change that commitment can rapidly become over-commitment. OSNZ is very lucky to have someone with Jim Briskie's experience (as an Associate Editor of the major US journal, *The Auk*) volunteer his services.

With the considerable assistance of the Assistant Editor, Paul Sagar, and Jim Briskie, production of the journal has been resumed, and the June 2007 issue has been printed and will be posted to members before the AGM. A programme for the rapid publication of the other two issues for 2007 has been instigated and they will appear within the next two to three months, followed closely by the issues for 2008, which are being prepared by the new Editor.

NOTORNIS ON-LINE

From June, papers and other articles that have reached publication stage will be electronically published on the *Notornis* web page at the end of each calendar month, in anticipation of their paper publication in the journal as soon as space is available.

SOUTHERN BIRD

Nick Allen has continued to produce an excellent product, providing a key place for members to share their observations, for dissemination of news and views (verbal and pictorial) on birds, places, and members. Members are encouraged to continue to support Nick's efforts by providing copy and illustrations in good time to meet the publication deadlines.

ATLAS OF BIRD DISTRIBUTION IN NEW ZEALAND 1999-2004

Five years (1999-2004) of field work and three more of data processing and analysis came to fruition when the landmark *Atlas of Bird Distribution in New Zealand 1999-2004* was launched by The Administrator of New Zealand, Chief Justice Dame Sean Elias (standing in for His Excellency the Governor-General who was overseas at the time) at Government House, Wellington, on August 13th 2007. The hard bound, 500+ page volume is a magnificent achievement by all concerned and has drawn favourable reviews and acclaim for its contribution to both science and the publishing industry. As noted elsewhere in this report, the production team has since been awarded major prizes from the New Zealand printing industry.

The atlas contains over 2,000 full-colour maps, digests and analyses of the patterns of distribution and changes in distribution since the 1985 atlas data were obtained, and very important summaries of the habitats in New Zealand. From this year, basic distribution maps will be available on-line from a separate *Atlas of Bird Distribution in New Zealand Birds 1999-2005 Webatlas*. The main data source will remain the published volume. Data from the atlas are available for conditional release for further analyses by application to the Society, and this resource has been used extensively over the past year by private researchers, ecological consultants, and government agencies. Work has nearly been completed on the reconstruction in electronic form of data from the 1985 edition of the atlas.

NEW ZEALAND BIRD REPORT

Manawatu Regional Representative Ian (Sav) Saville has made significant progress in developing our new annual publication,



New Zealand Bird Report, as a vehicle for disseminating the kind of observations on birds that were formerly included in Classified Summarised Notes. It will also include annual reports from Society schemes and analyses of data on, for example, the Beach Patrol Scheme, and other reports. Rare Bird Committee reports will continue to be printed in *Southern Bird*. Sav will be co-ordinating with Jim Briskie, the new Society Editor, and with Council on the final format and publication of the first issue. Regional Recorders and Regional Representatives will be the conduits for information, and discussions on the formats for annual returns are beginning.

STATE OF NEW ZEALAND'S BIRDS 2007

The third issue of this annual assessment of the status of selected groups of birds or aspects of New Zealand ornithology is presently with the printer and will be distributed shortly. Its focus this year is the contribution made by *The Atlas of New Zealand Birds 1999-2004* and some of the trends that the atlas has identified, highlighted, and most importantly quantified, in the distribution of our indigenous, introduced, and immigrant species. OSNZ thanks Kerry-Jayne Wilson for continuing this important initiative as a forum for informed commentary on the scientific issues that impinge on conservation of our avifauna. The effort involved in assembling a group of authors and framing a coherent, coordinated treatment of diverse issues is considerable and the high quality of the product each year is a tribute to Kerry-Jayne's commitment to promulgating authoritative information on important issues in a highly-accessible and compelling format.

As noted last year, the series is another way of fulfilling the Society's constitutional brief to promulgate scientifically sound information on New Zealand birds. Copies of this issue will be sent to Cabinet Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and MPs of the smaller parties, and to CRIs, DoC regions, universities, regional councils, and other organisations.

CHECKLIST

The new checklist is nearing completion. This is another major publication milestone for OSNZ and Council and the membership thank the Checklist Committee and Convenor Brian Gill for their efforts in providing this key resource which is fundamental to research on, and conservation of, New Zealand's avifauna. To some, taxonomy is a needlessly tedious business of little real interest to the study of birds. Actually, all discussion of biodiversity is meaningless without an understanding of the relationships of species and indeed how many species we have. Examples where doubtful taxonomic status has impeded conservation are many, but perhaps the plight of the Brown Teal, long thought to be a race of the relatively secure Auckland Island Teal but now known to be a distinct and globally highly endangered species is example enough. A significant new finding is the unexpected evolutionary status of the Stitchbird, which new research has shown not to be a honeyeater after all, but to be probably a part of the radiation that led to the wattlebirds such as Saddlebacks and Kokako. That finding raises the conservation importance of the Stitchbird an order of magnitude, as a globally endangered family of birds, rather than a genus within a much larger grouping.

Negotiations are under way for its publication without incurring significance expense to the Society, but retaining all the proprietary rights to the information. Council thanks Brian Gill for his initiative in seeking a suitable publisher for the new edition, and in ensuring that the contents will be of the highest possible standard and another landmark publication from OSNZ.

As with previous checklists, this edition will be made available at reduced cost to OSNZ members.

MONITORING AND RECORDING SCHEMES

The Scientific Committee is making progress on developing a workable and affordable on-line recording system for the Society. The efforts of other organisations to introduce such schemes by pilot programmes, of which the Society has been kept well informed, have provided much useful background information. At the same time, the Committee has been considering the range of monitoring and recording schemes at present active or in abeyance both nationally and regionally and possible schemes to fill the space left by the Atlas scheme.

GOLD MEDALS IN PUBLISHING – ATLAS OF NEW ZEALAND BIRDS 1999-2004

It is not only the excellence of the scientific content and its importance for conservation and ornithological research that have been recognised. *The Atlas of New Zealand Birds 1999-2004* achievement in extending the already high standard of OSNZ publications has been marked by the award of two gold medals

for excellence in printed publication at the New Zealand Printing Industry Pride in Print Awards. The first medal was for the class of sheet-fed four-colour printing products of more than 16 pages (for which the >500 pages of the atlas was ample!), and inspired special comment from the judges for the uniform excellent printing of the complex maps, as well as for the overall product, which showed that New Zealand printers were well up to world standards. Another judging panel then conferred on the atlas one of 10 gold medals in the Supreme Awards, taken from about 60 classes, which is high praise indeed.

Although the medals are technically awarded to the Ornithological Society as a whole, it is clear that they recognise the leadership of Christopher Robertson in organising the production team and in insisting that only the highest quality of printing and publication would be good enough for the atlas. In recognition of the achievement, the medals will be formally 'presented' to Christopher Robertson at the Kaikoura AGM, with examples being held by Christopher and the OSNZ.

MEMBER HONOURED

The Society records with great satisfaction the public recognition of Christopher J R Robertson's contributions to science and conservation in New Zealand and worldwide. In late 2007, Victoria University of Wellington conferred an Honorary Doctor of Science (DSc) degree at their graduation ceremony for his work on seabirds in New Zealand and elsewhere. He was then awarded a QSM in the 2008 New Year's Honours list. OSNZ congratulates Christopher on these signal, and overdue, honours. Gillian and the family can take great pride in his achievements, which are also theirs, by their contributions to Christopher's efforts over many years.

APPRECIATION

Council again thanks the membership for contributing in so many ways to the activities and fellowship of our Society over the past year. Regional Representatives have a pivotal role in co-ordinating the Society's schemes and encouraging members at large. As I noted last year, the Society depends ultimately on the participation of the membership in all aspects of the Society's activities. The goodwill of the membership is the Society's most precious asset.

Council is pleased to acknowledge the appreciation of the Regional Representatives of the assistance provided by our Executive Officer. As noted in last year's report, Ingrid's role is to assist and facilitate, not replace, the essential contributions of the Regional Representatives, regional recorders, membership secretary, editors and reviewers, contributors to Society publications, regional newsletter compilers and contributors, convenors and organisers of the Nest Records Scheme, Beach Patrol Scheme, Moulting Scheme, and other activities. That expectation has been amply rewarded.

Members of the Rare Birds Committee, Scientific Committee, and the Checklist Committee have all contributed more dedicated labour on behalf of the Society. The Checklist Committee's current work is nearly at fruition, but because of the continued advances in understanding the relationships of our birds, there will continue to be a standing committee to advise on the classification of our birds.

Our librarians and webmaster help to keep up the supply of information to the membership and to the world at large. The Society appreciates the donation of time and funds by many members, especially in the regions. Council is indebted to the members involved in the planning and hosting of the AGM and Scientific Day in New Plymouth in 2007, and for the field trips, which were all most enjoyable and rewarding (again, despite the weather). It is a pleasure to acknowledge the dedication and effort of so many members, and the richly deserved honours and awards that have been made over the past year. The Society's world becomes ever more complex, but with forethought and the efforts and contributions of a growing number of members, it will be able to deal with the many challenges that changing times and climates hold for us and the birds.

RICHARD N HOLDAWAY

President

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand, Inc.

16th May 2008



TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE 2007 FINANCIAL YEAR

The annual accounts presented with this report outline a very full years activities.

Firstly the General Account includes a subscriptions increase of \$15,124 (\$35,604 in 2006 versus \$50,728 in 2007). This appears to be due to a timing difference only. Subscriptions paid in advance reduced to \$9,557 from \$30,370 in 2006; a drop of \$20,813. Overall subscriptions are nearly \$5,700 less. This could well be fully recovered this year. Other receipts are down because of lower transfers, with the only item of concern being less contract fees received. The receipt of such fees depends on field work being completed and written up.

Expenditure in 2007 was similar to that in 2006 apart from the Kakapo double issue of 2006 being fully sponsored, and the starting costs for our Executive Officer, which will add an extra \$20,000+ this year. However, as budgeted, this will be covered by transfers.

In respect of the other accounts US\$10,000 is now due for the E-bird project from the Project Assistance account. Smaller Regional Grants were paid in the 2007 year.

Finally the Meadows Atlas account is still active despite my forecast of its conclusion in 2007. To date over \$270,000 has been spent, with additional inputs required for the old Atlas. With steady future receipts (in the order of \$14,310 in 2007) in future we should quite quickly make up the deficit. To have a current deficit of \$10,026 on a project costing some \$270,000

since 2002 is quite exceptional and highlights the careful planning and execution by Christopher Robertson, and judgement by the Society to back this project to the full.

The Statement of Balances and the Notes disclose a satisfactory year's financial activities and includes provision for delayed Journals. My future concerns are in respect of AGM costs and regional assistance. To date meeting costs have been kept low because of members donations but the demands that these annual meetings make on regions needs review. This can be considered with their general funding needs.

To sum up no review of subscription rates is required but care must continue to ensure we do not over-extend our members. Our application for registration with the Charities Commission is currently being processed. Registration will preserve our tax-exempt status, and will provide increased donation tax rebates. With these we will be well-positioned to retain our present satisfactory financial situation.

My thanks to all Officers: Richard Holdaway; David Melville; Councillors; Regional Reps and *Southern Bird* editor Nick Allen. The unsung heroes in the Society are our most active members. These are the backbone that enables many to further their studies and contribute to our unique birdlife and our Society.

MARK NEE
JP, B.Com, CA (retired)

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SHINING CUCKOO AND NEW ZEALAND FANTAIL INTERACTING

The first Shining Cuckoo encounter last spring by Colin Ogle was at Gordon Park Scenic Reserve, about two kilometres east of Wanganui city, on 9th October 2007. Throughout the period 09.00-11.30 Shining Cuckoos were calling frequently and there seemed to be many of them present. At around 11.00, three of us were standing at the edge of a forest gap about 15 m across when we saw a Fantail and another bird fly across the open area, close together, and alight in a 3-4 metre-high Mahoe *Meliccytus ramiflorus* shrub on the far side from us. At the top of the shrub the Fantail was very agitated but the other bird was partly hidden in the foliage about 1.5 m off the ground. Suddenly, the two birds took off and flew straight towards us, landing on cutty-grass *Carex lessoniana* leaves almost at ground level. We were maybe 2.5 – 3 m from the two birds, enabling us to see clearly that the other bird was a Shining Cuckoo. The two appeared to be fighting and were oblivious to our presence. They fought on the ground for maybe five seconds, although the high speed of the activity left us unclear as to what the birds were doing to each other. The Shining Cuckoo broke off and flew back across the clearing and into the forest with the Fantail a metre or two behind. This was the only cuckoo seen by Colin, although our work in the reserve (weed control) meant that searches were not made for them.

