

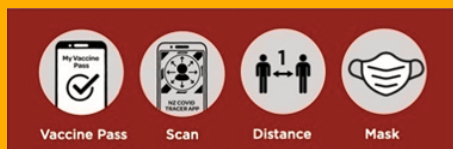


Birds New Zealand
PO Box 834, Nelson 7040
<https://www.birdsnz.org.nz>

Regional Representative: Mary Thompson
197 Balmacewen Road, Dunedin 9010
birds.otago@birdsnz.org.nz 03 464 0787

Regional Recorder: Richard Schofield
64 Frances Street, Balclutha 9230
cluthaphotos@gmail.com

Otago Region Newsletter 1/2022 *February 2022*



**Meetings at new
venue ~ 4th
Tuesday of
month**

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

Ornithological Snippets

Maree Johnstone reports that numbers of **Kereru** seem to have increased in Roseneath this summer as judged by those visiting her neighbour's plum. Last and previous seasons the most seen at any one time was five birds. This summer as many as twelve were madly swallowing cherry plums. The number could have been greater though save for the unfortunate one that was reduced to a pile of feathers found on the lawn underneath overhanging plum tree branches, the culprit possibly being a NZ Falcon.!

Some large **SIPO** flocks were reported with 229 at Dunrobin 28 December, 94 Lake Hawea 28 December, 91 near Alexandra 20 December, 61 at Balclutha on 17 December and 50 near Kyeburn on 4 January. A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** at Aramoana, first seen on 21 December, was present until at least 3 January. Single **Brown/Southern Skuas** were reported from Taiaroa Head on 30 November, and from Aramoana on 26 December.

A **Little Black Shag** was at Pounaweia on 28 November, while a breeding-plumaged **Cattle Egret** was nearby at the Yacht Club at Hinahina during the wader count on 12 December. A possible **Bittern** was heard near Queenstown on the following day.

On 20/12 Alan Baker saw a pair of **Moreporks** with a young one at the edge of the Dunedin Town Belt. He continued to see them until 26/12. They were close to where a pair nested in 2017. Before Christmas Maree Johnstone spotted a **NZ Falcon** (perched) on Upper Junction Road, possibly an Orokonui bird?

2 Red-crowned Parakeets were seen and photographed on the Government Track in Waipori Gorge on 2 December, 2 **Eastern Rosella** at Tahakopa on 17 December, and a **Kaka** was nearby above Papatowai on 17 January

A **Brown Creeper** in the compiler's garden on 26th December was unexpected, as was the window that the unfortunate bird encountered a few moments later; it was later heard calling, so hopefully it lived to tell the tale. Alan Baker reports a **Tomtit** in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery on 8 January. A **Fernbird** was probably the most unlikely sighting during the December Atlasing visit to Motatapu, with possibly a second bird heard calling.

A **Marsh Crake** put in an appearance at Measley Beach wetland on 23 January, while one of the Tomahawk birds was seen on 9 February. Alan Baker reports a pair of **Variable Oystercatcher** with a small chick at the Leith mouth on 21 and 22 of January. On 25 January at Cabbage Point (Catlins River Estuary) there were 65 **Banded Dotterel** and a single **Ruddy Turnstone**. The **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** at Aramoana was present until at least 13 February

At least 7000 **Black-billed Gull** were seen and photographed at Warrington on 29 January, with at least 600 there two weeks later. 4 **Black-fronted Tern** were roosting in Balclutha on 14 February. Up to 45 **Fluttering Shearwater** have been seen from Aramoana Mole on several occasions in the first half of February, including a leucistic bird on 13.

120 **Little Pied Shag** were counted at Wickcliffe Bay on 25 January, a **Reef Heron** was at Nugget Point on 4 February, and a single **Royal Spoonbill** was present in Balclutha from 7 February onwards.

Please send any interesting reports to cluthaphotos@gmail.com Richard Schofield

eBird News

In early December the new Trip Reports feature was launched on eBird. This allows users to compile lists from a day, weekend, or anything up to a month, to give an overall review of a trip, with all records in one place. It includes all the checklists on which a particular species was seen, along with any media added to the checklists. It can be shared with other observers, and if any checklists are added subsequently by anyone in the group within the selected timeframe, they are also added to the report. To create a checklist, go to "My eBird", then "Manage my...Trip Reports" or check out <https://ebird.org/mytripreports>; note this is not available through the Atlas portal. For further information search for Trip Reports in the eBird Help pages.

