



BIRDS
NEW ZEALAND
Te Kāhui Mātai Manu o Aotearoa

MANAWATŪ

Newsletter October 2024

- 🌀 From the Regional Representative
- 🌀 Talk at the August 2024 meeting
- 🌀 Bird sighting
- 🌀 Upcoming meetings
- 🌀 Upcoming trips and events
- 🌀 Links to other regions' newsletters
- 🌀 Notices
- 🌀 Health and safety
- 🌀 Contributions to future newsletters
- 🌀 Birds NZ Manawatū contacts



Banded Dotterel © Elizabeth Taylor

From the Regional Representative

I am very pleased that the monthly meetings have been going well. Spring is the time where migratory birds are coming back to our shores. The next couple of months seem to be a busy survey time. The Manawatū Estuary Trust celebrates and welcomes the waders coming back at Manawatū Estuary Saturday 5th October. The eBird October Big Day is coming up Saturday 12th October. Spring wader count will come in November or December and a national coordinated Royal Spoonbill nest and breeding count will take place from November through to January. I haven't planned a speaker for our November meeting. If you have some suggestions for the November meeting, please email me on:

kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com

Thank you to Elizabet Tayler and Neil Haggarty for sending in material for this newsletter and to Jennifer Wasley for making sure everything is paid on time.

Please send me photos and notes about your bird adventures and sightings or other bird news for the newsletter on

kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com .

Talk at the August 2024 meeting

Around 10 people listened to Phil Battley talking about tracking of Red Knots. It was mainly Birds NZ members this time. The talk created a good debate afterwards; according to Phil.



Bird sightings

Elizabeth Taylor saw a group of 30-34 Bar-tailed Godwits at Foxton Beach on the 11 September 2024. Most were feeding, preening and splashing in the water. There was also a small group of Wrybill and a couple of Banded Dotterels. She sent in some photos.



On 29th September Neil Haggarty saw 122 Bar-tailed Godwits and 3 Golden plovers from the platform at Manawatū Estuary which he reported on eBird. He also saw four Red Knots. At Ohau Beach he saw at least 3 New Zealand Dotterels along with the Godwits.

Elizabeth also has **a bit of a warning for photographers on Hokio Beach:**
'I went there on 16th September. I stopped to photograph a Caspian Tern in a stream. I noticed a vehicle on the other side of the stream but didn't take much notice until the driver got out, walked through the stream, picking up a big piece of wood on the way and headed for us. I got back into our vehicle just as he arrived at the door demanding to know if I had been taking photos of him. Fortunately, I was able to show him a photo of the Tern and explain I was only there for birding. Not sure what he intended to do with the lump of wood but once he was satisfied, I wasn't interested in him. He waded back through the stream, wood in hand. Anyway, there were quite a few Godwits dotted along the beach.'

The Cattle Egrets often seen at Whangaehu beach road were last reported seen on 19th September 2024 by Jim Norris both on ebird (<https://ebird.org/checklist/S195649122>) and on BirdingNZ.net in the Bird sighting and alert forum. The Cattle Egret is a regular winter visitor. Jim wrote on BirdingNZ.net:

"Yesterday, 19 September, Graham Guy and I found the cattle egrets well back from the Whangaehu Beach Road. Unusually they were in an empty paddock without the dairy cows that can make viewing them difficult. There was light rain at the time but that seemed to result in the egrets being more settled than usual. They didn't lift until a dairy worker drove through their paddock to get another herd for the milking shed. There are still the eight birds we have been seeing recently and two of them are quickly gaining some of the orange colours of their breeding plumage."

The two photos were posted by Jim Norris on his eBird checklist. Two birds are in breeding plumage in both photos.



I am organizing a trip to Whangaehu beach road Saturday 12th October to see if they still are there. It is on eBird's [October Big Day](#). See further details under upcoming trips and events.

The Shining Cuckoos are also back.

Photo by Chris Tuffley
taken 11 Feb. 2022 in
Palmerston North.
Copied from eBird.



Upcoming meetings

Birds NZ Manawatū meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month, **7:15pm in Val Kenward Room at the Palmerston North Community Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street.**

Wednesday 9 October 2024

Topic: Chatham Islands birding

Speaker: Chris Tuffley is a tramper, photographer and mathematician who became a birder too, through contributing to the NZ Bird Atlas.

In January Chris went to the Chatham Islands on a week long eight-person share-cost pelagic birding trip organised with Owenga Charters by Steve Wood. The group had four days on the water, making offshore visits to The Pyramid, the Forty-Fours, Rangatira South-East Island and Mangere Island, as well as spending time in open ocean. The rest of the time was spent on Rēkohu Chatham Island finding and photographing land- and coast-based Chathams endemics.

The group saw a total of 68 bird species, including almost all of the main endemic target species. Come along and see some pictures and hear all about it.

Chatham Island mollymawk | Toroa © Chris Tuffley



Wednesday 13 November 2024

There is no planned speaker yet. We will look back over 2024 to see what went well and not so well and what we want to do in 2025.

Upcoming trips and events

Welcome to the birds Saturday 5th October 2024

Members of the Manawatu Estuary Trust extend a welcome to everyone to our Manawatu Estuary, at Foxton Beach, on Saturday 5th October 2024 at 10am to welcome our migratory birds back to the Manawatu Estuary. We will be meeting at 10am, before the high tide, by the viewing platform at the end of Dawick Street (off Seabury Avenue), Foxton Beach.



eBird October Big Day Saturday 12th October 2024

October Big Day is organised by eBird. It is an international event where all the checklists submitted to eBird contribute to the Big Day. You can do your own [October Big Day](#) or you can participate in the trip below.