At about 11.45, Colin wrote an email to local bird enthusiasts, saying "the forest was alive with cuckoo calls". As a result of this email, Paul Gibson visited the same reserve with photographic equipment and a tape recorder at 13.30. He played a Shining Cuckoo recording several times and within minutes was 'surrounded by cuckoos', the actual number being impossible to assess but at one time there were four birds together on one branch. The total number present was likely to be more than a dozen, as at times when they gathered together in the forest canopy they appeared as a small flock and their combined chattering was deafening. Paul noted that "a group of three Fantails mobbed a Shining Cuckoo and for some moments were together a bundle of rolling feathers right before my eyes". They were about five metres away and on the ground or on ground-cover plants. The encounter ended with the Shining

Cuckoo flying rapidly into the forest with the three Fantails in close pursuit. The whole encounter was over in seconds and too quick to be photographed.

Our separate encounters with Shining Cuckoos and Fantails in the same location and on the same day raises several questions. Were these seemingly abundant Shining Cuckoos on a stop-over as a migrating flock moving southwards? Visits to the forest by both of us independently within the following week revealed just a 'normal' level of cuckoo calling. Ralph Powlesland (pers comm) has observed Shining Cuckoos in small flocks on a few occasions, generally foraging at a rich food source, at which time the cuckoos were mainly silent. Neither of us saw any birds feeding on 9th October. Shining Cuckoos are noted as being in small groups occasionally (*HANZAB* Volume 4, 1999). Ralph also told us that he has heard 'a few birds quite vocal high up in tall trees' which he assumed might be something to do with breeding behaviour and suggestive of possible lek behaviour. Group activity by Shining Cuckoos has been noted in the literature many times but often the reason for it is unclear (Brian Gill pers comm).

The only confirmed breeding by Shining Cuckoos on mainland New Zealand is in Grey Warbler nests (Heather and Robertson, *The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*, 1996; *HANZAB* Volume 4, 1999). Why, then, should Fantails be aggressive to Shining Cuckoos? A large number of host species has been recorded for Shining Cuckoo in Australia, including Grey Fantail and other Australian flycatchers. It is possible that Fantails might be aggressive to Shining Cuckoo because cuckoos, in general, are nest predators taking eggs and chicks, independently of when laying eggs in other birds' nests (Ralph Powlesland pers comm). Apart from a record in the Classified Summarised Notes by R. Michie of Shining Cuckoo taking eggs of a Chaffinch in 1948, this has not been recorded in New Zealand (*HANZAB* 1999). Furthermore, there is a total absence of records of any kind of interaction between Shining Cuckoo and other bird species in New Zealand, apart from Grey Warbler, in *HANZAB* (1999).

We extend our thanks to Dr Ralph Powlesland (Department of Conservation, Wellington) and Dr Brian Gill (Auckland Museum) for suggestions about our observations and on a draft of this account.



JOHN KHOURI

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I have audited the financial report on the following pages. The financial report provides information about the past financial performance of the society and its financial position as at 31 December 2007.

Council Responsibilities

The constitution of the society states that the administration and management of the society shall be vested in the Council. The Council is responsible for the preparation of an annual report and audited statement of accounts for the year to 31 December 2007.

Auditor's responsibilities

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

Basis of opinion

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

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

Qualified opinion

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

A physical stock count of assets was not completed at year-end and there were no practical alternative auditing procedures that could be applied to confirm the assets. Accordingly the existence of society library and assets of \$35,063 in the balance sheet was unable to be verified.

Subject to the matters noted in all the above paragraphs, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the society as at 31 December 2007 and the results of its activities for the year ended 31 December 2007.

The audit was completed on 16 May 2008 and my qualified opinion is expressed as at that date.



John Khouri, B Com ACA, Auckland

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2007

	NOTE	2007	2006			
Income	1. GENERAL ACCOUNT			Less Expenditure		
Annual Subscriptions NZ		50,728	35,604	Printing <i>Notornis</i>	17,773	28,346
Annual Subscriptions Overseas		11,820	13,024	Printing <i>Southern Bird</i>	12,513	10,841
Donations		929	1,889	Packing & Posting above	6,181	9,344
Sales General		928	841	Council Meetings	5,275	6,343
Kakapo Issue		402	510	Printing & Stationery	0	971
Notornis & Southern Bird Refunds	4	3,550	4,271	General Expenses	1,850	1,981
Interest		1,446	964	Travel Expenses	3,268	3,939
SUB TOTAL:		69,803	57,103	Postage & Tolls	209	878
Transfers From				Audit	800	800
1. Life Membership Reserve				Beach Patrols	0	69
2. Plant Purchase Repl & Mtce Account		1,750	1,659	Computer and Software	1,804	3,452
3. Sir Robert Fella Memorial Fund		0	15,388	Executive Officer	6,862	0
4. A.J Edgar Junior Award Fund		4,779	0	Insurances	1,674	1,074
5. Meadows Atlas Memorial Fund		4,883	0	Rare Birds / Checklist Committees	0	471
Admin. Fee		0	4,807	SUB TOTAL:	58,209	68,509
4. Contract Account/ Admin.fees		12,243	23,250	Transfer to:		
Kakapo Issue DoC Grant		0	12,500	1. Library & Asset Account Depreciation	0	9,617
Donation Camalco		0	2,400	2. Meadows Atlas		
SUB TOTAL:		23,655	60,004			
TOTAL INCOME		93,458	117,107			

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Atlas Launch Contribution	2,753	0
8. Library Auction Reserve		
Grant for Journals	1,000	1,000
SUB TOTAL:	3,753	10,617
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	61,962	79,126
Surplus/(Deficit)	31,496	37,981
Plus Balance as at 1st January 2007	(6,911)	(44,892)
General Account as at 31st December 2007	24,585	(6,911)

2. LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUND

Income		
Interest	2,409	1,557
New Life Members	2,044	1,022
Total income	4,453	2,579
Less Expenditure		
Transfer to General Funds:		
Annual Contribution	1,750	1,659
Total expenditure	2,703	920
Plus Balance as at 1st January 2007	17,506	16,586
Balance as at 31st December 2007	20,209	17,506

3. LIBRARY ACCOUNT

Income		
Library Exchanges	1,700	1,700
Less		
Transfer to General Funds:		
Annual Depreciation	0	9,617
Surplus/(Deficit)	1,700	(7,917)
Plus balance as at 1st January 2007	33,363	41,280
Balance as at 31st December 2007	35,063	33,363

4. SIR ROBERT FALLA MEMORIAL FUND

Income	2007	2006
Interest	0	410
Plus Fund Balance as at 1st January 2007	4,779	4,369
Less Transfer to General Account	4,779	0
Balance as at 31st December 2007	0	4,779

5. A.J EDGAR JUNIOR AWARD FUND

Income		
Donations	0	75
Interest	0	412
Income	0	487
Plus Fund Balance as at 1st January 2007	4,883	4,396
Less Transfer to General Account	4,883	0
Balance as at 31st December 2007	0	4,883

6. PROJECT ASSISTANCE FUN

Income		
Royalties Penguin Field Guide	5,367	5,581
Interest	16,976	9,732
Projects Cancelled	0	1,230
Surplus A.O.C	0	14,856
TOTAL RECEIPTS	22,343	31,399
Expenditure	5	
Projects Approved	0	5,333
Regional Allowances Grants	3,180	4,957
State of NZ Birds	3,808	765
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6,988	11,055
Surplus/(Deficit)	15,355	20,344
Plus Balance as at 1st January 2007	123,247	102,903
Balance as at 31st December 2007	138,602	123,247

7. MEADOWS ATLAS MEMORIAL FUND

Income		
Sales - Atlas	16,879	0
Sales - Atlas Information	14,310	3,625
ICPB Payment	65,000	0
Donation - Atlas Launch		
Batson Printers	1,035	0
General	458	1,045
Interest	7,486	7,597
Transfer from General Account		
Atlas Launch Contribution	2,753	0
Total income	107,921	12,267
Expenditure		
Atlas Inputs	44,251	48,077
Atlas Printing	108,122	0
Atlas Postage & Packaging	16,133	0
Transfer to General Account	0	0
Administration Charge	0	4,807
Atlas Launch	3,788	0
Total expenditure	172,294	52,884
Surplus/(Deficit)	(64,373)	(40,617)
Balance as at 1st January 2007	54,347	94,964
Balance as at 31st December 2007	(10,026)	54,347

8. LIBRARY RESERVE

Income		
Charges	278	0
Donation	350	0
Interest	321	147
Transfer from General Account	1,000	1,000
Total income	1,949	1,147
Expenditure		
Journals	1,871	1,502
Surplus/(Deficit)	78	(355)
Balance as at 1st January 2007	2,331	2,686
Balance as at 31st December 2007	2,409	2,331

9. CONTRACTS ACCOUNT

Income	2007	2006
Wader Report	15,979	23,978
Wader Surveys	7,520	44,000
Agriculture & Fisheries Surveys	24,500	0
Total income	47,999	67,978
Expenditure		
Wader Equipment & Status Reports	5,500	7,750

Agriculture & Fisheries Survey	18,010	0
Transfers	0	0
To General Account	12,243	23,250
Administration Fees	0	12,500
Grant Kakapo Issue	0	35,753
Total expenditure	35,753	43,500
Surplus/(Deficit)	12,246	24,478
Balance as at 1st January 2007	110,554	86,076
Balance as at 31st December 2007	122,800	110,554

STATEMENT OF BALANCES AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2007

Members Funds		
General Account	24,585	(6,911)
Life Membership Reserve	20,209	17,505
Library Reserve	2,409	2,331
Members Funds	47,203	12,925
Restricted Funds		
Sir Robert Falla Memorial Award		0
4,779 AT Edgar Junior Memorial Award	0	0
4,883 Project Assistance Fund	138,602	123,247
Meadows Memorial	(10,026)	54,347
Contracts Fund	122,800	109,554
Restricted Funds Liabilities	251,376	296,810

TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS & LIABILITIES

298,579	309,785
Assets	
Bank	8,380
Accounts Receivable	4,943
Advances	750
Investments BNZ	80,000
Investments Auckland Mortgage Trust	190,000
Library Account	35,063
G.S.T	2,550
SUB TOTAL	321,686

Less Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	13,550
Subscription in Advance	9,557
Goods & Service Tax Due	0
SUB TOTAL	23,107
NET TOTAL OF ASSETS	298,579

M.P Nee Treasurer

NOTE TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2007

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

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

a. Subscription Income

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

b. Royalty Income

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

c. Interest Earned

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

d. Goods & Service Tax

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

1. RESERVES

a. Life Membership

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

2. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

	2007	2006
Royalties Penguin	2,900	1,800
Interest BNZ	268	385
Auckland Mortgage Trust	0	2,094
Notornis Charges	1,700	0
Southern Bird	75	0
TOTAL	4,943	4,279

Valuation

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

2. The accounts show income from sales mainly of the older holdings at AGM. For pens and surplus Notornis it is anticipated sales of up to \$800 will be made annually.

3. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Audit Fee accrued	800	800
2007 Notornis & Postage	12,750	0
TOTAL	13,550	800

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2007

4. NOTORNIS & SOUTHERN BIRD REFUNDS

Notornis / Library Exchanges	1,700	1,700
Papers in Notornis	1,700	2,276
Southern Bird Adverts	150	295
TOTAL	3,550	4,271

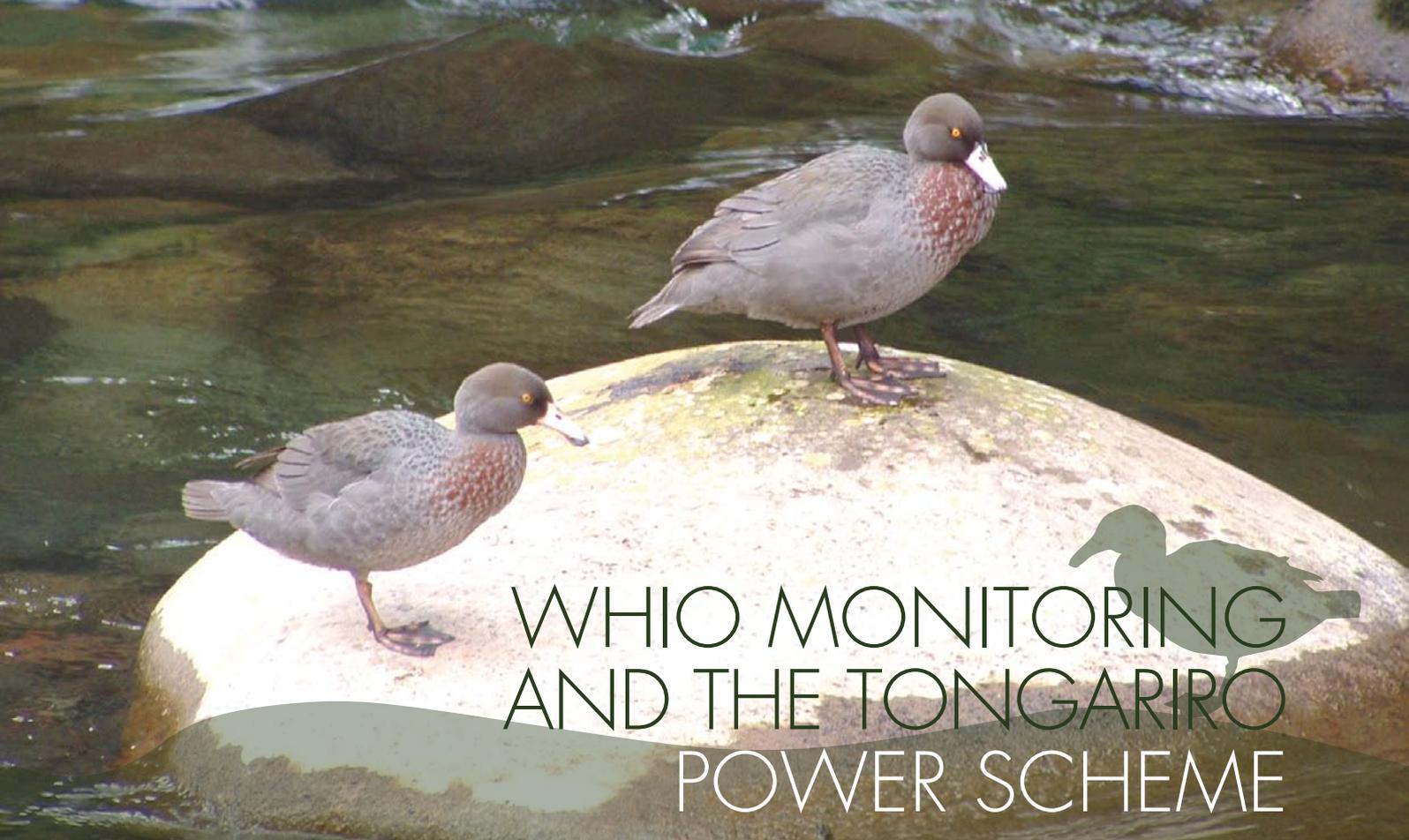
5. PROJECT ASSISTANCE FUND GRANTS MADE

Payments 2006	0	5,333
Regional Patrol Grants	3,180	4,957
State of NZ Birds	3,808	765
TOTAL	6,988	11,055

6. CASHFLOW STATEMENT

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





WHIO MONITORING AND THE TONGARIRO POWER SCHEME

An adult pair of Blue Ducks. The male is at the rear with the slightly darker head colouring, larger size and more chestnut mottling on breast (Photo – K. Oates).

As the stream follows a cobbled and coarse riverbed, it progressively sweeps over the broken water and settles in ponds of calm matter where the surrounding border is perfectly lined with riparian foliage. Here, in the summer, the water banks are shaded sufficiently enough to disguise them from being ideal habitats for excessive algal growths, and in the winter, enough sunlight is allowable to maintain a temperature in the water to promote aquatic invertebrate production.

The majority of the channel is made up of mammoth boulders looking as though they were poured into the river by very large hands. They cluster into large piles randomly throughout the water and dark lichen wraps around their concrete coloured bodies while small butterflies bask their wings upon the hot surfaces before being lifted off by a breeze encouraged by the waters current. The clarity of the water is as if it was distilled making it look like pure vodka. Even during turbulence it reflects the light from the surface onto the underside of overhanging leaves transforming them into glowing figures of movement.

The water here is controlled naturally by rainfall and drought, creating enough floods in the spring to flush away surplus aquatic vegetation and promote invertebrate life, and enough drought in the summer to create a flawless environment for offspring to live and grow without the threat of being washed away.

There are trout beneath the rapids with rainbows on their backs. But rarely seen are the fish that contribute to the areas

popularity in recreational angling. A duck paddles through the current and wades in shallow water between large rounded stones. He ruffles his bluecorn feathers and watches the water pass by around his very large webbed feet with eyes coloured like the richest of amber.

Suddenly, he dunks his head beneath the tranquil water and pecks at the submerged gravel disturbing whatever stability those small rocks held together. As he rises out of the water, his tapered bill gleans a mouthful of satisfying mayfly nymphs and the bird swallows his meal without even considering its significance. Shaking the drops of water from his nearly water-resistant head plumage, he casually releases a high-pitched; yet at the same time composed, whistle through his bill. "Weeee-oo".

Within a kilometre of the single male, there are six other groups of Whio (Blue Ducks), five of them with broods of at least four each. The ducks here manage to sustain a population sufficient enough to replace those lost through natural causes without the aid of human interference. It is about now that you ask yourself, where such a flawless and absolute ecosystem could exist today considering the current significance for energy?

The reason for such an idyllic environment is because it is not today, it is 1956. This was the year that rumour began of a hydro scheme being created within the Tongariro River (later known as the Tongariro Power Development), which would play a significant role in New Zealand's post-war economic expansion.

It wasn't until the late 1960's that the public was officially informed and construction began on the western diversion including rivers such as the Mangatepopo, Whanganui and Whakapapa.

As work progressed into the 1970's and even early 1980's, the Tongariro and the Moawhango Rivers were included in the project. During the late 1980's the Department of Conservation first conducted a breeding season survey, and concern began to arise surrounding the effect of water take from certain rivers on the productivity and dispersal of the Blue Duck.

In the early 1990s, ECNZ (Genesis Energy's predecessor) began work to renew its resource consents for the Tongariro Power Scheme (TPS). This initiated a lengthy process of consultation with many parties, including the Department of Conservation (DoC) and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (Forest and Bird). DoC and Forest and Bird



When calling the head and neck is extended and the bill 'blushes' pink (Photo – K. Oates).



>>> CONTINUED PAGE 12

ABUNDANT

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Glen Ericson, Territory Wildlife Park

Mt Borradaile - birdlife

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A juvenile male Blue Duck colour-banded on the Tongariro River. Note the dull eye and bill colour and last remnants of down around the face (Photo – K. Oates).

were concerned primarily with the effects of the TPS on the environment and especially the impact of the TPS on Blue Duck and their habitat.

DoC, Forest and Bird and Genesis Energy agreed to a mitigation package that included the release of minimum flows below the Mangatepopo and Whanganui intakes on the Western Diversion of the TPS and the establishment of the Central North Island Blue Duck Conservation Charitable Trust, which was launched on 16th August 2002. The Trust (which has gifted \$500,000 up front to Blue Duck research, will provide a further \$500,000 after five years, and another \$500,000 after ten years), provides for ongoing projects to enhance, protect and promote Blue Duck populations, their habitat and natural character, including the investigation of what key factors are affecting the rate of continued existence such as presence and population of aquatic invertebrates, flow regimes, base flow rates and predation on and surrounding susceptible rivers during nesting times.

Finally in 2003, under a Genesis Energy initiative, an Environmental Consultancy based in Ohakune called Enviro Research commenced monitoring of Blue Duck populations on sections of the main rivers below their intake structures. The monitoring was established to determine specifically how regulated flow regimes will safeguard Blue Duck habitat on rivers both in the Western and Eastern Diversions by conducting annual census surveys, an essential part of environmental monitoring associated with the Tongariro Power Scheme's resource consent operations.

CO-OPERATIVE APPROACH:

Because DoC Biodiversity Staff also study Blue Ducks on parts of the Western Diversion river system to initiate their blue duck conservation strategy for the Central North Island, Enviro Research, Genesis and DoC formed a mutual agreement on the allocation of river sections for each party that was rational, realistic and valuable in terms of data collection, data sharing and the purpose of the data collected.

While DoC's work focuses on sections immediately below the Mangatepopo, Whanganui and Whakapapa intakes, the Genesis monitoring range undertaken by Enviro Research includes sections of the Whakapapa and Whanganui Rivers almost to their confluences, and the Rangipo Reach of the Tongariro River from Rangipo Dam to the Poutu intake.

If a pre-determined number of ducklings are counted during the annual census surveys then Enviro Research undertakes catching and colour banding of all juveniles and any un-banded adults within a defined study area where each rivers physical characteristics make banding practical. This is also in co-operation with DoC staff as four to six people are required to safely catch birds in mist nets placed across each river. Birds are fitted with one numbered metal band and a unique three colour combination that denotes their origin, age, and individual name.

The entire project involves two visits to each section of river

during early December and making a way downstream (or upstream if you're real keen) from a start to a finish point either by walking, tubing or kayaking depending on the rivers size and hydrology. Without trying to count the same duck twice, large amounts of data are collected, which later translates into valuable information such as, population trends, dispersal data, adult and juvenile survival rates, chick productivity, and recruitment tendency.

WESTERN DIVERSION RESULTS:

Beginning with the Western Diversion and utilising the most recent study report (December 2006), the establishment of the following base flow rate changes were taken into account.

Whakapapa increased to 3 cumecs (cubic metres per second) in 1992

Mangatepopo increased to 0.5 cumecs on 1st December 2004

Whanganui increased to 0.3 cumecs on 1st December 2004

The current monitoring work began in December 2003, with one other comparable survey undertaken by NIWA (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) in December 1998, providing an opportunity to compare duck numbers before and after the increase in minimum flows that occurred in 2004.

Results show that the increase of flow on the Mangatepopo stream and Whanganui River have had a positive affect on Blue Duck density and distribution, with an increase in the number of pairs using the total length of each river.

Unfortunately, an inverse trend of overall decline since 2003 has been recorded on the Whakapapa River where the flow regime has remained constant since 1992. The Department of Conservation has conducted research, which has shown that predation of nesting females, eggs and nestlings has impacted on the density of Blue Ducks in the section of river immediately below the Whakapapa intake, which provides little or no recruitment back into the wider river population. The research involved catching a sample of female ducks and fitting tiny transmitters to their backs, so that they could be tracked back to their nesting site. Once all nests were located, infrared cameras were installed to monitor any predation that was occurring on eggs, nestlings and adult ducks themselves. The results of that initial investigation endorsed the need for aerial pest control which creates a large scale knock-down of mustelids (Stoats and Ferrets) through secondary by-kill, followed by intensive predator trapping along the river banks. The aim of this work is to ensure that, at minimum, 30 inter-relating pairs of ducks survive within the Whanganui catchment in the long-term with a minimum of management. Thirty inter-relating pairs are deemed the minimum density for sustained population survival.

FIGURE 1: ADULT POPULATION TRENDS ON WESTERN DIVERSION STREAMS (1998-2006).