The Summer visit to Motatapu Station in mid-December attracted 8 participants, and enjoyed fine weather – again. Good coverage was attained, with the most unexpected record being one or two Fernbirds in the central part of the station. To view the trip report, check out <https://>

ebird.org/newzealand/tripreport/22019 A further visit is planned for 10 -12 April – please let me know if you are interested in participating.

The February Atlasing trip saw 6 members venture out in fine, with good coverage achieved of the Lake Mahinerangi, Hindon and Loganburn Dam areas. One party discovered NZ Falcons at two separate locations, while both groups located numerous NZ Pipits. The trip report can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/newzealand/tripreport/edit/36612?view=checklists>

The next Atlasing trip is planned for the inland Catlins area on **Saturday 12 March**. Meet at Bunnings at 8.30. Please let me know if you intend coming, so that you can be informed of any changes to the plan.

Users of the app on Android (not yet on IOS) will have noticed that the selected portal (hopefully NZ Bird Atlas!) is now displayed when starting a checklist, and also when submitting it.

Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com

BirdsNZ Otago Branch News

Meetings and Field Trips under Covid restrictions

Welcome to the new birding year. Check out our exciting programme of speakers and events at the back of the newsletter. We are trying not to restrict our activities too much under the Red Traffic Light covid setting and plan to have Indoor Meetings and run field trips with as much care as possible being taken to manage the risks associated with Covid-19; we will be adhering to Government regulations and guidelines regarding meetings, etc.

Meetings at new venue on 4th Tuesday of month.

We are trying a new venue for at least the first half of 2022. It is the **Community Room in NEV (Valley Project)** beside NEV Primary School. This should give us a bit more flexibility and is more informal than the university venue. The big change is that the meetings will be on the 4th TUESDAY of the month. I hope this doesn't clash too badly with your schedules. So please update your diaries. The venue has plenty of parking, easy access and is on regular Bus Route No. 8 to Normanby (from Bus hub at 6.59 or 7.14pm would work OK and 9.30pm back). The Valley Project is just after and beside the NEV Primary School (on right going up NEV) and you will see a mural of NZ Falcon on the carpark wall - very welcoming!

At this stage we want to continue having **face-to-face meetings** for those who are comfortable with coming along, but we fully understand that there are those who are not keen on being out and about unnecessarily. We will be **Zooming the meetings live** as well so everyone can participate. This is one positive of covid, as now our out-of-town members can join us too. The Zoom link will be sent out to members the previous evening by email.

With being at Red Traffic light for covid we can still hold Indoor Meetings; attendees will need to have a Vaccine Pass, scan QR code, and wear masks at the meeting, and space out at least in household/friends bubbles. And of course you should not come to the meeting if you are not feeling well or think you may possibly have been in contact recently with covid (eg travel or visitors from out of town).

Field Trips

It would be a pity to stop the Atlassing Trips and the Global Big Day because of covid, so at this stage field trips will go ahead.

Field trips would work OK if participants are happy to organise themselves into 'bubbles' of 2, 3 or 4 for carpooling, or take own cars. If you are unhappy to share transport that will be respected.

Mary Thompson
Regional Representative

Atlas Trip Report 4 December

The final Atlas trip for 2021 took place on Saturday, 4 December. Maureen Howard, Petrina Duncan and myself met at 8.30am at the usual rendezvous spot, outside Bunnings. We met Richard Schofield at 9am near the Outram dairy and as there was just the four of us it was decided it would be more social to remain as a group rather than split into two teams of 2. So with Richard driving, we headed for the Maniototo and the environs of Middelmarsh.

Early in the day on Gladbrook Road we, well Richard, got a little owl. A great start! Sharp eyed Richard spotted it from the car and screeched to a halt. The owl flew up from the road and into a plantation. Lucky you didn't run it over Richard! I don't think dead birds qualify for the Atlas count.

Next we went to Sutton Salt Lake where I expected to see numerous pipits. Plenty of yellowhammers though and skylarks but only one pipit near the end of our walk. Petrina spotted a Californian quail and we all enjoyed the sight of 29 pied stilt on the lake.



Sutton Salt Lake

Photo: Petrina Duncan

Probably the most prolific count of the day, in terms of species was on Sutton-Mt Ross Rd where we counted 20 species. Enticingly there was a pond almost out of binocular range and as the telescope was being set up the farmer drove by. He was a good guy! After chatting about what we were attempting to do he gave us permission to drive closer to the pond which allowed us to get a more accurate count. So as well as the ever present passerines and various

spur-winged plovers, SIPOs and harriers we documented 6 Australian shovelers, 13 pied stilts, 25 grey teal, and a NZ scaup. Also this place was ideal for lunch as there were some very comfortable large rocks which gave a good view of the pond and so while Richard chatted to the farmer the women took advantage of his hospitality and had a very pleasant lunch-break.

