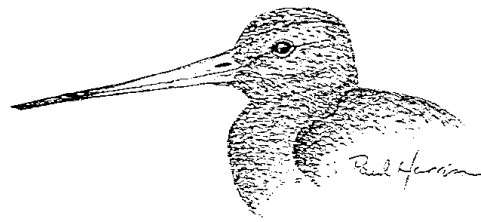


KUAKA

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

Aug 2022

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Greetings Kuaka readers, welcome to our newsletter for August 2022, enjoy the read.

We welcome contributions to our newsletters and Facebook page. If you have sightings, birding spots that might interest others, bird table news, events, photos, conservation, pest control, behaviours that you have observed, and the like, do let us know. To be included in the September newsletter we would need your contribution prior to September 6. We look forward to hearing from you.

If you were not among the 15 members who made it to this month's meeting at the Papakura Croquet Clubrooms here is a synopsis of what you missed:

SPEAKER - Adrian Riegan

We all know that Adrian is heavily involved in the satellite monitoring of the comings and goings of our wader species who travel the East Asian-Australasian flyway between NZ/OZ to Alaska/Siberia, and return, especially the godwits/kuaka. But it turns out Adrian is interested in stay-at-home waders too – especially the endangered NZ dotterel/ tuturiwhatu, more especially those who call the west coast of Auckland home.



We know that the tuturiwhatu nest on sandy beaches on both coasts on the top half of Te Ika-a-Maui. Adrian wants to establish whether manu born-and-bred on the west coast return to the coast to raise their own families.

To quote Adrian – if you have a question, go out and find the answer.

Prior to 2020 there was little or no data as there had not been any banding programme for the Auckland west coast beaches, or manu had been banded with metal bands that are devilishly difficult to read in the field, even more so if the bird is standing in the water as in the photo above.

Adrian's plan is to put easily observed flags on each bird and 107 tuturiwhatu, both adults and chicks, have been banded/flagged since 2018 mainly at Karekare and Piha.



Local community groups on the coast are now fencing nesting sites and under taking pest control, but as is the case up Awhitu way, possums, stoats, dogs, people, vehicles and bikes make life tough for beach and dune nesting species.

Of 66 tuturiwhatu chicks banded since 2020, 30 have been resighted and reported to Adrian. Whilst the birds do move up-and-down the coast (reported from as far south as Port Waikato), they have also been spotted on the east coast. Tuturiwhatu do not breed until two years old so Adrian is waiting, fingers-crossed, to see if any of the banded birds return to the west coast beaches to breed this year or next.

As a matter of interest, west coast birds breed later than those on the east; by the time the westies are sitting on eggs, in November, the chicks on the east will have fledged. Adrian believes this difference reflects the harshness of the climate on the west coast, but unfortunately this means the birds will have eggs and chicks at about the same time that humans, and their dogs, take to the beaches and dunes in the warmer weather.



Tuturiwhatu nests are difficult to spot (especially if you are driving a vehicle down the high tide mark) and this isn't helped by the adults who will fly off the nest when the perceived threat is around 300 m away. They will then approach the human/dog from a different angle in an attempt to lead them away from the nest.

Adrian's closing plea was for us to look out for the flagged birds, take a note of the flag number, and let him know, along with the details of time and place.