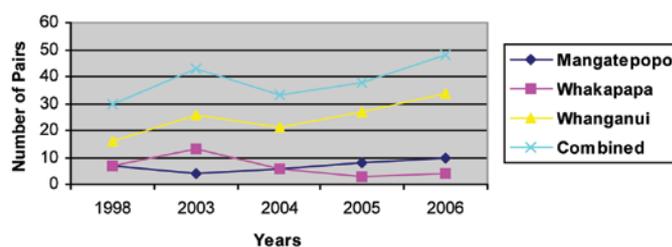


Figure 1 shows that on the Mangatepopo stream and the Whanganui River there has been a consistent linear increase in the number of breeding pairs since 2004 (when the increased minimum flows became operational). There has been a consistent linear decrease on the Whakapapa since 2003 with a slight recovery between 2005 and 2006.

A fluctuating pattern of annual productivity on the Western Diversion streams between 1998 and 2006 was also noted, with total breeding failure occurring in 1998 (a year where the weather was dominated by the southern oscillation). However, the highest annual production occurred in 2006, in a season where an El Nino weather event also occurred. This coincided with a large possum control operation occurring in Tongariro Forest that will have undoubtedly contributed to higher nesting success and survival as a result of secondary by-catch reducing Blue Duck predation.

Spring freshes (or flood events) have been cited as a major contributing factor in poor nesting success (Williams; 1991),

and 2006 was no exception with large stage rises occurring throughout the Western Diversion during October and November.

However, these results indicate that Blue Ducks on the Western Diversion streams are capable of high fledging rates during spring freshes, and may have adapted to the fluctuating flow rates that occur in these rivers. Furthermore, 2006 was an exceptionally successful breeding season and this is likely to be due to a number of factors including the increased predator control (provided by DoC through a significant aerial drop of 1080 poison along the rivers boundaries), a lack of freshes impacting on early nesting attempts, and the increase in base flows on the Whanganui River and Mangatepopo stream providing more suitable 'in-stream' habitat, which would have resulted in a higher density of pairs attempting to breed.

These results must be considered a small sample in terms of the number of years of survey after the increased flow regime. With only three years of monitoring data post-increased flows, it is too early to determine to what extent the increased flows have affected pair density and annual productivity rates in the long-term.

TONGARIRO RIVER RESULTS:

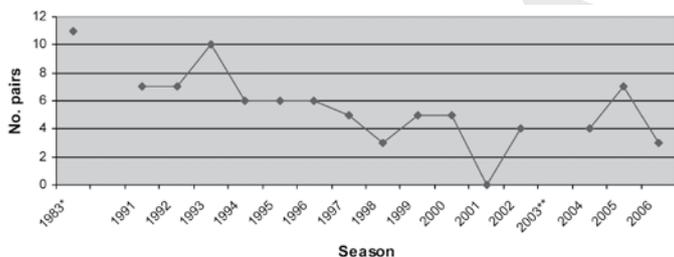
Two fundamental factors that have affected the population on the Tongariro River are two events that both occurred during the year of 1995. First of all in late winter, the minimum flow of the Tongariro was reduced to just 0.6 cumecs from the Rangipo Dam. In conjunction with this, the events following the eruption of Mt Ruapehu in October 1995 further added pressure upon the population through high levels of ash fallout creating suspended sediment transported along the reach, which was exacerbated by a series of flushing flows conducted between November 1995 and August 1996 depleting invertebrate food sources available to blue ducks. Because both events occurred in quick succession, it is difficult to say whether both affected Blue Duck numbers, or to what extent.

On the Tongariro River, Enviro Research has counted blue ducks within the Rangipo Reach twice in December during the years 2004-2006. The Department of Conservation counted the same reach during the years 1991-2002 providing comparisons between pre and post-reduced flow in 1995. The underlying population trend of the Rangipo Reach has remained one of highly variable pair density and distribution, and research has shown that blue ducks in the Rangipo Reach have a much wider genetic variation than denser more stable populations like those on Western Diversion streams. This shows that the Tongariro population has been reliant upon input (immigration) from outlying populations.

In 2006, a 50% reduction in adult Blue Duck density was recorded compared with 2005, yet is comparable with most survey years since 1994 (Figure 2).

The following figure concludes the number of pairs within the Rangipo Reach of the Tongariro River (1983-2006). The gaps shown on the graph indicate the year in which monitoring was not undertaken (2003) or the data received from surveys was considered unreliable for comparative purposes (1984-1990).

FIGURE 2: ADULT POPULATION TRENDS ON THE RANGIPO REACH (1983-2006.)



This graph shows how the density of Blue Duck pairs has steadily declined since 1983, with one aberrant year in 1993. It is interesting to note that in 1993 the scheme was shut down for maintenance and the river flowed naturally. There was a period of stability between 1994 and 1996, and then a downward trend occurred following the eruptions of Mt Ruapehu and the reduced flow rate. The number of pairs fell to zero in 2001 after some fluctuation, and then slowly increased up to 2005 where numbers

were comparable with the early 1990s, but continue to fluctuate with a marked reduction recorded in 2006.

Enviro Research has shown through their banding operations that more birds are detected when more time is spent on the main stem. It seems that two 'float through' surveys in December are insufficient to detect all birds present, however banding occurs at a time when dispersing juveniles are likely to be seeking suitable habitat in which to settle thus boosting numbers present in late summer. Furthermore there is a complex relationship between tributary streams with more stable flows, and the main stem of the Tongariro which can fluctuate markedly. The territories of many pairs utilise sections of tributary streams and the main stem, and they can easily remain undetected unless tributaries are surveyed at the same time.

Recreational releases (a controlled release of water from dams on rivers used for recreational and environmental purposes) occur on both the Whakapapa River and the Tongariro River, however on the Tongariro, these may double in flow to deplete periphyton (algal blooms) build up in late summer.

The dates for recreational releases are set in agreement between Genesis Energy and the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association, and are timed to avoid disturbance to the nesting or brood-raising phases of the annual blue duck breeding cycle.

It is not known how flows, particularly recreational releases that occurred in September, affected blue duck productivity in the Rangipo Reach during the 2006/2007 breeding season. But the natural freshes on 29/9/06 (79.34 cumecs), and 18/10/06 (123.07 cumecs), may well have impacted on nests and/or chick survival for pairs breeding in the main stem of the Tongariro.

Furthermore the Tongariro population is considered a 'sink' population i.e. reliant on immigration from one or more outlying 'source' populations for recruitment and sustainability. Sink populations usually occupy poor quality habitats where productivity is insufficient to sustain the population. Under such conditions, unless sinks receive migrants from one or several sources, they will eventually become extinct. Immigration and emigration levels for the Tongariro population are not known, but it would appear from the fluctuations in numbers seen since 1998, that these levels heavily influence the number of resident adults recorded in the December census surveys.

IN CLOSING:

Considering the clearance of forests for farming, the development and damming of rivers for hydro electric power, the introduction of mammalian predators, and the hunting pressure posed by Maori and early European explorers, the range of the Blue Duck has become greatly limited and fragmented.

The projects conducted around the country, and especially within the Central Plateau, have made a huge contribution to the information and knowledge that can be released for education on blue duck survival.

Funding of these projects by the Blue Duck Conservation Charitable Trust and Genesis Energy has made it so much easier for this research to be conducted in what must be described as a difficult and demanding working environment for bird study.

Enviro Research has contributed to the greater pool of information through their investigations of how changes in base flow rates of significant rivers in the Central Plateau adequately safe guard blue duck habitat. Although the riverine working environment can be physically challenging, Enviro Research along with their DoC colleagues and local volunteers find the work particularly rewarding.

As long as the rugged Moawhango, trout-favoured Tongariro, tap-dancing Mangatepopo, historic Whanganui and ancestral Whakapapa rivers continue to flow with inconvenient restrictions, the Blue Duck will continue to remain within their boundaries because this is Whio territory. We expend and commit our time to make this territory a better place for our \$10 note duck, and hope that soon it can live in harmony alongside technology's firm grasp on the environment.

Even though the rivers in our area still have the ability to take ones breath away with intriguing land features, refreshing water falls, pumping rapids, and endless photographic opportunities, even I find myself dreaming of back in the day, when Blue Ducks wouldn't have been given the privilege of a second glance.

SASHA STIER *Research Assistant Enviro Research Ltd.*
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This feature contains unchecked reports. Some sightings require confirmation by the OSNZ Rare Birds Committee

Searching using a 'kiwi dog' around Arthur's Pass township found four **Great Spotted Kiwi** in two days. The best find was finding a chick sharing a burrow with male and female adults (a fairly unusual arrangement). This suggests that the pest-control work being done in the area by a team of community volunteers is paying off. However the chick was taken for raising in captivity until it reaches what is regarded as the predator-safe weight of 1,000 to 1,200 g. It is estimated that 15-18 Great Spotted Kiwi currently live near the village.

After last being recorded in the 1920s, the confirmation of the recent re-discovery of **Beck's Petrel** has been made with the publication of details in the *Bulletin of the British Ornithologist's Club*. Beck's Petrel is a tropical *Pseudobulweria* species and sightings were made in the Bismarck Archipelago north-east of Papua New Guinea. The most concentrated group of sightings were off Cape St George on the southern tip of New Ireland, but the species could breed on any number of small islands and atolls in the area. Juveniles of the species were observed, and a freshly-dead young bird becomes only the third specimen of the species.

Two **New Zealand Storm Petrels** were caught in the Hauraki Gulf in November, bringing to seven the number caught since the species rediscovery in 2003. It was planned to fit the birds with transmitters in an attempt to discover their breeding area, but neither bird was showing signs of breeding so they were released without being so fitted.

Chatham Petrels have returned to the main Chatham Island with the translocation of 43 chicks from Rangatira to artificial burrows in the Sweetwater Conservation Covenant in the south of the island. This follows on from the success of an earlier translocation of birds to Pitt Island in 2002-4, where seven pairs of the species have bred since.

Chatham Island Taiko have been found to have a large preponderance of unattached males in the population, with 95% of non-breeding birds being that sex. It is thought that since males return to their natal breeding area, and females wander more, that a low population both in terms of size and density is making it difficult for the males to attract females. It is hoped that by increasing the species's density in the Sweetwater Conservation Covenant secure breeding site by playing recordings and translocating chicks this will have a positive effect on its conservation status. This year a record 13 chicks fledged after translocation from the Tuku Nature Reserve.

Blue Ducks have bred on Flora Stream (Nelson) for the first time in a decade. Recent work translocating the species and trapping stoats in the area seems to be paying off with the increase in numbers of the duck from one lone male three years ago to three pairs there now.

After being translocated there between March and May 2007, a pair of **Shore Plovers** has surprised those working on the species by breeding on Mana Island early this summer. It is hoped the species will thrive on the predator-free island. Birds wandering from the island have graced nearby Green Point/Titahi Bay and Petone on the mainland, and wandered as far as the Manawatu Estuary and Blenheim. One bird returned to its home aviary at Mount Bruce. Twenty more birds were translocated to Mana in late February this year.

Twenty **Chatham Island Snipe** were released into the Ellen Elizabeth Preece Conservation Covenant on Pitt Island in April, thus making them accessible to the public (though the reserve is on private land) for the first time in many years. The species survived at one stage only on Rangatira, though was the subject of a successful transfer to Mangere Island in 1970. Both these latter islands are reserves closed to the public.

Seven **Kakapo** chicks hatched in March on Codfish Island, the first breeding there in three years. All the chicks were sent to Nelson for hand-rearing as the Rimu fruit on Codfish Island did not ripen this year. The seven hatchlings take the Kakapo population to 92 individuals. There are plans again this spring for Kakapo Encounter tours on Ulva Island. See www.stewart-island-news.com/kakapo.html or phone (03) 219-1400 for more information.

Red-crowned Parakeets from Little Barrier Island have been released on Motuihe Island in the Hauraki Gulf, just 15 km from downtown Auckland. This is the second species of bird to be re-introduced to the island following the release there of Saddlebacks in 2005.