One bird that stood out for me and was included in most count lists was the skylark. At many stops we seemed to be surrounded by song from above. At Sutton Salt Lake we counted 10 skylarks and 10 yellowhammers, probably an underestimate of both. According to birds online 'average breeding season density on pastoral sheep farms on the Canterbury Plains was estimated to be about 22 skylarks per Km². Densities on some sheep and beef farms in Otago are considerably lower at 5 birds per Km².' In this part of Otago densities certainly would rival Canterbury!



Pipit Photo: Maureen Howard



Photo: Maureen Howard

In summary I think we all thoroughly enjoyed the day (I certainly did) and were well satisfied with the number of lists submitted. We did our first count at 9.50am and our last at 5.47pm, a total of 23 lists. Not a bad effort! Thank you to my travelling companions.

Maree Johnstone

Predators of Scaup Identified

While studying Scaup and Australasian Coots on Tomahawk Lagoon, several actual and potential predators were noted.

Both birds were previously absent apart from rare brief visits, usually one or two Scaup and Coots together in April. Scaup started colonising the lagoon in April 2017, are now permanent residents breeding annually, and frequently the most numerous duck on upper lagoon. They are also seen flying in from south in evenings and night. A few Coots stayed through last year, for the first time, and now are raising chicks.

Recently, three adult Coots were gathering food and all feeding the same four new chicks. A Coot very aggressively chased off a curious Mallard juvenile female. The Coot did not stop until the confused duck fled the area.

Scaup obviously keep watching the sky, with small head tilts, and are wary of anyone ashore. I saw Scaup clearly watching a helicopter. A group of two small adult male Scaup, a larger adult female, and two juveniles were silent, until a Harrier circled at 100m altitude. All called and looked up with quick sideways twists. They repeated short swim dashes as a perfectly coordinated group in rapid alternate directions, as if to confuse which way they go, working rapidly closer to shore bush. Scaup called whistling "swee" and soft chuckling "wirri - woo," amid splashes of fast swimming. After the Harrier departed, Scaup continued swimming and diving, the female napping afloat with eyes blinking open. No successful Harrier predations of Scaup have been seen yet, although Harrier kills of Paradise Shelducks and Mallards have been seen. So far, the occasional Falcon is intent on Starlings.

The most serious attempt at preying on Scaup was seen on 26 / 12 / 2021 at upper lagoon. There were a total of 43 Scaup, consisting of 30 adults and 13 ducklings. Suddenly a Black-backed Gull swooped around raupo at 30cm altitude upon a female Scaup and five ducklings swimming 2m offshore, and reached down attempting to snatch a duckling in its bill. A very near miss, the duckling probably saved by the Scaup screeching and lunging up at the gull, as the ducklings all dived and popped up closer to shore. The gull disappeared, the Scaup stayed out on the water checking the sky, the ducklings hid afloat under overhanging grass. Soon after, the Black-back Gull was again cruising low over and around flax and raupo, flying into the northeasterly using the wind to glide with few stiff wing flaps.

A ginger cat was seen stalking scrubby shoreline, intently watching swimming Scaup 0.5m away. A black and white cat frequents ngaio and long grass further around. Dogs off lead are common. Stoats are occasionally seen, more so around lower lagoon. Years ago the ngaio forest was crawling with ship rats at night, but not now. A few Norway rats are seen, particularly a bold one who likes hamburger scraps at the carpark. A freshly dead female Scaup was found 0.4m ashore, she had no obvious wounds and had not been eaten. Given the cycle of toxic algal blooms, maybe some birds get sick and die. A few Black-back Gulls sicken and die, as do a few Black Swans, maybe they carry disease from outside the lagoons.

Despite hazards, Scaup are doing well, frequently the most numerous ducks at upper lagoon and not shy about reminding Mallards when personal boundaries are crossed. And now the Coots have moved in also. Interesting that they used to arrive together as visitors.

Andrew Austin



Download

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/science-and-technical/nztcs36entire.pdf>

Support for Students – research and conference.

There are several Studentship Awards for research on any aspects of ornithology available to Birds NZ student members; see website for details.

Fledgling Fund Grant to attend New Zealand Bird Conference, open to all Birds NZ student members. Deadline for applications 28 February.

Student Conference Support for Otago student members. Deadline for applications 28 February (more info from otago.birds@birdsnz.org.nz)

NZ Bird Conference 2022

The 2022 NZ Bird Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Birds New Zealand will be held in Christchurch, from **4 to 6 June**. This is an excellent opportunity to hear about new research findings about birds in New Zealand, networking, and field trips for professional and amateur ornithologists, students and others who are interested in birds and their habitats.

