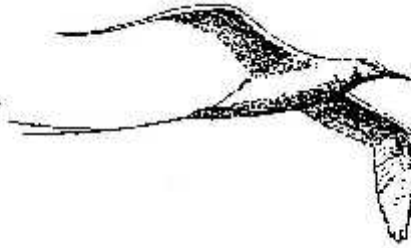


# AMOKURA



*Newstetter  
of the Northland Region  
of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand*

**October 2013**

**Amokura 108**

**Published in February, July and October of each year**

**MEETINGS** of the Northland Branch of the O.S.N.Z. are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER.

TIME: 7-30p.m.

VENUE: Founders Room, Alzheimers Society, 321 Western Hills Drive, Whangarei.

COST: A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

**ALL WELCOME**

## PROGRAMME TO DECEMBER 2013

OCTOBER		AMOKURA 108
	10	MEETING: Speaker Dai Morgan – "Glossy Black Cockatoo"
	12	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	15	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
NOVEMBER	14	MEETING: Speaker - Ranger from Bream Head Trust
	9	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	12	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
		KAIPARA HARBOUR SURVEY
DECEMBER		WHANGAREI HARBOUR SURVEY
	11	SOCIALISE (remember that it is on <b>WEDNESDAY</b> )
	14	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	17	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL

<b>REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE:</b>	<b>Janet Snell</b>	<b>438-5737</b>
<b>TREASURER:</b>	<b>Jim O'Malley</b>	<b>027 821 9216</b>
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<b>AMOKURA EDITOR:</b>	<b>Kevin Hayes</b>	<b>437-6470</b>

## BRANCH HAPPENINGS

At the September meeting R.R. Janet dealt with a range of emails etc as follows;

- We have replied to Mary Thompson about the Royal Spoonbill nesting survey
- We have acknowledged the donation by Bob McVicar, of a speaker system
- O.S.N.Z. have loaded to their web-site, details of the Birds NZ Research Fund
- Members were reminded that they can purchase copies of the newly released book "RAOUL & the KERMADECS – NZ's northernmost islands" a history by Steven Gentry. In bookshops from 30 September.
- The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust are holding their conference in Dunedin from 17-18<sup>th</sup> October 2013
- Dai Morgan will be in Whangarei during October and has offered to present to our regular meeting, a talk plus photos, about his work in Australia for the Glossy Black Cockatoo Recovery Programme.
- The Northland Kiwi Forum newsletter for September provided an update on Kiwi conservation work, particularly "SAVE KIWI WEEK" which runs from 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October.
- Members are advised of a lecture to be given by Peter Hayden and Rod Morris at NorthTec on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 7-00p.m. Peter and Rod's very entertaining and informative lecture features a section on "Kiwi Comeback".  
Join them for a memorable journey in words and pictures, to discover some of the great characters of New Zealand's wildlife. There will be an opportunity on the night, to buy a copy of their book "AN EXTRAORDINARY LAND"
- The Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology offer a workshop on Plant Identification at Warkworth on 26/27 September and another on Five Minute Bird Count techniques, again at Warkworth, on 22/23 October. Both are free!

For further information on any of the above, please email Kevin at [khayes@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:khayes@vodafone.co.nz).

The past quarter has seen us enjoy some good presentations including, during July, a D.V.D. detailing the history of the restoration of Ulva Island. At that meeting, Janet and Julie told of having sighted a Royal Spoonbill that was banded at the Wairau Lagoon on 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 1996, making it some 17 ½ years old.

In August, Anne McCracken and Heather O'Brien entertained us with some very good film clips of the courting behaviour of Dabchicks and of Australasian Little Grebe on the Whangarei Sewage Treatment Wetlands, Kioreroa Road, Whangarei. We also enjoyed seeing some of Anne's pics from her visit to Holland.

In September, Hilton Ward provided a PowerPoint presentation for the seventeen members present, showing the work that he and Melva are doing to provide access to a wetland at Waiotoi Road, Ngunguru. Hilton has a good photographic eye for fauna with some excellent shots of native orchids and other vegetation. On the next page we list some of the species that Hilton and co. have seen in the vicinity of Ratty's Landing/Hugh Crawford Reserve area of the Ngunguru/Whangarei Road.

