

KUAKA

Newsletter of
South Auckland Branch
Birds New Zealand
Te Kahui Matai Manu o Aotearoa

December 2021

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Greetings everyone, no meeting this month so this newsletter highlights the sightings that have been reported since the last newsletter, the Atlas report, and our Facebook posts for the past month

We won't produce a newsletter in January but you can look forward to its return in February. Have a great Christmas and New Year and we look forward to catching up in a couple of months.

SIGHTINGS since the last meeting included:

- ✚ Banded rail and four chicks seen at Pahurehure by Wendy and Michael
- ✚ Sue saw a pair of banded rails at the Auranga subdivision
- ✚ A kereru was spotted devouring, with difficulty, a large green plum at the Hatch property, Bombay
- ✚ Two scaup were spotted by Sue on the pond near SH20 Roscommon Rd
- ✚ The reef heron was spotted at Kawakawa Bay again
- ✚ Two brown teal were on the pond at Wattle Farm Rd (also seen here last December)
- ✚ The Parry white faced heron triplets are still on the nest at Aka Aka (Dec 4). They are moving around a lot and doing a lot of wing flapping. They should be leaving the nest pretty soon.



The nest



The triplets



YUK – what's on my tongue!

BEACH PATROL

There was a Karioitahi beach patrol in November. The haul was comprised of: 1 gannet, 1 Canada goose, 5 sooty shearwaters, 1 prion sp., and a white chinned petrel!

There won't be a beach patrol in December or January unless someone would like to volunteer to do a walk along the beach and let me (Wendy) know what you find.



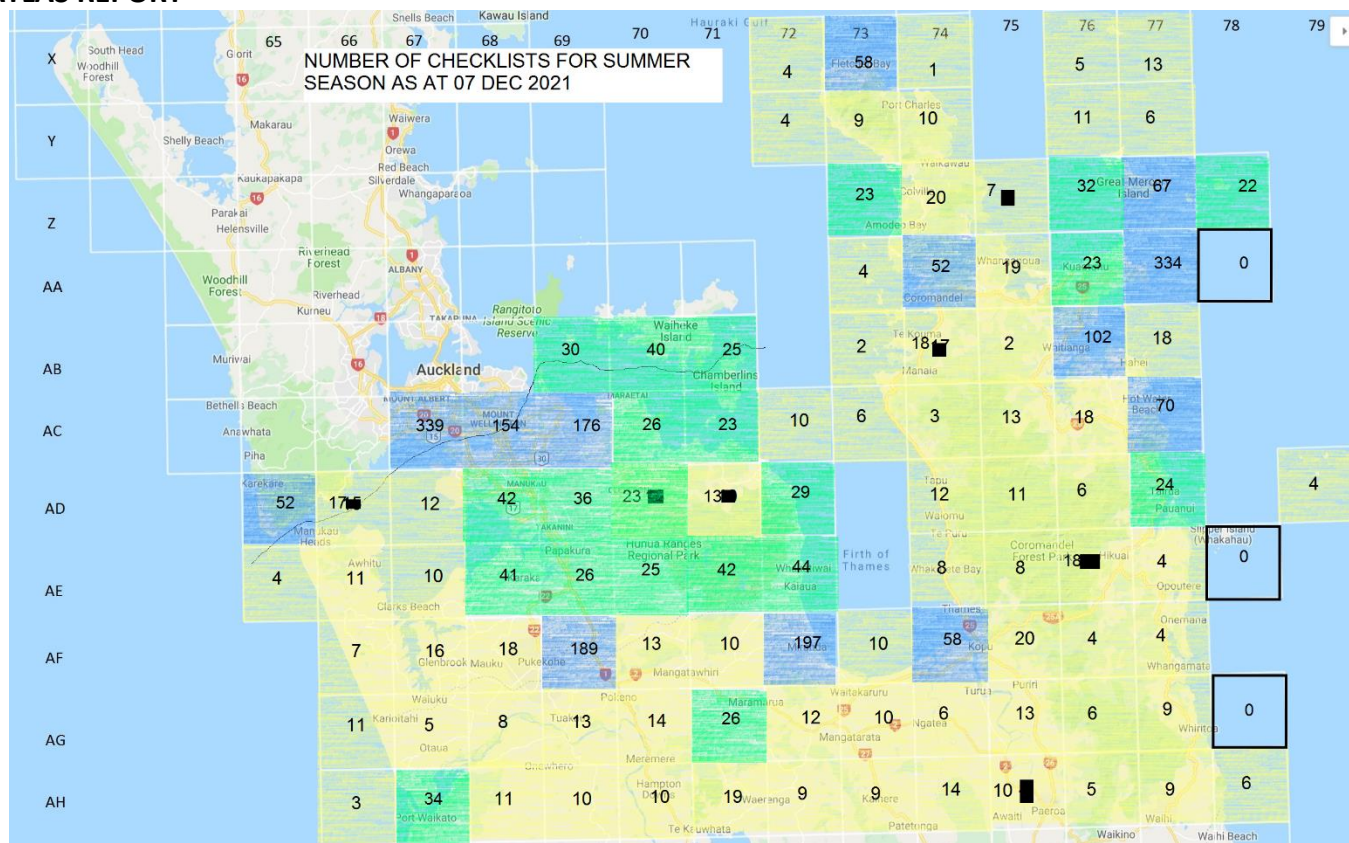
The **white-chinned petrel** is common at sea around NZ, but rarely sighted from land. It feeds in both small and large groups. One of the largest Procellaria petrels (equal in size to Westland petrel), white-chinned petrels are large, sooty-black petrels with a varying white patch on the chin or throat, and black legs and feet.

