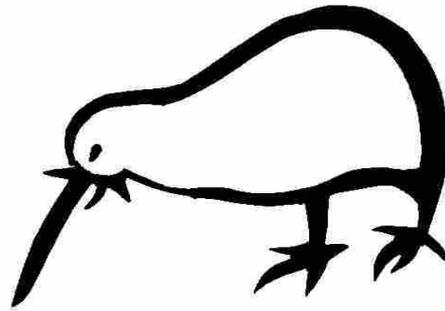


# APTERYX

Issue 12

**August 2005**



## **NEWSLETTER OF THE FAR NORTH REGION OF THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND**

### **REGIONAL REP'S RAMBLINGS**

I am delighted to announce that Kerry & Jane Walshe of Kerikeri Pharmacy have offered to sponsor the Far North Newsletter with a donation of \$200 a year. We are very grateful for this & it will allow us to maintain a quality publication with colour illustrations which have up to now taken quite a chunk of our annual allowance from central funds for printer ink, paper & copying charges.

A warm welcome to some recent new members, belatedly to Mike Bryan from Kaitaia & now to Bet & Frank Jaques of Kerikeri; also to Laureen Alston, an existing member who has recently moved to Kerikeri from Auckland.

As most of you are aware, one topic discussed at the annual conference & AGM in Hamilton was the proposed adoption of a brand name for the Society such as 'Birds New Zealand'. This was to be voted on by the whole membership & in case you have not yet voted, a referendum form is enclosed with this newsletter. As you will see from the form, the official name of the Society would not change but the proposal would make it much easier to attract new members. The RRs were unanimously in favour.

I am again enclosing the information sheet on the Australasian Ornithological Conference & the Australasian Shorebird Conference to be held in Blenheim & Nelson respectively. The Early Bird special has now expired & I realise it is a long way but if anyone can go then I look forward to a short report for the December newsletter.

Most Far North members have an email address. From time to time I circularise news by email such as programme changes, confirmation of times & meeting places of events, etc. If you do not have email & would like to be kept informed this way, please let me know & give me a phone number so that I can contact you with such information.

Wrybill on Tokerau Beach, 19.3.05 (Detlef Davies)



The Far North Regional Officers are as follows:

**Regional Representative:**

Detlef Davies, 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri. Phone: 09 407 3874 (home), 09 407 0178 (work)

Email: [detlefdavies@yahoo.com](mailto:detlefdavies@yahoo.com)

**Regional Recorder:** Detlef Davies

**Treasurer:** Isabella Godbert, 67 Waipapa Road West, Kerikeri Phone: 09 407 8058

Email: [godbert@xtra.co.nz](mailto:godbert@xtra.co.nz)

**RECENT EVENTS**

**Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> May FAR NORTH AGM**

**Minutes of the AGM for the Far North Region of the  
Ornithological Society of New Zealand**

**Meeting held on** 12<sup>th</sup> May 2005 at 180 Landing Road Kerikeri.

**Minute-taker:** Lindsay Alexander.

**Meeting began** at 8.00 p.m.

**Present:** Detlef Davies, Ian Wilson, Anthea Goodwin, Jane and Kerry Walshe, Winsome and David Fisher, Russell Thomas, Lindsay Alexander.

**Apologies:** Carol Davies, Chris and Marianne Sale, Lynette Smith, Bill Campbell, Paul Asquith, Mike Bryan, Isabella Godbert.

**Minutes of last A.G.M.:** Last A.G.M. held 6<sup>th</sup> May 2004. Minutes published in first newsletter and taken as read.

**Regional Representatives Report:** Detlef read out a resume of what the branch had done and achieved over the previous year. Events had included:

15 Aug. Crake-watch at Taipa  
27 Aug. Slide show, Cape Town to Pack-ice Pelagic  
19 Sept Shining Cuckoos  
8 – 10 Oct Birds-a-Plenty Festival, Whakatane  
13 Oct Members evening & NZ Dotterel census plans  
16 – 17 Oct NZ Dotterel Census  
14 Jan CJ Ralph's talk on Moturoa Island  
23 Jan Hauraki Gulf Pelagic  
6 Feb Barbecue  
19 Feb Parengarenga Harbour  
24 Feb Atlas Project, Stephenson Is & outer Cavallis  
26 – 27 March Far North Birding weekend; Parengarenga Harbour & Houhora Pelagic  
3 April Moturoa Island  
Beach Patrols every fortnight

General consensus that much had been done over previous year.