There will be several keynote lectures and shorter talks on a wide range of topics. The field trips include Atlassing on Banks Peninsula and Ashley River estuary as well as a tour behind the scenes at Canterbury Museum ornithological collections. Earlybird registration is by 31 March; there is the possibility of cancellation due to Covid restrictions and if this happens full refunds will be given.

Credit Due and Wedding Dream Catchers

Although I was critical of the consenting process for a wedding venue near Tomahawk Lagoon in 2019, and concerned for birds, there are good signs so far.

Watching birds from the outlet, the scope naturally swings onto vehicles on Lochend road, and checks construction activities. Vehicles have been travelling at the agreed 10 KPH, apparently not disturbing birds. The old cow bier was repaired as a wedding venue, with landscaping. There has been at least one wedding, post Covid lockdowns, with no problems from noise or for birds.

Years ago I tried to rent Lochend Farm cottage, above Tomahawk Lagoon. A second advantage is no neighbours. The owners declined, it was derelict and prone to power cuts, which to me indicated a bargain. But no, and then it was sold. More recently, the horse field at the outlet was sold. It is reclaimed land, misused words meaning stolen, because in the 1940's it was water of the lagoon where a man used to spear big flounder from his dinghy. Now, it often hosts Spur-winged Plovers and Oystercatchers including when they are absent from the lagoon, the ruined buildings and pines are home for two Little Owls, and there were two wild natural coloured Turkeys. These two properties were difficult to sell. A prospective buyer for the horse field gave up upon advice that building houses required an engineer's report on the substrate, which would prohibit building anything. The new owner seems to be doing nothing. No one worries about it also being nicely in the tsunami zone. Imagine if law gave environmental organisations first go at buying land surrounding wetlands, to re wild it. With me as ranger, providing the tsunami warning works.

Three bird friendly additions are at the weir, on the way to the wedding venue. First is a sign of a Pukeko, stating 25 KPH. Then at the channel a sign states 10 KPH. Looking up the new concrete power poles, it seems as if Cheyenne came in the night and strung up dream catchers on power wires over the channel, as a bravery rite proving fitness for marriage. These are perforated circles to make the wires visible to birds and prevent collisions. The row of swinging circles are spaced along wires over lower Raupo Channel, which birds follow between the lagoons, and where Black Swans previously crashed fatally into wires causing power blackouts. There are no circles on most of the heavy duty wires, only at the weir. It will be interesting to see how well dream catchers work at deterring birds.

Reminds me of the Mackenzie Country, where power pylons sample birds at night. An unofficial routine on the trap line was checking under the high buzzing cables to see who dropped last night. They ranged from finches to Canada Geese. That's how I found a Marsh Crake in the Mackenzie Country, the next was alive in a clump of rushes far from water and pylons, pointed by my workmate, Karo the labrador gundog. We had many adventures, good for birds and mortal for mustelids.

Whenever I encounter Julie and Mark Caldwell from Lochend, they are friendly and enquire about birds. Last time I checked Scaup from Tomahawk Lagoons weir, the signs showed their powers. A convoy of six vehicles, two towing large refrigerator trailers, emerged from Lochend wedding venue, all going 10 KPH without disturbing any of us, and they didn't know I was there. None of the birds appear to get married. They live in oblivious sin, bless them, as Walt Whitman says in his poem, Animals. Maybe with the exception of Paradise Shelducks, who pair for life, after moonlit rituals known only to tohunga and shamans, and gossiped over by Pukeko. Lately, there are some 3000 Paradise Shelducks massed at lower lagoon and 800

around upper lagoon, for their annual moult. In 2019, 2020, 2021 I counted them accurately. The Paradise Shelduck moult at Tomahawk is one of the wildlife events close to Dunedin. In one spot they have even worn a broad foot track into the hillside. You scan the shore with binoculars and scope, seeing crowds of Paradise Shelducks, and more coming in. Kotuku, the White Heron hasn't returned yet.

Andrew Austin

Notes from Graeme

A reminder for people to look out Banded black-billed gulls that were chicks on the Makarora river in November.

I enjoyed my first visit to Mahu Whenua , in the Motatapu Valley. Interesting plants in retired tussock country. Largely clean of weeds and pests. Pity no sign of red tussock in the head water bogs. Long gone I guess. The most interesting bird observation; finding sparrows in a small matagouri patch in grassland with tussock , miles from any buildings. Not the first time I have found them in 'uncivilised' environments. Adding to the picture of a bird with great behavioural adaptability and plasticity. At home in supermarkets and montane grey scrub!

