

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (Inc)



Wellington OSNZ—Birds New Zealand

June 2022

www.birdsnz.org.nz and www.notornis.org.nz

Greetings

Banding with unique markings remain a central tool in ornithological studies. In April Annemieke Hendriks from the DOC Banding Office gave a talk in which she described the history of banding in New Zealand, together with an update on Falcon, the DOC banding database and some examples of band returns in the Wellington region. Our famous banded dotterel from Eastbourne (PAP) is spending its third winter in New Caledonia and will hopefully return to Eastbourne in August. Further examples of band of observations from the Wellington Region are included in this newsletter.

Geoff de Lisle

2022 New Zealand Bird Conference

[The 2022 New Zealand Bird Conference](#) was held in Ōtautahi/Christchurch during 4-6 June. As always, the conference was a fantastic event. With close to 200 people attending, it was almost impossible to catch up with everyone! As is a trademark of the New Zealand Bird Conference, attendees were impressed by the high quality of the [presentations](#), particularly those of students, many of which were supported by the [Birds New Zealand Research Fund](#). In addition to this fund, members can now also further support students, allowing them to attend conferences through the Fledgling Fund, which supported one of our region's students: Imogen Foote. You can read Imogen's conference report [here](#). Presentations covered a range of ornithology topics, including physiology, conservation monitoring, impacts of pollution, the use of genetics/genomics for conservation, and much more. Next to the regular presentations, conference attendees were treated to gems like Jim Briskie's plenary talk on potential unintended impacts of Predator Free 2050 for birds as well as our very own Colin Miskelly's showcasing of the [5th Edition of the Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand](#), the authority for bird names and taxonomy in Aotearoa. At the end of the conference, a Robert Falla Award was presented to another one of our region's members: Graeme Taylor. Graeme received this award for his sustained contributions to the study and conservation of seabirds and service to the Society. Very well deserved Graeme! Several other Meritorious Service, Notornis and Conference awards were presented – a list of the awards can be [viewed here](#). In summary, the 2022 New Zealand Bird Conference was another highly enjoyable and interesting conference and I am already excited for the 2023 New Zealand Bird Conference in 2023 in Taranaki!

Ngā mihi,
Johannes Fischer
Wellington Regional Representative

Wellington Birds New Zealand Monthly Meetings

Our next monthly meeting will be on Monday 4 July. We have another fantastic speaker, again from Te Papa: Lara Shepherd. Lara's talk is titled "**Genetic research sheds light on weka taxonomy and translocations**". Lara has generated new ancient DNA data from weka to examine some of the taxonomic confusion within this species. Lara also investigates some of the past translocations of weka, our most translocated bird species, because their source populations were often not recorded. Very exciting stuff!

Due to COVID restrictions, all meetings will be hosted on Zoom until further notice. You can access the meeting on **Monday 4th July 2022 from 7:40 pm via:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88996182505?pwd=MTNGZkFUMk5ubGIERDhOcnY4RnAydz09>

4th April 2022 **Annemieke Hendriks** (Banding Office, Department of Conservation) gave a presentation titled, "From the Field to FALCON: A closer look at the NZ banding scheme". *"Since the first banding schemes started in 1947, over 1.4 million birds from 241 different species have been banded throughout New Zealand. On an annual basis we receive almost 1,500 reports of these banded birds that have been recovered, dead or alive."* This is an extraordinary number of bands which was the stimulus for the development of FALCON the new banding database. The DOC banding website contains a wealth of information, including history of bird banding in New Zealand, the new FALCON database, how to become a registered bander and how to report the sighting of a banded bird.

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/>

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/reporting-a-bird-band/>

<https://birdbanding.doc.govt.nz/> Includes an introduction to the FALCON database.