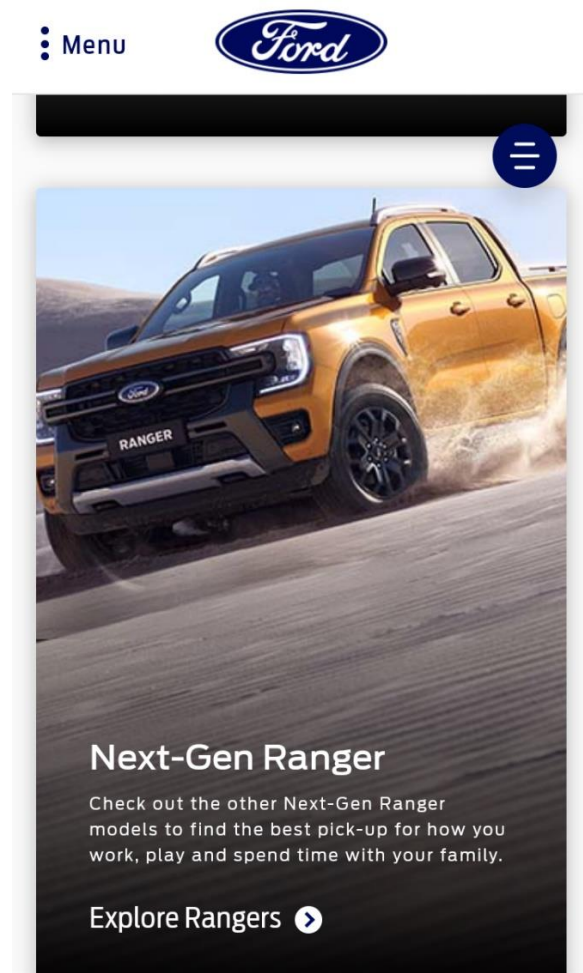
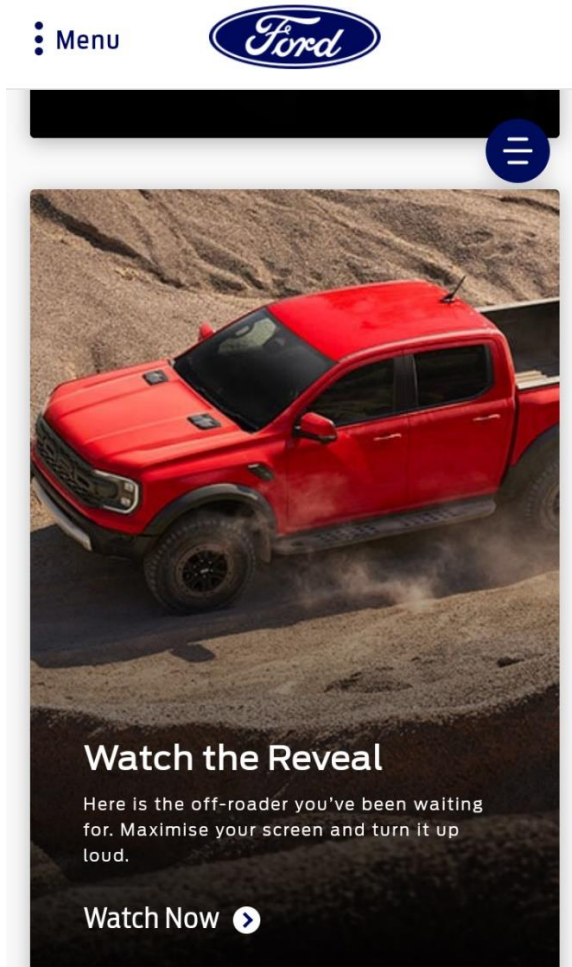
SIGHTINGS

- ✚ At the end of July, a kotuku/white heron was reported from Waiau Pa
- ✚ David noted that a large flock of shoveler that had been present on the Tuakau ponds was much depleted last weekend. He wonders if breeding pairs are taking up their nesting spots due to the unusually warm winter we have experienced (NZbirdsonline suggests that nesting normally occurs in October)
- ✚ There was a large flock of black shag/kawau near Port Waikato
- ✚ Two brown teal and a scaup were spotted on the stream at Puhinui, along with 40 banded dotterel
- ✚ 71 scaup were seen on the lake at Golden Cross mine near Waihi
- ✚ Up to 127 sulphur crested cockatoo have been seen near Miranda recently
- ✚ Two dabchick/weweia are resident at the Botanic Gardens in Manurewa
- ✚ The godwit/kuaka that is carrying a satellite tag is still present at Port Waikato despite all the vehicles and dogs roaring around the dunes. There were also 13 banded dotterel present last weekend
- ✚ Harriers/kahu are quite vocal at the moment although no aerial displays have been noted to date

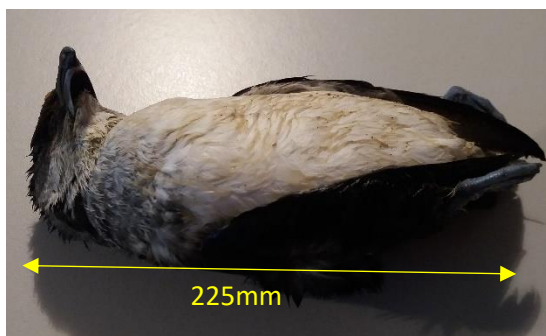
DISCUSSION

- ✚ Despite their favourite tree being felled, the Parry white faced herons are back at Aka Aka. Undeterred, they are nest building in an adjacent tree.
- ✚ Speakers have been installed in a couple of the trees in Stadium Dr, Pukekohe town centre where sparrows and starlings roost in large numbers. The speakers broadcast calls to deter the manu from roosting. Seems to be working, but the manu are simply just moving to other nearby trees.