Another trip on the Evohe out to the antipodes to deliver albatross scientists Graeme Elliott and Cath Walker. Nick Beckwith was smuggled aboard at short notice. 169 ten minute counts were made. Much quieter this time. So hard to be motivated to do counts in quiet times. Species list shorter than you might see on a big day out in Otago waters. Again no work ups and large gatherings of birds. In fact the most interesting event was the thousand or so spotted shags swarming on bait fish in the inner harbour basin while we were loading.

We have a wonderful environment that is worth working towards greater water quality and clarity, and to restore the fisheries that feed our shags. So sad to hear of the decline of spotted shags in the North.

Graeme Loh

Logan Park Tui

On Thursday 2 Dec at 5.45 pm I was biking up the Big Easy track on Signal Hill behind Logan Park High School. I was about half-way from the start of the track to the plateau (which is situated about halfway up the hill), when I heard the typical sound of squeaky disc brakes on a mountain bike coming down hill. So I warned my friends who were biking with me that someone was probably coming downhill and would meet us on the narrow track. But no-one eventuated. Then I heard it again, and over the course of about three minutes, on the zigzag track, I heard it four times in all. Each time it was a series of three squealing disc brakes in succession, and I began to realise that it was not an actual bike, but a tui, that went on to sing another few phrases of normal tui-like song each time after it's bike brake rendition. I know lyre birds do this sort of thing, and was quite excited to discover a tui doing it. The bike brake sound was very authentic, but repeated exactly the same each time, which wouldn't happen so regularly on a real bike. The tui will have had plenty of opportunity to hear these sounds as the place is alive with mountain bikers coming downhill and using their brakes a lot. Be interesting to know whether anyone else has heard this bird when walking or biking in the vicinity.

Sue Galloway

Otago Summer Wader Count 12 December 2021

	Karitane	Blueskin Bay	Ara-moana	Harbour West	Harbour East	Papanui Inlet	Hoopers Inlet	Catlins	Pbello-Taiaroa	Toma-hawk	Total Dec. 2018	Total Nov 2019	Total Nov 2020	Total Dec. 2021
Pied Oystercatcher	34	221	35	86	2	120	34	118	7		270	437	839	657
Variable Oystercatcher	13	2	2	5		4	3	14	11		45	76	85	54
Pied Stilt	67	44				13	24	112	6		97	40	156	266
Banded Dotterel								17			43	7	3	17
Spur-winged Plover	22	23	2	14		14	6	78	3		30	44	118	162
Bar-tailed Godwit	146	1007	8				300	443			1723	2435	1982	1904

Thank you to everyone who contributed to December's count. There was a great turnout and interest from new counters although the postponement to December affected ability to participate. Thankfully the weather was in contrast to our last winter count, although conditions on Saturday 11 December were somewhat worrying with mist hanging around the hills.

Godwit counts are roughly similar over the past four summer counts although more than half of this summer's tally were counted by Nick at Blueskin. What is going on there? Have a look at one of Nick's photos...he photographed the flock and counted them on computer screen. The SIPOs are determined to get in the way!

The pied stilt count is healthier than last year...over one hundred more. Are spur winged plovers on the increase?

Maree Johnson

Return to the Drylands

Otago Branch member Petrina Duncan recently left the bird paradise of Blueskin Bay to return to live in her home near Wanaka. The drylands of the Upper Clutha area unfortunately lack the avian diversity and abundance seen in Coastal Otago. Predators and extensive habitat modification have wreaked havoc on native wildlife. However, there are still many pockets of excellent bird habitat and atlas squares which have had few or no visits. Petrina is trying to get to some of these areas to do bird checklists in her spare time.

She is also keen to encourage other inland Otago Branch members to go out on atlas checklist trips. If anyone living in Wanaka, Hawea, Queenstown, Cromwell, Alexandra, Omarama or other central areas would like to join in on some birding field trips, please contact Petrina by email: petrina.duncan@southernlakessanctuary.org.nz to make a plan.

Petrina's new role with the Southern Lakes Sanctuary Trust is to coordinate communications between the many volunteer pest trapping groups across the region and the general public. There are hundreds of keen volunteers checking thousands of traps around townships and across the rugged landscape of this dry region. Telling their success stories is key to encouraging them to continue their mahi and inspiring others to become part of the movement to bring back the region's native biodiversity.



