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## *Otago Region Newsletter 3/2022* *April 2022*

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

We will continue to wear face masks out of consideration for others at the indoor meetings

Unite  
against  
COVID-19

### **Ornithological Snippets**

An impressive total of 53 **Great Crested Grebe** were counted at Lake Hayes on 12 April; an unfortunate **Long-tailed Cuckoo** found at Signal Hill on 4 April failed to make it on to eBird, as it was deceased.

**Marsh Crakes** at Tomahawk Lagoon and Lake Dunstan continue to be reported, while the **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** at Aramoana was present until at least 8 April. Also at the latter site were 173 **Black-fronted Tern** on 12 April. A group of 5 **Little Shag** were seen flying several hundred metres high above Balclutha on 17 April, while there was a party of 17 **Pied Shag** at Blueskin Bay on 14 April

There have been 3 recent **Bittern** sightings, with one on the Lenz Reserve (Catlins) on 24 February (about 60m from where an acoustic recorder failed to yield any in the spring), another by the Upper Manuherikia River on 20 March, and a third at Warrington on 28 March. A **White Heron** was at Tomahawk Lagoon on 11 April.

A **Tui**, which had been singing normally, responded to a Morepork recording with a morepork call of its own, near Wangaloa on 18 April. A **South Island Robin** heard on the Gillespie circuit on 24 March was presumably a wandering bird from a translocated population. There have been some notable finch flocks as autumn progresses, with **Greenfinches** numbering 350 on Inchclutha on 3 April, and 180 at Motatapu on 9: and **Lesser Redpoll** counts of 200 & 250 were recorded near Lochindorb on the recent Atlas field trip. Finally a late(!) report on eBird of a **Cirl Bunting** at Waikouaiti in December 2015.

Correction -the **Shoveler** figure of 1150 at Queenstown was actually the March number; there were 850 present in February.

Please send any interesting reports to [cluthaphotos@gmail.com](mailto:cluthaphotos@gmail.com) Richard Schofield

## eBird News

In August each year, eBird updates its taxonomy, which includes new species, splits, lumps, and name changes. We have been invited to suggest potential name changes for NZ birds, to take effect from August 2022, and would like to take this opportunity to canvass opinion among NZ birders about their suggestions for changing the NZ names in eBird for something more familiar, or less confusing. Proposals so far include Southern Black-backed Gull for South Black-backed Gull, Australasian Shoveler instead of Australian Shoveler, Rock Wren replacing Rockwren, and Silver Gull (Red-billed) reverting to Red-billed Gull. It should be noted that some or most of the requests so far will align with those in common usage, and hence with the Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand, the revised version of which is due out in the next few months. If you would like to have your say, please send your suggestions to [cluthaphotos@gmail.com](mailto:cluthaphotos@gmail.com)

Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or [cluthaphotos@gmail.com](mailto:cluthaphotos@gmail.com)

## BirdsNZ Otago Branch News

### Global Big Day, Saturday 14 May



Oscar's photo of whio as poster bird for Global Big Day on the eBird website

This year we are trying to beat our species total for the day for the Otago region (67 in 2021; 68 in 2020 and 76 in 2019) by targeting all the best birding spots and going all out to find all the possible species for Otago.

Below is my list of birding spots and the key species at those areas; the idea is that small groups should decide which area/s they want to target-we'll finalise the allocations at the meeting/zoom next Tuesday. There might be small prizes or lots of accolades for various achievements, eg most species, only report of a species, hard species to get (eg falcon), some totally arbitrary criteria (chosen by Mary and Richard).

