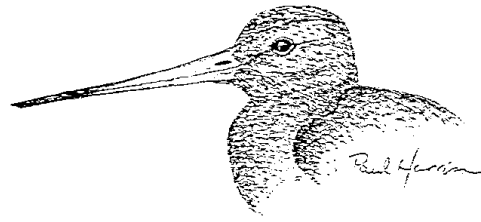


# KUAKA

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

October 2022

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Greetings Kuaka readers, here is our newsletter for October 2022. We review this week's meeting, discussion on tuturiwhatu, and recent sightings. We have Sue's Ebird Atlas Report, details of the upcoming wader census and of course, we finish with our selection of the month's posts to our Facebook page. Enjoy the read.

## MONTHLY MEETING

If you couldn't join us on Tuesday night, this is what you missed:

The meeting primarily revolved around discussion of NZ dotterel/tuturiwhatu, including the following observations: Tuturiwhatu have been noted nesting, or with chicks, at Opaheke (between Papakura and Drury), Ardmore airport, Pavilion Dr (near Mangere airport), Big Bay (up Awhitu way). In addition, there is a pair at Waharau (Firth of Thames), another pair at Clarks Beach, and at Kawakawa Bay there are nine individuals present.

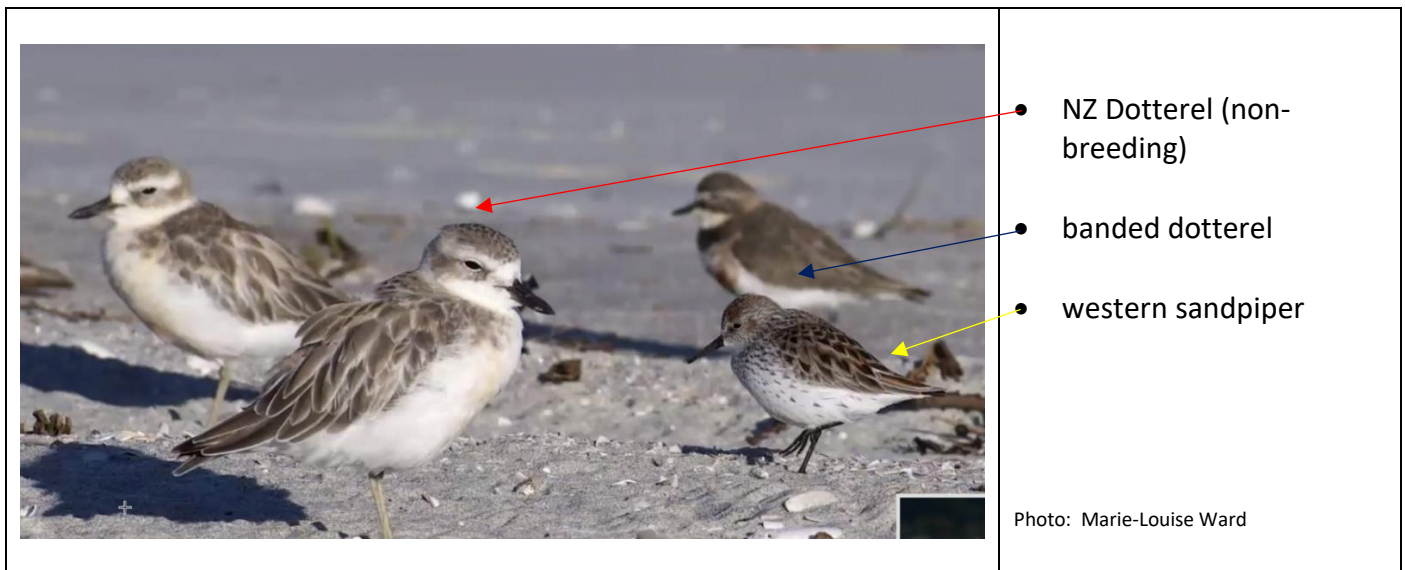


Gwen has been monitoring NZ dotterel for many years and had the following observations: Whilst tuturiwhatu are historically recorded as nesting on or near beaches, in fact, due to lack of suitable habitat on the coast that is free of dogs, vehicles and people, the manu will nest where it is quiet, provided there is a wetland, or pond nearby. They have been recorded nesting on subdivisions, large building sites, open parks and beside airport runways (as noted above).