A further 14 captive-bred **Orange-fronted Parakeets** were translocated to Maud Island in late February, bringing the number translocated there to 43. Some nesting activity was noted from the birds translocated there in 2007. A bonus for those working on Maud Island at the moment is watching the species feeding on the lawn in front of the ranger's house.

A further 52 **Stitchbirds** were translocated to the Ark in the Park in the Waitakere Ranges in late May, following on from 59 released there in 2007. The newly released birds have been noted at feeding stations provided for them, and it is hoped they will settle down and breed as quickly as the first cohort did.

Most birdwatchers have commented on how quiet this summer/autumn has been for unusual birds. Nevertheless some were present, and there was always the added interest of a reasonable number of banded and flagged waders, with studies on these birds ongoing at present.

A juvenile **Lesser Frigatebird** seen at Taharoa (Waikato) was the prime suspect in the demise of a New Zealand Dotterel chick on the beach there. Continuing the tropical initial theme a **Red-tailed Tropicbird** was noted flying past Anchor Bay, Tawharanui on 24/3. The long-returning **Glossy Ibis** came back to Travis Wetland (Christchurch) in early March, for the tenth year in a row. Two **Chestnut-breasted Shelducks** (a drake and a duck), possibly long-stayers from 2006's influx were at Greenpark Sands (Lake Ellesmere) on 8/12. Wandering **Brown Teal** were recorded from Little Waihi (Bay of Plenty), up to two from January to March. A possible **Brolga** was seen flying down the Waimakariri River near Mt White bridge (Arthur's Pass) in early March. A **White-tailed Sea Eagle** was reported (with photos) from the extensive Queenstown/Twizel area between November 2007 and February, if accepted this will constitute a new bird on New Zealand's list. On the subject of raptors the **Black Kite** at Renwick (near Blenheim) seems to have stayed throughout the period – though people don't seem to report it very often these days. A **Black Falcon** was reported from Maketu (Bay of Plenty) in April and a **Nankeen Kestrel** was at Winton (Southland) from 9/6.

A **Mongolian Dotterel** in full breeding plumage was at the Cow Island area of Awarua Bay (Southland) on 3/12, with another on Papanui Spit (Kaipara Harbour) on 9/2 and 2/3, and one on nearby Big Sand Island on 9/3 and 7/6. For comparison a **Large Sand Dotterel** was also at the Cow Island area of Awarua Bay on the same day as the Mongolian Dotterel. Another Large Sand Dotterel was at Miranda on 30-31/12 and up to four were on the South Manukau in autumn. One of the wandering Mana Island **Shore Plovers** was at the Manawatu Estuary from 2/1, with others gracing the more usual sites of Green Point and Waikanae in autumn. Also gracing the Manawatu Estuary was a washed-out **Grey Plover** off and on from 14/2 to mid-May, with another at the Kokota Sandspit (Far North) on 25/2.

The multiple-returning Hamilton **Japanese Snipe** seems to have come back for another year with a bird reported at Rotokaeo/Forest Lake, Minogue Park in that city from early January. Two **Great Knots** were at the Papanui Spit (Kaipara Harbour) on 9/2, with one there on 2/3 and 9/3, and one across the harbour at Big Sand Island on 9/3 and 7/6. Four **Sanderlings** were counted at the head of Awarua Bay on 3/12. A bird tentatively identified as a **Little Stint** was on the South Manukau in April. Miranda briefly hosted a **Little Whimbrel** on 31/12. The Manawatu Estuary hosted a breeding-plumaged female **Hudsonian Godwit** in late March. A **Siberian Tattler** stayed at the Ashley Estuary for a few months from its discovery on 11/12 and up to three were on the South Manukau Harbour in early autumn. One of the **Wandering** form of this species pair was at the end of Kaikoura Peninsula on 29/2, with another in the South Manukau Harbour on 7/3. A Marsh Sandpiper was at Miranda on 14-16/5. Miranda also played host to a **Terek Sandpiper** this summer (as it usually does) and another was reported from another regular site for the species, Big Sand Island (Kaipara) on 9/3.

Unahi (near Awanui, Far North) was the site for a **White-winged Black Tern** on 20-25/4. At Miranda a **Gull-billed Tern** flew in front of the hide on 12/12, then chose to roost on the furthest shellbank away from birders' prying telescopes. Akaterere Point (Far North) was the venue for a fly-by **Sooty Tern** on 23/2. A **Common Tern** was in the tern roost at the tip of Kaitorete Spit (Lake Ellesmere) on 9/2, with one on the Manawatu Estuary tern roost on 22/3.

Continuing the rash of recent sightings of the species, six **Crested Pigeons** were reported in April from Gardiners Road in Christchurch. A private site in the Far North near Kaitaia held no less than three **Barn Owls** from at least April onwards, though one bird was taken into care after injuring its wing. It is conjectured that they either flew together as a group from Australia, or may have bred. Two **Spine-tailed Swifts** were reported from the Heathcote area of Christchurch in March. Two Fairy Martins took up long-term residence at Tawharanui Open Sanctuary north of Auckland in late March and early May. Two **Laughing Kookaburras** were reported from Puramahoi (Golden Bay) on 9/4, possible vagrants from across the Tasman. The most unfortunate rare bird award for 2007 surely goes to the **Dollarbird** that was found squashed flat on a road near Kariotahi (South Auckland) in late December.

Sources: *What's Up DoC* email newsletter, *Birding-NZ* email group, *BirdLife News Alert*, *e-Wrybill*, @DoC Canterbury e-newsletter.





Far North

It has been an eventful autumn in the Far North, beginning with the March indoor meeting when Ian and June Wilson gave us a presentation on their trip last year to Spitzbergen, one of the most northerly accessible places in the world.

Later in March Detlef and Carol travelled south to Tawharanui to join the bird survey there over Easter weekend organised by Suzi Phillips. At least 16 of us stayed in the bunkhouse and assessed the numbers of self-introduced Bellbirds, and various other species like Whiteheads and Robins recently brought in following pest control and the erection of the predator-proof fence. The trip coincided with the presence of two Fairy Martins and a brief encounter with a Red-tailed Tropicbird.

An extended pelagic in early April gave us four days of very exciting Far North birding when Ian Wilson and Detlef Davies joined a seabird bonanza to the Three Kings, organised by Sav Saville and Brent Stephenson. Seven of us plus skipper 'Tank' Barker headed out of Houhora and recorded 30 species of pelagic seabirds including White-necked, Black-winged, Kermadec and Gould's Petrels, Long-tailed, Brown and South Polar Skuas, Red-tailed Tropicbird and Grey Ternlets. The hauling in of a two-metre Striped Marlin on the last day was an added bonus.

The two Barn Owls at Kaitaia are still present as I write. A White-winged Black Tern was at Awanui Wharf for a few days in April; the Spoonbill roost there is now well over 200 and up to 20 Cattle Egrets are also in the area.

John Dowding visited our area in early April to present a Dotterel Workshop at Aroha Island. This was organised by DoC but OSNZ publicised the event to the extent that 33 people attended; a great result for a region which is home to a large proportion of the New Zealand Dotterel population.

DoC advisory scientist, Tony Beauchamp gave a presentation at our meeting on 2nd May (our belated April meeting). He spoke about Weka and their increases, declines and distribution. He went on to tell us about Hochstetter's Frogs, which prompted the idea of arranging a day's 'frogging' sometime. We had another meeting at our alternative venue, Bill Campbell's house in Coopers Beach, on 16th May when Detlef and Carol repeated their illustrated talk on Borneo and Kevin Matthews showed us a recent selection of photos including some of dragonflies and other insects.

Carol arranged an OSNZ display in the entrance to Kerikeri library for a fortnight for which we provided as many posters, books, publications and photos as we could find. This seems to have been very well received and is a good way of promoting and marketing the Society.

DETLEF DAVIES

Auckland

Associate Professor Don Dearborn visiting from Bucknell University (USA), speaking at our March meeting related his experiences of working on Tern Island in the North-western Hawaiian Islands group. This 14 ha island, located almost halfway between Midway Island and Honolulu, was almost completely transformed into an airstrip by the US Department of Defence during WW2. The airstrip is now much smaller, with restoration activities benefiting thousands of seabirds, hundreds of turtles and dozens of Hawaiian Monk Seals that breed and rest on the island. Don's images of the seabirds were staggering; for example 45,000 Sooty Terns nesting at a density of approximately four pairs per square metre!

For our April meeting, we welcomed Detlef Davies from the winterless north to continue our tropical theme with a talk about his visit to Borneo. His travels took him through a range of habitats, including montane forest, lowland rain forest and coastal forest. Although focussing on the birdlife, it is clear that throughout the visit Detlef was in awe of the wealth of biodiversity. We were fortunate to share this experience through images portraying this diversity of life: bats, lizards, frogs, dragonflies and orchids in particular.

Michael Anderson, a post-graduate student from the Ecology and Conservation group of Massey University, Auckland, was our guest speaker in May. He presented some interesting aspects of brood parasitism between cuckoos and their hosts. Michael's talk introduced brood parasitism in birds generally before presenting aspects of his study on the relationship between Grey Warbler and Shining Cuckoo. The complexity of the relationships and evolution of egg and nestling mimicry drew intense interest amongst members.

Some exciting sightings for the region were the recorded by members during bird surveys in Tawharanui Regional Park north of Auckland over Easter; a number of Fairy Martins and a Red-tailed Tropicbird! The Fairy Martins have been seen subsequently by a number of observers. Destined to be another coloniser from across the ditch, perhaps?

MEL GALBRAITH

South Auckland

Activities in the South Auckland region have continued much as usual this year. Monthly meetings have involved a number of speakers, with the March speaker being Ian Southey, one of our members who showed a range of his photos, mainly of waders but also describing some of his itinerant birding activities in recent years.

In April Dianne Brunton from Massey University in Auckland gave us an illustrated talk on the work that she and her students are doing on communication in birds using sight, sound and scent, and their

relationship to pollination of plants.

Art Polkanov from Auckland Conservancy Office of DoC was the speaker in May. He gave us an insight into his work involving the eradication and control of unwanted bird species in the Auckland region. This is work that occasionally makes the headlines but is clearly a much greater problem than we all realise, with nearly 800 registered bird breeders in Auckland, who either intentionally or unintentionally release birds into the wild, as well as birds coming ashore from ships.

On the field work front the only organised activities since the previous news was the New Zealand Dotterel count in March, which involved counting the post breeding flocks of these birds at all of their known sites on both the east and west coasts. It would appear that the population is still growing, thanks to the many groups of individuals and volunteers monitoring them in their nesting areas.

The bulk of the summer period has been spent by keener members checking for banded and tagged waders as they move around their various feeding areas. During February it was noted that many of the Godwits in the Manukau Harbour had left the southern shores which seemed a strange phenomenon. Over the Easter weekend, Geraldine King was at the southern shell banks of the harbour, where she discovered a number of dead and dying Lesser Knots. Over the next few days, following a search of the shore line around the southern Manukau and at the Whitford and Miranda roosting sites, a total of 72 dead Knots were found.

Several fresh specimens were sent to Massey University for investigation into the possible cause of death, but unfortunately the results were indeterminate, as the tests for the likely suspects are currently not available in New Zealand. It was however believed to be some form of marine bio-toxin which may well explain the Godwits' sudden departure three weeks earlier. Some good news, however, is that 10 of these birds, which were found in a sorry state, were taken to two different bird rescue centres, nursed back to health and subsequently released three weeks later. These released birds were banded with individual marked flags and one of them has since been seen in Australia. We are therefore hopeful that the rest have survived too, and we will be looking out for them in the spring.

Notable bird sightings over the early months of this year were up to three Grey-tailed Tattlers and a Wandering Tattler on the southern Manukau, along with seven Eastern Curlews. In April a strange looking stint was seen on the southern Manukau. It was tentatively identified as a Little Stint but this is still subject to consideration by the Rare Birds Committee. There were also up to four Large Sand Dotterels at that roost.

At Miranda a Hudsonian Godwit was present over the late summer period and a young Black-fronted Tern was present for one morning. Recently a Marsh Sandpiper has resided on the pools, and during the recent Annual General Meeting of the Miranda Naturalists Trust a Bittern landed on the pond outside the Centre building in full view of all these crazy birders, who, if the centre were a boat, would have toppled it for certain.

