



BIRDS

NEW ZEALAND

Te Kāhui Mātai Manu o Aotearoa

MARLBOROUGH

October 2023

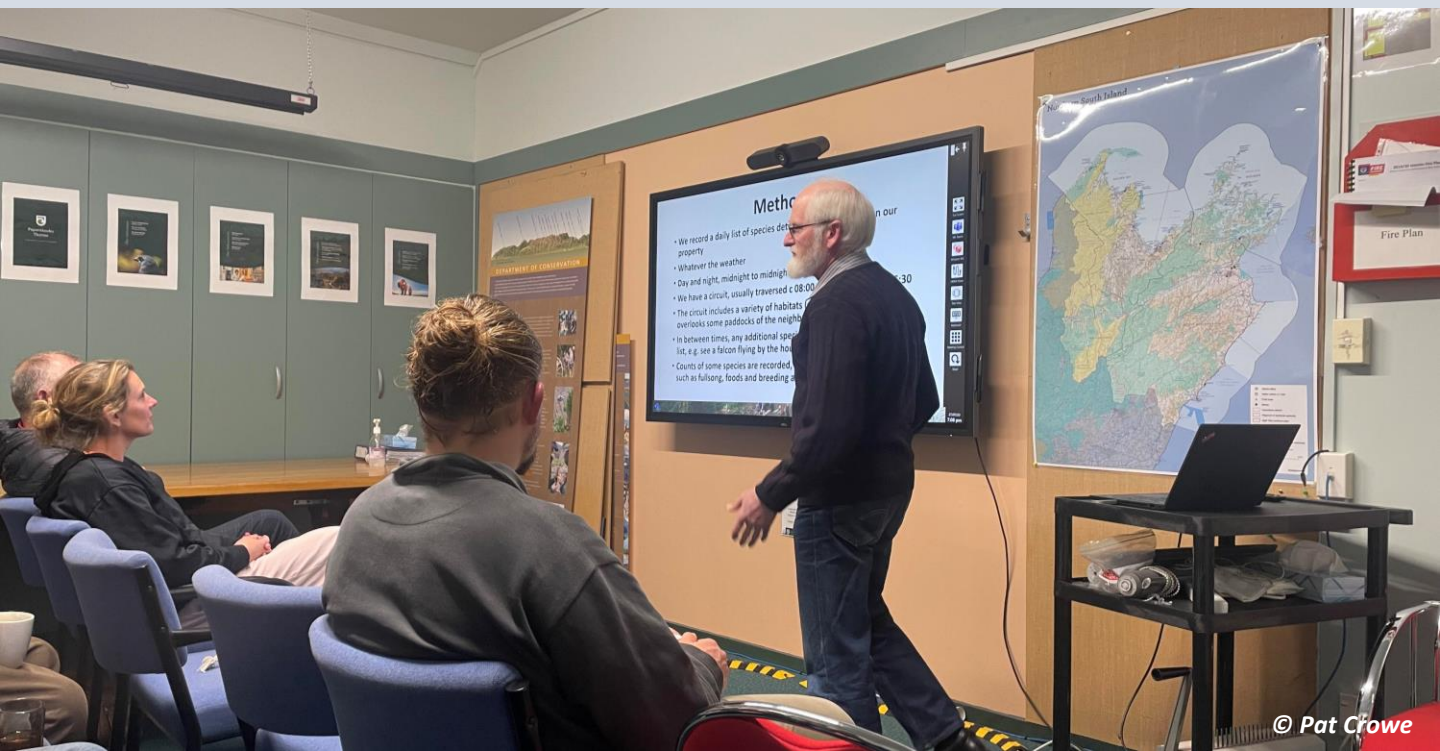
- + REGIONAL TALK SERIES
- + GLAZEBROOK ATLASING
- + BLACK-FRONTED TERN BANDING
- + CRESTED GREBE CENSUS
- + ATLAS UPDATE
- + UPCOMING EVENTS



RALPH POWLESLAND – BIRDLIFE AT MANAROA

At the end of July, the branch hosted its second evening talk with Ralph Powlesland presenting his observations in the seasonal movements and population changes in the birdlife at his and Mary's block of land at Manaroa in Pelorus Sound. It was a great talk to follow up after Mike Bell's inaugural talk was so popular and nineteen people showed up hear Ralph speak.