Taiaroa Head	Albatross, shags, penguins	
Hoopers Inlet	Dotterels, godwits, pukeko Shags, kingfisher, grey teal, SIPO, VOC, swans, stilts	
Tomahawk lagoons	White heron, spoonbill, shags, marsh crake, coots, ducks	
Botanic Gardens	Finches, bellbird, tui, rosella	
Orokonui and surrounds	Tomtit, robin, kaka, brown creeper, rifleman, fernbird	
Blueskin Bay	Black-billed gull, silver gull, terns, shags (pied shag), godwits, dotterel, reef heron	
Aramoana	Black-fronted terns, Caspian, White-fronted terns, godwits, dotterel, sharp-tailed sandpiper, turnstone, fernbirds, albatross	
Moeraki	YE penguin, cirl bunting, shags, seabirds	
Catlins/Nuggets	Mohua, kakariki, fernbird, cockatoo, bittern, falcon, spoonbill, albatross	
Wanaka/Central Otago	Great crested grebe, quail, chukar(Mt Roy), pipit, cirl bunting	
Taieri Plains	All finches including yellowhammer, swallow, skylark, falcon	
Old Mt Cargill Rd at night	Little owl, morepork	
Pineapple Track at night	morepork	

On the day please submit as many complete checklists as possible via the NZ atlas portal and share the checklists with the others in your group and also otagobirds (this is Birds NZ Otago's account where all data that is collected by our Branch activities and projects is recorded together).

To follow our progress on the day go to the main eBird.org (not atlas portal); Explore Otago-New Zealand; Filter under 'all years' dropdown box to Global Big Day May 14 2022.

**Mary Thompson**

## Launch of Town Belt Bird Count Trail



This event went well, with a lovely morning. We had an excellent representation of Birds NZ members and several from City Sanctuary and Predator-free Dunedin. Thanks to Mayor Hawkins for his support. It was good to get a photo in the ODT - it's hard to get publicity, so please share any Facebook posts on your social media.

Here is a photo from Craig of us all.



## Volunteers needed

Birds NZ has signed an agreement with the DCC to regularly maintain the ten bird count stations located along the Town Belt. This will involve regular cleaning of the signage to keep them free of moss, algae, insects, etc and if signs subject to graffiti or vandalism to let DCC know of maintenance requirements. Hopefully our signs will stand the test of time. It would be great to have several volunteers who are prepared to look after a few signs regularly and report any problems to me in first instance. Let me know if you would like some signs to look after. Thanks.



Birds NZ has also agreed to manage community engagement and events in relation to the bird count stations. We plan to hold bird count training events for the public later in the year.

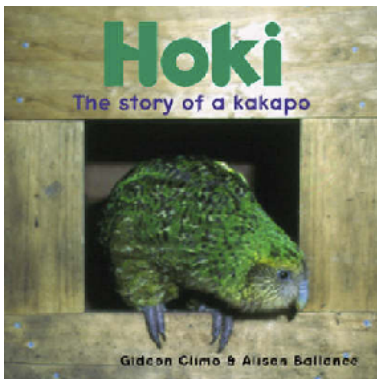
Mary Thompson  
[nzmaryt@gmail.com](mailto:nzmaryt@gmail.com)

## Books for Sale by Donation

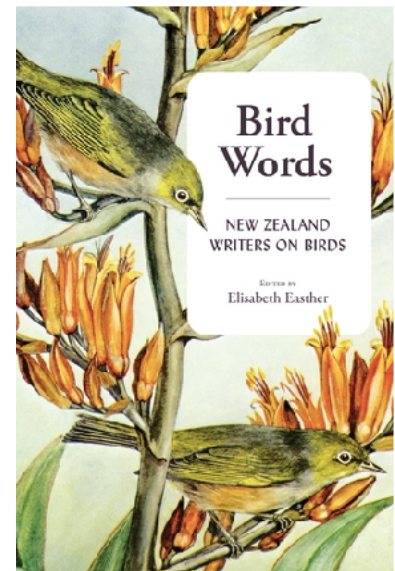
A quirky selection of bird books has been donated by Audrey Eagle. We plan to sell these for a donation towards funds for our Student Travel Fund. Some books are very desirable and others will appeal to eclectic collector tastes. Birds NZ would like about \$5 per book and more if you think they are worth it, as a donation for our funds. The books will be at the next meeting, but if you think you would like a book (unseen) just email me and I'll reserve it for you. Funds can be deposited directly into Otago OSNZ bank account 030903 0392455-00 (ref. name, for books). Thanks.