DAVID LAWRIE

Bay of Plenty/Volcanic Plateau

The 28th February saw the completion of the 14th marsh bird count at Waikaraka Estuary, near Te Puna, with Banded Rails seen in small numbers. One day later two members from our region took part in a combined field trip with Waikato OSNZ members (who outnumbered us by four). Camping at Ohiwa allowed us to partake in the Bay Of Plenty Shorebird Census the following day. After an in-depth assessment of what we found on a beach patrol, we spread out around the harbour and counted thousands of Bar-tailed Godwits, many New Zealand Dotterels, a Fernbird and a Bittern. The Bittern was flushed after a tape of Fernbird calls was played by the oyster farm close to Ohope. A passing British birdwatcher thought all his Christmases had come at once, as these two species were on his must-see list, and he got them inside 20 seconds of one another. Palpatations indeed!

We also visited Whakatane Bird Rescue, where Rosemary Tully showed us her charges, including a New Zealand Pigeon and a Morepork.

In April, I started the next season of field work for the Grey-faced Petrels. We have some very keen youngsters helping us out this year, and we are putting them to good use with 'war-whooping' to attract the birds. It seems the higher the voice is, the more the birds are attracted to it.

On the 9th April, I gave a talk to OSNZ Bay of Plenty detailing the history of the project. Current Grey-faced Petrel Convener, Hugh Clifford is pleased with our field work, with a steady trickle of first-time-back-at-the-colony youngsters fresh from their initial 3-4 year period at sea. We are also catching birds that are at least 20 years old. In May a group of 25 Tauranga Kiwi Conservation Club members were shown around the Mount Maunganui site, whilst the following week it was the turn of Rotorua Forest & Bird members.

Birding highlights this last quarter in the region are a Cattle Egret



which straggled to Mount Maunganui in April; and high numbers of Pacific Golden Plovers and dozens of Banded Dotterels at the Baypark Stadium roost (that Murray Smith can scope from his back yard) in May. Up to six Kaka have been seen in the Katikati and Pahoia areas, signalling a return to the semi rural setting for these itinerant parrots. The roving gangs are part of the "Kaimai Chapter", raiding nut farms and orchards in the cooling days of autumn. Whakamarama has had eight all summer though. There must be some good nuts there.

In April, a Whitehead was reported from the Te Tuhi Track, Kaimai Range; a good record from this bird-barren range. Tui are back on John Groom's persimmon trees, our man on the ground at Matata. He also reports several nests of Kingfishers being taken over my Mynas. Geraldine King reported 13 Blue Ducks from the Whirinaki River in late April, with nice suite of the more common native forest birds in tow. Tim Barnard is currently still seeing a Brown Teal at Little Waihi (April). It is presumed it originates from Mayor Island, where some of the species were recently plonked. Rosemary Tully has had an interesting bird at her Bird Rescue Centre in the form of a Bittern. It was successfully released in April. Also in April a Black Falcon was reported from Maketu by Julian Fitter. He also popped over to White Island seeing numerous shearwater species and a probable Antipodean Wandering Albatross. Ann Graeme and Marlene Ware saw a Falcon sitting on a tree atop Mauao (Mt Maunganui) on 16th May. It flew off to the Matakana pine forests.

PAUL CUMING

Taranaki

In March Mary Stewart from the Taranaki Regional Council outlined their oil spill policy and guidelines. It appears that Maritime NZ would be in charge for a large oil spill, but small ones would be managed locally. Mary spoke about the legal and moral obligations and public expectations that something would be done, also the impacts on recreation, commercial, cultural and physical damage and habitat recovery. It is nice to know that the paper work is in place, but some training for locals on how to handle birds and what to do would not go amiss.

Kris Grabow gave us an update on the Kiwi Recovery Programme for Egmont National Park. Only eight chicks were raised and released this year. She also told us that whilst at Aotuhia collecting Kiwi eggs, Yellow-crowned Parakeets were seen and heard.

Two interesting reports that came in from non members were seventeen Royal Spoonbills at Mokau in late February and a Black Noddy that was found alive at a seaside property in central New Plymouth but unfortunately died.

Kay Rodbard and Heather Ward had a brief but interesting trip to Norfolk Island where a good variety of birds were seen including Scarlet Robin, Red-crowned Parakeet, Wandering Tattler, Turnstone, Whimbrel and Red-tailed Tropicbird.

David Medway reported at the March meeting that Fantails appear to be more plentiful at the moment. Those present at the April meeting following this agreed with his observations. A Wrybill turned up at Waiongana and stayed for several days and Banded Dotterel numbers increased there.

Barry Hartley gave a brief resume of known Variable Oystercatcher breeding success along the coast. Once again success was a bit patchy, with nine fledglings recorded.

March's outing was along the Rerekapa track. Robins were heard and seen, as was a small flock of Whiteheads. *Metrosideros fulgens* was flowering well but wasn't attracting many Tui or Bellbirds.

At the April meeting we received a copy of the Waitaanga Bird Survey done by Dave Bell. The only known wild Kokako in Taranaki was not recorded, so it may not now be alive.

Kerry Matthews and Shay Dean from the Taranaki Regional Council spoke about the council's plans for Umutekai, a small remnant swamp forest on the eastern outskirts of New Plymouth. A monitoring programme with tracking tunnels to identify pest species is underway, and the results of this will determine what pest eradication programme is used.

Kara Pranker outlined her proposed bird survey for Rotokare. Five minute counts at thirty stations will be performed monthly until December if enough volunteers can be found. The survey needs to be underway as soon as possible. She also reported that Californian Quail had been seen at Rotokare; possibly a first record there.

Nine New Zealand Dabchicks were recorded from the Inglewood oxidation ponds, usually a reliable spot for the species. David Medway saw a Morepork at Lake Mangamahoe in daylight being mobbed by Blackbirds. There were 103 New Zealand Scaup and 25 Coots on this lake in early March.

The April outing along the Rahiri track in Egmont National Park turned up few birds; one Rifleman, and a male and female Tomtit being of most interest. It was then on to Lake Mangamahoe, where thirteen native and nine introduced bird species were seen.

Non-members' reports at the May meeting were once again of

interest: a Falcon seen in flight at Moturoa in western New Plymouth; a White Heron reliably reported from the Opunake area in south Taranaki; and also from Opunake seventeen Royal Spoonbills and thirty eight Grey Teal were at the local oxidation ponds.

May's evening talk was a trip to Western Australia, as far south as the Margaret River and Augusta by Julie and me, to visit family. A great time was had (apart from the mosquitoes). We saw the largest and smallest bird species, Emu and Weebill, and many in between. Concern was expressed at the continuing habitat destruction there, especially of saltwater wetlands. A visit to Creery Wetland Ramsar site in Mandurah is a must-do.

While we were away in WA a Pied Oystercatcher and a New Zealand Dotterel settled in at Waiongana, despite the Pied Oystercatcher being continually harassed by the resident Variable Oystercatcher proving that there really is no better place to be in New Zealand!

The field trip in May was a gentle stroll around Barrett Lagoon, a favourite spot on the western outskirts of New Plymouth. Many Tui were seen coming and going from the flowering coastal Banksias.

PETER FRYER

Wanganui

For some years the Wanganui branch of the OSNZ has been in recess. However, in 2007 two new members who joined the group were keen on revitalising the branch again for the purpose of sharing local birding knowledge with regular meetings and email alerts of bird sightings. Peter Frost had newly arrived in Wanganui from Zimbabwe where for many years he had worked as an ecologist with some experience in ornithology. The other new member was myself, who had recently published a book, *New Zealand Birds*, a diverse selection, and in my search for photographic opportunities during the previous two years had met some local OSNZ members whose birding expertise I valued.

The group meets the last Monday of each month. During the last part of 2007 a talk was given by Peter Frost on the African Black Duck, the ecological equivalent of New Zealand's Blue Duck, though not as specialised anatomically. Colin and Robyn Ogle spoke on their trip to South Australia's Gluepot Reserve, 54,000 ha of mallee purchased by Birds Australia in 1997 to protect a range of birds, especially the Black-eared Miner. Ian Bell also spoke on the birds of Queensland. These last two talks reminded us that Australia has a huge cross section of bird species, not just parrots and Emus!

In February Colin Ogle and I presented a PowerPoint on visits to Great Barrier Island. Some birds that are scarce on the mainland are more plentiful there, such as Banded Rail, New Zealand Dotterel, Kaka, Brown Teal and Black Petrel. The March 2008 meeting was a 'show and tell', and Ormond Torr's close-up photos of bird feathers got us all guessing as to what bird they belonged; very well done. Our speaker was unable to get to our April meeting so I was asked to show photos of Norfolk Island and its birds. Although just a tiny island, it contains a wide variety of birds, especially those of sea and shore. Special sightings were Red-tailed Tropicbird, Masked Booby, Greater Frigatebird, Golden Whistler and Nankeen Kestrel.

Wanganui is not on all birders' maps. Nevertheless, we have enjoyed seeing a great variety of birds in our estuary over the last few months. Species recorded include Bar-tailed Godwit, Lesser Knot, Wrybill, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied and Variable Oystercatchers, Caspian, White-fronted, and Black-fronted Terns, as well as the three common shags in this region - Black, Little Black and Little - and the three common gulls. Now that winter is approaching the waders have mostly left (nine or so Bar-tailed Godwits remain) but we are pleased to welcome again over twenty Royal Spoonbill and good numbers of Kingfishers seeking meals of crab.

The Manawatu Estuary is just an hour's drive away from Wanganui and many members have visited there in the past few months. They have been rewarded with sightings of some rare and interesting birds: a Grey Plover; Curlew Sandpiper; Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, a Shore Plover, as well as the usual mix of summer waders.

Some Wanganui members of OSNZ, operating as 'Birding Wanganui', organised and led a very successful summer nature programme of trips to the Manawatu Estuary in January, with 55 people taking part (these trips were a joint venture between DoC and community groups). Many of those that participated enjoyed looking through telescopes and seeing for themselves close-up views of Bar-tailed Godwit, Lesser Knot, Pacific Golden Plover and Wrybill.

A recent visit from an English birder seeking to see as many New Zealand species as possible was especially interesting. He came to us for help in locating Nankeen night herons, only found in New Zealand along the Whanganui River. I directed him to their roosting place where he waited until it was almost completely dark at which time the birds emerged from their day roost to head off fishing for the night. He was 'over the moon' to be able to add another bird to his list, and headed on his way a happy man. His enthusiasm for birding was infectious and I understand typical of many British birdwatchers, a dose of which would be good for many of us New Zealanders.

PAUL GIBSON

Hawke's Bay

The Manawatu Estuary was the destination of a small band of members in March to view the waders before they departed. Although the weather conditions weren't the best, they had a great couple of hours admiring the well-coloured-up wader flock and searching for an



elusive Grey Plover. Highlights were spotting a Curlew Sandpiper in the midst of the wader flock, and everyone managing good views of a Shore Plover. We were pleased to be joined by the Frasers; members from neighbouring Wairoa. They also came along to April's field trip to Ball's Clearing at Puketitiri. The usual bush birds were all seen or heard, including Whitehead. This is a lovely small bush reserve and time was taken to enjoy the trees, plants and a good variety of fungi, as well as the birds.

Jim Hamilton found a Song Thrush nest with hatching eggs on 13th March, and also had a Fernbird in his Gimblett Road vineyard on 3th April. This was quite an unexpected find as there isn't any suitable habitat nearby. Christine McRae regularly sees New Zealand Falcons at the Hastings Golf Club, but also spotted two Falcons flying over her workplace in an urban district of Hastings. John Winters heard a Kaka over the Twyford orchard where he was staying, and then saw it fly overhead on 7th May. He also had some interesting sightings while visiting Mahia on 22th March: at Table Cape there were 52 Turnstones, 43 Bar-tailed Godwits, eight Pacific Golden Plovers and 28 Variable Oystercatchers. In the estuary at Mahia he saw nine Whimbrels, four New Zealand Dotterels and six Royal Spoonbills.

