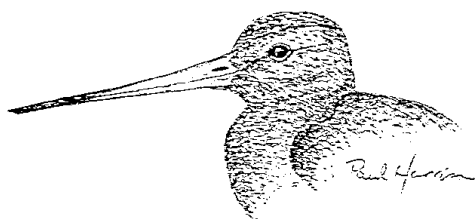


KUAKA

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

Mahuru 2022

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Tena koutou *Kuaka* readers

This newsletter was produced during Te-wiki-o-Te-Reo-Māori. Apologies for any mis-spellings or incorrect use of the Te Reo.

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 October/Oketopa newsletter we would need your contribution prior to Oketopa 10. We look forward to hearing from you.

MONTHLY HUI: Here is a synopsis of what you missed by not joining us last Turei/Tuesday.

- ✚ Our Facebook page now has 362 followers - are you one of them?
- ✚ The kuaka are on their way back. Check out Adrian's posts on the Pukorokoro Facebook page or website.

SIGHTINGS reported included:

- ✚ Keith noted that kuaka and huahou/knots have started to arrive back at Pukorokoro/Miranda, and was a bit surprised that flocks of torea/SIPO have still been leaving for Te Wai Ponamu in reasonable numbers recently
- ✚ There were reports of people hearing pipiwharau/shining cuckoo in the last week
- ✚ David reported that there are three or four pairs of tuturiwhatu/NZ dotterel possibly ready to breed on a new subdivision at Clarks Beach. They may be manu who lost nests washed out on the beach recently
- ✚ There was also a report and photo of a kookaburra at Clarks Beach
- ✚ Anna found two dead takapu/gannets at Pokorua Gap, and a pile of kereru feathers at her property
- ✚ Large flocks of tara/white-fronted tern have been seen at Port Waikato and Pokorua Gap
- ✚ Tony managed to catch and band two adult tuturiwhatu/banded dotterel at Port Waikato
- ✚ Bruce saw a flock of 22 hurukowhai/yellowhammers on the Eden Park fields. He is also continuing to monitor the matuku moana/white-faced heron nest in his garden



KAIKORERO MATUA (guest speaker):

John Dyer from Auckland Waikato Fish and Game NZ gave a talk about grey teal/tete-moroiti. These manu are found in Australia, New Guinea, Indonesia, Vanuatu, Solomon Is and Aotearoa/New Zealand. There some 120,000 are found in New Zealand - about the same overall number as the NZ shoveler/kuruwhengi. They do not hybridize with either native or introduced species in NZ.

There seems to be some disagreement (Birdsnzonline v John) as to how common tete-moroiti were before the 1950's but at that time numbers were seen to increase following irruptions from Australia as the birds fled severe droughts in that country.



In recent decades, Ducks Unlimited has introduced breeding boxes to many wetlands, which have proved very successful. The female chooses the site and they tend to use the same or a nearby box every year.

John has found wood wool to be the best nesting material and he noted that the female may deposit a very smelly poo on the eggs to deter predators.

The male often looks after the first clutch of young while the female lays and broods a second clutch of eggs.

Some females will lay eggs in another bird's box and leaving the box owner to incubate the eggs and raise the young. Females can raise up to 10 young, so if John finds more when checking the nest boxes, he may redistribute them, or put them under his chicken for her to raise. Myna/mina, who will also nest in boxes, sometimes cover the tete-moroiti eggs with rubbish, forcing the female to abandon the nest, although the reason they do this is not clear

John bands and weighs the manu and checks the hua heihei/eggs. He will also band young found in the box, although he has to be quick as they are only there for 24 hours

Tete-moroiti can be quite mobile and John would like to get funding to fit some with trackers.

Threats to tete-moroiti include waipuke/flooding, botulism, toriura/stoats, morihana/koi carp, alligator weed and "accidental" shooting. Tete-moroiti are fully protected in Aotearoa but despite that at least 10% of the population is shot each hunting season.

You may want to check out a paper written by John in 2014: Grey teal – reviving a spectacular success story stopped dead in its tracks. Just search the title on-line.



