



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 4/2022

May 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

Following on from last month's column, **Great Crested Grebe** numbers on Lake Hayes on 3 April reached 123 adults and 101 juveniles, (224), possibly the highest yet counted. (Richard Bowman via John Darby.) Another grebe was seen on Lake Waiholo on 16 May. A **NZ Pigeon** had a nest with young in Stuart Street 17 May. **Marsh Crane** has been recorded from another location, with a bird videoed at Orokonui Lagoon on 30 April.

A **Southern Rockhopper Penguin** was at Nugget Point from at least 19-20 April, while single **Sooty Shearwaters** were found dead by the road in Balclutha on 8 May & at Allanton on 10 May. 3 **Cirl Buntings** at Otematata on 18 April were in Canterbury, but the observer contends that as they were on the south side of the Waitaki, they were actually in Otago!

Finally, an article in the ODT tells of the relocation of two of Orokonui's **Takahe**. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/mixed-emotions-juvenile-takahe-move>

Please send any interesting reports to 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

Contact Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com



BirdsNZ Otago Branch News

Counters required for wader count June 12th. High tide at Dunedin 1.47pm.
Backup day June 26th, high tide at 2pm.

Please confirm participation with Maree Johnstone, mareej@kinect.co.nz
or 027 660 9446

All, including new members welcome

This month's meeting: Tracking Migrations of South Island Pied Oystercatchers

Anne Schlesselmann, from Landcare, will describe this project and update us on the findings so far. This is an important joint project between Birds NZ, DOC, and Landcare Research to find out more about NZ's internal migrant waders so we can provide them with better protection. For example, SIPO encounter diverse threats throughout their annual migratory cycle. Groups of SIPO have been caught and banded with different colour flags for each region, and some fitted with GPS trackers. So come along to hear Anne or join the zoom meeting and learn how you can help this project.

Nick Beckwith has been regularly checking the SIPO on Warrington Beach over the past year and has spotted 7 different yellow flags since July last year with sightings made in July, Aug, Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb and the latest on 16 May; they seem to move around throughout the year and come and go. The yellow-flagged birds come from Golden Bay/Nelson. Nick is still waiting for a different coloured flagged bird to turn up, so far they don't seem to visit Blueskin Bay.

Here is the latest sighting. This bird was banded 31 August 2019, aged 2 years, at Rabbit Island, Nelson.



Join the Zoom Meeting Tuesday 24 May at 7.30pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84951231305?pwd=cWR0RlRCVE5GYlNpUHBvMVdlSjcXUT09>

Meeting ID: 849 5123 1305 Passcode: 964121

Global Big Day was a really Big successful Day

Otago Region recorded 79 species, starting with a morepork at midnight on Friday (Oscar and Ela) and ending at 10.59pm with another morepork and kaka but unfortunately no kiwi(Maree). The remotest report was from Backstream Biv in the Catlins (Joseph). We had to contend with drizzle sweeping in every so often and a change to southerly wind about 3.30pm, but this brought in the albatross. We only missed kea and identified parakeet; anything else? Richard notes that Otago had three species that no one else in NZ or the World saw: what are these?

At least 25 people took part so thanks to everyone for helping us get to our grand 'winning' total. Accolades go to the following, but I think we can all pat ourselves on the back for a great day birding.

Oscar for the first bird heard in the world for Global Big Day; a morepork at midnight on Saturday morning at Wallace Street.

Maree for the most species in a nocturnal count (4)