### Some nearly new and some first editions

Bird Words ~ ed. E Easter  
 The human nature of birds ~ Barber  
 Shorebirds of NZ ~ Keith Woodley



Hoki, the story of a kakapo  
 ~ Alison Ballance  
 New Zealand Birds (First edition)  
 ~ Oliver  
 From Penguins to Parakeets  
 ~ Sibson  
 Year of the Spur-winged Plover  
 ~ Barlow  
 How to Watch Birds  
 ~ Steve Braunias

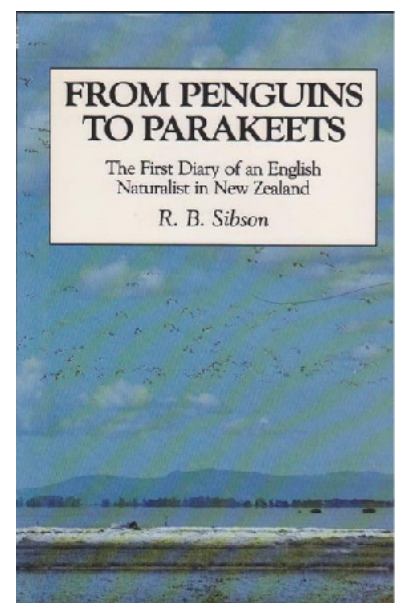


### Field Guides

Bahama Islands  
 Seychelles  
 Australia (Slater)  
 Voices of the Australian Bush  
 West Indies  
 Collins Bird Guide-British Isles  
 Hawaii's Birds  
 Birds and Flowers of Norfolk Island  
 Wading Birds of the World  
 Collins Bird Atlas

### NZ Birds

Kakapo ~ Best and Powlesland 1985  
 Takahe ~ Lavers and Mills 1984  
 NZ Albatrosses and Petrels.  
 Identification of shearwaters and petrels.



## Motatapu Station Autumn Birding Trip, 8-10 April 2022

A small group of Birds NZ members converged near Glendhu Bay, Lake Wānaka, on the 8th of April having been granted birding access to the Motatapu Station's private tracks. Dunedin birders on the trip included Richard, George, Franny, Jorge and Niko (aged 5). They were joined by Dawn from Queenstown and Petrina from Wānaka.

Historically, the Motatapu area was visited seasonally by early Māori who used the valley as an access route for food gathering around Lake Wānaka and for the movement of pounamu (greenstone). The hills and river had particular significance for the local Māori. The river's early name was Mate-tapu, due to the urupā (cemetery) in the hills nearby.

The early European explorers were unaware of this low pass through the mountains enabling access from Lake Wānaka to Lake Wakatipu. That is, until the Otago gold rush of 1862, which saw thousands of miners pushing their way up every valley and following all the rivers in search of 'the colour'. The huge swathe of high country between Lake Wānaka and Arrowtown includes the crown pastoral leases of Motatapu, Mt Soho, Glencoe and Coronet Peak stations. Most of the area is now protected in perpetuity by [Mahu Whenua QEII National Trust Covenants](#).



Highland Creek Hut, Motatapu Station (Photo by Petrina Duncan)

This was the first autumn bird atlasing trip on Motatapu Station and we were fortunate to have fine weather for the whole weekend. On Friday evening, we settled into our excellent accommodation - Highland Creek Hut - which is privately owned by the station. Not to be confused with the public hut of the same name which can only be reached by a strenuous two-day walk! We

were thankfully able to drive all the way to our hut, which had luxuries such as a fridge, gas cooker, comfortable beds and a hot shower. We won't dwell on the abundant mouse droppings or the little scuffling noises in the night.

