

BEACH PATROL SCHEME 2007

PRELIMINARY REPORT – Lloyd Esler

This report is based on 403 cards received as at 16.2.09 (379 for 2006). In 2007, 2307km were walked (2,223km in 2006). Dead seabirds found in 2007 totalled 3,786 (3,117 in 2006). This shows a few more recoveries and a few more cards with a few more kilometres covered.

Three sections had no patrols done – East Coast North Island, Fiordland and Wairarapa.

Southland had the highest rate of recovery at 5.8 birds per kilometre, largely the result of a single beach patrol on Mason Bay on 13 May 2007 when 526 juvenile Sooty shearwaters were counted in 16km. The average recovery rate for the whole country is around 1.6 birds per kilometre. The best recovery rate for an individual patrol comes from one on the Wellington coast where one bird was found in zero kilometres which gives a rate of an infinite number of birds per kilometre – do beach patrollers dream of this or dread it?

The most enigmatic patrol was one that recorded no birds for no kilometres as the beach patroller didn't actually go out on that day.

Cause of death was recorded for a few birds – some waterfowl were obvious victims of the shooting season and a gannet and Black-backed gull were entangled in fishing lines.

There were two significant seabird wrecks during the year. These were Blue penguins on Bream Bay in January and juvenile Sooty shearwaters in Southland in May.

Interesting recoveries included a wrybill, Arctic tern, Kerguelen petrel, Wedge-tailed shearwater, Gould's petrel, Brown teal, two godwits, two Light-mantled sooty albatrosses, a Chatham Island shag and a goat skull.

Six band recoveries were recorded during the year. Three of these were locally banded Red-billed gulls recovered at Kaikoura. A Black-backed gull at Ruapuke (AW) on 14.2.07 had been banded at Kawhia (AW) on 13.12.81. A Sooty shearwater at Muriwai (AW) on 14.4.07 had been banded on Kauwhaia Island (AW) on 7.12.00 and a Wandering albatross on Muriwai (AW) on 11.8.07 had been banded as a chick on South Georgia on 16.10.2001.

The usual assortment of land birds was noted. These are: magpie (20), Rock pigeon (6), kereru (5), blackbird (4), myna (4), pheasant (3), pukeko (3), goldfinch (3), harrier (2), starling (2), fowl (2) and individuals of thrush, tui, silvereye and yellowhammer.

Section of Coast		No. of Cards	No. of Birds	km covered
Auckland East	AE	11	25	30
Auckland West	AW	67	383	586
Bay of Plenty	BP	13	60	26
Canterbury North	CN	31	361	193
Canterbury South	CS	4	71	10
East Coast NI	EC	-	-	-
Fiordland	FD	-	-	-
North Coast SI	NC	2	4	4
Northland East	NE	32	940	289
Northland West	NW	24	510	552
Outlying Islands (Chatham)	OI	6	13	12
Otago	OT	1	3	3
Southland	SD	38	832	142
Taranaki	TA	60	232	174
Wairarapa	WA	-	-	-
Westland	WD	2	1	4
Wellington South	WS	13	43	43
Wellington West	WW	99	318	239
Totals		403	3,786	2,307