**Additional achievements-** Russell Thomas mentioned 5 Minute Bird Counts at Ngawha (Ian has seen a number of Bittern here in past during Sept/Oct.). Ian Wilson Bird counts at Puketi

Russell asked if national results for Dotterel survey available. Anthea said that Richard Parrish likely source for this.

**Treasurers Report:** As the Treasurer was not present the Financial report could not be read. The Treasurers Report will be included in an email circular. (Report received later is added at the end of these minutes).

**Election of Officers:** Motion passed that the status quo be maintained: Kerry proposed / Ian seconded.

- Atlas Project: Anthea,**
- 445 forms had been filled in for the 84 squares in our area.
  - Contributions from 12 members and 13 non members
  - Only square not covered was the Three Kings, and we are not allowed there.
  - Coverage was sketchy in some areas and not all seasons covered.
  - Anthea has kept copies of atlas forms.

Detlef suggested that Anthea write a short resume of Atlas results for the Far North newsletter.

**Newsletter:** Agreement that it was very good quality. Detlef said that the main cost was printer ink about \$15/newsletter (later thought probably \$25 as more copies were sent out ). Total cost per year is c. \$200. Kerry Walshe offered to pay for these costs with acknowledgement for Kerikeri Pharmacy in newsletter. Agreed offer is generous and offer unanimously accepted.

-Russell suggested sending newsletter by email as a Word document. Concern expressed that PDF files may not be able to be opened by some.

-Suggestion to send newsletter to New Zealand Kiwi Foundation and Far North Forest and Bird.

-Detlef will take newsletter to OSNZ Regional Representatives meeting in Hamilton.

-Russell will check on costs for Xerox copying of newsletter at Colour Copy and Keri Print.

-Request by Detlef for members to send in information, not only about birds but other fauna as well, for inclusion in newsletter.

**Programme of events:** National Kiwi Monitoring from 27<sup>th</sup> May-15<sup>th</sup> June. Back up time 25<sup>th</sup> June-13<sup>th</sup> July.

-New Zealand Kiwi Foundation invites OSNZ members to take part in May/June Kiwi Monitoring. Best method of training is for inexperienced listeners to go with experienced listeners.

Ian said that he would appreciate listeners for monitoring kiwi in Puketi. This is independent of the national monitoring scheme. Contact Ian.

**Use of excess Far North branch funds.** Anthea said that the General Treasurer OSNZ would not appreciate use of excess funds as donations to other organizations. Russell said that if funds cannot be used by this branch then they should go back to the Society. David asked if use of funds to pay for petrol costs for branch activities would be allowed. Russell said that the monies was to be spent on the societies activities. David suggested asking the society if local funds can be put into local projects. Detlef agreed to ask this at the Hamilton Regional Representatives Meeting.

**Other Business:** Kerry expressed his gratitude to Detlef for his enthusiasm and engendering enthusiasm within the Far North branch. General agreement.

Ian suggested a visit to Lady Alice Island, Hen and Chickens to see Kokako and to count birds. DoC would need to give agreement for this.

A.G.M. finished at c.9.15 pm.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT FAR NORTH REGION OSNZ 2004-5**

### **INCOME**

Bank balance Jan 1 <sup>st</sup> 2004	\$229.38	
Capitation and allowances	\$230.00	
Total		\$459.38

### **EXPENDITURE**

10 May Petrol vouchers	\$50.00	
18 Oct Northland Age	\$50.63	
Total		\$100.63
Balance as at 31 December 2004		\$358.75
11 <sup>th</sup> May Newsletter reimbursement	\$100	
Balance as at 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2005		\$258.75

## Fri 20<sup>th</sup> – Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> May FAR NORTH PELAGIC

2 Far North members, Paul Asquith & Detlef Davies went on a 2 day trip organised by Kiwi Wildlife Tours. Chris Gaskin describes the trip as follows:

*We left Friday 20 May 6.30PM from Houhora and steamed up to North Cape that evening, anchored under the light. Very pleasant conditions - little variable winds, and these conditions persisted right through the next day. Saturday 21 May, up early and away by 7AM. Headed northwest from North Cape to the shelf edge, we stooaged around this area for a while including two chumming sessions before heading east to deeper water (over 1000m). We were approx 40kms NNW of North Cape which meant we were further north than the Three Kings.*