On Saturday, we split up into three teams to cover maximum ground and atlasing squares. Dawn and Richard were planning to bike south through the property, but an untimely flat bike tyre put an end to that idea. (Note: if you're worried your bike pump may not fit a tyre valve, carry a ballpoint pen with you as a solution - thanks Jorge!) Instead, they walked around the



North Branch circuit of the Motatapu River. The track was designed for horse riding, and has no steep gradients (yay!), but does have some interesting zigzag sections, which led to some debate about what distances to enter into eBird, and a selection of river crossings. The birding was not exciting but there was plenty of it, with numerous passerines including redpoll, silvereye, tomtit, grey warbler and fantail with black shag in the bluffs of the lower valley.

Franny, Jorge and Niko headed south using a vehicle and legs to get along the main access track that follows the Motatapu River. It was a pleasant route with a combination of open pasture, matagouri and bracken scrub and small fragmented mountain beech gullies. While there were no unexpected bird finds along this stretch, it was still a fulfilling morning of bird watching. European passerines dominated the open pastures, although we did find a pipit at one place. We enjoyed watching 42 paradise ducks take flight as a kahu/harrier hawk flew over them, had the harrier not flown over we would not have detected the ducks that were out of sight engulfed by the long golden grass. It was a pleasure to have a pair of karearea/NZ falcon fly low over our heads and we were glad to detect the titipounamu/rifleman in the beech gully above John's hut. Piwakawaka/fantail, korimako/bellbird and miromiro/tomtit were well distributed up through most of the forest filled gullies that we visited. We spent time in the scrubby section where the matata/SI fernbird had been detected over summer but did not hear or see any sign of it. A pair of Californian quail appeared instead, much to the delight of Niko, who marvelled at the male's striking plumage (this was his first close up view of these birds).



Left: John's Hut up the Motatapu Valley was a pleasant spot for lunch (pukeko is wooden).

Right: Niko listens to titipounamu in the mountain beech forest above John's Hut. (Photos by Franny Cunninghame)

George and Petrina walked up a track alongside Highland Creek, through remnants of mature beech forest and regenerating scrub. Although the birding was fairly quiet in the morning, no doubt thanks to the frosty start, high numbers of tomtits, bellbirds and silvereyes were counted in these areas on the return walk. Aiming for the square DM20, George and Petrina headed for the open slopes higher up the hill. After bashing through very thick regen and spooking a large male deer in the process, DM20 was finally reached. Pipits, redpolls and harriers made an appearance, while plenty of silvereyes, bellbirds and other bush birds could be heard from a gully. The steep walk across and up the slopes was relatively straightforward and provided excellent views of the whole valley, rugged peaks, the Motatapu section of Te Araroa and the DOC hut further up the creek.



George (left picture) and Petrina (right) on the grassy slopes above Highland Creek.  
(Photographs by Petrina Duncan and George Pickerell)

Saturday at dusk was time for some nocturnal counts and thankfully the ruru/ moreporks were calling at a few of our survey spots. Playing their call proved particularly successful at one site where a ruru swooped low over the group and landed just a few metres away. We later shared a wonderful pot-luck dinner and dessert which was well-earned after a very long day of birding.

On Sunday we split up again: Franny and her family, along with George, counted birds in fragments of beech forest along the main access road as they made their way out of the property. There were bellbirds, dunnocks and silvereyes aplenty, but no rifleman. In addition, a small wetland area nearby was notable for the frogs and number of dunnocks calling rather than the longed-for fernbird.

Richard, Dawn and Petrina set off on foot along the Kennedy Face track which follows the main Motatapu River valley. Forest remnants and thousands of planted native trees provide a haven for small native birds, especially fantails, with riflemen heard in many of the mature beech-forested areas. Plenty of introduced passerines were also counted in open and scrubby areas. Harriers circled above but no falcons were seen or heard.