2nd May 2022 **Colin Miskelly**, Curator Vertebrates, Te Papa. Colin gave two talks which were combined for a fascinating evening of ornithology. The first part of his presentations focused on three photographs taken from the 1930s and 1960s. The second presentation was on "Birds of Rakiura's tracks and beaches" based on a three week tramping trip in December and January. Notably, there has not been pest control over the majority of the island. While there are no mustelids on Rakiura the rats, cats and possums are having a major detrimental effect on the bird life. Robins, fernbird and brown creeper are restricted to areas with poor habitats and reduced predator numbers. Stewart Island tokoeka are widely distributed and are surviving in the presence of the introduced predators. Where predators have been eliminated such as on Ulva Island, species such as mohua are abundant. Colin during his trip found a large, headless penguin on a beach of Rakiura. The absence of a head made identification very difficult. However, DNA analysis by Lara Shepherd at Te Papa revealed that it was an Adelie penguin and is the 5th record of this species in New Zealand. See details below of the Te Papa blog on the headless penguin.

Note: Rats have recently been found on Ulva Island and they have yet to be eliminated. More details can be found on the following weblink <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2022-media-releases/doc-consults-on-plans-to-deal-with-ulva-island-rat-invasion/>

Eastbourne banded dotterel back in New Caledonia again!

The following report was posted on **Société Calédonienne d'Ornithologie** facebook page on the 17th of June <https://www.facebook.com/societe.calédonienne.d.ornithologie/>

"Double collar raincoat double banded gravelot Charadrius bincintus, Endemic to New Zealand PAP has been back for some time at his usual wintering spot, the Dumbéa Estuary. Born in Eastbourne near Wellington Her story on <https://www.sco.nc/.../actualites/l-histoire-de-pap-355096>.

It will be difficult to see him next year his resting place on the Nouré basins where a marina will be dug." French scholars can read the original post in French on the **Société Calédonienne d'Ornithologie** facebook page. The following are "other" common names used for banded dotterels (Oiseaux.net).



Foreign names

Gravelot à double collier, Chorlito bicinchado, borrelho-de-cinta-ruiva, Doppelband-Regenpfeifer, maori lile, Dubbelbandplevier, Corriere doppiabanda, tvåbandad strandpipare, Nyzealandbeltelo, kulík ozdobný, kulík dvoupruhý, Dobbeltbåndet Præstekrave, uudenseelannintylli, corriol bicollar, sieweczka ozdobna, Двухполосый зуёк, チャオビチドリ, 栗胸鴉, 栗斑鴉

PAP, a male, was banded on Eastbourne beach in October 2017 and spent the 2021/22 breeding season on Eastbourne beach. The picture (above) was taken on the 9th of March, 2022 at Lake Kohangatera (Pencarrow Lake) and this was the last time he was seen in New Zealand. PAP is on its third visit to New Caledonia having also visited the island in 2020 and 2021. If he follows his movements from the previous years PAP will be back in Eastbourne in August.

Regional Representative: **Johannes Fischer** birds.wellington@birdsanz.org.nz

Regional Recorder: Peter Hodge peter.hodge@gmail.com

Pauatahanui Survey: Ian Armitage ian.armitage@xtra.co.nz



June 2022 – Issue 30 Newsletter

A revised and expanded version of [New Zealand Birds Online](https://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz/) was published at the end of May. The changes made to the website were mainly made to match changes in the [Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand 5th edition](https://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz/), which was published simultaneously. This is the most extensive update that the website has received since it was launched in 2013.