With cold weather conditions in the South Island the coast was searched on May 10th in the hope that Black-fronted Terns may have arrived to spend winter here; however only two were found. Thirty-two Caspian Terns were at Waitangi, including a banded bird. At Ahuriri Royal Spoonbill numbers gradually built up through April, with 54 the maximum number seen. Two were colour-banded.

On the first day of the wildfowl-hunting season the usual large numbers of Grey Teal, Australasian Shovelers, and Black Swans were present on the Westshore Lagoon. In addition five Mute Swans were also present. A Mute Swan with a fully grown cygnet have also graced the Muddy Creek area at Clive. They have been present for a couple of months at the time of writing.

MARGARET TWYDLE

Wairarapa

Donalds' Block, on the eastern shores of Lake Wairarapa, provided some good birding for January's field trip, hosted by the property owner, Jane Gillet. Sighted at the covenanted Haywood Lagoon were Pukeko with chicks, New Zealand Pipits and a shag colony along with a wide variety of other common species. Then, nearer Lake Wairarapa were Black Swan, Pied Stilts and a Black Shag. At the Lake Reserve area, a Black Kite was observed, and later approximately 40 Royal Spoonbills. In a wetland area four New Zealand Dabchicks plus two juveniles were observed. Final sightings were a lone Pied Oystercatcher and an Australasian Shoveler.

Our AGM in February was followed by the presentation by Glen Holland of a data show entitled 'Hyenas to Bee-eaters – a Recent Trip to South Africa. Glen came out from South Africa 10 years ago with his family, and became well known to many members during his three years at the Mount Bruce/Pukaha Wildlife Centre. This time was followed by seven years at Auckland Zoo. Glen has now returned to the Wairarapa from where he is involved in zoo conservation. He leads birding tours to African countries, and is developing a South Pacific Birding Trail modelled on trails already known to New Zealanders such as wine, food and art trails etc. Hyenas to Bee-eaters was a stunning data-show of colourful and amazing birds, their habitat and their bird calls. Glen had always been remembered by our members for his ability to mimic bird calls and, once more, he did not disappoint us with this unique skill. In July two local OSNZ members will be joining an African birding tour led by Glen.

For the March field trip ten people from the Wairarapa attended the 'Farewell to the Birds' at the Manawatu Estuary, now a Ramsar site. After a brief introduction by members of the Manawatu Estuary Trust about 100 people trekked out to the sandspit. Wrybills appeared on the sand prior to the sandspit proper; a prelude to what was to come. The tide was right and excellent views were obtained with the numerous telescopes present. Birds seen were Bar-tailed Godwits, Lesser Knots and Pacific Golden Plovers, with many in their distinctive breeding plumages. Probably the highlight was to see a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, a Curlew Sandpiper, and best of all, a solitary Shore Plover which was unfazed by all the attention. Back at the parking area, the plans for the proposed observatory were viewed. Construction of this is expected to start soon.

In April, Tenick Dennison gave a well-researched talk and video presentation of The History of the OSNZ Wairarapa Region 1988 to 2008. Our foundation members were Tenick and Janet Dennison, Brian Boeson, Jack Luttrell, Colin Scadden, Helen Cook, Dave Sim, Ian Buchanan, Jason Taylor, and Paula and Martin Bell. A course, 'Bird Watching for Beginners' involving eminent lecturers and field work was attended by 21 people, of whom eight to ten were local members. This course stimulated interest and brought in new members. In 1990 a very successful Junior OSNZ camp at Boggy Pond, on Lake Wairarapa was attended by 12 participants (including seven from Wairarapa) plus 16 helpers.

Mist-netting and bird banding, wader counts, Black-fronted Dotterel and New Zealand Dabchick Surveys, field trips to Porangahau, Cape Kidnappers and Ward, Marlborough, were some of the highlights of the following years. In 1995, Colin Scadden organised the first of many minibus birding trips centred around attendance at the OSNZ annual meeting and conference. This first trip was to Stewart Island, and is still recalled with much enthusiasm. One year, our region hosted the OSNZ conference, and did so with creative flair. This event,

too, has become part of the annals of our region. Latterly, our Big Bird Quiz, initiated in 2004, has become another annual highlight.

May's field trip was a bird census and twitchathon at Henley Lake in Masterton. The Henley Lake Trust presented prizes for the twitchathon scores, and the census was, of course, appreciated.

BARBARA LOVATT

Wellington

Foxton Beach was the destination for a number of Wellington members on March 8th for the 'Farewell to the Birds' event at the Manawatu Estuary. They and a large number of birders from the lower North Island were greeted by a very high tide and many shore birds were present. This must surely be the only place in the world where one can see Wrybills next to a Shore Plover, and the Pacific Golden Plovers were looking especially colourful in their breeding plumage. Unfortunately the Grey Plover didn't turn up.

Jennifer Vinton, an MSc student at Victoria University Wellington, told us about her studies on 'Urban flyers – bird movements in Wellington city' in April. Jennifer has carried out a large number of transects through the inner city, noting the numbers of species and individual birds seen. Biodiversity decreases from the relatively leafy suburbs towards the city centre, but biomass, in terms of individual bird numbers, increases towards the city centre. This is because a few introduced species, especially Starlings and Feral Pigeons, are very abundant in the city centre. The work will be useful for those trying to understand the interactions between built environments and birds, and for those trying to connect local 'hotspots', e.g. Karori Sanctuary and Otari-Wiltons Bush, into wildlife-friendly corridors.

For our May talk Raewyn Empson, chief conservation scientist at Karori Sanctuary, brought us up to date on the Stitchbird, Bellbird and Kaka populations at the sanctuary. These three species have been intensively studied by a number of voluntary workers. The good news is that all three populations are showing gradual increases. The bad news is that all three are showing imbalances between males and females. Detailed data on all three species show the ratio of males to females increasing over time. For Stitchbird and Bellbird, female survival rates are significantly lower than male survival rates, in both juveniles and adults. This may be due to males competing for females, thereby stressing the females and leading to increased mortality. Dispersal outside the study area, to get away from pestering males, may also account for decreased female survival.

Initial data from Kaka showed that birds bred more successfully as they became more experienced. However, breeding success then tailed off over time, and one possible explanation is in-breeding as a result of the relatively small founder population. The three species are responding differently to environmental factors; the worst breeding season for each species being 2005/6 for Stitchbird, 2006/7 for Kaka, and 2007/8 for Bellbirds. Further transfers are planned to address the male to female imbalances and to literally introduce new blood. This will prove to be a very interesting and detailed long term study of three endemic species.

Recent surveys on Kapiti Island have shown that Saddlebacks are spreading, and so are Kokako. The spread of Kokako is most dramatically demonstrated by birds being seen around the viewing platform at the trig point, foraging on the ground. New Zealand Falcons are cropping up in a number of Wellington suburbs, and one was recently seen (unsuccessfully) chasing a Red-crowned Parakeet on Matiu-Somes Island.

ANDY FALSHAW

Nelson

The unusual occurrence of four White Herons together on the bank of the Takaka River was photographed by Richard Stocker; it is unusual to see even two together. The nearby salmon farm can attract up to three in winter. On 9th April Richard also saw two Kookaburras sitting on a fence on his farm. Previous records of single birds in the Bay are thought likely to be Australian vagrants rather than North Island birds.

Alec Milne and family, along with DoC and others, have been searching an area in the Kahurangi National Park for a South Island Kokako seen two years ago, but heard by Alec in March this year. Alec was quite unprepared for the depth and richness of this bird's song, which is described as the 'Pavarotti of the forest' and wonders what usurper's rights we claim in pushing such species to extinction.

A family resident in Ligar Bay have enjoyed watching an adult New Zealand Falcon teaching a young bird to catch prey by flying over the bay and dropping a carcass of a recently-caught passerine from the air whence the young Falcon would swoop in and catch it on the wing. On one particular day the juvenile was seen floundering in the water 80 m offshore while a parent bird circled overhead. Fearing the worst the observer launched his kayak in a rescue bid, but returned for gloves to handle the bird. Meanwhile the falcon was making reasonable progress so he stood by as it finally floundered up to



the shore. It proudly dragged the carcass of a Red-billed gull up the beach, cached its kill by a log and flew off, returning about an hour later to dine.

Falcons have also been reported over the properties of Graham Wright in Stoke, and Steve Wood in Lower Moutere. Steve reported seeing a New Zealand Dabchick on a pond close to the coastal highway near Mapua. Also seen in recent weeks have been four Cattle Egrets in the Lower Moutere/Motueka area. David Melville reported a Pectoral Sandpiper on the Bells Island shellbank in mid-March. This bird has been seen on a number of occasions since by others.

At the March meeting Stuart Wood was elected RR for Nelson. He takes over from Steve Wood who had three years in office, and was thanked for his contribution to the region and national OSNZ AGM attendances. Rob Schuckard gave a DVD presentation on the reclamation of the Saemangeum Estuary in Korea. It was a sad reflection on this estuary once teeming with migrant arctic waders. Disaster is the only way to describe the scene at this major stop-over on the East-Asian flyway. David Melville also gave a brief report and showed pictures at the moa dig site in North Canterbury attended by some members of OSNZ earlier this year.

In April Charles Hufflett, owner of Solander Fisheries whose office he makes available for our monthly meetings, gave an informal talk explaining some of the tactics used in the prevention of seabird capture in long line fishing.

In March Pauline Samways once again lead the OSNZ contribution at the invitation of DoC for the Nelson/Tasman District National Seaweek activities on Rabbit Island. Primary school children from the region are made aware of the importance of caring for the seas, oceans and the surrounding coasts. The children at our station learnt about seabirds with the emphasis on the Blue Penguin. Over the three-day event Gillian, Stuart, Pauline and Don taught 21 classes about the seabirds in our area, the threats faced by Blue Penguins and how they could help. We feel good feedback from children, teachers, and parents hopefully made the effort worthwhile.

At May's meeting Rangī Zimmerman and Paulla-Jean Pridham gave a presentation on the monitoring and protection of the breeding Fairy Terns at Waipu. Rangī is on a one-year DoC Ranger course with the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology and was given this duty as part of her work experience. Gwenda Pulham was the mentor for these two women, who became absolutely engrossed in this work. Hence they are now our newest members.

Apart from human disturbance, the elements pose huge problems to Fairy Terns, as witnessed by pictures of eggs buried in sand and even a chick suffocated in one instance. High tides threatened two nests (four eggs), which were rescued. Placing the eggs in a flask and wading back to dry land was a real challenge for Rangī. The eggs were promptly despatched to the Auckland Zoo to hatch. Many subtle tactics were employed to keep the nests safe, including adding shells to extend a shellbank allowing the birds to move back from encroaching tides. An opened-ended bucket was partially buried to give shelter to the chicks during a storm. At some point supplementary feeding was applied but canned Chinese whitebait was not to the chicks' liking, nor to the guardians.

At the end of April some OSNZ members attended a one-and-a-half day workshop organised by the Tasman District Council on the protection of the Waimea Estuary.

A key speaker was Dr. Trevor Partridge who described the successful restoration work done on the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Christchurch. A field visit to sites around the Waimea Estuary showed some positive and some not so positive developments. The declamation of a wood chip site at the MDF (medium density fibreboard) mill in Richmond created much interest.

Fifty-four Wrybills arrived to roost on the Bells Island shellbank in early May. Among them was GM-OB. This particular bird has rarely missed spending a winter here in the past ten years.

DON COOPER

Otago

The Otago region has decided to do a seasonal survey of the birds at the Hawksbury Lagoon. The first cycle will be completed with the winter count in June. So far good numbers of Mallards, Grey Teal, Paradise Shelducks and Shovelers have been counted, with many Pied Stilts in the summer, and single sightings of a Royal Spoonbill and a White Heron. It will be interesting to see if a seasonal pattern emerges as we collect more data.