Richard and Dawn on the slopes above the Motatapu River and walking through a mature beech forest remnant (Photos by Petrina Duncan)

Overall, our weekend trip to Motatapu Station was a fantastic chance to enjoy the perfect weather, stunning mountain views, great company, high numbers of birds and a glimpse into this well-managed high country restoration project. Thanks to Richard and Dawn who organised this trip, the managers of the station for giving us access, and to everyone who



participated. Looking forward to the winter trip! The trip report can be viewed on eBird at <https://ebird.org/newzealand/tripreport/47112>.

## Atlas trip to the inland Catlins area 2 April 2022

Having waved goodbye to Richard on numerous weekends on surveying jollies, I finally found myself free to join this one.

So instead of a sleep in on Sunday morning, 9 am saw us on the road to meet up with the Dunedin folk in Balclutha. A quick redistribution of people in cars and the two parties set off through the Clinton gorge to make for the head of the Owaka Valley to fill in squares and species.

First stop saw Mary, Maree and Ela branching off to head down Lochindorb Runs Road, and the realisation that the day had decided to be windy (the previous month's trip having been postponed due to rain!), so chances of hearing things was much reduced.

Our car containing Richard, Maureen, and myself went down Owaka Valley Road. Several stops and a lot of wind yielded a reasonable number of introduced species considering; along with the usual suspects for the native brigade – Bellbird, Silvereye and Grey Warbler. A few Harriers were out and enjoying the breeze, but no Falcons spotted in spite of scrutiny of the tops and crags.

Our two parties had agreed to meet at Tawanui camping ground for a late lunch – a comparison showed the Lochindorb Runs car had definitely got the numbers over our car, with 2 big flocks of Lesser Redpolls in crop paddocks being particularly notable.



The plan had been to survey some of the Tawanui end of the Wisp, but the wind made this unappealing and by then we were over being blown about, so the decision was made to leave this for another day and head for the bonus square of the day – Nugget Point.

Coming down the south side of Catlins Lake to experience the new Hinahina bridge, we pulled in and had a go at counting some of the birds on the mudflats of the lake. Lots of birds, so we did it species by species and finally admitted we couldn't count the far away ones on the other side of the lake. A total of 563 birds still seemed quite an achievement with 37 Royal Spoonbills, numerous Grey Teal and Australian Shoveler present.

The next mission was an ice cream stop at Four Square in Owaka (an atlassing tradition I understand!), then through Karoro Creek Road and on to the Nuggets. A brief stop to count the White-fronted Terns at Nugget Burn also turned up a Black-fronted Tern (alas no other species

– not quite the North Island here). The flock of 196 terns was much appreciated. Bonus species – 6 Variable Oystercatchers

Well feathered and flying Royal Spoonbill fledglings about the rock stacks at the first viewpoint kept our attention for a bit, along with the increasing numbers of adults flying into the gut and disappearing! We never did get a view of this roost, so a pretty good hideout.



Shelter was good at the lighthouse thanks to the prevailing wind and the bird count started rising as people got their eyes in and picked up more. The usual good number of Otago Shags on the outer stacks and a very exciting find of a falcon sat below the lighthouse platform which then flew across and up the cliff face above the boulder beach on the south side of the point. Fur seal numbers were down but still enough late pups and parents about to watch.



Further out to sea the Sooty Shearwaters entertained us trying to estimate numbers - "30, 300, 600?" - it really depended which way you were looking (and how far out). Albatross numbers were fair with Buller's, Shy, and Southern Royal all being identified. A Giant Petrel (very definitely a Northern) entertained flying around and through the stacks. We even managed to find an Australasian Gannet amongst the crowds.