They have a circumpolar distribution, breeding on the Antipodes, Auckland, Campbell, Prince Edward and Falkland Islands, South Georgia, Iles Crozet and the Kerguelen group. In NZ they breed in burrows on Antipodes, Auckland and Campbell Islands.

The largest population in NZ is in the Auckland Islands, with 200,000 breeding pairs on Disappointment Island. There are large numbers on Antipodes and lesser numbers on the stacks off Campbell Island. Other populations around the world range up to 750,000 pairs (South Georgia).

The main food items of white-chinned petrel are squid, salps, fish and crustaceans, although numbers and types of prey items alters during the breeding and non-breeding periods. Squid appears to be the main food item taken in NZ. Most food is taken from the surface, by shallow diving on or just above the surface of the water. White-chinned petrels readily take offal and discards from fishing vessels.

ATLAS REPORT



Well, summer is here and I hope you are all enjoying the fine weather and the new freedoms at the Red level.

Please note:

- The figures on the map include summer 2019 to 2020 checklists, plus a few that have already been done in the first days of December.
- The yellow squares have had between 1 and 20 checklists submitted, the green squares have had 21 to 50 and the blue squares have had 51 or more

As you can see, there are plenty of yellow squares, especially south of the Auckland boundary, and on the Coromandel. Once the border opens next week, we will be able to get to these places at last. Hopefully there will be plenty of birders visiting the Coromandel from Auckland and other parts of NZ over the summer period.

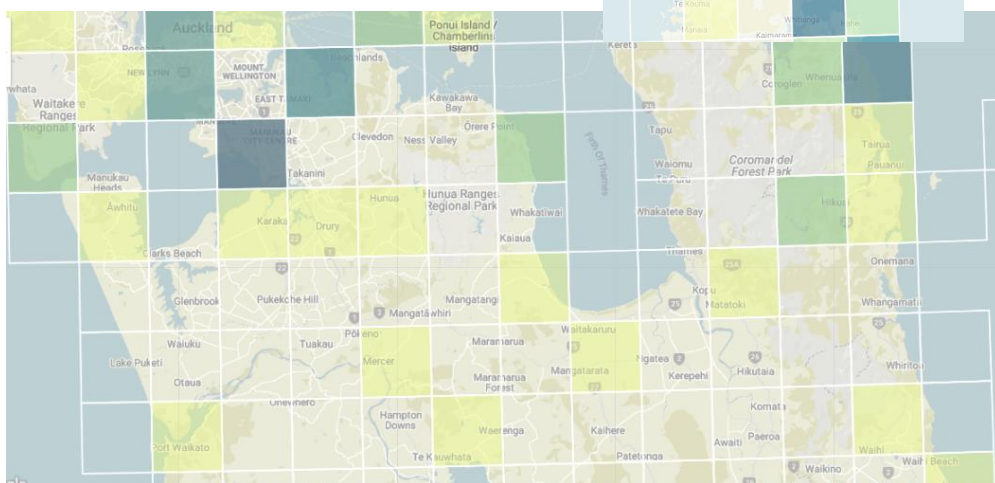
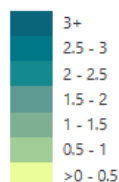
For the atlasers among us, check out the December challenge – [December Atlas Challenge - New Zealand Bird Atlas \(ebird.org\)](https://ebird.org/december-challenge)