Whilst on a sandy beach they simply wriggle into the sand for their nest, in a paddock or park they pluck grass and make a small 'cup' as a nest. Incubation usually takes 28-30 days and when the chicks hatch, they 'un-zip' the egg; rather than simply poking a hole in the shell the tamaiti carefully cuts all the way round the circumference and pops the shell open.



## A BIT OF HELP WITH MANU ID AT THE BEACH



## SIGHTINGS

- ✚ Pied stilts/poaka are nesting at Opaheke and Ardmore airport
- ✚ Banded rail/moho pereru pair at Pahurehure (Papakura) with six chicks
- ✚ 61 Black backed gulls/karoro have been reported from the colony on the Awhitu Pen.
- ✚ 150 white fronted terns/tara have also been reported from the gull colony – we have no details of any nesting activity
- ✚ There are plenty of spur wing plover young about our rohe
- ✚ Mallards appear to have had a good season so far with big clutches and good survival rates; although Wendy reported a pukeko attacking a mallard mum and then feeding one of her ducklings to a young pukeko tamaiti.
- ✚ Shining cuckoo/pipiwharauoa are quite vocal currently in suitable habitat in our rohe and have been heard since late September.
- ✚ There are plenty of pheasants around and the females are now nesting.
- ✚ The kaka are still present up Awhitu but are very quiet. Apparently, they go quiet during the breeding season as an attempt to be discrete.
- ✚ Spoonbill have been seen at Mangatawhiri roosting in trees near the Regional Park boundary, and at Ryburns Lagoon. No reports from Waiuku yet.
- ✚ There is a falcon/karearea in the Mangatawhiri district

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 November newsletter we would need your contribution prior to November 7. We look forward to hearing from you.

# Tara photography competition

Help us find out what White-fronted terns are eating all around Aotearoa! We're kicking off a photographic citizen science research project into tara diet with a competition, so submit your images and be in to win!



## MORE BEACH ACTION

These photos were taken on the south bank of the mouth of the Rakaia River last month.

This tuturiwhatu suddenly appeared in front of us and did its best to lead us away with its broken wing act.

We never did see the nest or chicks and I am sure that the quad bike that came past soon after didn't see them either!





## 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.

**Nov 8**

Gillian Vaughan

Moult counts

**CHRISTMAS BARBEQUE: 10 December** Kindly hosted this year by the Parry's from Aka Aka  
More details will be included in the next issue of Kuaka.

## SUMMER WADER CENSUS:

This year's summer census is in November:

- **Firth of Thames/Tikapa Moana-o-Hauraki: 13<sup>th</sup> Noema.** The 3 meter high-tide is at 11.31am
- **Manukau Harbour: 27<sup>th</sup> 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.