*By early afternoon we started working our way SE along the shelf edge before heading back in. We reached our anchorage under the North Cape light just on dark. SST ranged between 19C inshore to 20.2C along the shelf edge. Light winds made chumming difficult (i.e. little breeze means the scent doesn't bring in the birds in the same way as with windier conditions) but fairly fine overhead and warm temperatures made for a beautiful atmosphere to cruise around looking at seabirds. A favourable weather forecast for the light conditions to continue until 10-midday Sunday 22 May encouraged us to stay up at North Cape rather than run back to Houhora or head for a more enclosed anchorage near Cape Karikari. This prediction turned to custard at about 2AM when all hell broke loose. Fortunately the anchor stayed pretty firm and North Cape offered enough good shelter from the nor'easter and sea.*

*With daybreak we were rewarded with a spectacular sight of a big sea raging around the Cape, a 35-40kn wind whipping everything to flying spume. Seabirds were pouring around the Cape at great speed, many (particularly the Grey-faced Petrels) being hoisted high by the wind, some at least as high as the headland itself. Breakfast was a leisurely affair, Steve, Detlef and Murray whiled away some time by hauling a couple of sizeable kahawai and a beautiful male Sandager's Wrasse which went back. After a few hours the wind shifted more to the west and seemed to ease a little. By 11.30AM we were on our way home, an amazing sleighride with a big 3-4m following sea, the wind NW 25-30kns with stronger gusts, and heaps of seabird action. Quite the adrenalin rush with most of us camped on the foredeck. Back in at Houhora Game Fish Club Wharf at 3PM with huge smiles all round. The conditions meant there was a big difference in where we saw birds each day. The strong winds brought birds such as Grey-faced Petrels and Fairy Prions very close to shore on Sunday, whereas we'd been out towards the shelf before picking them up on Saturday.*

A summary of Chris's description of the birds seen is as follows:

**KERMADEC PETREL:** 2. Both intermediate phase, one seen each day. The second on the way back home on the Sunday, coming straight at us from out of the waves then lifting right up in front of everyone on the foredeck, up and over our heads... every feature (upper and lower parts) crystal clear, much jubilation.

**PROVIDENCE (SOLANDER'S) PETREL:** 3. Two seen on Saturday, one seen on Sunday, the latter in same conditions as the Kermadec and not long after, whipping up right in front of all of us, great views, more jubilation!

**GREY-FACED PETREL:** 2000-3000 (hard to estimate). On Saturday we saw them right out along the shelf edge, although towards dusk we had them all the way in to the Cape. After dark they were flying around the boat, they are breeding at North Cape. We saw most on Sunday when they were hard inshore, we even had them coming up over the boat while we were anchored. During most of the run home there were always GFPs in sight, often a steady stream and spectacular in flight with the strong wind. They only petered out when we got close to Mount Camel at the entrance to Houhora Harbour.

**BULLER'S SHEARWATER:** 100s., **FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER:** 2. One each day.

**LITTLE SHEARWATER:** <100. On Saturday we were able to get very close to a number, birds either feeding or resting on the water. Most birds had white-looking faces (white extending above the eye), whereas others had a more dusky-looking face with the dark area extending below the eye. Also several seen on Sunday.

**FLUTTERING SHEARWATER:** 100s., **SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER:** 3. One each day.

**FAIRY PRION:** 100s. On Saturday these were mainly out along the shelf edge where saw a steady stream of birds, usually in loose small groups. On Sunday, just south of the Parengarenga Harbour mouth we saw a big flock of

several hundred birds in a broad band extending down our route. Lovely sight with birds lifting off the huge waves and catching the sun. Saw several groups resting on the water.

**COMMON DIVING PETREL:** 100s both days. On Sunday we saw them most of the way, particularly in one stretch off Parengarenga Harbour where there seemed to be little heads bobbing like corks amongst the waves everywhere, some dashing away from under the bow as we surfed into troughs.

**WILSON'S STORM PETREL:** 1. First saw this flitting around a Gibson's Albatross resting on the water with 2 Fairy Prions. Stayed with it for a few minutes and watched at close range.