Bird monitoring site in regenerating scrubland on the Lake Hawea foreshore pest trapping line. Seasonal 5 minute bird counts are done by local volunteers from the group Wanaka Backyard Trapping.
Photo: Petrina Duncan

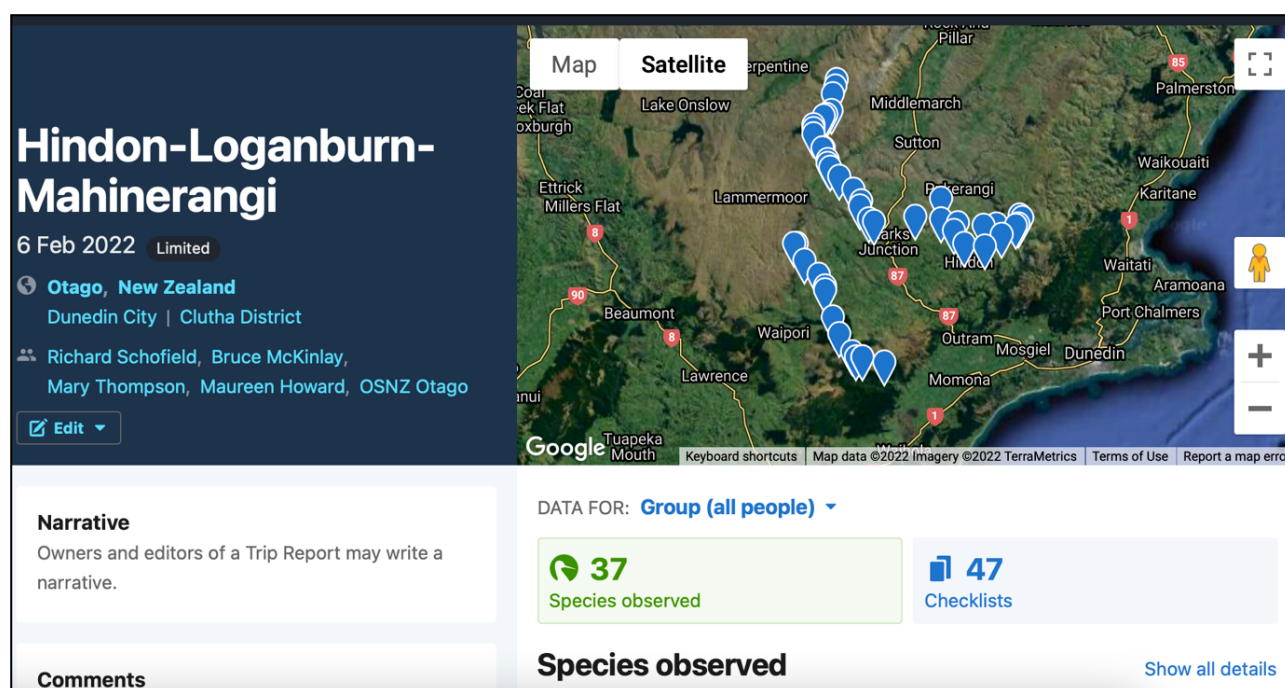
Atlas Field Trip Sunday 6 February; a biased report

We met up at Outram and the 'girls' team of Maree, Mary and Maureen headed out to Lake Mahingerangi and the wind farms at the end of Eldorado Track then back via Waipori Falls. The 'boys' team of Bruce, Richard and Andrew, headed out to Hindon and Loganburn.

Cold squalls of rain came through when we on the tops near the wind farm but the expedition was rewarded with a sighting of our first falcon, but on the whole birds were quite scarce – saw pipits, many yellowhammers, welcome swallows and surprisingly few starlings. The lake was also very devoid of waterfowl. On the way to Waipori Falls we stopped at a spot overlooking a hillside of recently felled pine forest and Maree spotted a falcon preening on top of a pile of slash. Another great bird. The afternoon warmed up and down the Waipori valley we had several stops to check out the bush birds. Brown creeper was a highlight and numerous bellbirds; quite a few young ones practising their foraging skills. We didn't find a fantail!



The field trip was set up as a Trip Report on eBird; total species for the day was 37 with 47 checklists so a very good effort. The report has a map with every checklist position marked and provides a list of the total number of each species seen and 'details' give which checklists the species were recorded on. This new feature of eBird is worth looking at as it compiles everything for a set period.



Mary Thompson

Robins outside Orokonui: 2021 season summary

A four-letter word partly sums up the 2021 season – rain! However, despite a covid-delayed start and wet weather disruptions, the robin team did an outstanding job documenting another relatively successful breeding year at our Mopanui study site.

It's hard to pick the highlight of the season. It could be that a total of 24 wonderful people helped with the project this season, equating to over 300 hours of robin monitoring. Thank you once again to everyone who came along—new faces and old. It was fun.