Anna wrote to the Advertising Standards Authority expressing dismay at the latest Ford Raptor ad which highlights 4wheel driving over dunes and beaches. The Authority have dismissed her complaint.



BEACH PATROL



No official beach patrol was undertaken in August but Sue found the remains of an arctic tern and Anna found a very tidy diving petrel/kuaka (photo).

PROGRAMME FOR 2022

Monthly Meetings: held on the second Tuesday of each month, at the Papakura Croquet Club, 1 Chapel Street Papakura. Meetings start at 7:30. Visitor's welcome. \$3.00 donation to cover costs please.

Sept 13	John Dyer	John is Northern game bird manager for Fish & Game and will update us on his waterfowl banding programme
Oct 11	Keith Woodley	History of Pukorokoro Miranda Naturalists Trust and the connection to BirdsNZ South Auckland
Nov 8	Gillian Vaughan	Moult counts
Dec	Christmas BBQ	Details TBA



Great BIG Nature 3 August at 03:48 · 🌐

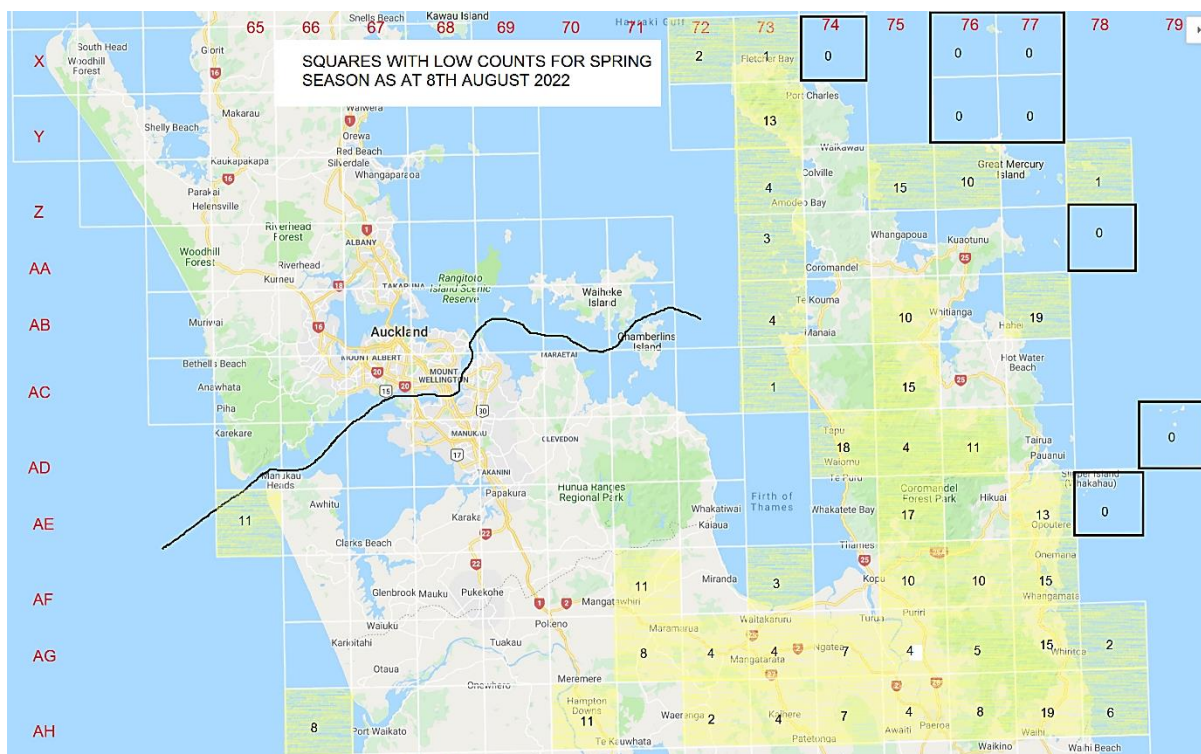
Looking like a 'mad professor', Marabou storks probably have the worst hairdos in the entire animal kingdom. And this photo pretty much proves that theory!

Connect with Nature!

