



# THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND



PO Box 12397 Wellington    osnz.org.nz

Alan Baker  
Regional Recorder  
48 Pacific Street  
Dunedin 9010

Mary Thompson  
Regional Representative  
197 Balmacewen Road  
Balmacewen  
Dunedin  
03 4640787

03 4675180

## *Otago Region Newsletter 5/2012 June 2012*

### Winter Wader Count

Species	Karitane	Blueskin Bay	Aramoana	West Harbour	East Harbour	Papanui Inlet	Hooper's Inlet	Catlins	Total 2012	Total 2011
Pied Oystercatcher	39	310	97	309	3	42	100	170	1070	1282
Variable Oystercatcher		25	2	11	19	19	6	2	84	155
Pied Stilt	16	23	3		9	16	11	25	103	209
Banded Dotterel	52		56					45	153	141
Bar-tailed Godwit			83			36		8	127	179
Spur-winged Plover			2	10		10	4	35	61	145
Grey-tailed Tattler								1	1	

The weather on June 17 was fine but cold for the Winter Wader Count. Thanks to the teams of people who went out to all the usual areas. A rarity, Grey-tailed Tattler turned up for Richard Schofield at the Catlins (there was one over summer at Blueskin Bay) but he felt numbers were down and apart from Banded Dotterels, the totals compared with last year confirmed this.

**Mary Thompson**

## Ornithological Snippets

During the June 17 wader count Richard Schofield saw 2 **Cattle Egrets** and 40 **White-faced Herons** at Hinahina, large numbers of ducks (367), feral geese (88) and **Black Swan** (203) were reported from Papanui Inlet and a **Gannet** was seen off Aramoana. One was off Karitane on 10 June and another was seen heading up harbour past Port Chalmers on 20 June. Also off Karitane on 10 June were a couple of **Cape Pigeons** and **Fluttering Shearwaters** and a single **Buller's Mollymawk**. Closer in there was an adult **Pied Shag**; the third winter running this species has been seen at Karitane. Back in mid-May, 3 **Buller's**, 2 **Salvin's** and a **White-capped Mollymawk** passed Huriawa Peninsula along with 2-300 **Fluttering Shearwaters** and 3 **Gannets**.

Alan Baker saw a **Reef Heron** at Shag Point on 22 May, the first in the area since Richard Schofield saw one at the Nuggets a couple of years ago. Adult male and female **NZ Falcons** have been seen on several occasions in the past month around Waitati and the Orokonui Sanctuary. The male seems to be especially partial to **Eastern Rosellas**.

## Notices and Business

### Call for seabird breeding data



Hi, I'm a wildlife management student at Otago University conducting a research project on seabirds as part of my wildlife management course.

I'd like to contact people who hold information on seabird colonies or breeding sites throughout the Otago region to aggregate this data into a single regional dataset. I hope to use this dataset to identify gaps in the coverage and extent of our understanding of seabird colonies/breeding sites.

Importantly, this collected data will also be incorporated into a national programme, directed by Chris Gaskin (Forest & Bird/BirdLife International), to produce an enduring and accessible seabird colony

database for New Zealand. This resource in turn will be used to help identify Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in New Zealand. The IBA programme is an international scheme to identify and protect sites which are critical to the long-term survival of avian species. Despite New Zealand's wealth of bird species, particularly seabirds, no IBAs have yet been established. I aim to assist in the early stages of this process by collating the necessary data to classify candidate IBAs and to identify priority sites and species which require further surveying.

Any contribution to this regional dataset would be greatly appreciated and contribute to avian conservation. If you hold or know of data on Otago seabird colonies/breeding sites please contact me and I can email a spreadsheet for you fill in, or you can send any data directly to me if you prefer. Please note that 'seabirds' include storm petrels, shearwaters, petrels, albatrosses, gannets, shags (or cormorants), skua, gulls, terns, grebes and penguins. They include those that breed along the coast and on islands, as well as those that breed inland on rivers and near lakes. Also please feel free to get in contact if you have any queries over the use of data or on the projects described. Many thanks.

**Kate Hand** Email: [kathrynlhand@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynlhand@gmail.com)

### **Banded Tui and Bellbirds**

Murray Efford has been busy again this summer and autumn and has banded another 100 tui and bellbird at his place in Helensburgh. It is crucial for the project that resightings are made and recorded. The tui and bellbirds will be starting to come to feeders soon so keep a good look out. Please send information of any banded birds to Murray Efford email [murray.efford@otago.ac.nz](mailto:murray.efford@otago.ac.nz); or leave phone message on 476 4668 or post to 60 Helensburgh Road, Dunedin 9010. Include location, date, time, left leg: colour over metal; right leg: top colour over bottom colour. Also take a digital photo if at all possible.

### **Acoustic Monitoring of Birds**

The Otago Branch has just received its own set of 4 of the latest model acoustic recorders for use in our bird monitoring projects. The first highly successful use of this method was the confirmation of a small population of Australasian Bittern in the Waihola/Waipori wetlands. OSNZ members are encouraged to come up with ideas for other projects; talk to your RR.

## **NZ Threat Classification System**

"In 2008, a panel of ornithologists assessed the conservation status of New Zealand birds against the NZ Threat Classification System. The results of this analysis were published in the September 2008 issue of *Notornis* (Vol 55: 117-135). The next revision of the threat status list for New Zealand birds is soon underway. Status will be assessed using the same criteria as used in 2008.

We would be very grateful for any submissions providing new information, especially any census or trend data, on bird species, subspecies, etc. that you consider to be threatened or at risk, or very poorly known but seldom encountered and possibly threatened. We would also be very interested in receiving arguments why you think that the 2008 panel got a particular classification wrong, or where you think that the status has changed sufficiently since 2008 to warrant a change in classification.

The 2012 expert panel will meet to review the classification of New Zealand birds on 12-13 June 2012, so please let us have your submissions by 10 June. More information and submission forms can be found here:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/new-listing-of-the-threatened-status-of-nz-frogs-reptiles-bats-and-birds/> "

These assessments are due to be carried out at 3-4 yearly intervals, and so if your region is a "hotspot" for particular threatened or "at risk" species, then in coming years you may consider a local project to keep tabs on those species to help inform this process.

**Hugh Robertson & Rod Hitchmough**

Science & Technical Group, DoC, Wellington

## Programme 2012

Monthly Indoor Meetings will be held in the Benham Seminar Room, Benham Building, Department of Zoology, 340 Great King Street at 8 p.m.

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|------------------|---|
| Wed 27 June      | Indoor Meeting Kaitlyn White<br>Kakapo hatching success.                                |
| Sunday 1 July    | Hawksbury Lagoon<br>Contact Derek Onley 482 2831  |
| Wed 25 July      | Indoor Meeting Robert Schadewinkel<br>Radiotracking of translocated robins in Orokonui. |
| Wed 22 August    | Indoor Meeting Bryce Masuda<br>Consequences of brodifacoum operation on Ulva.           |
| Wed 26 September | Indoor Meeting Kerry Weston<br>Rock Wren  |
| Wed 24 October   | Indoor Meeting Craig McKenzie<br>Photographing Birds                                    |
| Wed 28 November  | Indoor Meeting Sue Odlin<br>Bird encounters in UK and Japan.                            |

Newsletter editor: Derek Onley, [derekonley@yahoo.com](mailto:derekonley@yahoo.com)

Many thanks to all who contributed.  
Final date for copy for next newsletter 18 July