**BLACK-BELLIED STORM PETREL (prob):** 1 seen about 35 kms north of North Cape. Much debated. Definitely *Fregetta* (i.e. either White or Black-bellied Storm Petrel) and most definitely not a NZ Storm Petrel with its broad well-rounded wings, larger size, stockier body. This was a bird we watched at fairly close range (>15 m) for about 10mins. Complete lack of foot projection throughout the sighting and mostly white undertail saw us leaning very much towards WBSP on the day. Also, dark plumage along flanks was clear to the eye. However, dark plumage along the central belly shows up in some photos. This feature and the underwing coverts would see the ID as BBSP.

**WHITE RUMPED BLACK/WHITE STORM PETRELS:** 3 sightings besides the two above - one prob *Fregetta* sp, one prob NZ Storm Petrel and one possible Wilson's Storm Petrel. Further discussion on these Storm Petrels & the BBSP on Pterodroma Pelagics website.

**GIBSON'S ALBATROSS:** 10+. Adults, imm and a couple of fresh juvs, all but one on Saturday.

**ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS:** 3 prob, all on Saturday.

**CAMPBELL (NZ BLACK-BROWED) ALBATROSS:** 15+, most on Saturday.

**BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS:** 5+ Mix of adults and imm.

**WHITE-CAPPED ALBATROSS:** 2. One each day.

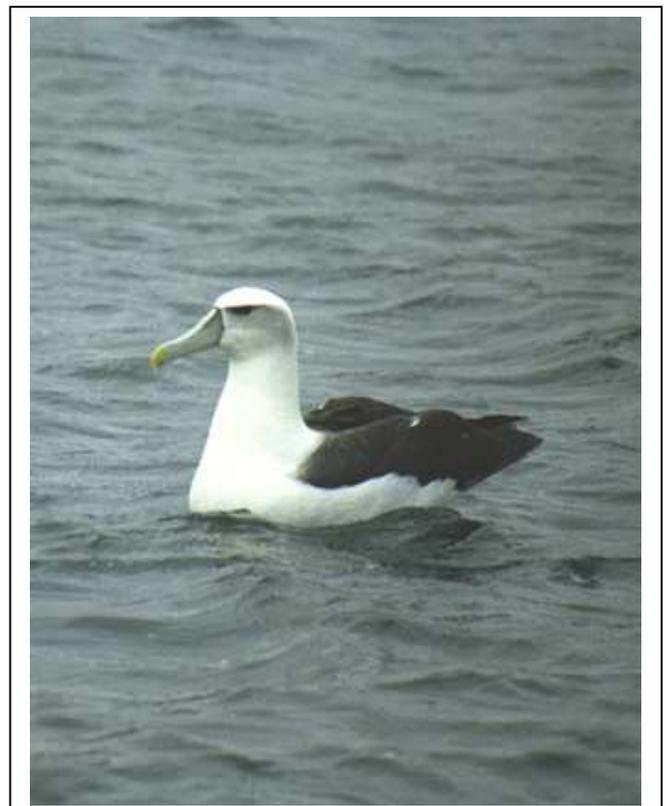
**BLUE PENGUIN:** 10, most while anchored at North Cape.

**AUSTRALASIAN GANNET:** 100-200.

Also a probable **Cook's Petrel**. Other marine life included **Sunfish, Marlin & Tuna** but no cetaceans this time.



Providence Petrel, Lord Howe Is 5.4.99 (DD)



White-capped Albatross, Stewart Is 3.6.99 (DD)

## Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> – Mon 6<sup>th</sup> June OSNZ AGM & Conference, Hamilton

Detlef, Carol & Russell attended an enjoyable weekend. At the RRs meeting on the Friday, a few matters arose which may be of interest:

- Proposed new brand name for the Society (see earlier)
- Regional site guides. Suggestion that regions produce a short site guide for bird enthusiast visitors. This could take the form of an elaborated map with important bird areas & directions. (I would like to work on this).
- The RR (or other local member) could have a separate telephone listing under “OSNZ” (plus the region).
- Funds provided for regions are not intended for local conservation initiatives but for members costs of running their regional programmes (e.g. petrol, marketing, newsletters).

On the Saturday there was a ‘bird race’ & 2 of us were in the winning team with 56 species, (although we were a team of 11 in a minibus!)