You may also be interested in a new EBird feature – trip reports [Introducing eBird Trip Reports - New Zealand Bird Atlas](https://ebird.org/trip-reports)

If you are staying at or close to home over the summer, think about doing some counts on the warm summer nights or early mornings. As you can see from this map, very few squares have had much activity at night.

Nocturnal checklists start earlier than 40 minutes before sunrise, or later than 20 minutes after sunset (currently 8.48pm to 5.10am). I'd love to know if you are hearing morepork or anything else.

NOCTURNAL EFFORT HOURS



For those of you who do not load your checklists into EBird, if you do advise a sighting of an interesting or unusual bird, or do a count of all the birds you can identify at a particular location, please provide the following details: Exact location of sighting, Date, Start and End Time, Species, Number of birds seen.



*Merry Christmas
from Wendy and Sue*

NO, I DIDN'T SLEEP WELL.

WHY DO YOU ASK?

FACEBOOK Some of the past month's posts are shown below. Go to the Facebook page, @birdsnzsa, to find the links to follow for any particular posting that interests you.

If you have some good photos, information, or links that you think would be suitable for our site send Wendy or David an email with the photo or link.



Kākāpō Recovery

Yesterday at 10:30 · 🌐

Supplementary feed out is well and truly underway on both Whenua Hou and Anchor. The birds are putting on weight, they'll need lots of energy for the upcoming b... See more



Karamea Wild

21 November at 09:49 · 🌐

These are not babies, they aredon't move little stones...