TATAHI PATROL (beach patrol): Our last tatahi patrol was back in Pipiri/June. We plan to try to run one before the end of Mahuru/September. Patrols take place mid-week at Karioitahi, if you are interested in joining us simply contact Wendy.



A further reminder that 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 matuku of the 2022 season?

Email your first boom to matukulink@gmail.com

The Cuban Trogon is endemic to Cuba!
Its natural habitats are dry forests, moist forests & heavily degraded former forest!



Not manu of Aotearoa, but still handsome

NEST RECORD SCHEME You will find the full details on how to take part in this citizen-science project on the Te Kahui Matai Manu o Aotearoa/BirdsNZ website.

If possible, searches for nests should be made from the earliest time that manu are thought likely to be nesting right through the season until all species have stopped breeding. Contributions from rural, forest and island habitats are very useful because most records are from around people's homes.

Although cards are needed for all nests regardless of the number of visits, the most valuable information is from nests visited more than once. Even two observations on a nest have more than twice the value of a single one, even if the nest is totally destroyed the day after it was first found. It is not necessary to visit nests daily, especially if no change in contents is expected.

A few well-planned visits can provide maximum information. For instance, for most manu, two afternoon visits during laying enables one to get the date of the first egg and the laying sequence (not necessarily every day); a visit during incubation gives the clutch size, after which a couple of visits around hatching time will give the approximate incubation period and hatching success. A few visits during the nestling stage will give details of growth, nesting success and fledging periods. If you can, try to follow the successive nesting attempts of each pair as far as possible throughout the whole breeding season.

Each observer must exercise a sense of responsibility, always putting the welfare of the bird first if a visit might endanger the nest. Basically, there are three potential risks: a) accidentally damaging the nest; b) **causing desertion or premature fledging of young**; c) revealing the nest to predators. So, take care.

There are some helpful guidelines in a PDF entitled OSNZ Nest Record Scheme, available on line with a search for "osnz nest record card". The Nest Record Cards are also available online, along with guidelines on completing them.

You can download the Nesting Scheme cards from the Te Kahui Matai Manu o Aotearoa/ BirdsNZ website

TUTURIWHATU - Northern NZ Dotteral

Last month Adrian Riegan spoke to us about his project to monitor the use of the west coast beaches of Tamaki Makarurau by tuturiwhatu.



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, be it west or east coast.

Our long-time member Ray Clough passed away peacefully on September 9.



Ray, and his wife Nola, were Mangere residents for 50+ years and Ray had always taken a keen interest in the local birdlife, including caring for manu sick with botulism from the Mangere sewage ponds. Ray was thrilled to see the return of the area to something like it was like before the oxidation ponds were formed in 1960, and worked closely with Watercare in the habitat restoration work (commenced in 1998). Wrybill/ngutuparore use the old sewage ponds area for roosting and northern NZ dotterel/tuturiwhatu breed in Ambury Park; Ray was concerned that "human beings want recreation areas but [must] respect the environment and the birdlife is important too. A lot of people just aren't aware that birds nest on the ground as well as in trees."

Rest in peace Ray.

A beautiful portrait of a knob-billed duck



Sub-Saharan Africa, Madegaskar, Northern India, Laos and Southern China

AWHITU LANDCARE

The group are preparing for the spring nesting zone protection work. As advised by Adrian, tuturiwhatu on the west coast tend to nest 4-8 weeks later than those on the warmer east coast; so, whilst hatchings are already being recorded in some areas, our local birds are not quite ready to identify their nesting sites.

Auckland Council have funded shiny new pigtail fencing standards and 200metres of white tape. Council also showing some interest in investigating a "special status" for Colbeck Spit, an important shorebird roosting /nesting site. Anna is hoping to be able to furnish them with the bird count statistics from the Spit, if she can get the data from Tony H.