<https://mailchi.mp/tepapa/nz-birds-online-jun-22?e=df137d7969>



Te Papa Blogs

Whose body is that? The case of the missing penguin head

[Lara Shepherd](#), 5 May 2022

A few years ago, our Vertebrate Curators Alan Tennyson and Colin Miskelly challenged Te Papa's geneticist Lara Shepherd to identify a couple of [penguin heads recovered from Antarctic toothfish stomachs](#). On a tramping trip to Rakiura | Stewart Island last December, (2021) Colin discovered a headless black and white penguin on Mason Bay beach. This was clearly not a New Zealand penguin – but what species was it? Lara was able to get DNA from the feathers of the headless penguin and a comparison with reference DNA sequences showed that this bird is an Adélie penguin. <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2022/05/13/a-new-bird-for-new-zealand-black-tern/>

A new bird for New Zealand – black tern

[Colin Miskelly](#) 13 May 2022

Rare vagrant birds can be a challenge to identify correctly. In many migratory bird groups (e.g., waders, terns, and petrels), several species look very similar to each other. There are further complications with species that look very different depending on their age and breeding status (e.g. juvenile plumage versus adult non-breeding plumage, or adult breeding plumage).

When a previously unrecognised vagrant species reaches New Zealand, it is even more challenging, as it will not be featured in New Zealand field guides and websites. Unless bird-watchers are thinking globally, a previously unrecorded species may be overlooked if it is misidentified as a species that is already on the New Zealand list. Curator Vertebrates Colin Miskelly describes how this was the initial fate of New Zealand's first [black tern](#).

<https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2022/05/13/a-new-bird-for-new-zealand-black-tern/>

A new bird for New Zealand – black-naped tern

[Colin Miskelly](#) On: 18 May 2022

Cyclone Dovi was a Category 4 severe tropical cyclone that passed through New Caledonia before barreling into New Zealand during 12–14 February 2022. Many North Island residents were hit by gale-force winds, power outages, torrential rain and flooding. Curator Vertebrates Colin Miskelly describes a discovery that came along with it.

However, the storm had a silver-lining for bird-watchers, as it carried with it an unprecedented haul of vagrant tropical seabirds, including New Zealand's second-ever [bridled tern](#), and at least one each of [great frigatebird](#), [lesser frigatebird](#), [brown noddy](#), and [black noddy](#), that were all observed between the Far North and Whangarei.

<https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2022/05/18/a-new-bird-for-new-zealand-black-naped-tern/>

Congratulations, Jan Keast, winner of the April eBird Challenge!

To qualify, all you had to do was submit [complete checklists](#) to 5 grid squares that had less than 10 hours of Autumn effort hours in them in the Atlas eBird portal during the month of April. Every 5 unique grid squares you entered data into gave you one entry into the draw. These checklists had to include counts for every species reported (no X's!), be submitted to the Atlas portal and were to follow the best practices outlined [here](#) to increase the scientific value of the data.

One of the two winners for the April eBird Atlas Challenge was Jan Keast, a Wellington member of Birds New Zealand. Jan submitted a total of 173 complete checklists to the Atlas eBird portal during April, detailing a total of 71 species. She spent time surveying across 18 grid squares, 7 of those had less than 10 hours of Autumn effort in them. Jan has contributed valuable diurnal and nocturnal data across a wide spatial area, tallying up 54 hours worth of effort in April to help further increase the Atlas dataset.

Jan's Atlaser's Profile can be viewed on the following link, https://ebird.org/atlasnz/news/aprils-challenge-1st-winner-jan-keast?fbclid=IwAR0s66HXfbnsKvnxgTeGXgAljq8_kKelsqsiwhXUz9uMin2t8THYeJ0luls

Total squares	105		
Total Checklists	33795	Average checklists / square	321.9
Atlasers	340		
Species observed	142		

*Includes the Wairarapa and Wellington regions.

For news on the New Zealand Atlas project visit their facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/NZBirdAtlas/>

"It's official, a QUARTER OF A MILLION checklists have been submitted to the NZ Bird Atlas eBird portal as of today, 20th June, 2022."