Photo: Josef Gelernter

ATLAS REPORT

After many cold, wet days, we are starting to see a bit more sunshine and spring is only three weeks away. So, this month the atlas map is for the spring season, showing the squares which have had 20 or fewer checklists over the last three years. As you can see, these are concentrated in the south and east of our region, probably reflecting the long lockdown we had in Auckland last year. So start planning ahead for your next atlasing trip!



For winter, there are still eight squares with low checklist numbers and eight* with no counts (offshore islands), so I hope to get to some of these before the end of the month.

Looking at the number of checklists submitted for our region over the last three and a bit years, 29% of them have been done in winter, although the effort has been reasonably even across the seasons. There has been some variation between districts in our region though.

season	Checklists by season
Spring	3456
Summer	3792
Autumn	3953
Winter	4508



Highest season per district	
Manukau	Autumn
Papakura	Spring
Auckland Franklin	Spring
Waikato Franklin	Spring
Hauraki	Winter
Thames-Coromandel	Winter
Waikato	Summer

Thanks to those who have sent through their recent nocturnal or daytime counts. Morepork have been detected in a couple more squares recently, but please continue to send through your reports. Jot down the following details and send them through to me so I can load into the atlas: Exact location of sighting, Date, Start Time, duration of count, Species, Number of birds seen

‘Missing species’ Some of you should have received an email from me with a list of ‘missing/target’ species for your home square, and I have already had feedback from some of you. **If you didn’t get an email, but would like to help out, just send me your address.** Or if you would like a list for other squares that you visit regularly, just let me know.

I would really appreciate your feedback on any locations in your square where you think there might be suitable habitat for these species, or even just let me know that there is definitely no suitable habitat for certain species. A few sightings have already been made in the last month, but we still have until May 2024 to look for these species. Some of you will have bittern on your list, so listen out for them when they start booming in September.

If you spot a bird on the ‘target’ list, just do a count of at least 5 minutes and record all of the species that you see/hear, and enter into the atlas. Or send the following details to me: Exact location of sighting, Date, Start Time, duration of count, Species, Number of birds seen. Even if you don’t see or hear the target species, it is still important to know they are missing from suitable habitat.

FIELD TRIPS

We have 10 people interested in the Slipper Island field trip, and were hoping to go this month. However, David is having trouble pinning the owners down on a date, so it will probably take place in spring or summer now – I will keep you posted. There have only been three checklists done in that square so far (although shared by several people), on a pelagic trip in March 2021. So, no atlasing on land so far, and all seasons will need to be covered.

RURU PROJECT

We re-ran the ruru counting project in June/July but the response was disappointing. The 2021 count saw 75 participants recording 155 birds; this immediate past count saw 29 participants (**of which only 5 are OSNZ members**) and 39 birds recorded. Counts ranged from zero to four ruru per site.

The object of this project is to set a baseline for the presence of ruru in our region which is undergoing subdivision and intensification with habitat loss occurring on an ongoing basis. Researchers in NSW have identified land development as one of the challenges for boobook (a close cousin of the ruru) due to habitat loss.

As before, the counts have been logged to the NZ Bird Atlas thus filling in some of the missing winter night counts in our region.

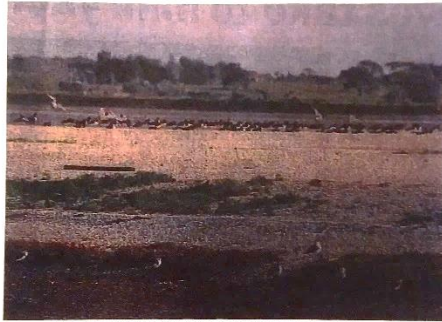


Kuaotunu Bird Rescue Trust 1 July at 15:30 · 📷

A new day a new Ruru. Not impressed, but warm and looked after. Fingers crossed.

We will be running the count again in 2023 and will contact you then and ask for your participation.

NZMS - 2956 Inventory
Ray Clough Collection
(1990-2010 2010-2017)
Photographs



Spur-winged plovers, foreground, and pied oystercatchers, background, roost here in their thousands. Photo by Ray Clough.
Manukau Courier – 17/01/2013

Auckland Libraries | Ngā Whare Matauranga O Tāmaki Makaurau

Auckland Libraries: <https://www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/>

Kura Heritage Collections Online <https://kura.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz>

Research South: library.southheritage@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Ray Clough has donated his considerable collection of slides and 16mm film to Auckland Libraries archive.