LIVESCIENCE.COM

Tangled bald eagles crash land on Minnesota street

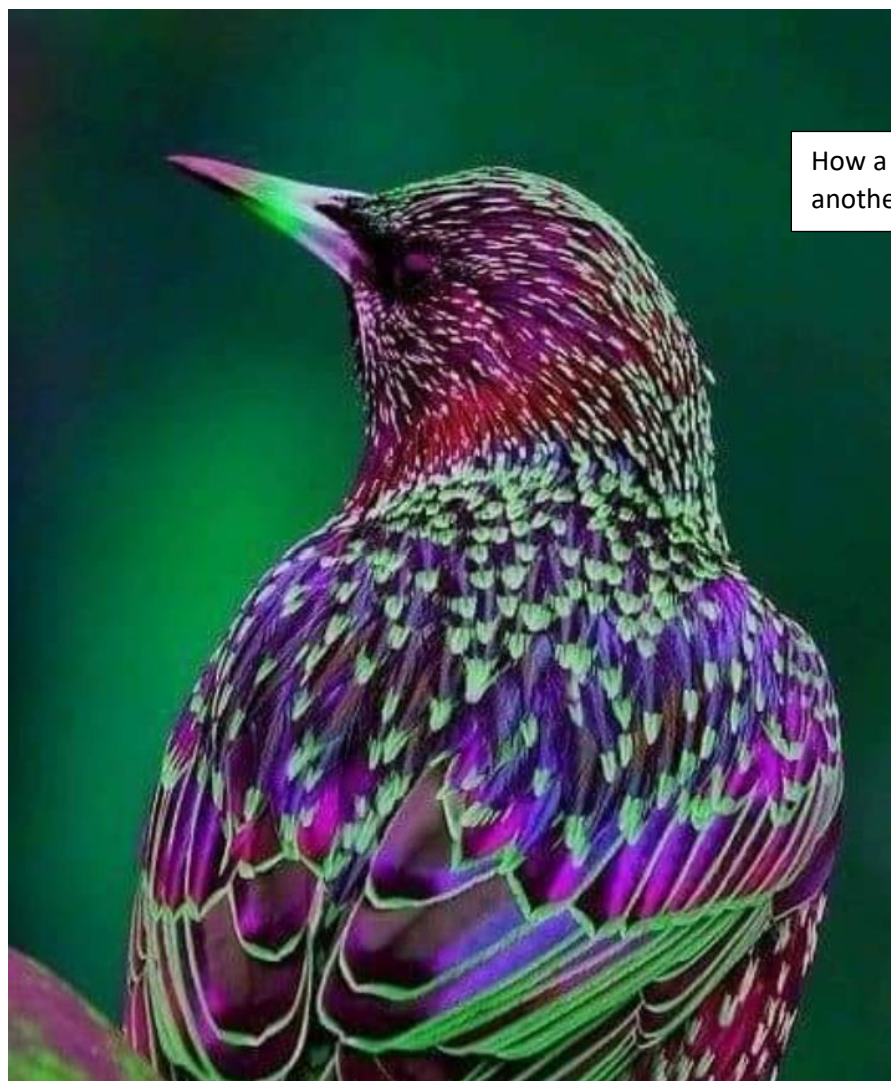
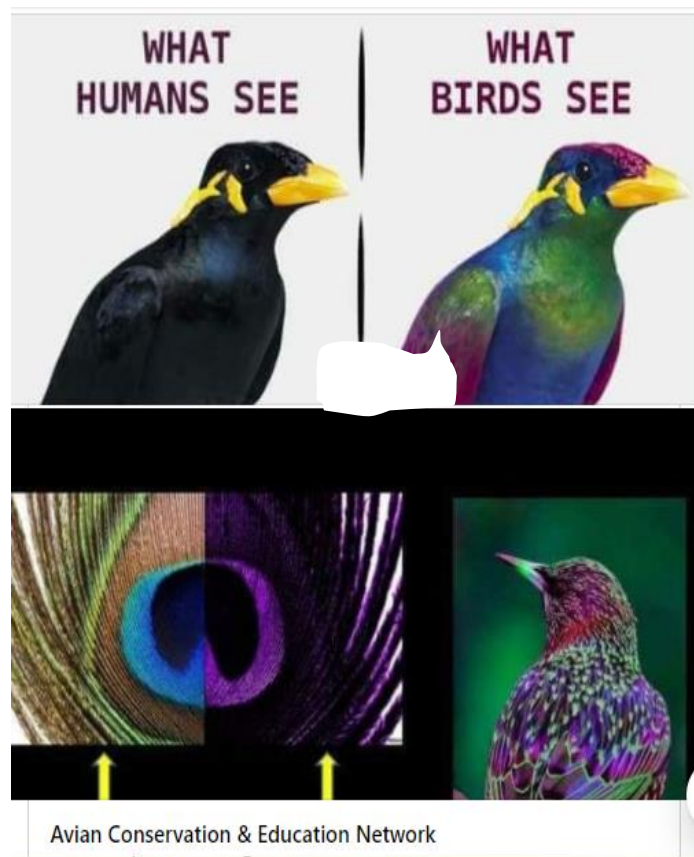
This may seem like a bizarre incident, but bald eagles get tangled ...



STUFF.CO.NZ

First kiwi chick born on Kaitake Ranges in Taranaki just months after birds reintroduced





How a starling looks from another bird's perspective

This is a long read but worth it to learn about kereru survival in different habitats in NZ



PREDATORFREENZ.ORG

What factors are limiting kererū populations?

Kererū (kukupa) are big, beautiful and often unintentionally comic ...



Department of Conservation

23 November at 15:15 · 🌐

Waikato-based photographer and videographer Peter Drury ([Visualist](#)) snapped this beautiful picture last week of a moho pererū/banded rail - and its rare white ... [See more](#)

Westland Petrel *Procellaria westlandica*



RNZ.CO.NZ

Blackout for endangered native black seabirds

West Coast street lights are turning off at night again this summer ...



PREDATORFREENZ.ORG

Blue ducks - how different is 'different'? - Predator Free NZ

[Learn More](#)



THEGUARDIAN.COM

Climate crisis pushes albatross 'divorce' rates higher – study