<https://gardenbirdsurvey.nz/>



Banded Birds in the Wellington Region

Banding birds provides valuable information on movements, longevity, population trends and breeding. The following are some examples of banded birds observed in the Wellington region in 2022. While standard viewing with binoculars / telescope are the essential tools for finding banded birds, photography can add an additional dimension. A camera with a good optical zoom and the added digital enhancements offers the possibilities of reading details on small flags as well as the numbers on metal bands. Multiple photographs may be needed to obtain the numbers on metal bands. The Department of Conservation website provides the instructions for reporting banded birds (dead or alive) <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/finding-a-banded-bird/>

Caspian Tern, Paraparaumu Beach, May 2022. Louise Thomas

[Louise Thomas: Writer, Editor and Artist](#)

1 May 2022

*"I quite like spotting a banded bird in the wild (as long as it isn't surrounded by 100 other banded birds). The bird is part of some study and was probably banded in a different part of the country (or even in a different country). This Caspian tern/taranui (*Hydroprogne caspia*), J20, was at his ease with two others on Paraparaumu Beach last Friday where the Kapiti Ferry pulls ashore. I reported him to the banding office and learned he was banded as a chick on Bell Island Shellbank, Waimea Inlet, Tasman in 2019, and is part of an ongoing study of Caspian Terns which have bred in the Tasman and Nelson districts, with particular interest in their movements around New Zealand. And now they know J20 has been visiting the Kapiti Coast. Bird #50 in 2022. "*



Royal spoonbill, Hutt River, April 2022, Lousie Thomas

RY//M; RG. It was banded at Brighton, South Island, 14/02/2005.



Banded Dotterel, Ration Point, Pauatahanui Inlet, February & May 2022



The heavily-cropped picture on the left was taken on the 17th of February, 2022 at Pauatahanui. The third letter of the flag is not clear but is probably E. The picture on the right includes a flagged bird (second from right) taken on the 7th of May with most of the flag hidden. PHE was banded at Eastbourne on the 12th of January 2021 as a chick just prior to fledging. Dallas Bishop & Geoff de Lisle

Robin, Rangatira, Kapiti Island.

While we were staying on Kapiti Island we noticed on the 22nd and 27th of April, 2022 by the Red House at Rangatira a robin with a metal band. From multiple photographs the band letters and numbers are BP and ends with 642. It appears as though it probably has a 1 in front and the actual number is BP1642. On the 12th of August 2017 we photographed a banded robin on Kapiti with BP164..... and the last numerals were not seen. Dallas Bishop



Kevin Parker reported, "I banded 38 robins on Kapiti in August 2017, all with the prefix BP164XX. The birds you photographed sounds like BP442, a female (by tarsus and wing measurements) banded at 0935 on the 7th of August, 2017 on the Rangatira loop."

Pied Shags, Mana Island

On the 6th of January we observed on the south-western side of Mana Island a pied shag with a metal band. From photographs the band number was O-38296. In February (22nd) another banded pied shag was observed on the beach by the boat shed at Mana Island. The band number of this bird, also obtained from photographs was O-38297.

With a bit of detective work we learnt from Mike Bell that both birds were banded on the 24th of November, 2020. Both birds had GPS devices attached to them. Based on moult pattern and feather wear, when banded O-38297 was a three-year-old bird and O-38296 four years or older. Both these birds are likely to have been on Mana Island since they were banded but their bands had been overlooked during our many visits to the island. Heather & Robertson (2015) a banded pied shag in Australia lived over 20 years.



Acknowledgements: Special thanks to Mike Bell, Kevin Parker and the Banding Office for providing information on banded / marked birds and Louise Thomas and Dallas Bishop for the photographs.



Places for Penguins is a Forest and Bird Wellington Branch project to co-ordinate steps being taken to reverse the decline of the Korora / little penguins in Wellington. The project is centred on penguin habitats on Miramar peninsula and has involved a planting programme, predator control, provision of nest boxes and monitoring of birds during the breeding season. Last year Places for Penguins started marking birds with microchips (transponders) in five bays of the peninsula. Currently 80 birds (adults and chicks) have been inserted with microchips. Plans for the coming breeding season are to insert microchips in a further four other colonies with the goal of having whole population in nest boxes along the Wellington Coast marked.

