



Matuku: Birds NZ

Waikato Region Newsletter

March 2024

March 20th Meeting

The Big Freeze of 22 – Birdwatching on the Northumberland Coast

March Meeting

Join us to hear one of our members Graham Saunders talk to us about Northumberland. Lying between Newcastle and the Scottish border it is rich in natural history. The famous Lindisfarne and Farne Islands lie just off the coast, as does the less well known and more southerly Coquet Island. These are nature reserves, as are a lot of the wetland areas along the coast. These are important for the winter visitors that cross the North Sea for the warmer climate. Graham will describe some of the birds and other natural history, both common and rare, that he encountered in the cold freeze of 2022. He will also discuss some of the changes that he has noticed over time.

We hope you can join us in person for the meeting (there will be no zoom option this month). Feel free to bring friends or family.

The March meeting is on Wednesday 20th 7.30 pm at 5 Northway Street, Te Rapa at the DOC building. Press the buzzer to get entry.

February Fieldtrip Report

We had a small turnout for our February trip to Maungatautari. Some of us had never done the free walking track. Thank you Kaye for organizing this. Among the birds we saw on the way was a falcon calling overhead and noisy saddleback. We were well entertained by a large flock of noisy whiteheads, continuous robins accompanying us on our journey and we think we heard a bellbird. If you haven't been on the free walk it is well worth the trip – the walk begins just above the parking area by the information center. Our next trip is to see falcon – see details next page.

February Meeting Report

We enjoyed a documentary about natural history documentary making made by Cornell University. Set in an Alaskan wildlife refuge we got to see the only population of a relative of the Canada Goose and the huge amounts of eelgrass that provide food to migrating birds.

Harbour Census Report

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to gather data on the birds on the Aotea, Raglan and Kawhia harbours. Amongst the birds seen were godwits, whimbrel, spoonbill, wrybill, fernbird and reef heron. Special thanks to Doc and Ali Grigg for providing boats. Next census is June.



What's coming up - Meetings

Pop these dates in your diary so you won't miss these informative meetings.

Wednesday March 20th Abi Quinnell talking about her volunteering experience in North America

Wednesday April 17th - speaker TBC

Wednesday May 15th - speaker TBC

Trips & events coming up

For planning purposes please RSVP if you intend to come.

Sunday 7th April – Wingspan National Bird of Prey Centre family day out – Rotorua

- Join us on our next trip to Wingspan, Rotorua to get up close and personal with the New Zealand falcon which is rarer than our kiwi and the more recently self-introduced New Zealand barn owl. This is an opportunity to learn about these birds, how they are rehabilitated and see a display of the hunting skills of the New Zealand falcon.
- Bring your family and friends along with you for the visit. \$33 adults. \$16 for children up to 15 years \$28 senior citizens
- Numbers are limited for this trip.
- RSVP to jeanettebrooker@yahoo.com for details on how to pay online and meeting time. Important note: payment needs to be made in advance to confirm your spot. Cut off date for payments to be received Wednesday 27th of March.
- After the 1 hour formal presentation we will have an opportunity to visit the newly finished aviaries and the small museum and shop before having lunch on site. Carpooling will be available.
- This event is weather dependent and will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain.



Kings Birthday Weekend Conference

1-3 June - early bird rates close soon

The 2024 New Zealand Bird Conference & AGM is taking place in Nelson this year. Get in early and get cheaper rates. Online registration and details are available at birdsanz.org.nz/nz-bird-conference/conference-details/.

Discounted early registrations and abstract submission end on 31 March!

This year there will be an informal session of talks where members are encouraged to speak about their birding activities around where they live. The format will be a max of 5 slides and 5 minutes for each presenter. If you would like to participate please contact Peter Gaze peterdgaze@gmail.com

Birding Books

If you haven't been up to the Miranda Shorebird centre recently you may be surprised to know they have an excellent range of birding and natural history books available for purchase. All books are available for purchase online at www.shop.shorebirds.org.nz When I was up there recently I purchased two books which may be of interest to Members.

[Birds of New Zealand: Locality and Identification Guide by Stuart Chambers](#) This provides valuable information on the jizz or conspicuous characteristics of a bird and includes differences between similar species.

[Bird Places of New Zealand: The North to South Guide to Bird-Watching Spots by Stuart Chambers](#) Provides GPS coordinates of an area with details of how to get there and the target species of the location.

Hamilton Lake census

Barry welcomes people to join him on the monthly census counts.

Contact birdsanzwaikato@gmail.com for more details.

You can read the 2023 Hamilton report at the link below.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gBrZeex3b78m3btMmD54NiL9w5HYu0yk/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=107226954348911908628&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Other Regions Newsletters:

Nelson Newsletter:

birdsanz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Nelson-2402.pdf

South Auckland Newsletter

birdsanz.org.nz/news/south-auckland-newsletter/

Other News

·Birds NZ Otago Robin Story:
odt.co.nz/lifestyle/resilient/kakaruaipopulation-growth-promising

Birds NZ Data used in SIPO Model

birdsanz.org.nz/news/birds-nz-data-used-in-sipo-model/

Flying Start is now available as a PDF This book commemorates 50 years of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (1940-1990) and is valuable to everyone interested in birds!

birdsanz.org.nz/news/historical-publication-a-flying-start/