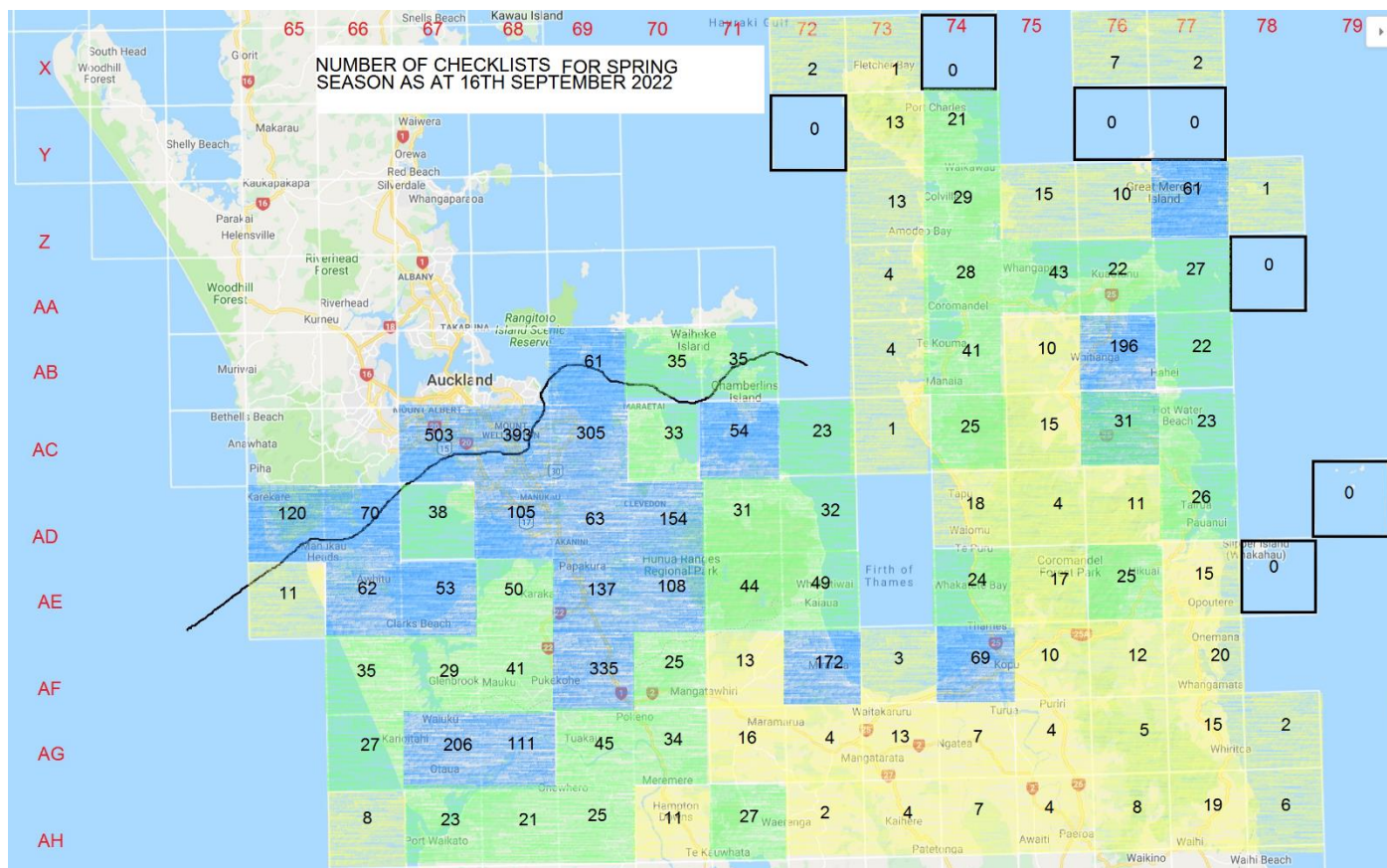
Baby Emu 🥰



ATLAS REPORT

Spring is finally here, although we are still getting a few cold, wet days. Manu are busy nesting, so if they have chosen your garden or an area that you visit regularly, I encourage you to fill out a nest record form, and contribute much-needed data to the body of knowledge on nesting behaviour. I am currently monitoring nine nests for manu pango/blackbird, kakianau/black swan and kuihi/greylag goose. Details and forms are available at [Nest Record Scheme - Birds New Zealand \(birdsNZ.org.nz\)](https://birdsNZ.org.nz) or contact me for copies. We have already had reports of inland breeding tuturiwhatu at several locations, so look out and complete nest record forms for these too.