Places for Penguins request that any dead penguins are checked for microchips which can be done by contacting them by email placesforpenguins@gmail.com. Metal flipper bands are being used on penguins nesting on Matiu / Somes Island and a small colony at Days Bay. They should be reported to DOC and the

reporting instructions can be found on the following link, <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/reporting-a-bird-band/>.

Recent results of the Places for Penguins project can be read in their newsletter,

<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/sites/default/files/2022-04/F%26B%20PfP%20newsletter%2C%20Summer%202021-22.pdf>

Nigel the no-mates Mana Island seabird immortalised in song

Nigel the gannet – so named because he had no mates and [whose love affair with a concrete decoy on Mana Island gained world-wide attention](#) – has been immortalised in song.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/128617839/nigel-the-nomates-mana-island-seabird-immortalised-in-song>

Bird Snippets

[Australian bittern, Waikanae](#)

Reported by Michael Szabo, 3 April, 2022

Australian bittern photographed in flight at Waikanae.

Reported on New Zealand Birders facebook page.

[Falcon Hutt River, Melling](#)

Dallas Bishop & Geoff de Lisle, 15th May, 2022

Dark, gloomy autumn day. This bird was perched on a willow by the Hutt River. The condition of the tail is intriguing but most probably reflects recent bathing in the river.

[Cirl bunting, Seatoun, Miramar Peninsula](#)

mrdanieljking, 21st May, 2022.

Reported with photograph on iNaturalist,

<https://inaturalist.nz/observations/117982104>



[Red-crowned parakeet, Miramar Peninsula](#)

Lydia Titterton & Ed Marshall, 28th May, 2022. A

single, red-crowned parakeet recorded from 30 Napier St., Miramar. Sightings of red-crowned

parakeets appear to have become more common and is likely to be a reflection of the progress of the Pest-Free Miramar programme.

<https://ebird.org/atlasnz/checklist/S111566981>

[Falcon & kereru, Mana Island](#)

Dallas Bishop & Geoff de Lisle, 27th May to 4th June
While on Mana Island we saw a pair of falcons and a single kereru (separately). They appear to have arrived on the island in the last couple of weeks. Both species have been recorded on Mana previously but have not become permanent residents.

[Light mantled sooty albatross, Pukerua Bay](#)

Johannes Fischer & Igor Debski, posted on BirdingNZ.net by [Michael Szabo](#) on Mon Jun 13, 2022

Johannes Fischer and Igor Debski report via Facebook seeing 2 Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses, 1 Antipodean Albatross, 1-2 Soft-plumaged Petrels, 1 White-headed Petrel, 1 Brown Skua and 1 Pomarine Skua flying south offshore while seawatching from the northern tip of the Pukerua Bay headland (track from Ocean Parade) on Saturday 11 June.

Oskar Ehrhardt also reports via Facebook seeing a Light-mantled Sooty Albatross at the same location to

[Kite surfers](#)

[Alan Tennyson](#) » Sun May 15, 2022

At the Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve yesterday there were several kite surfers and a notable reduction in numbers of roosting birds (gulls, terns, oystercatchers). I could see 17 kite surfers from the sandspit (not all in the reserve). Kite surfers are always present now when the wind gets up. Is this an issue for birds at other sites?
Photo, Alan Tennyson.



Mana Island – 27 May, 4.27 pm

The following eBird checklist was recorded from the hide on the wetland track, Mana Island. The number of starlings (2092) was determined from a hard copy print of the photograph (below). Each evening flocks of starling arrive from the mainland and roost overnight. Almost certainly this was not the total number of starlings arriving from the mainland on the 27th of May.