The Dunedin folk finally decided it was time to head homeward, and as we walked along we spotted Dunnocks on the way out. (Handy hint – this is a great place for them) and then

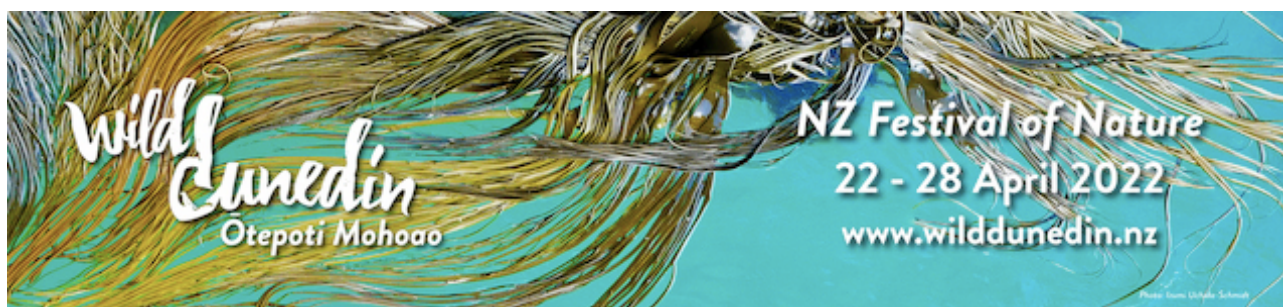


spotted a fishing boat heading across Molyneux Bay for shelter in the lee of the hills – just offshore from the car park. Up with the scope again and our definite extras of the day were White-chinned Petrel and a possible Short-tailed Shearwater. Attempted and sustained efforts were made to get other shearwaters, but in the end they were all Sooties with the late afternoon light playing tricks with their plumage.



Thanks to Mary, Maree and Maureen, Ela And Richard for their company – looking forward to getting on a few more trips in the future.

**Photos by Ela Hunt  
Suzanne Schofield**



## Notes from Graeme

### Low flying marine traffic.

Newsroom today, Thursday 21st April, has a fluffy piece about a new science fiction vehicle come real. Electric gliders to commute around the coast. They start in harbour waters, rise up on foils and then fly just ten metres above the water. Ideal they promise for short hop flights to ports around the country. They should be nice and quiet being electric, unlike helicopters. And no airports needed. Not sure how they will run the gauntlet of Otago Harbour entrance with large flocks of seabirds feeding, penguins, shags and dolphins diving, and a one nautical mile flying exclusion around Taiaroa Head Toroa. New Zealand in the Roaring Forties and being world seabird central could prove a testing trial ground for an idea born in Florida.

<https://tinyurl.com/mr46s3bv>

### Stop Press!

Sue and I have just landed back in Dunedin after two weeks of feeding out for the kakapo on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island. Food to support the mums raising chicks and food to restore the condition of the boomed out males.

Sue did chance upon a fledgling returning home after a bit of a day walk. But we were trotting around in the daytime on a roster of about five feed stations a day each on a three day rotation, so only the poos of the extraordinary nocturnal parrot were seen .



Lots of other birds were seen on those walks, inspiring lots of ideas. A highlight for me was how the yellow-crowned parakeets seemed to be quite curious about me, was it my orange safety beanie? They would fly up and hop closer until they were less than two metres away, muttering, inspecting, hopping. The red-crowns were just as common but not nearly so curious.

Mohua were transferred there around 1998. They are not particularly numerous but quite well distributed including in the 4-5m tall regenerating scrub on top. Their calls are quite simple, not nearly as rich as the classic recordings from the Dart and Eglinton. They are constantly bullied by bellbirds, chased and sung on top of. Are our cranky bellbirds and tui the reason

there are almost no exotic birds on the island? There are blackbirds, but they are few and extremely flighty. No silvereyes were seen in two weeks. I have never seen so many bellbirds and it was very hard to make a sound recording of any other bird because of their constant song and alarm.

The kaka are abundant. Their song repertoire is very different from those in flying distance in Waitutu and on Rakiura. I did eventually get some recordings of their dialect.

The Campbell Island teal also took an interest in us humans. We would crunch through some ferns to the creek and ripples would appear in an empty channel and a group of ducks with



very narrow beaks would swim up to us and continue life within a couple of metres. Charming! for a brown bird.