There seems to have been a lot of bird action off the Otago coast this year. In addition to the usual Northern Royal Albatrosses, White-capped, Buller's and Salvin's Mollymawks and Northern Giant Petrels have been seen off Aramoana. Large numbers of White-fronted Terns and Black-billed Gulls were recorded at Karitane and Warrington, and the feeding of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters just offshore has provided an incredible sight. It seems that more Australasian Gannets

have been seen than in previous years.

From many random reports it seems that Australasian Crested Grebe numbers in Otago are increasing, and the Otago region is looking into the logistics of doing a census next season.

Monthly Indoor Meetings have continued this year with a stimulating variety of speakers. The year was kicked off with a writer's view of Kiwi and other birds by Neville Peat whose latest books will be published this year. We are also fortunate in Otago to have many research students speak to us about their projects. These are always interesting and give many of us new perspectives on bird study.

MARY THOMPSON

Southland

Jamie Wood reported that on Ulva Island (off Stewart Island) on several occasions last summer he observed forest bird species landing on the beach to feed. He saw Tui commonly perched in trees along the coast flying down to quickly take insects from the beach before flying back to the trees. He also saw a Tomtit feeding on invertebrates along the waters edge, taking a photo of the behaviour to prove it.

Neil Robertson from Te Anau reported a solitary Blue Duck on the shore of Lake Manapouri at Supply Bay on October 5th last year, as well as a pair of Grey Ducks in the same vicinity. Neil also observed a pair of Coots on the lower Waiiau River south east of Manapouri.

Lloyd Esler's annual Mason Bay trip turned up 130 New Zealand Dotterels at the mouth of Martin's Creek. This is the largest flock that Lloyd has recorded on his many trips to Mason Bay.

Other reports from Southland include: a White Heron hanging around a bus depot in an Invercargill industrial area and another reported from a suburban garden on the North Road, Invercargill; and an Australasian Bittern reported from the roadside in April at Borland Lodge. The latter was one species that was not seen at this popular spot during Bird Atlas fieldwork.

An ominous sign is an increase in sightings of Canada Geese, with a flock of 120 near Colyers Island in Bluff Harbour. Paul Jacques reported two Large Sand Dotterels and a tattler sp. from Cow Island, Awarua Bay. Finally a Falcon dropped in at Chris and Brian Rances property at Otatara and proceeded to consume a bird that it had just caught.

Trips (held in conjunction with the Natural History Field Club) have visited The Catlins, Bald Hill, the Foveaux Track around Bluff Hill, Colyers Island and Mores Reserve (Riverton).

PHIL RHODES

WE HAVE A NEW EDITOR FOR NOTORNIS: JAMES BRISKIE

James Briskie has been passionate about birds ever since he found his first American Robin nest at the age of six in his home town of Winnipeg, Canada (a passion that has not diminished in the 40+ years since).

Jim currently lectures in the Biology Department at the University of Canterbury, a position he has held since moving to New Zealand just over 10 years ago. He obtained his undergraduate and MSc. degrees from the University of Manitoba, and a PhD from Queen's University in Ontario. Jim then worked at the Universities of Sheffield, Montana and Oxford before making the long flight south.

His research interests range from conservation biology to behavioural ecology, and he has published over 50 scientific papers in these fields. Since 1998, Jim and his graduate students have been studying forest birds in the Kaikoura area and on islands around New Zealand, including the Chathams. Jim has also acted as an Associate Editor for *The Auk* over the last three years; experience which he hopes will help him in his new role as Editor of *Notornis*.

PERSONNEL

Contrary to the information given in the March 2008 issue of *Southern Bird*, Yvonne MacKenzie is not the back issues officer. Roger Sharp is continuing to fill that role. Apologies for any confusion caused.

25TH IOC BRAZIL 2010

The 25th International Ornithological Congress (25th IOC) will take place in Campos do Jordão, Brazil from the 22nd to 28th of August 2010. This is the first time that the IOC is being held in a Latin American country. More than 1,500 participants are expected to come from all over the world and the congress will present an ideal opportunity to meet fellow ornithologists and visit a mega-diverse country. The deadline for submitting proposals for Plenary speakers and Symposia is June 1st. More details can be found at www.i-o-c.org. The Local Committee looks forward to seeing many of our New Zealand colleagues in Campos do Jordão!



Regional Reps and What's On



Far North

Detlef Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri 0470. Ph (09) 407 3874.
Email detlefdavies@yahoo.com

Northland

Katrina Hansen, 3 Harbour View Road, Onerahi, Whangarei. Ph (09) 430 2133. Email katrina.hansen@xtra.co.nz
Evening meetings, second Thursday of the month, ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954. West coast beach patrols ph. Prue Cozens (09) 437 7760. East coast beach patrols ph. Pauline Smith (09) 435 3060. Whangarei Harbour wader count ph. Tony Beauchamp (09) 436 2661. North Kaipara wader count ph. David Crockett (09) 435 0954.

Auckland

Mel Galbraith, 62 Holyoake Place, Birkenhead, Auckland. Ph (09) 480 1958. Email melgar62@slingshot.co.nz
Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month (except January) at 7.45pm at Natural Science Building 23, Unitec, Point Chevalier.

South Auckland

David Lawrie, 52 Mill Road, R D 2, Pukekohe, Auckland. Ph (09) 238 8407. Email lawrie@ps.gen.nz
Evening meetings are held at the Papakura Croquet Clubrooms, 5 Chapel Street, Papakura, on the second Tuesday of each month (Feb-Nov) at 7.45 pm. Beach patrols ph. Wendy Goad (09) 292 7838. Manukau and Firth of Thames censuses ph. Tony Habraken (09) 238 5284

Waikato

Dai Morgan, 78 Grey Street, Cambridge. Ph (07) 823 1990. Email d.k.morgan@massey.ac.nz
Evening meetings, every third Wednesday 7.30pm, DoC Area Office, 5 Northway Street (off Te Rapa Road), Hamilton.
Beach Patrols and Cambridge Lake census, Hugh Clifford ph (07) 855 3751. Hamilton Lake Census, Barry Friend ph (07) 843 6729. Forest Lake Census, Brian Challinor ph (07) 855 2561. Kakepuku Bird Counts and West Coast Harbour Censuses, Laurie Hoverd ph (07) 871 8071. Bird Sightings, Dai Morgan

Bay of Plenty/Volcanic Plateau

Eila Lawton, 449 Lund Road, RD2 Katikati 3063. Ph (07) 549 3646
Email elawton@actrix.co.nz

Gisborne/Wairoa

RR's position vacant.

Hawke's Bay

Helen Andrews, 254 Mangatahi Rd, RD1, Hastings 4171. Ph (06) 874 9426. Email helenandrews@xtra.co.nz
Indoor meetings are held on an irregular basis, but field trips are organised regularly. Please contact Helen Andrews for details.

Taranaki

Barry Hartley, 12a Ronald Street, New Plymouth. Ph (06) 757 8644. Email Barry_Hartley@clear.net.nz
Evening meetings - first Tuesday of the month (exc Jan) 7.30 pm. Field trips on first conducive weekend thereafter.

Wanganui

Tom Teasdale, 33 Paterson Street, Aramoho, Wanganui 4500. Ph (06) 343 9992. Email teasdale.family@clear.net.nz
Evening meetings - last Monday of every month, 7.30pm (unless the day is a public holiday), St Joseph's Hall, 1 Campbell Street. For more details contact Tom Teasdale.

Manawatu

Ian Saville, 23 Duke Street, Feilding. Ph (06) 323 1441. Email binzsav@clear.net.nz
Evening meetings - second Wednesday of Feb, May, Aug and Nov, Lido Centre, Park Street, Palmerston North, 8pm. Beach patrols - first Wednesday of each month and also at other irregular times.

Wairarapa

Barbara Lovatt, 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown. Ph (06) 304 9948. Email barbara.lovatt@slingshot.co.nz
Evening meetings held on the second Thursday of the month (exc Jan) 7.30 pm, venue alternating between Masterton and Greytown. Field trips are the following weekend. Contact Barbara Lovatt for further details.

Wellington

Ian Armitage, 50 Ranui Terrace, Tawa, Wellington. Ph (04) 232 7470. Email ian.armitage@xtra.co.nz
Evening meetings - first Monday of the month, Head Office of DoC, 18-32 Manners Street, Wellington, meet 7.30 pm for a 7:45 pm start, ph. Ian Armitage (04) 232 7470.
East Harbour Regional Park bird survey, Reg Cotter (04) 568 6960. Fluttering Shearwater chick transfers, Colin Miskelly (04) 479 1662. Beach patrols, Sharon Alderson (04) 298 3707. Mana Island robins & sooty shearwaters, Geoff de Lisle (04) 527 0929. Mist-netting and

passerine banding, Peter Reese (04) 387 7387. Rock pigeon nesting project, Ralph Powlesland (04) 386 3323.

Nelson

Stuart Wood, 24 Olympus Way, Richmond. Ph (03) 544 3932. Email stuartwood38@yahoo.co.nz
Evening meetings - usually first Monday of the month, 7.15 pm Solander/ Aurora Fisheries Board Room. The Solander/ Aurora building is on the right hand side of Cross Street, just beyond Dickson's Boat Repair and more or less opposite the 'red shed' - the Tasman Bay Cruising Club, Nelson. Phone Stuart Wood (03) 544 3932 or Don Cooper (03) 544 8109.

Marlborough

Mike Bell, 42 Vickerman Street, Grovetown 7321. Phone (03) 577 9818 or 021 734 602. Email mike.bell@marlborough.govt.nz
Lake Grassmere count - third Sunday of month. Ph Brian Bell (03) 570 2230. Passerine banding, each weekend during February and March, at Jack Taylor's farm, Ward, contact Mike Bell Ph (03) 577 9818.

Canterbury/West Coast

Jan Walker, 305 Kennedys Bush Road, Halswell, Christchurch. Ph (03) 322 7187. Email shesagreen@gmail.com
Evening meetings last Monday of the month, Spreydon Bowling Club, Domain Terrace, Christchurch. Monthly field trips - dates vary, contact Jan Walker.

Otago

Mary Thompson, 197 Balmacewen Road, Balmacewen, Dunedin. Ph (03) 464 0787. Email mary.thompson@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
Evening meetings monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 8.00pm in Benham Seminar Room, Zoology Department, 340 Great King Street. Contact Mary Thompson.

Southland

Lloyd Esler, 15 Mahuri Road, Otatara, RD9 Invercargill 9879. Ph (03) 213 0404. Email esler@southnet.co.nz
Evening meetings (in conjunction with Field Club) held second Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm. Please phone Lloyd Esler for venue and further information, field trip usually on Saturday following. Beach Patrols on a casual basis, phone Phil Rhodes (03) 213 1228 or Lloyd Esler.

NEW POST CODES

New Zealand Post is now requiring that letters are addressed with correct post codes if bulk mail-outs are to attract the discounts that they are offering.

Please would all New Zealand members ensure that when their next renewal notice is sent to them they check, and add/ update if necessary, their postal address post code.

Please note that P.O. boxes and private addresses in the same area will probably have different post codes.

Correct post codes will enable OSNZ to make savings on all its postage, particularly the quarterly *Southern Bird* and *Notornis* mail-outs. Thanks

ROGER SHARP *Back Issues Officer*

AOC 2009

The fifth biennial Australasian Ornithological Conference will be held at Armidale, New South Wales from 30th November to 4th December 2009 inclusive. The Conference will consist of four days of spoken and written presentations with Wednesday 2nd December given over to local tours. The Conference is presented jointly by Birds Australia and the Ornithological Society of New Zealand.

Contact ANDREW LEY: aley@northnet.com.au

COLLECTION OF BIRDS HIT BY CARS (SOUTHERN BIRD, MARCH 08)

In a recent article in *Southern Bird* the authors encouraged members to send birds hit by cars to Massey University. This is not the position of OSNZ. OSNZ wishes to point out that Section 55 of the Wildlife Act allows only recognized public museums to hold New Zealand wildlife, in trust for the people of New Zealand. OSNZ recommends that members take specimens of native New Zealand birds that they find dead to one of the four major public museums: Auckland Institute and Museum; Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand; Canterbury Museum; and the Otago Museum, only.