- 2 paradise shelduck
- 1 pied shag, heard calling from colony on beach
- 2 Australasian harrier, flying
- 1 New Zealand falcon, flying
- 2 Yellow-crowned parakeet
- 1 Bellbird
- 2 Whitehead, heard
- 3 Fantail

2092 European starling

- 2 Eurasian blackbird, heard
- Dallas Bishop & Geoff de Lisle

<https://ebird.org/atlasnz/checklist/S112172756>

Photo, Dallas Bishop



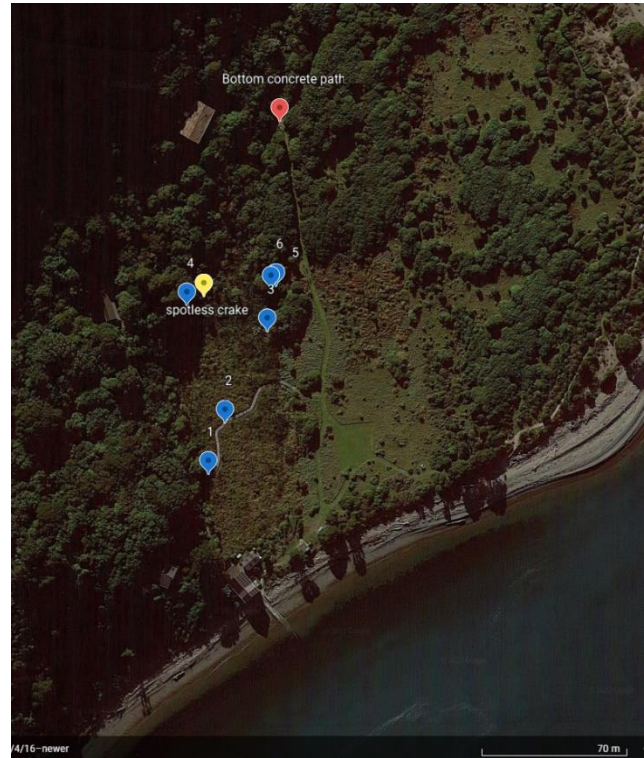
Kapiti Island, Rangatira – in search of the invisible

Wetlands are not a major feature of Kapiti Island. The largest wetlands are at the north end of the island at the Okupe Lagoon and the bottom of the Waiorua Valley. There is a smaller wetland at Rangatira at the centre of the island where the Department of Conservation (DOC) has its accommodation. While on DOC volunteer duties in April 2022 Dallas and I used a couple of trail cameras to search for cryptic birds in the wetland at Rangatira. Our principal target species was pāteke (Brown teal) which were known to be present but are rarely seen, especially during the daytime. In 2000 and 2001 20 captive-reared teal were released at three different locations on Kapiti. By September 2004 it was estimated that the population on Kapiti was 10 pāteke with birds being observed at Wharekohu, Maraetaroro stream, Rangatira and Waiorua (<https://www.brownteal.com/reintroduction-sites/kapiti-island/>). Pāteke have been regularly seen at the north end of Kapiti with 10 birds being recorded on Okupe lagoon in January this year (<https://ebird.org/atlasnz/checklist/S101398046>).



Trail cameras (2) were set at the 8 locations marked on the map (position 7 by toilets, not marked on map). The camera did not operate at the red marker (bottom of concrete path). Previously a camera at this position has photographed pāteke. Cameras were activated by movement and set to take 15 second videos. They were put out for 11-28 hours/site and capable of taking pictures day and night. Over 450 videos were taken at the various sites with a maximum of 148 videos taken on one of the three occasions by the camera set up at the yellow spot site (pictured above).

A pair of pāteke (middle right) was observed at 4 different sites (4,6,7 and yellow). A spotless crane/pūweto (bottom right) was recorded at one site (yellow) on three different occasions. When they were observed they were present on a single video clip for each occasion a camera was deployed at this site.