Ralph has been recording day lists at Manaroa for the past 12 years. He walks the same track twice daily recording the species and numbers of birds he sees and hears and additionally records all the birds he sees incidentally while out and about during the day. He spoke about trends he has observed in local population numbers over the years as well as seasonal movements of the different species. Ralph was very engaging, and his talk was met with a lot of interest and questions throughout. The seasonal movements of birds there was particularly interesting especially when Ralph displayed the various species on graphs. There has been a marked increase in the number of fernbird observed in recent years which is consistent with fernbirds being observed in a greater number of wetlands around the Marlborough Sounds area. The talk was intriguing and highlighted what can be achieved by making simple bird observations each day over a long period of time.





The opportunity arose for Dan and Pat to join the Marlborough Tramping Club who were running a day trip up to Glazebrook Station at the head of the Waihopai Valley at the start of July. This had long been the one remaining grid square (CF54) for Marlborough that had no Atlas effort as there is not easy public access to the square. We set off from Blenheim in the dark on a Sunday morning and spent the next two hours driving up the Waihopai. We set off mid-morning from the old Glazebrook homestead with the intention of following a four-wheel drive track and old musterers trail up to the Acheron Saddle and doing checklists every 500m. Snow flurries prevented us from getting all the way to the saddle but we still managed to record a total of 37 checklists on the day and covering a variety of habitats including river, farmland, scrub and native forest.

We recorded 22 species including pipit, robin and tomtit. There was plenty of suitable rifleman habitat and we tried playback in several spots but unfortunately did not record any. Other notable misses that we would've expected were NZ Falcon and lesser redpoll.

It was a great opportunity to see and Atlas some new country. While it is a great achievement to have some data in all 136 Marlborough grid squares, there is still plenty of country that requires more effort and many grid squares that need more seasonal effort.



We highly recommend keeping an eye on the Marlborough Tramping Club's website to see where they are off to. They get to great spots in the region, that need some Atlas love!



ASSISTANCE NEEDED!

Baylee from WMIL is asking for help from Birds NZ members to join her in December to help with catching and banding tarapirohe/black-fronted tern chicks on the Clarence and Acheron Rivers in Molesworth. This is part of a long-term predator trapping and black-fronted tern monitoring project.

The trip is planned for **Thursday 14th December – Sunday 17th December** and people can join for part or all of the banding trip. This work is carried out on a braided river system which involves river crossings at varying heights and strength, however the flow is usually quite low in December remaining at around knee height with a couple of exceptions. The braided river islands these terns' nest on can also be quite rocky and on uneven ground so steady balance is needed.

There are plenty of accommodation options available in Hanmer Springs, otherwise the St James Hut could be available to be booked through DOC.

Please email Baylee (baylee@wmil.co.nz) to register your interest.

NATIONAL CRESTED GREBE CENSUS

Rosalie Snoyink and Leslie Jensen are organising a South Island-wide survey of Crested Grebes on 27 January. This is a repeat of the survey that was carried out in 2014 and 2004 which showed some of the expansion of great crested grebes. From what we have observed in Marlborough, great crested grebes seem to have expanded even more over the last 10 years.

There are several Lakes and other water bodies around Marlborough (Elterwater, Delta Lake, Grovetown Lagoons) where Crested Grebes have been known to be present in recent years and we could target a good number of these on the day with a combined effort. There are also some trickier to get to locations (Lake Tennyson, Lake McRae and Lake Rotorua [Kaikōura]) that we could try for.

Please let Pat know if you are keen to partake on the day.





Molesworth © Dan Burgin



New Date for postponed Bird Atlasing trip into Molesworth: Waitangi Weekend (3-6 February).

Due to calving, we were not able to run the atlasing trip to Molesworth on the initial proposed dates over Marlborough Anniversary Weekend so think about joining us for the same trip in February.