Next task ebird entries.

### **eBird Big Day Saturday 14th May**

Let's be kind to the planet we love, that supports our interests, and so not use a lot of fossil fuel. I have not been a follower of big days and big years. They have seemed to be the world of wealthy mature men rushing around the country side beating their chests. I was a bit appalled last year to be on a pelagic boat with people that had flown the length of the country to 'get' a few more species. And some of you will remember my joint talk with Sue on Sub-antarctic seabirds where I suggested that our discretionary travel is one item we can easily cut from our fossil fuel footprint. The money saved could be put to good use by seabird researchers discovering things we did not know, and identifying changes needed to the fishing methods used in the Pacific Ocean.

So I was pleasantly surprised when I looked up at the commentary of the world eBird Big Day summaries in the past few years and found some stories of light carbon footprints yielding fun results, as well as contributing to data. And an awareness that fossil fuel use compromises the future.

For me the prime responsibility this May is to see the Sandfly Bay sooty shearwater chicks get away Ok. Franny, Sue and I might be banding them that Friday/Saturday, so might be in position to get the first bird of the Big Day in the world unless someone else starts the day at night in the Chathams. The prions will not be at the colony as it is a full moon weekend.

What low carbon big days can we have here in Otago?

**Graeme Loh**

### **Zoom seminar Friday 29 April at 12 noon**

#### **Understanding godwit migration timing**

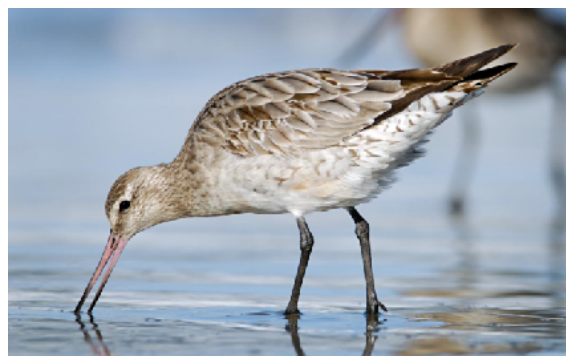
Assoc. Prof. Phil Battley, Wildlife and Ecology Group, Massey University

Phil Battley, who has been studying the migration and movements of our bar-tailed godwits for several decades, is going to be giving a zoom seminar to Zoology. This seminar will be of interest to many Birds NZ members and we have been given the link so we can take this opportunity to hear a great talk. Mark it in your diaries, Friday 29 April 12 noon to 1pm.

Here is the Zoom link:

Zoom - <https://otago.zoom.us/j/96448643698?pwd=eUx3M3VpRDFBcGxjVGZEk1N5RUZYUT09>

Password 739630



Bar-tailed godwit. Non-breeding adult feeding. Warrington Beach, Otago, October 2006. Image © Craig McKenzie

## EarthDiverse webinar series on birds

### 1. HIS212: History and Environment Series - "Feathers on the Frontline: The Legacy of Birds in the First World War"



This course will take a fresh perspective on one of the largest and most wide-reaching conflicts of human history: the First World War. We will look at how birds and birdwatchers were shaped by this conflict, how human-bird relationships changed, and how the legacy of certain species lives on today. We'll read letters from birders at Gallipoli and the Somme, explore the relationship between femininity and ornithology during the war, look at how our feathered friends helped shape the course of the war, and so much more!

Register here: <https://earthdiverse.org.nz/course/his212/>  
4 consecutive weekly lectures beginning Tuesday 10 May, 5.30-6.30pm

#### Course Outline:

Week 1: The Legacy of Birds in WWI - An Introduction

Week 2: Shaping Memories - Birds in the Trenches

Week 3: Chronicling the War - Ornithological Journals in 1914-1918

Week 4: Unsung Heroes - Carrier Pigeons in the First World War

### 2. ENV108: Environment and Biodiversity Series - "A Social History of Birds: Our Fascination with Life on the Wing"



For centuries, we have been fascinated by the lives of birds. Starting in antiquity and ending in the present day, this course explores how humans around the globe have fallen in love with, studied, and changed the world of our feathered friends, and how they, in turn, have changed us. We will look at birds in religion, myth and the arts, the rise of the natural historians, conservationists and bird-watchers, the role of birds in 20th century statehood, and finally the history of avian domestication.