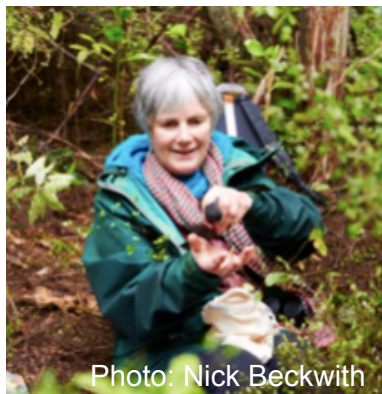


Photo: Nick Beckwith

We established there were a lot of robins at the site – from a walk-through along the main tracks using playback, we estimated at least 24 territories – the most ever, with birds located in areas where in previous years there have been none. But actually the unbanded population is too large now to be able to estimate its size accurately.

It could be that with so many enthusiastic and trained nest finders, we monitored the most nests in a season so far – 10 confirmed (and 1 probable that failed before it could be confirmed). And that nest success was similar to 2020 levels, with 7/10 nests known to have fledged a total of 14 young. All 3 nest failures occurred before the end of October, with predation by unknown predators being the likely cause of 2 of the failures. The 3rd nest was too high to investigate. The Halo Project again generously lent us 2 of their nest cameras, but they had not been placed on the nests that failed. Crudely calculated nest survival estimates were 62%. This rate is not that much lower than the 72-77% levels recorded inside Orokonui from 2011 to 2014 by Mike Jones for his MSc (University of Otago 2016).



Some of the Robin Team 2021

Photo: Nick Beckwith

We resighted all of the 2020 banded adults except for one male – who presumably had died overwinter as he was replaced in his territory by a robin we had banded as a nestling in 2020 – and a pair we had banded in 2020 who we believe have moved outside our study area. Another male – one we had banded as a nestling in 2019 – disappeared during this season. We banded 4 nestlings (nests went on to fledge) and 6 adults in 2021. And following my being granted L3 bander status for robins, it's been a really nice end to the season letting some keen L1 banders get some practice at bird handling.

If you want to hear some of the action, Karthic joined us to record our work on the project for his 'Tune into Nature' podcast series on Otago Access Radio – the episode went out this week so please take time to check it out.

Other thank yous go to Jill Hamel and Ruth Houghton for their continued support for this project, Nick Beckwith for being exceptionally good at growing mealworms and taking photos, Graeme Loh and Franny Cunninghame for providing nest climbing equipment and their expertise using it, Graham Parker for his support as L3 bander, and the Halo Project for the loan of cameras.

George Pickerell

Black Orange Blue Metal - Story of the Robins



Take a forest walk, listen to the iconic song of the Robin and meet the team working to find out how the birds are doing and the threats they face in their new home -a little patch of forest.

South Island Robins / Kakaruwai are one of the most curious birds of Aotearoa NZ. They were once widespread, but today, their numbers are at risk and declining. In one of the forests outside Orokonui, the birds have been nesting for a few years and a team from Birds NZ led by Georgina Pickerell, is studying the Robins and their nesting success.

Featuring - George Pickerell & Birds NZ Members - Francesca Cunninghame, Niko Jimenez-Cunninghame, Oscar Thomas, Adrienne Mulqueen, Katie Gray, Bruce McKinlay.

Thanks to the members of the Robins team and Birds NZ Otago Branch.

Here are the links-

Apple Podcasts- <https://apple.co/3GUnFdM>

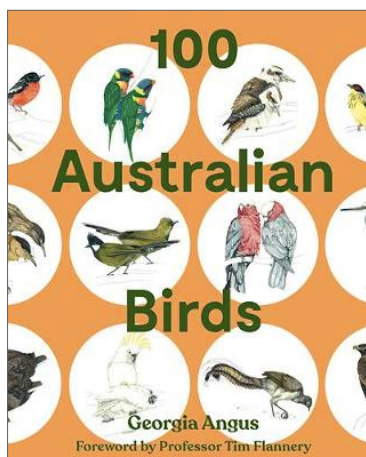
Spotify - <https://spoti.fi/3gP3gMz>

OAR FM - <https://oar.org.nz/tune-in-to-nature/>

It's also available on other podcast platforms like Audible, iHeart Radio etc.

Karthic.