Here is an updated map for the spring season, and this time have included counts for all squares in our region.



Please note:

- the figures include spring 2019 to 2022 checklists
- The yellow squares have had between 1 and 20 checklists submitted, the green squares have had 21 to 50 and the blue squares have had 51 or more

Most of the effort has been concentrated around the more populated areas of South Auckland and Te Tara-O-Te-Ika-A-Maui/Coromandel. **As always, the yellow squares need more checklists** – these are mainly in the Hauraki district and more remote parts of Te Tara-O-Te-Ika-A-Maui but hopefully the warmer weather will see more people heading out of town for some birding.

Thanks to those who have sent through their recent nocturnal or daytime counts. Please continue to send through your reports. Daylight saving starts at the end of the month, which means early risers will have darker mornings to see and hear birds, while night owls will need to wait a bit longer in the evenings!

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.

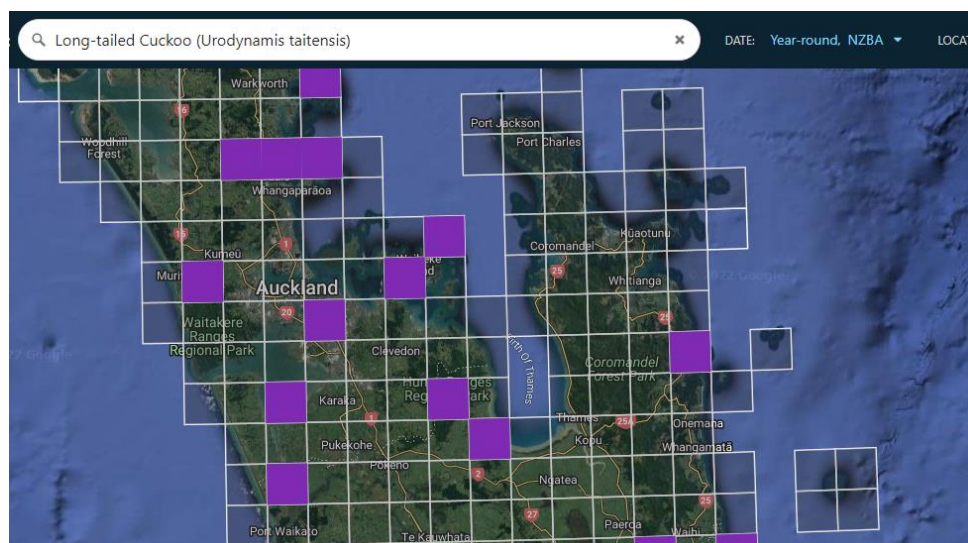
‘Missing species’: For those of you who received a list of ‘missing/target’ species for your home square, keep looking out for possible habitats for these birds. If you didn’t get an email, but would like to help out, just send me your address. Or if you would like a list for other squares that you visit regularly, just let me know.

Even those squares that have had plenty of checklists may still have some species that could potentially be present but have not been reported yet. With the arrival of spring, matuku/bittern will be booming, and pipiwharau/roa/shining cuckoo and koehoea/long-tailed cuckoo will be arriving back in NZ, so listen out for these. See attached maps for presence/absence.

If you spot a manu 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.

As a matter of interest here are two maps showing where the two cuckoo species have been reported from over the term of the Atlas to date.



PROGRAMME FOR THE REST OF 2022

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

Oketopa (Oct) 11	Keith Woodley	History of Pukorokoro Miranda Naturalists Trust and the connection to BirdsNZ South Auckland
Noema (Nov) 8	Gillian Vaughan	Moult counts

KIRIHIMETE BARBEQUE: 10 Tihema/December Kindly hosted this year by the Parrys from Aka Aka
More details will be included in the next issue of Kuaka.

RAUMATI/SUMMER WADER CENSUS:

This year's raumati census will be in Noema/November

- Firth of Thames/Tikapa Moana-o-Hauraki: 13th Noema. The 3 meter high-tide is at 11.31am
- Manukau Harbour: 27th Noema. This 4.1 meter high-tide is at 13.57pm

If you have never been involved with a wader census here is your opportunity. Give Tony Harbraken a call, 09 2385284, and he will tell you what is involved. You won't be sent out on your own on the day, but will accompany an experienced census taker, so no need to worry about your wader ID skills – in fact this is your chance to enhance them.