## June / July WADER COUNT

### Sat 25<sup>th</sup> June Rangaunu Harbour & Walker Island; Kowhai Beach

10 of us took part in the first wader count day, including 5 people from DOC in Kaitaia. The census concerns a 6 year programme of monitoring the population of Arctic wading birds which occur in New Zealand in greatest numbers in the northern winter. Some non-breeding birds stay in New Zealand in the southern winter, hence the idea of a count in June. From the point of view of the census, the birds we were most interested in were **Bar-tailed Godwit, Lesser Knot, Turnstone & Pacific Golden Plover**. We were fortunate today in finding 3 **Eastern Curlew** on Walker Island, this has a smaller world population & most spend the northern winter in Australia. The results of the census follow.

### Tues 26<sup>th</sup> July Parengarenga Harbour

The second wader count day couldn't be arranged until July & 7 people gathered at the wharf at Paua for a count on Kokota Spit & other high tide roosts around the harbour. Again the results of the count follow.

A common feature of good wader sites in the Far North is that you need a boat to reach them. As a result of the difficulty in getting enough people, a suitable boat & skipper & appropriate weather & tides on the same date for these censuses, the Society has been offered money to buy a boat for future use. We should get c.\$3,500 & have been asked to look for a small aluminium 12 foot 25 hp boat (or similar); the fund should cover a trailer & a little extra money is available for training. So far I have not had time to search, although suggestions have come in from a couple of members. Please keep your eyes & ears open & email me with ideas.

Lesser Knot, Kaipara Estuary 13.2.05 (DD)



**Ornithological Society of New Zealand - WADER CENSUSES 2004 - 2009**

OSNZ REGION	<b>FAR NORTH</b>	<b>MAIN SITE</b>				<b>RANGAUNU HARBOUR</b>
YEAR	<b>2005</b>	COMPILER				<b>DETLEF DAVIES (DD)</b>
MONTH	<b>JUNE</b>	Tide Height, Time, Weather etc				
CENSUS DATE	<b>25. 6. 05</b>	<b>Tide very high, 10 am - 2 pm, N wind, blustery showers</b>				
DATE >	25. 6. 05	25. 6. 05	25. 6. 05	25. 6. 05	25. 6. 05	
TIME >						
PRINCIPAL COUNTER >	DD	DD	DD	Anthea Goodwin		
LOCAL SITES >	Walker Island	East Beach	Kaimau-mau	Wallace Road	Tokerau Beach	
SITE TOTALS >	<b>327</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>65</b>	

**SPECIES TOTALS v**

Pied Oystercatcher	<b>189</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>180</b>		
Variable Oystercatcher	<b>97</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>56</b>	
Pied Stilt	<b>554</b>	<b>150</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>4</b>
New Zealand Dotterel	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>				
Banded Dotterel						
Black-fronted Dotterel						
Wrybill	<b>5</b>				<b>5</b>	
Pacific Golden Plover						
Spur-winged Plover						
Turnstone	<b>55</b>				<b>55</b>	
Lesser Knot	<b>1,175</b>	<b>75</b>			<b>1,100</b>	
Curlew Sandpiper						
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper						
Pectoral Sandpiper						
Red-necked Stint						
Far-eastern Curlew	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>				
Whimbrel	<b>8</b>				<b>8</b>	
Bar-tailed Godwit	<b>470</b>	<b>50</b>			<b>420</b>	
Black-tailed Godwit						
Grey-tailed Tattler						
Marsh Sandpiper						
Terek Sandpiper						

**OTHERS**


**MAIN SITE TOTAL >** **2,563**

Return June sheet by 31 July to Adrian Riegen.

**COMMENTS**

riegen@xtra.co.nz Fax 09-814-9741

231 Forest Hill Rd, Waiatarua, Auckland 8



**Ornithological Society of New Zealand - WADER CENSUSES 2004 - 2009**

OSNZ REGION	<b>FAR NORTH</b>	MAIN SITE	<b>PARENGARENGA HARBOUR</b>	
YEAR	<b>2005</b>	COMPILER	<b>DETLEF DAVIES</b>	
MONTH	<b>JULY</b>	Tide Height, Time, Weather etc		
CENSUS DATE	<b>26. 7. 05</b>	Tide quite high (3.1), 10 am - 3 pm. Dry, sunny, slight cloud, light NW wind.		
DATE >	26. 7. 05	26. 7. 05	26. 7. 05	26. 7. 05
TIME >				
PRINCIPAL COUNTER>	Russell T	Anthea G	AG	AG
LOCAL SITES >	Kokota Spit	Ahiaruhe Shellbank	Te Pua Paddocks	Te Hapua
SITE TOTALS >	<b>431</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>574</b>