Kirsten Olsen is organising a trip to Whangaehu Beach road, Koitiata beach and Tutaenui Reservoir near Marton on October Big Day. It will be interesting to see if the Cattle egrets are still in the paddocks around Whangaehu Beach road and to see which birds are around Koitiata lagoon and Tutaenui Reservoir. We will count all the birds we see and hear and submit eBird checklists. If you haven't used eBird then it will be a good opportunity to learn how to use it.

We will leave Milverton Park, corner of Ferguson St and Victoria Av, at 8am and be back around 2pm. We will carpool and share the petrol cost. The round trip is 165km.

Contact Kirsten Olsen latest Thursday 10 October if you are interested and want to come along. email: kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com
phone 027 354 6010

The Peter Schweigman Memorial Royal Spoonbill Colony and Nest Count, 2024

Birds NZ Manawatū took part in the nation-wide Royal Spoonbill Census this last June/July. It was successfully completed and had excellent coverage of the most likely locations of over-wintering birds. This year 4547 Royal Spoonbills were counted in NZ, compared with 2361 in 2012.

In November, December and January a systematic, coordinated nationwide survey will be undertaken to locate Royal Spoonbill colonies and count the active nests and number of birds in attendance. Each region will coordinate its own survey. In Manawatū we know that there are at least four or five likely nesting sites. But there might be more. If you are interested in taking part in the colony and nest count please contact me: **Kirsten Olsen**, email kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com or phone 0273546010.

Photo by
Kirsten Olsen



Spring/summer wader census

Spring/summer wader census for the Manawatū region will be the 16th or 17th November. **Contact Phil Battley:** p.battley@massey.ac.nz or **Kirsten Olsen:** kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com .

Photo by
Neill Haggarty
1st Oct 2023
Manawatu
Estuary, eBird



Links to other regions' newsletters and programmes

Auckland Programme – Aug 2024 to Jan 2025:

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

South Auckland – September newsletter:

birdsanz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/South-Auckland-2409.pdf

Otago – September newsletter:

birdsanz.org.nz/news/otago-newsletter/

Notices

Articles on Birds NZ webpage:

BNZRF 2023: Chatham Island taiko foraging ecology – Summary article (Johannes Chambon): birdsanz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2023-BNZRF-Chatham-Island-taiko-foraging-Summary-article-2409.pdf

BNZRF 2023: Whenua Hou Diving Petrel tracking – Summary article (Te Arawhetu Waipoua): birdsanz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2023-BNZRF-Whenua-Hou-diving-petrel-Summary-article-2409.pdf

BNZRF 2024: Overview articles of the projects selected this year are available at: birdsanz.org.nz/funding/birds-nz-research-fund/



Bar-tailed Godwit © Elizabeth Taylor

Health and safety

The Birds New Zealand Council has asked the regions to include health and safety information in the newsletters.

Health and safety of Birds New Zealand's members when they participate in Birds NZ organised activity, like meetings, collection of data and fieldtrips, is important to the Council. The [Health and Safety Policy](#) can be found on Birds NZ webpage. Press [Here](#) to get to the policy.

To make it more practicable, the Council has developed [health and safety guidelines for field trips](#) that also can be found on the website.

The guidelines state: *"At a health and safety briefing before a field trip commences the trip leader will describe the route, any specific or potential physical difficulties that might be encountered, and the approximate times for lunch, tea breaks and the end of the trip."*

It further states: *"If a member has an allergy or medical condition, they should bring their own anti-histamines and personal medications. The trip leader should be advised of medical problems a member has and how to deal with them. Bring a mobile phone and share phone numbers with others. Don't hesitate to call 111 for any incidents involving injury." (...)*
"The trip leader should check the weather forecast for the day and, if necessary, monitor the weather conditions during the trip. Turn back if the weather deteriorates. Each member should bring sufficient food and drinking water for their personal needs."

Finally, it is stated in the policy:

"Instances of accidents or ill health of members and others whilst carrying out activities in any capacity for Birds New Zealand are required to be reported promptly to the Regional Representative who in turn will advise the President without delay. Records of accidents will be recorded in the annual reports of Regional Representatives."

So please, if you have any incident that could have resulted in injury or results in injury while participating in Birds New Zealand activity report it to the Regional Representative. In Manawātū it is: Kirsten Olsen, email birds.manawatu@birdsnz.org.nz or phone 027 354 6010

Contribution to future Birds NZ Manawatu newsletters

Please send me photos and text that would be appropriate for this newsletter. If you want to be the future editor or help with format and design, please email me (Kirsten Olsen) kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com.

Deadline for the October 2024 issue is 26 September 2024

Please send your contributions to: kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com

Contacts in Birds New Zealand Manawatū Branch:

Regional representative: Kirsten Olsen

email: birds.manawatu@birdsnz.org.nz

SO MANY WAYS TO HELP OUR BIRDS



Bar-tailed Godwit
(Image: Michael Szabo)



Red Knot
(Image: Neil Fitzgerald)



Pacific Golden Plover
(Image: Michael Szabo)

Birds New Zealand runs annual wading bird surveys to track their numbers and distributions, which can help to inform and improve conservation actions.

You can join Birds New Zealand right now for just \$1.75 a week.

It costs \$90 a year, and for students it's just \$45 a year.

<https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/membership/donate/>

JOIN US NOW OR DONATE



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