Seen or Heard at Rattys Landing or Hugh Crawford
Australasian Bittern
Australasian Harrier Hawk
Banded Rail
Black Backed Gull
Black Shag
Blackbird
Brown Teal
California Quail
Caspian Tern
Chaffinch
Common Myna
Eastern Rosella
Fantail
Fernbird
Goldfinch
Greenfinch
Grey Warbler
House Sparrow
Little Shag
Mallard Duck
New Zealand Kingfisher
New Zealand Pigeon
North Island brown kiwi
Paradise Shelduck
Pied Shag
Royal Spoonbill
Shining Cuckoo
Silvereye
Song Thrush
Spur Winged Plover
Tomtit
Tui
Welcome Swallow
White Faced Heron
Yellowhammer

## RECENT SIGHTINGS

Royal Spoonbill	2	Old Mill Lane	14-06-13	M. Ward
Kiwi – calling (M & F)	2	Old Mill Lane	20-06-13	H. Ward
Australasian Bittern	1	Old Mill Lane	24-06-13	H. Ward
V. Oystercatcher (White)	1	Portland/Limestone	06-13	D. Calvert
House Sparrow	168	Ruakaka	30-06-13	J. Snell
Goldfinch	100+	Ruakaka	30-06-13	J. Snell
Kiwi – calling (F)	1	Old Mill Lane	03-07-13	Hilton Ward
Banded Rail	1	Old Mill Lane	03-07-13	Melva Ward
Spur-winged Plover	17	Beach Road	09-07-13	M. Reid
N.Z. Dabchick	8	Wilson's Dam	07-13	D. Calvert
Cattle Egret	150	Whg. Harbour	25-07-13	D. Calvert
Bar-tailed Godwit	40	“ “	25-07-13	D. Calvert
Royal Spoonbill	118+	Waikaraka	27-07-13	D & R Crockett
Little Egret	1	Mangawhai	03-08-13	Melva Ward
Royal Spoonbills	3	Ngunguru Est.	17-08-13	Hilton Ward
Pelicans	2	Nth. Wairoa River	18-08-13	Prue & Jim
Fairy Tern	2	Johnson's Point	28-08-13	Janet Snell
Royal Spoonbills	26	Waipu Lagoon	28-08-13	Janet & Julie
Australasian Bittern	1	Borrow-cut off Jordan Valley Rd.	04-09-13	Nathan B
Grey Teal	1	“ “	04-09-13	Nathan
Black Swan	1	“ “	04-09-13	Nathan
Royal Spoonbill	6	Parua Bay	05-09-13	Alan Willis
Shining Cuckoo (heard)	1	Te Hape Road	07-09-13	Alison Howell
Banded Rail	1	Old Mill Lane	09-09-13	Melva Ward
N.Z. Pigeon (Kereru)	2	“ “ “	12-09-13	Melva Ward

### Also seen!

A little earlier this year Pauline and Kevin were in Kerikeri and stopped for a coffee and a bite of lunch at a nice cozy little café which had both indoor and verandah seating. As the temperature was rather cool, we chose a table alongside a window, but inside the café. There was another table outside with just a pane of glass between us, and on it were the usual ashtray and a container of three types of sweeteners.

While waiting for our meal we watched a House Sparrow fly onto the table outside and choose a sleeve of raw sugar from the container – tugging at the paper until it came free and allowed him to flutter to the ground with his “spoils”. He then proceeded to chew at the ends of the paper until it was moistened and he could shred it. After working on it rather vigorously at each end, he managed, after some 8 – 10 minutes to gain entry to the sugar crystals inside.

When we commented on this to the proprietor as he brought our coffees, he told us that “the blighters only take the light brown coloured paper tubes containing raw sugar, ignoring the black coloured ones full of white sugar and the blue ones containing Sucaryl” Who knew that the common House Sparrow was both smart and intelligent!