Rachel for cattle egrets and great crested grebe

Richard and friends for mohua

Nick for marsh crake

Petrina for quail

Oscar for black-billed gull

Philippa for yellow-eyed penguin

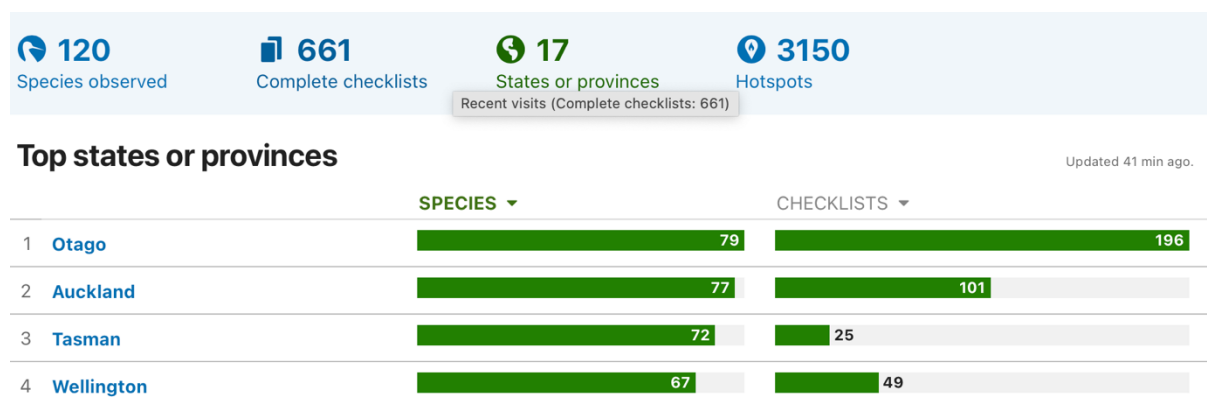
Georgina, Maureen and Maree for SI robin

Georgina for NZ falcon

Overall, Oscar and Ela recorded 56 species and had the highest number of species on a single checklist (29 at Aramoana Salt Marsh walk)

And Bruce and Andrew submitted the most checklists (17) followed closely by Richard and friends at 16.

Otago Region topped all the regions in NZ with 79 species, just beating Auckland with 77. We were by far and away the biggest contributor of checklist with 196 (next highest 101).



Mary Thompson



Nick's harrier



Maureen's robin



Oscar's fernbird



Georgina's falcon



Oscar's Buller's Albatross



Rachel's cattle egrets

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.

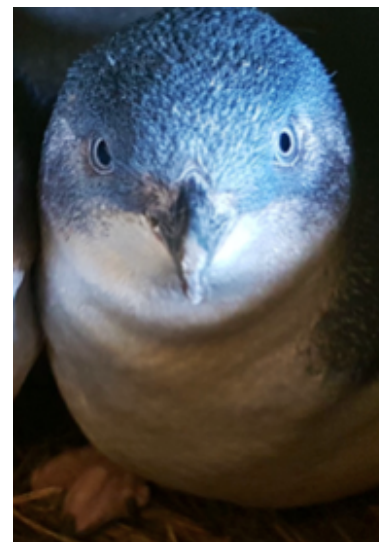
There will be several keynote lectures and shorter talks on a wide range of topics. The field trips include Atlassing on Banks Peninsula and Ashley River estuary as well as a tour behind the scenes at Canterbury Museum ornithological collections. There is the possibility of cancellation due to Covid 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 or e-mail us admin@nzpi.net

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.

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.

Tuesday 24 May	Anne Schlesselmann Tracking migrations of South Island Pied Oystercatchers (latest findings from a joint project of Landcare, DOC and Birds NZ)
Sunday 12 June	Wader count ~ High tide at Dunedin 1.47pm Backup day June 26th, high tide at 2pm. Please confirm participation with Maree Johnstone, mareej@kinect.co.nz or 027 660 9446
25 June to 3 July	Garden Bird Survey
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.)
Tuesday 26 July	Birding in the Chathams, Antipodes and other Subantarctic Islands Ela Hunt, Nick Beckwith and Richard Schofield. Followed by AGM.
Tuesday 23 August	Nic Rawlence Latest discoveries about ancient NZ birds
Sunday 11 Sept	Botanic Garden Birdwatching Walks; Birds NZ members will guides groups around the gardens spotting and identifying birds, 10 - 12 noon
Tuesday 27 Sept	Bruce McKinlay Town Belt Bird Survey findings.

Suggestions of locations for field trips and atlassing trips, and offers to help lead trips would really be appreciated, please contact Mary birds.otago@birdsNZ.org.nz

Please send all contributions for the June newsletter to: Sue Odlin sodlin@gmail.com

Final date for copy for next newsletter: **21 June**