

OSNZ National Wader Census  
 June - July 2015  
 November - December 2015 & January - February 2016  
 Summary compiled by Adrian Riegen

**Winter Census 2015**

A total of 118,337 waders of 19 species were counted during the June - July 2015 wader census, (Table 1), down from 122,822 in June - July 2014. There was good national coverage with only the two key sites of Parengarenga and Raglan not counted. Parengarenga was only partially counted in 2014 as well. Numbers of red knot were up on 2014 but bar-tailed godwit numbers were down as were South Island pied oystercatchers. Wrybill's were very similar 4,108 verses 4,112.

Rarities included, 1 marsh sandpiper and 1 sanderling.

**Summer Census 2015**

A total of 137,020 waders of 25 species were counted in the November - December 2015 wader census, up from 131,350 in 2014. National coverage was again very good, with the only key sites of Parengarenga and Rangaunu not counted. The big difference was the red knot number, up by over 4,000 on 2014. The bar-tailed godwit count was similar to the 2014 number but still well down on previous years. Turnstone numbers were just below the thousand again at 992. Parengarenga was a stronghold for turnstone, so the lack of count from there will have influenced the count.

No real rarities during this census but uncommon waders included, 1 great knot, 1 pectoral sandpiper, 1 grey-tailed tattler, 1 lesser sand plover and 2 grey plover.

NOTE: Species listed in the following tables are arranged in the order they appear in the fourth edition of the OSNZ checklist.

Table 1. Total Count June - July 2015

Species	2014	2015
Red Knot	947	1,214
Great Knot	2	
Sanderling	1	1
Curlew Sandpiper	9	
Red-necked Stint	64	7
Eastern Curlew	2	3
Whimbrel	3	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	8,816	7,781
Marsh Sandpiper	1	1
Terek Sandpiper	1	
Turnstone	362	159
Variable Oystercatcher	3,014	3,270
South Island Pied		
Oystercatcher	79,381	77,886
Oystercatcher Hybrid	20	11
Pied Stilt	17,282	15,506
Black Stilt/Hybrids	23	17
Pacific Golden Plover	6	
Grey Plover	1	
New Zealand Dotterel	780	1,083
Banded Dotterel	5,860	5,482
Wrybill	4,108	4,112
Black-fronted Dotterel	162	101
Shore Plover	2	3
Spur-winged Plover	1,975	1,696
Total	122,822	118,337

Table 2. Total Count November - December 2015

Species	2014	2015
Red Knot	28,940	34,226
Great Knot	1	1
Sanderling	3	7
Curlew Sandpiper	15	9
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	3	6
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	1
Red-necked Stint	79	95
Eastern Curlew	3	5
Whimbrel	24	13
Bar-tailed Godwit	74,989	74,838
Black-tailed Godwit	1	
Wandering Tattler	2	
Grey-tailed Tattler		1
Marsh Sandpiper	2	
Terek Sandpiper	1	
Turnstone	1,562	992
Variable Oystercatcher	2,278	2,306
South Island Pied Oystercatcher		
Oystercatcher	16,625	15,484
Oystercatcher Hybrid	4	10
Pied Stilt	4,367	5,471
Black Stilt/Hybrids	3	8
Pacific Golden Plover	75	253
Grey Plover	1	2
New Zealand Dotterel	483	649
Banded Dotterel	530	521
Greater Sand Plover		2
Lesser Sand Plover	2	1
Wrybill	141	216
Black-fronted Dotterel	7	23
Spur-winged Plover	1,206	1,880
<b>Total</b>	<b>131,350</b>	<b>137,020</b>

There was incomplete nationwide coverage in January - February 2016 but counts from Lake Wairarapa, Nelson, Canterbury and Southland were received. Numbers for Nelson, Canterbury and Southland are compared with the November - December 2015 counts in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3. Nelson Region counts for November 2015 and February 2016

Species	Nov.15	Feb.16
Red Knot	8847	13753
Sanderling	1	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1	
Red-necked Stint	5	5
Eastern Curlew		2
Whimbrel	1	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	16822	21979
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	
Turnstone	286	634
Variable Oystercatcher	594	632
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	4149	19155
Pied Stilt	163	385
Pacific Golden Plover	9	20
Grey Plover	2	2

New Zealand Dotterel		2
Banded Dotterel	48	848
Lesser Sand Plover	1	4
Wrybill		4
Spur-winged Plover	155	72

Table 5. Southland Region counts for November 2015 and February 2016

Species	Nov.15	Feb.16
Red Knot		4
Sanderling	2	3
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		2
Red-necked Stint	23	23
Bar-tailed Godwit	2130	1834
Turnstone	176	153
Variable Oystercatcher	8	27
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	379	1927
Pied Stilt	46	294
Pacific Golden Plover	1	5
New Zealand Dotterel	2	
Banded Dotterel	12	145
Large Sand Dotterel	2	
Wrybill		1

Table 4 Canterbury counts for November 2015 and February 2016

Species	Canterbury Regional sites		Avon-Heathcote Estuary		Lake Ellesmere	
	Nov.15	Feb.16	Nov.15	Jan.16	Dec.15	Feb.16
Red Knot	3	1	3	3	11	44
Curlew Sandpiper					4	3
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper					2	9
Pectoral Sandpiper						2
Red-necked Stint					47	23
Eastern Curlew	2	1				
Whimbrel	2	1				
Bar-tailed Godwit	692	570	1905	1113	181	224
Turnstone	5	4				
Variable Oystercatcher	41	29	56	49		
South Island Pied Oystercatcher	222	1135	723	3984	30	12
Hybrid Oystercatcher	7	16				
Pied Stilt	862	358	72	173	1604	3261
Black Stilt/Hybrid	4	1				5
Pacific Golden Plover					32	24
Banded Dotterel	63	18			341	1323
Black-fronted Dotterel	3					
Wrybill					1	216
Spur-winged Plover	162	82	48	55	269	66

Tables 6 and 7 show sites with more than 2,500 waders counted during winter and summer censuses.

Table 6. Sites with >2,500 waders in June - July 2015 & 2014

	<b>2015</b>	2014
Manukau Harbour	<b>30,712</b>	35,683
Kaipara Harbour	<b>23,773</b>	26,647
Firth of Thames	<b>13,164</b>	12,958
Farewell Spit	<b>8,431</b>	10,290
Golden Bay	<b>6,165</b>	4,448
Tasman Bay	<b>5,042</b>	4,838
Tauranga Harbour	<b>3,559</b>	5,225
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	<b>3,252</b>	2,821
Kawhia Harbour	<b>2,849</b>	3,111

Table 7. Sites with >2,500 waders in November - December 2015 & 2014

	<b>2015</b>	2014
Kaipara Harbour*	<b>31,898</b>	22,224
Manukau Harbour	<b>24,997</b>	24,659
Farewell Spit	<b>20,925</b>	23,875
Firth of Thames	<b>8,846</b>	10,877
Tauranga Harbour	<b>6,945</b>	6,252
Tasman Bay	<b>6,165</b>	7,217
Whangarei Harbour	<b>5,668</b>	4,454
Golden Bay	<b>3,995</b>	3,364
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	<b>2,807</b>	(2,236)
Ohiwa Harbour	<b>2,662</b>	2,767

\*No data available for North Kaipara at present

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April 2016