When she's mad at you



You may remember this poster from our July newsletter last year

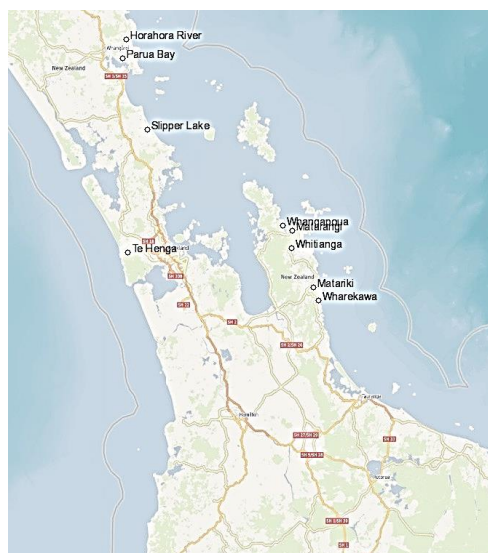


Matuku Link are developing a database of boom onset with the goal of establishing whether there is a regional difference in onset of booming but over time may also increase awareness of matuku presence generally and add to knowledge of their site preferences.

When and where did you hear the first bittern of the upcoming season.

Email your first boom to matukulink@gmail.com

Last year was the first year of the OK Boomer survey for matuku/bittern. The concept of the OK Boomer survey was to gather a different measure of matuku presence during the one time of the year when this mobile species is more restricted to a specific locality where nesting and raising young occurs.



This map shows sites of matuku/bittern booming as reported for the survey from the 2021/2022 breeding season.

These reports include sites where audio recording was carried out with some of those audio recordings detecting the presence of several territorial males. Some visual sightings were also received and these are to be recorded elsewhere.

It is hoped that reports will be received in future seasons from the many areas where matuku presence and breeding sites are known but as yet perhaps there is no awareness of this survey.

The potential for this survey to be a reliable indicator of breeding territories and therefore another measure of population stability or change, relies on input.

To enter details of sites where you have heard matuku booming [usually between September and February] please go to www.matukulink.org.nz/ok-boomer/ for the link to the survey.

Thanks to those who contributed during the 2021/2022 season and we look forward to your input again in the forthcoming season.

If you've got any questions or want to get in touch, please contact us on: hello@matukulink.org.nz
John Sumich — project lead OK Boomer at Matuku Link.



Karamea Wild 4 August at 23:27 · Facebook for Android ·



Bob doing his best fence post impression..

Matuku

Australasian Bittern

FACEBOOK A selection 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.

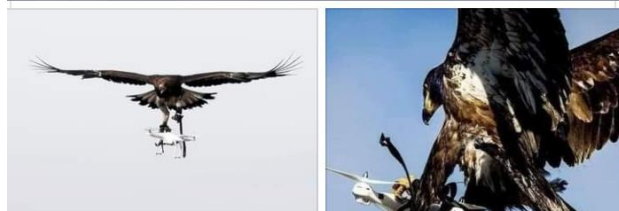
If you have some good photos, information, or links that you think would be suitable for our site send Wendy or David an email with the photo or link.



PREDATORFREENZ.ORG

Is the future of the Chatham Islands predator free?

Before the arrival of humans, the Chatham Islands were teemi...



Hosam Mohammed ▶ **Eyes On Nature** 19 July at

16:22 · Facebook for Android · 🌐

Hawk snatching drone out of the air 🦅



Nhu Nguyen ▶ **AMAZING WORLD OF BIRDS** 29 July
at 12:59 · Facebook for Android · 🌐



Whio Forever 20 July at 17:00 · 🌐

Have you seen a whio recently? 🦆

Reporting sightings helps us with the recovery of whio! Report sightings (if possible) with information about whether they are a pair, their sex (males whistle and females... [More](#)



World 1 August at 04:36 · Facebook Life
Mark Jordan ▶ The Awesome Nature Of The



LIVESCIENCE.COM
Over 60 million years ago, penguins abandoned flight for swimming. Here's how.



BLOG.TEPAPA.GOV.T.NZ
When did the huia's bill evolve? | Te Papa's Blog
Huia are one of Aotearoa's most well-known birds, despite goi...



Subhranil Das ▶ Australian Native Birds (ANB) 14



Great BIG Nature 15 July at 14:37 ·
Feather of a hummingbird!
Connect with Nature!

Happy birding!
Wendy and Sue