There are few prior reports of spotless crake/pūweto on Kapiti Island. In 2017 Hugh Robertson recorded hearing a spotless crake/pūweto at Wharekohu (<https://ebird.org/newzealand/checklist/S35628120>) and George Hobson and Jessica Wagner heard a bird at Rangatira in July 2021 (<https://ebird.org/atlasnz/checklist/S91102897>). Breeding of spotless crake/pūweto on Kapiti was recorded by Manaaki Barrett. He reported 3 spotless crake/pūweto (pair with young) in the Waiorua Valley (<https://ebird.org/checklist/S77821031>).

Spotless crake/pūweto did not respond to play-back calls while Dallas and I were at Rangatira in April 2022. The use of playback on Kāpiti requires prior approval from DOC.

In addition to pāteke and spotless crake/pūweto, 10 other bird species were captured on videos in April – korimako/bellbird, pīwakawaka/fantail, pōpokatea/whitehead, kākārīki/red-crowned parakeet, toutouwai/robin, tīeke/saddleback, kōkako, weka, pūkeko and chaffinch. All except weka and pūkeko were photographed either bathing and / or drinking.

Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop

Pauatahanui Survey – Highlights from the first three months

This survey is being carried out on the first Sunday of each month. Those wishing to join the survey should contact Ian Armitage ian.armitage@xtra.co.nz. Note, this is an excellent opportunity to get instruction on the identification of shore birds. Highlights from the first three surveys include:

- Fernbird. This is the first record of a fernbird in a Pauatahanui Survey. They were introduced into the Pauatahanui Reserve in 2017.
- Post breeding flock of banded dotterels (April, 28). This year the banded dotterels have often been seen at Ration Point and at high tide they often fly to paddocks by Gray's Road.
- A dabchick (April) which are rarely seen in the inlet.
- Three godwits at Ration Point (April, May, June) – juveniles not in breeding plumage.
- Large numbers of Royal Spoonbills on the island in the pond in front of the Thorpe hide (photo GdL).
- Large flocks of variable and South Island pied oystercatchers (photo (GdL), group of 71 variable and 31 pied oystercatchers in Section 4, May count).



Nesting Pied Shags - Lake Kohangatera (Pencarrow Lake)

In January 2017 pied shags were discovered to be nesting at the outlet of Lake Kohangatera (Pencarrow Lake). The notable feature of this colony was that the birds were nesting on low scrub (*Comprosmia propinqua*) rather than in trees (macrocarpa and pine trees) which are used by all other nesting pied shags in the Wellington region. Since 2017 pied shags have continued to nest in the outlet of Lake Kohangatera but with time the vegetation at the colony was dying. The picture (right) was taken in December 2020 where the vegetation in the colony has died and the nests now lay directly on the ground. On the 22nd of February this year pied shags were present at the colony but none appeared to be nesting.



In May, 2022 pied shags were discovered to be nesting on the opposite side of the outlet channel, nearer the lake (pictured left). A total of 17 nests and 32 birds were observed.



[Photos: Dallas Bishop & GdL]

Black Shags – Lake Kohangatera

Black shags have nested at the top of Lake Kohangatera dating back to 1925 when Stidolph visited the colony. Powlesland and Reese (1999) studied the colony between 1993 and 1998 when a daily mean of 67 birds were observed at the colony during the breeding season. During the 1990s the black shags were nesting in karaka trees at the head of the lake. In recent years the number of black shags at Lake Kohangatera appear to be decreasing. Nikki McArthur reported in June 2015 5 birds and 3 occupied nests <https://ebird.org/newzealand/checklist/S23887488> In February this year 7 black shags were seen at the outlet of the lake indicating that they may still be nesting in the area. However, a visit on the 21st of June this year to the karaka trees where the shags nested in the 1990s and later, failed to find any sign of recent nesting. Furthermore, no black shags were observed at the top of the lake.