**SPECIES TOTALS v**

Pied Oystercatcher	<b>478</b>			<b>478</b>	
Variable Oystercatcher	<b>77</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2</b>	
Pied Stilt	<b>1,082</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>570</b>
New Zealand Dotterel	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>			
Banded Dotterel	<b>107</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>106</b>	
Black-fronted Dotterel					
Wrybill	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>			<b>4</b>
Pacific Golden Plover					
Spur-winged Plover					
Turnstone	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>			
Lesser Knot	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>			
Curlew Sandpiper					
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper					
Pectoral Sandpiper					
Red-necked Stint	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>			
Far-eastern Curlew					
Whimbrel	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>		
Bar-tailed Godwit	<b>365</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>65</b>		
Black-tailed Godwit					
Grey-tailed Tattler					
Marsh Sandpiper					
Terek Sandpiper					

**OTHERS**


**MAIN SITE TOTAL >** **2,240**

Return June sheet by 31 July to Adrian Riegen.  
 riegen@xtra.co.nz Fax 09-814-9741  
 231 Forest Hill Rd, Waiaatarua, Auckland 8

COMMENTS

## PROGRAMME

All indoor meetings will take place at Detlef & Carol's house at 180 Landing Road, Kerikeri at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated. Any additions to this programme, indoor or out are most welcome.

### **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August Totara North**

Forest & Bird are meeting at 10 am today at the car park on right, 3 km along North Road from SH10 for an attractive & energetic walk through Michael Winch's steeply sloping property. Contact Michael on 09 405 1746.

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August Newcomers Social**

A chance to meet our newcomers & perhaps some prospective members. There will be a short video on the Abrolhos Islands, Western Australia. I will move the date if this is not convenient but for anyone travelling some distance, you are welcome to stay in one of our little flats.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September Waima Forest**

Forest & Bird's walk in this forest south of the Hokianga to look at plants. There may be birds too? Contact Helen Cogle on 09 405 8490.

### **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Sept Spring Walk**

Location to be decided but near Kerikeri, 9 am. This is intended as an introduction for beginners, including listening for calls & songs. Feedback & suggestions for this are welcome.

### **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October Members Evening.**

Open to presentations from the membership although we will try to pin down the elusive Laurence Gordon to get him to talk about his views on & successes with predator control.

**October** There is to be another NZ Dotterel census mid month, limited to suitable sites from Spirits Bay east & south to Houhora which were only scantily covered last year. The organiser is Patrick Whaley from the DOC office in Kaitaia. Please make contact if you can help.

**November** The next wader census is due this month & as Carol & I are away for most of the month, we will need a volunteer organiser. What about you?!

### **December**

Chris Gaskin of Kiwi Wildlife Tours has agreed to give us a talk one day this month, date to be confirmed. Subject will probably be seabird-orientated.

### **January**

David Crockett of Chatham Island Taiko fame has agreed to give us a talk on the amazing recovery programme of the Taiko or Magenta Petrel. This will be either on 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> of the month.

## BEACH PATROLS

### **AUGUST - DECEMBER 2005**

These are scheduled for the following Saturdays:

**90 Mile Beach:** 20<sup>th</sup> August, 17<sup>th</sup> Sept, 15<sup>th</sup> Oct, 12<sup>th</sup> Nov, 10<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**Karikari Beach:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept, 1<sup>st</sup> Oct, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct, 26<sup>th</sup> Nov, 24<sup>th</sup> Dec.

However, these may change & you should check dates with the organisers: Isabella Godbert – 09 407 8058 or John Dawn – 09 407 8658. Results have been sparse for the last few months so results will be deferred until the December newsletter.

A belated note of a band recovery concerns a Hutton’s Shearwater found by the 90 mile beach patrol on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2005 with band number X-12791. This bird was banded as a chick on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1998 in Kowhai Valley in the Seaward Kaikoura Ranges by Richard Cuthbert during his PhD studies on the species.