FROM OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

If you don't follow our page here are some of the posts that may be of interest.

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



Roaring Earth • Follow

11 Sep 2022 •

All bow down to the incredible bird that looks like a dinosaur and eats crocodiles! Meet the shoebill, a massive stork-like bird.



LIVESCIENCE.COM

This little penguin can waddle easily again thanks to his custom-made boots

Lucas the penguin lives at the San Diego Zoo.



LANDCARERESEARCH.CO.NZ

Adélie penguins, climate change and fisheries management

As a harbinger of change, Antarctica's Adélie...

.The greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), also known as the sagehen, is the largest grouse in North America. I...see more





A Russian photographer capture this magical moment. A red squirrel stands behind the camera while a blue tit bird acts as his model in this hilarious photograph taken in Russian woodlands. Photographer Vadim Trunov managed to photograph the animals at the perfect moment after he laid out food around the camera.. 🥰🥰🥰



Kākāpō Recovery

9 Aug 2022 · 🌐

The official kākāpō population is now 252!
Today the youngest of the 2022 chicks is
150 days old meaning that we n...[see more](#)



New Zealand Fairy Tern Charitable Trust

19 Aug 2022 · 🌐

Lovely photo of Donald. 📷
You may remember this wee fairy fledgling
who was found by Doc rangers a...[see more](#)



Cassowary Bird-most dangerous Bird in the World



Cassowary's talons-most deadliest feet of this Bird



CLEVER DUCKS

This years Ig Nobel Physics Prize was awarded to research that explores why exactly ducklings swim in formation behind their mother.

Frank Fish, a professor of biology at West Chester University in Pennsylvania, measured the oxygen consumption of mallard ducklings and concluded that swimming behind their mum took less effort than if they swam out of formation.



Ducklings may be taking a lead from pro-cyclists. *(Getty Images: Vicki Jauron, Babylon and Beyond Photography)*

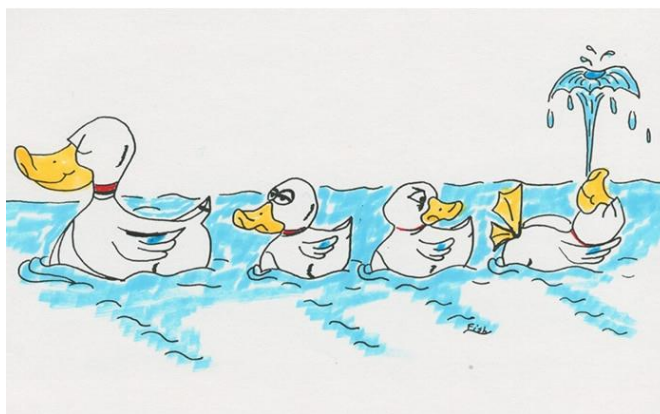
Professor Fish argues the physics at work is the same as that involved when cyclists "draft" or "slipstream".

As the front-runner slices through the air, the air flowing around them, a low-pressure area forms in their wake, and if someone behind can get close enough, they can be hauled along.

When it comes to ducklings specifically, Professor Fish said a straight line or diamond formation directly behind the mother was the best.

And he found the longer the string of ducklings, the more advantage to the last in the line.

"They could essentially just coast behind everyone," Professor Fish, who even drew a cartoon to illustrate the fact.



Dr Fish drew this cartoon to illustrate how the last duckling in the line could essentially take it easy. *(Supplied: Frank Fish)*

His work (published in 1994) wins the prize along with 2021 research that used computer modelling to conclude ducklings in formation are, in fact, surfing behind the mother.

"We have to experiment a little bit more to find out which might really be the case," Professor Fish said, adding that both processes could be at work.

But he was over the moon at winning an Ig Nobel. "This is something I've always dreamed about," said Professor Fish, whose email signature reads: "You're not doing science if you're not having fun."

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Happy birding!

Wendy and Sue