A trip was run into Molesworth during the last Atlas in the early 2000s so it would be great generate a similar effort for this Atlas. These trips are a great opportunity to explore areas not often visited and are also a lot of fun!

We will split up our efforts and try to target areas of Molesworth that have had little or no effort such as the Alma. We will also try to get over Mailing Pass into St James to target the upper Waiau Valley and Lake Guyon.

We will base ourselves at Sedgemere Chalet and Sleepout which sleep about 14 total but there is plenty of space for tents. The current plan is to travel into Molesworth on the Saturday (hopefully via Rainbow Road), Atlas all day for the Sunday and Monday then drive back out on Tuesday (Waitangi Day).

The ability to walk for multiple hours each day is preferable and the ability to use eBird to record checklists is essential. **Please email, txt or call Pat Crowe (birds.marlborough@birdsnz.org.nz or 027 258 3101) to register your interest if you have not already.**



NEW ZEALAND BIRD ATLAS

THE FINAL YEAR



ATLAS UPDATE



We approach the last month of the Atlas project's final Spring season data collection. As always, we hope you're keen to join us in finishing this project strong by uploading as many bird observations to the Atlas eBird portal across the country as possible! Marlborough continues to need plenty of Atlasing and birding across the region, as the two maps below reveal. Importantly day and night observations are vital to help us work towards the key aim for every participant of the project, to try detect all of the possible species within each grid square across the country and seasons.

Key summary stats as of 24th October 2023 are given below. Whilst we always encourage Marlborough Atlasing, please do consider targeting under-surveyed areas when travelling to neighbouring regions to assist with their efforts, and the collective goal of the project.



MARLBOROUGH SPRING 2023



22 Sept



135 Species observed



20 Grid Squares in need of first
Spring data



>8,600 Checklists



>2,100 Effort Hours

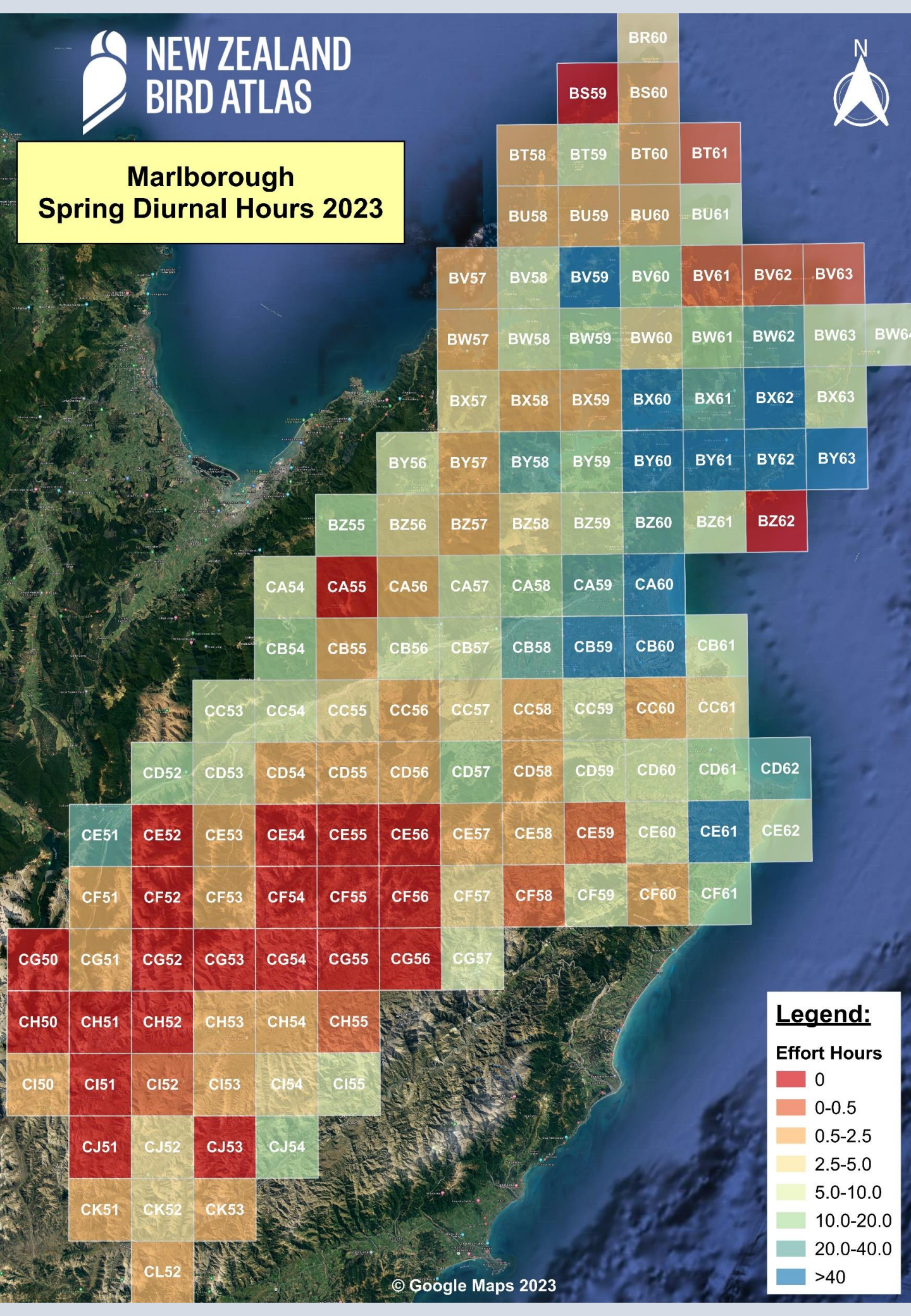
116 (85.3%) of 136 Grid
Squares with data