Powlesland RG, Reese PJ (1999) **Aspects of the breeding biology of Black Shags (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) near Lake Kohangatera, Wellington** *Notornis*, 46 (4), 484-497

Geoff de Lisle, Dallas Bishop



Sooty Tern Records

In the March Newsletter it was reported that there had been 13 accepted records of sooty terns in the Records Appraisal Committee's (RAC) database of Unusual Bird Reports (1986-2021). The UBR of the 2022 sooty tern observed in Pukerua Bay, the first live sighting from the Wellington Region, has yet to be evaluated by the RAC (photo Michael Szabo). However, dead sooty terns have been seen on beach patrols from the Wellington Region, dating back to 1958. The following are the Wellington Records of sooty terns from the Beach Patrol data base kindly provided by Ian Armitage.



Date_of_patrol	District	km_of_beach	Name_of_beach	Observer
4/05/1958	WW	1	Pukerua Bay	CN Challies
27/08/1960	WW	7.2	Foxtton Beach	IG Andrew
28/08/1960	WW	8	Waiterere	MS Imber
16/10/1971	WW	6.4	Waitarere Beach	MJ Imber
18/02/1979	WW	4	Ohau - Waikawa	S Cotter
31/12/1982	WW	4.5	Waikanae	A Tennyson
15/05/1983	WW	11	Himatangi - Manawatu River	R Slack; P Slack; A Slack
2/01/1986	WW	0.5	Pukerua Bay	E Waanders
11/08/1991	WW	10.1	Pekapeka - Te Horo	M Powlesland ; R Powlesland; S Trewick
14/11/1994	WW	5	Paekakariki	R Buchanan
17/11/1994	WW	0.5	Waikanae	J Luke

Members are encouraged to record dead birds found on beach through the Beach Patrol Scheme – details can be found on the Birds New Zealand website <https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/schemes/beachpatrolscheme/>. Dead birds found on beaches have been a valuable source of specimens for museums.

The following are the sooty terns from the Wellington Region held in the Te Papa Collection. The Collection of over 800,000 items is catalogued in a searchable database.

Date	Collected by	Location	
18/01/1979	Shane Cotter	Waikawa Beach	https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/620668
31/12/1982	Alan Tennyson	Waikanae Beach	https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/620698
9/09/1990	Reg Cotter	Somes Island	https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/620779
17/11/1994	Jean Luke	Waikanae Beach	https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/620800

Birds found during beach patrols continue to be an important and valuable source of material for Te Papa. The museum is interested in receiving rare and unusual birds from beach patrols as well as freshly dead birds of some of the more common species, and any banded birds. If you come across birds on beach patrols which you think may be of interest please contact Colin Miskelly or Alan Tennyson at Te Papa.

White-winged black tern at Waikanae River estuary

Roger » Mon Mar 21, 2022

This morning, amongst a flock of 1000+ white-fronted terns, I spotted this unusually different tern which was smaller than the white-fronted ones. Identification of the species has been confirmed by Oscar Thomas. BirdingNZ.net

Similar species: non-breeding black-fronted and whiskered terns lack the club-shaped markings of the head. Non-breeding black tern (an extremely rare vagrant to New Zealand) is separable only after careful observation.. NZBirdsOnline

50 UBR accepted reports of white-winged black terns. 1974-2020. Two accepted records from Wellington:

2004 Waikanae Estuary, 29th August

2015 Waikanae Estuary 21st January

The white-winged black tern breeds from eastern Europe and Middle East to Manchuria, and birds migrate to equatorial and temperate parts of Africa, Asia and Australasia. They have nested occasionally in New Zealand, the most recent record being in 2015. In New Zealand white-winged black terns are most often seen in the summer months when they are in pale non-breeding plumage. They favour coastal lagoons and estuaries where they feed mainly in flight, dipping down to the water to catch surface insects. In some years a few birds are seen whose physiology and breeding cycles are geared to the southern hemisphere; these birds inhabit different sites, typically inland riverbeds and associated wetlands, often in the company of black-fronted terns. NZBirdsOnline