The following books of ornithological interest were added to Dunedin Public Libraries' collections in 2021



100 Australian birds, by Georgia Angus

A bird a day, by Dominic Couzens

A most remarkable creature [the caracara], by Jonathan Meiburg
[also in large print]

A world on the wing : the global odyssey of migratory birds, by
Scott Weidensaul

Birds of New Zealand : collective nouns, by Melissa Boardman

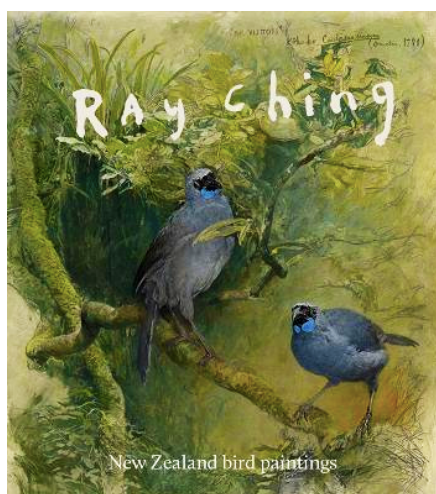
Birdsong in a time of silence, by Steven Lovatt

Featherhood : on birds and fathers, by Charlie Samson Gilmour

Field guide to New Zealand seabirds. 3rd ed., by Brian J.
Parkinson

Getting closer : rediscovering nature through bird photography, by Paul Sorrell

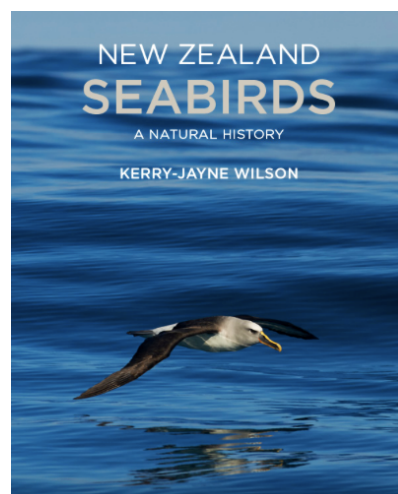
Neighborhood hawks, by John Lane



New Zealand bird
paintings, by Raymond
Harris-Ching

New Zealand seabirds : a
natural history, by Kerry-
Jayne Wilson

Photography, birds : field
techniques and the art of
the image, by Gerrit Vyn



RSPB guide to birdsong, by Adrian Thomas

Shearwater, by Roger Morgan-Grenville

Swifts and us, by Sarah Gibson

The ascent of birds : how modern science is revealing their
story, by John Reilly

The hummingbird handbook, by John Shewey

The hummingbirds' gift, by Sy Montgomery

The nightingale, by Sam Lee

The story of New Zealand's unique birds : from adzebill to
yellow-eyed penguin, by Alan Froggatt

The swallow : a biography, by Stephen Moss

Why peacocks?, by Sean Flynn



Thanks to collection specialist Susan Sinclair for this information.

Alan Baker

Programme 2022

Monthly Indoor Meetings will be held on the **4th Tuesday** at 7.30pm in the Valley Project Community Rooms, 262 North Road, NEV. Just past the primary school, with a parking area in front. Look for the NZ Falcon Mural.

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|-------------------|---|
| Tuesday 22 Feb | Bruce McKinlay
Birding experiences in Costa Rica, pre-covid |
| Saturday 12 March | Atlasing trip to the inland Catlins area. Meet at Bunnings at 8.30. Please let me know if you intend coming, so that you can be informed of any changes to the plan.
Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com |
| Tuesday 22 March | Craig McKenzie
On assignment for NZ Geographic - experiences photographing rare birds for feature articles. |
| 10 -12 April | Atlasing trip to Motatapu Station
Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com |
| Sunday 24 April | Tomahawk Lagoon Birdwatching 10am to noon Covid dependent
A Wild Dunedin Festival event. We will have telescopes available for the public to see birds close-up and assist with identification.
Contact Andrew if you can help; phone 454 5830 |
| Tuesday 26 April | Oscar Thomas
How to identify all those black and white seabirds. |
| Saturday 7 May | Global Big Day Field trips
How many species can we see in one day? Carloads of birders will be allocated to a various birding hotspots to ensure good coverage of habitats and species. |
| Tuesday 24 May | Anne Schlesselmann
Tracking migrations of South Island Pied Oystercatchers
(latest findings from a joint project of Landcare, DOC and Birds NZ) |
| Tuesday 28 June | Ursula Ellenberg
Seabird conservation research between the midnight sun and shadowlands (starting with some pre-pandemic work in Siberia and ending on some recent highlights of our tawaki research in Fiordland.) |

Zoom/internet meetings

The meetings will be zoomed live for those unable to attend. We welcome our members from Central Otago area and others who can't get to Dunedin, and members not so comfortable with attending meetings at this time. You can join the meetings by Zoom link. This will be emailed to members the previous evening, so check for the link.