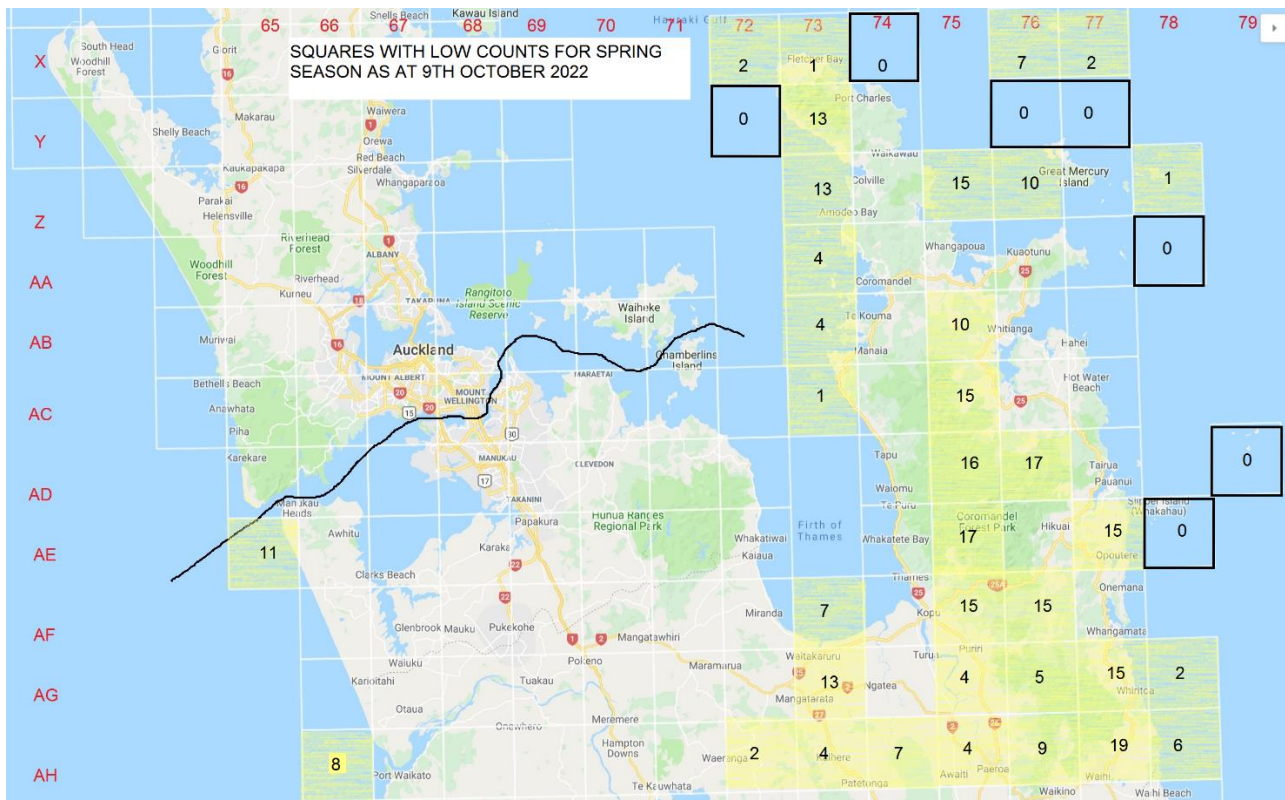




Bird of the year 2022?!

## ATLAS REPORT OCTOBER 2022

We are now almost half way through spring, and this month the atlas map shows the squares which have had 20 or fewer spring checklists. These are still mostly concentrated in the south and east of our region, so hopefully the warmer weather might entice a few more people to do some birding on the Coromandel.