Register here: [https://earthdiverse.org.nz/course/env208\\_socialhistoryofbirds/](https://earthdiverse.org.nz/course/env208_socialhistoryofbirds/)  
Course comprises 8 lectures and is due to begin in the week of 1 August 2022

#### Course Outline:

Topic 1: The Moral Wisdom of Birds

Topic 2: Birds in the Premodern Arts

Topic 3: Skin and Bones - The Early Ornithologists

Topic 4: John Gould's Fatal Journey, and the Tragedy of His Namesake

Topic 5: The Birdwatchers of Europe and North America

Topic 6: The Colonisation of Birding in a Decolonial Era

Topic 7: Kakaporiums, Foster Families and Translocations: Bird Conservation in New Zealand

Topic 8: Taming the Wild - A History of Bird Husbandry

Ivan Lin

## 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. There is the possibility of cancellation due to Covid restrictions and if this happens full refunds will be given.

## Birds Disturbance on Beaches

Birds NZ is wanting to collate any instances of disturbance of birdlife by either dogs or vehicles at any of our local birding habitats. We are not looking for in depth detail, just a bullet point list of places where you or members have noticed an increase in disturbance or even long term issues.

Bernie Kelley, Hawkes Bay RR, says that over the last few years, there has been some momentum building around reducing the presence of vehicles on beaches nationwide. Restrictions are happening or being canvassed through local councils who are all operating separately. It would be quite good to perhaps get a balanced view from an organisation such as Birds NZ, so this first step could be a way of formulating a society response. Birds NZ wants to see what further research should be done.

Please email Mary any instances you are aware of on Otago beaches who will forward them to Bernie to collate for presentation to council at the up-coming conference in June.



Are there little penguins in your neighbourhood, or your favourite beach?

Would you be interested in looking after them?

We are here to help. [The New Zealand Penguin Initiative](https://www.nzpi.nz) has created a network of community groups throughout NZ that are monitoring little penguins, and we're always looking for more people to join the cause. We provide free support for monitoring, protection, and advocacy to better understand penguin populations throughout NZ, and improve conservation measures to protect them.

If you are interested, please get in touch either on our website [www.nzpi.nz/get-involved](https://www.nzpi.nz/get-involved) or e-mail us [admin@nzpi.net](mailto:admin@nzpi.net)



## Programme 2022

**Monthly Indoor Meetings** will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> **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.

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.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Sunday 24 April  | <b>Tomahawk Lagoon Birdwatching</b> 10am to noon Covid dependent<br>A Wild Dunedin Festival event. We will have telescopes available for the public to see birds close-up and assist with identification.<br>Contact Andrew if you can help; phone 454 5830 |
| Tuesday 26 April | Oscar Thomas<br>How to identify all those black and white seabirds.   |
| Saturday 14 May  | <b>Global Big Day Field trips</b><br>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<br>Tracking migrations of South Island Pied Oystercatchers<br>(latest findings from a joint project of Landcare, DOC and Birds NZ)   |
| Tuesday 28 June  | Ursula Ellenberg<br>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.)                                      |

**Suggestions of locations for field trips and atlassing trips, and offers to help lead trips would really be appreciated, please contact Mary [birds.otago@birds.nz.org.nz](mailto:birds.otago@birds.nz.org.nz)**

Please send all contributions for the April newsletter to: Sue Odlin [sodlin@gmail.com](mailto:sodlin@gmail.com)

Final date for copy for next newsletter: **18 May**