Just over 1 Month left
of Season



Marlborough Spring Diurnal Hours 2023



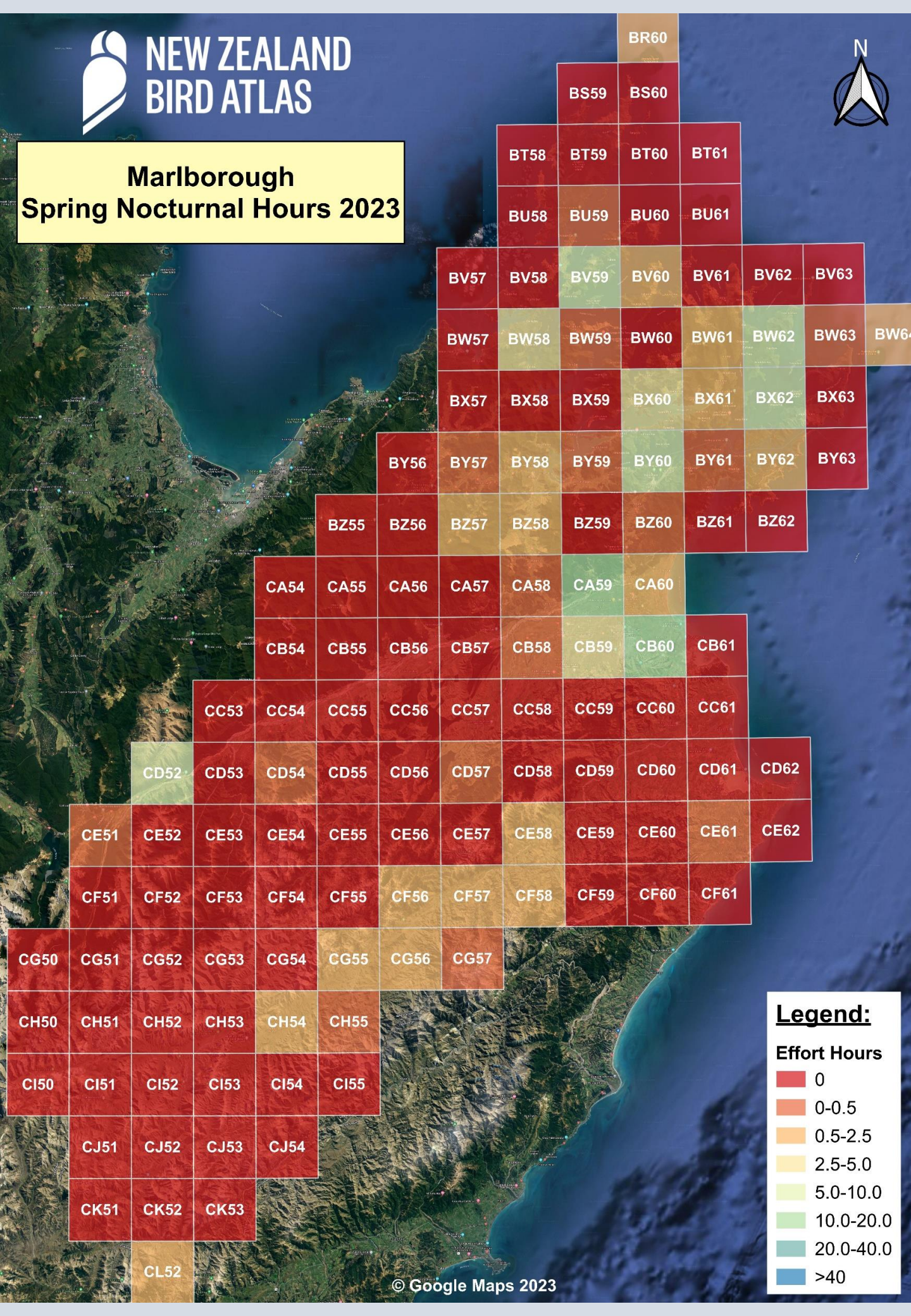
Legend:

Effort Hours

- 0
- 0-0.5
- 0.5-2.5
- 2.5-5.0
- 5.0-10.0
- 10.0-20.0
- 20.0-40.0
- >40



Marlborough Spring Nocturnal Hours 2023



Legend:

Effort Hours

- 0
- 0-0.5
- 0.5-2.5
- 2.5-5.0
- 5.0-10.0
- 10.0-20.0
- 20.0-40.0
- >40

UPCOMING EVENTS

8 – 12 November:

Wairau River Bird Survey

DOC and MDC are looking to carry out a survey of the entire Wairau River to assess river nesting bird numbers and are looking for volunteers to assist with counts. Need to be capable of walking 5-10km of riverbed in a day.

Please register your interest with Pat if you are keen to help out for some or all of the survey.



UPCOMING EVENTS

19 November:

Summer Wader Count Lake Grassmere

14 – 17 December:

Black fronted tern banding, Clarence River

27 January 2024:

National Crested Grebe Survey

3 – 6 February 2024:

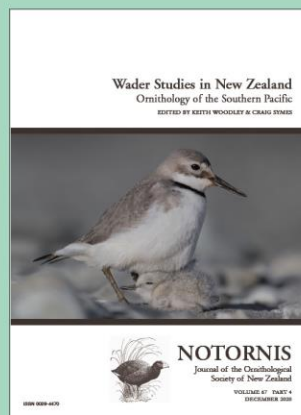
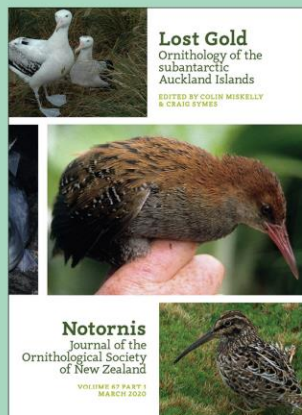
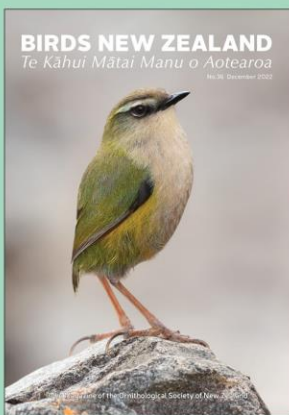
Molesworth Atlas Trip



Tikaokao/California quail © Dan Burgin

If you have any updates, notices or feedback, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Pat (birds.marlborough@birdsnz.org.nz) or Dan (dan@wmil.co.nz)

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