**RECENT SIGHTINGS**  
**(May to July 2005)**

I am supposed to be Regional Recorder as well as Regional Representative. At the next indoor meeting I hope to talk to you about finding another volunteer to take on the job of Regional Recorder as both jobs are too much for one person.

We have rather little to report this time & I guess we haven’t been out so much this winter. The following excludes the wader counts & the May pelagic sightings.



New Zealand Pigeon Manginangina Reserve, 10.7.05 (DD)

**North Island Brown Kiwi** We took part in Waimate North Landcare Group’s monitoring & our own records suggest that there are still good numbers in that area. In addition we have seen up to 4 birds in the Marsden Cross area on several dates. In the Russell area, Lindsay Alexander had 20 calls in 2 hours on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

**Common Diving Petrel** A ‘wreck’ of 5 in Te Ngaere Bay on 29<sup>th</sup> July (June Sale)

**North Island Weka** We hear that they are spreading on the Russell Peninsular. Lindsay had 2 calls on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

**Brown Teal** Very tame male in Matauwhi Bay, Russell on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> June (LA), in company with Mallards & keen to be fed bread.



**New Zealand Dotterel** 4 at Te Haumi, Paihia, by the main road on 30<sup>th</sup> July (D&CD)

**Kaka** 4 seen & heard at Matthews Bush on 23<sup>rd</sup> July (Michael Winch et al)

**Tomtit** Male on Moturua Island 1<sup>st</sup> July (Anthea G)

**Fernbird** One seen well at Ngawha Farm on 1<sup>st</sup> July on ridge 400m from nearest wetland. (LA, Gay Blunden). (See later)

Male Brown Teal, Matauwhi Bay, 8.6.05 (Jack & Vera Guy)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Seabird fanatics may be interested in the following from Pterodroma Pelagics:

#### SOUTH PACIFIC SEABIRD EXPEDITIONS



We are currently finalising some great itineraries for seabird and birding expeditions to the South Pacific in 2006. Our Vanuatu and Solomon Islands trip will be posted soon. Likewise Tonga to New Zealand (via the Kermadecs) and New Zealand to Fiji.

Watch this space!

We are also delighted to be able to offer places for birdwatchers on ocean going voyages between New Zealand and several South Pacific Islands e.g. Fiji, Tonga, Mangareva (French Polynesia) and Pitcairn Islands. As part of a South Pacific Seabird Mapping Programme, participants will be asked to keep records of birds seen each day (plotted to vessel's course) throughout their voyage. We will supply data collection cards. The ultimate aim of the programme's team is to place trained observers on ocean-going vessels travelling across the South Pacific. Data collected will be entered into a South Pacific database for mapping seabird distribution. Please contact us for more details.

Please note, these are not seabird birdwatching tours. However, the crews on these vessels will do their utmost to make you 'feel at home'.

Costs for the 2005 tours are NZ\$150 pp per day, (2006 TBA) & are inclusive of meals and twin-share accommodation. International flights and travel within destinations at either end of these voyages are not included. We can make these arrangements for you through our own travel agent.

#### **Tours include the following:**

18 <sup>th</sup> August	Suva to Nelson & Marlborough Sounds	10 days
29 <sup>th</sup> August	Nelson to Tauranga	3 days
12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Tauranga to Mangareva French Polynesia)	12 days
29 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Mangareva to Papeete (Tahiti)	5-6 days
6 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Papeete, Cooks, Tonga, Raoul to Tauranga	25 days
Late Jan 06	Tonga to Whangarei via Kermadecs	8 days
March 06	Whangarei to Cook Is.	10 days

Bookings - please contact us - [info@nzseabirds.com](mailto:info@nzseabirds.com)

#### **FERNBIRD**

The following note just received from Lindsay Alexander:

"While doing a series of five minute bird counts at the Top Energy Ngawha Farm at mid-day 1st July 2005, OSNZ members Gay Blunden and Lindsay Alexander observed a fernbird near to the top of a ridge some 400? metres from wetland. Vegetation cover was young dense, but stick like, 3 metre Kanuka with an open undercanopy. Ground cover was thick Tangle Fern. The fernbird tended to stay close to the Tangle Fern. First noticed by it's distinctive call, the bird was observed for some ten minutes and approached to within 2 metres of the observers. It made two other clearly different calls in that time. This bird was not in traditional fernbird habitat!"