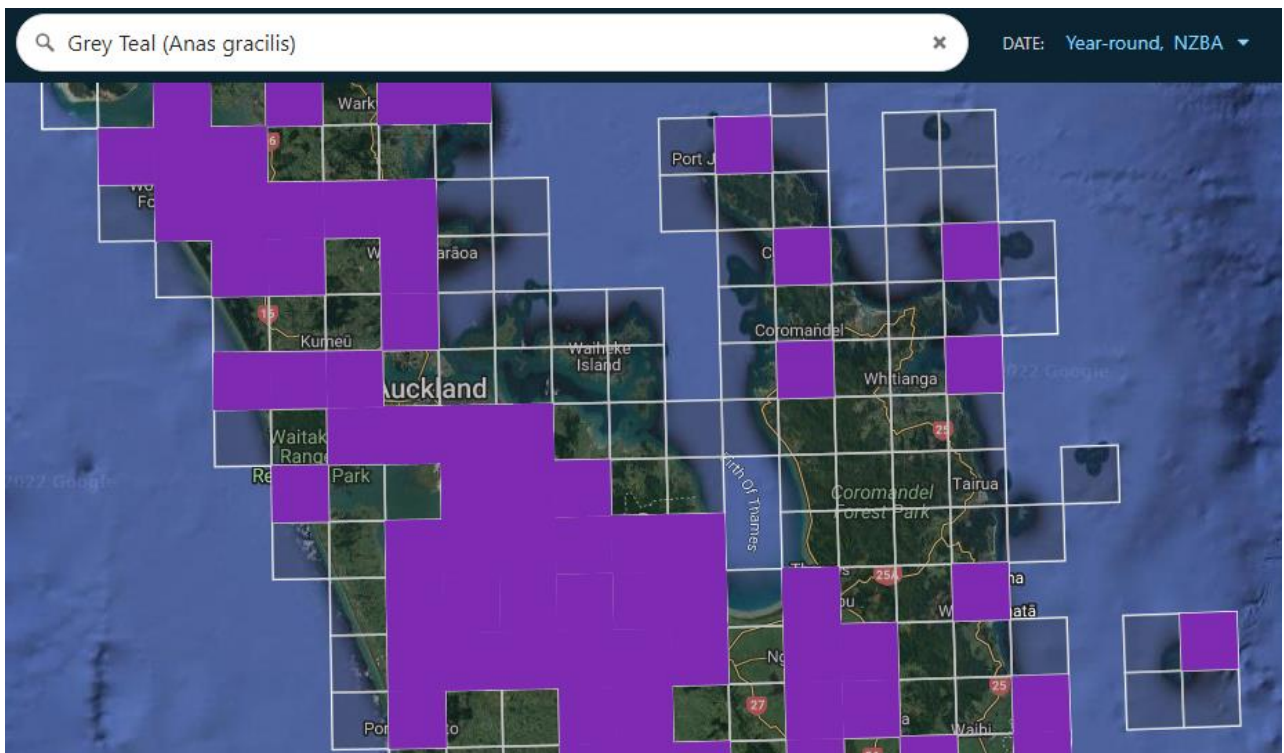


For those who are birding closer to home, please look out for target species. If you didn't get a list from me, let me know.

I have been focussing on ponds recently and have already found grey teal and shoveler in squares where they were not previously reported. The attached maps have purple squares where these species have been



found, so there are still plenty of areas to investigate, depending on suitable habitat. Even less exciting species like Canada Goose and Greylag Goose still count in the atlas.



With many birds breeding, or returning to NZ from overseas, there is plenty to watch out for. If you find something interesting, try to take at least 5 minutes and record all of the other species that you recognise, Enter the details into the atlas or send Sue the following details: Exact location of sighting, Date, Start Time, duration of count, Species, Number of birds seen

**A website that might be of interest:**

A new database called **AVONET** contains measurements of more than 90,000 individual birds, allowing researchers to test theories and aid conservation. Body measurements for all 11,000 bird species has been released in an open-access database

**YET MORE ACTION ON A BEACH**

Out-of-control dog at the amazing Ashley Rakahuri estuary and beach. It was a close shave with death for this precio... See more





**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.



**JP Mower** ▸ **Birds Auckland**  
2d

Partnership ... life on **Tiritiri Matangi Island**. Observations of North Island Kōkako courtship as seen today between Hemi, the grandson Cloudsley Shovell; matriarch of Tiritiri Matangi's Kōkako and his partner Te Rangi Pai.  
Here are images of Hemi feeding Te Rangi Pai the ripe seeds from Nikau P... See more



**Scott Brooks**  
Sep 22 · 🌐

The Aussie Little Grebe pairs are getting busy for the breeding season with 3 floating nests already built at Lake Drive Lake in Tikipunga, Whangarei. Fingers crossed for a good bunch of chicks in the next couple of months to help boost the population as there's only a few hundred of these in New Zealand.



STUFF.CO.NZ

**Shy albatross males more likely to get dumped, new study finds**

The monogamous birds usually mate for life,...

A prairie dog trying to ignore the starlings who are trying to mug him for his meal.





