

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (Inc)

Wellington Region Newsletter

OSNZ—Birds New Zealand

March 2015

<http://osnz.org.nz/> and <http://notornis.osnz.org.nz/>

Greetings OSNZers

With the daylight hours shrinking we can look back on what has been a most acceptable summer with lots of warm, sunny days and little wind. The low rainfall has been of some concern especially for farmers and gardeners and for those of us who rely on roof collection for their water supply. A major ornithological milestone was reached in March with the submission to eBird of the 10,000th complete bird checklist for Wellington / Wairarapa. This is a notable achievement, especially since we are the first area in New Zealand to reach this milestone. Much of the credit goes to Nikki McArthur who has been a tireless champion of eBird. Importantly there are now sufficient numbers of entries in eBird for it to be a valuable database for resource management. Of note in this newsletter is the report of monthly bird counts of the Otaki sewage ponds and Pharazyn Reserve by Enfys Graham, Rosemary Heather and Brian Harding. The counts demonstrate the importance of these areas for waterfowl as well as showing some major seasonal changes in the number of birds.

Geoff de Lisle

Wellington Regional Representative

Upcoming Monthly Meetings

WHERE and WHEN

Meetings are held at Te Papa's collections building, 169 Tory Street. Go up the steps and across the carpark.

First Monday of the month, 7.30pm. Note, because the first Monday in April (6th) is Easter Monday, the April meeting will be held on Monday the 13th of April

April Meeting – 13th April

Camping with emperor penguins' by Colin Miskelly

A short AGM will be held before Colin's talk.

May Meeting

Monday May 4th. Kyle Morrison will talk on the decline of the population of rock hopper penguins on Campbell Island.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Birds New Zealand (OSNZ) will be held over Queens Birthday weekend and consequently there will not be a Wellington meeting in June.

Report of Monthly Meetings

FEBRUARY MEETING – [Members' Night](#)

Ian Armitage gave an illustrated talk of his and Gwyneth's trip by boat from Doubtful Sound to Dusky Sound and then on to Preservation Inlet. This remote area of Fiordland has a rich history, including the extended visit by James Cook during his second voyage to New Zealand (1773). During his trip Ian visited Pigeon Island where Richard Henry lived for a number of years and translocated kiwi and kakapo onto Resolution Island. As an extra, Ian showed some pictures of the extensive red-billed gull and white-fronted tern colonies at Wairaka Point, Pukerua Bay. This is a recently established red-billed gull colony with well over 100 nests.

Nikki McArthur our regional recorder presented a summary of the Wellington bird observations recorded in 2014. Included in this talk was Nikki's choice of his top ten observations which will be published at a later date.

Delia Small summarised her recent findings of monitoring robins in the East Harbour Regional Park. From 2008 to 2012 a total of 103 birds were released in the Park which has an ongoing predator-control programme. Delia with the help of volunteers found 12 robins but only a single breeding pair. This pair laid three clutches and raised four fledglings. These findings all indicate that the translocation will not lead to a new, self-sustaining population of robins. It is noteworthy that the transfer of robins to Zealandia and Mana Island have been successful while those to Wainuiomata, Matiu / Somes Island and East Harbour Regional Park have failed.

Duncan Watson presented an illustrated talk of a recent holiday of birding sites of the North Island. Duncan is a photographer of considerable note as evidenced by the large number of his pictures in NZBirdsOnline. An important component of Duncan's talk were location maps of North Island birding sites, copies of which can be obtained from Geoff de Lisle.

MARCH MEETING - [Investigating the secret life of Wellington cats, Dr Heidi Kikillus](#)

Dr Heidi Kikillus is a post doctoral fellow in Urban Ecology at Victoria University. Her talk principally centred on urban cats and their possible effects on wildlife. Many of her studies have been carried out to support the initiative "Enhancing the Halo" which is all about creating a safe haven for all of our native creatures in our backyards in Wellington. An important question that is being addressed is how to make the most of all the work put into the wildlife hotspots around Wellington such as Zealandia, Otari-Wilton's Bush and Oruaiti Reserve. Citizen Science projects are a significant component of Heidi's studies. By involving the public in projects it is possible to carry out large scale studies which are long term and allow access to otherwise restricted areas such as private gardens. A major benefit of Citizen Science projects is that they can lead to behavioural changes which could enhance local wildlife. Important messages from this talk were the need for more information on the effects of urban cats on wildlife and the need to actively involve the public if steps are to be taken to minimise their adverse effects.

Field Activities

1. *Mist netting and passerine banding* – Peter Reese reports, Zoo Saturday 21 March

We had a reasonably successful session at the Zoo on Saturday. The conditions were good in the morning but bright sun and a strong northerly affected most of the nests later in the day. A small turn out of banders meant that we erected only 5 nets instead of the

usual 8-10 and we were slower to get them up. However we still managed to catch 65 birds of 7 species with 53 new and 10 recaps. Most of the recaps had been banded in the last few months.

Species caught were - (recaps in brackets)

Blackbird - 1 (0)

Dunnock - 3 (1)

House Sparrow - 32 (5)

Goldfinch - 6 (1)

Greenfinch - 2 (0)

Chaffinch - 2 (2)

Silvereye - 7 (1) the recap was the oldest bird of the day banded May 2012

Zealandia / Karori Sanctuary five minute bird counts

These counts are being carried out every 3 months. This is a great opportunity to learn the five minute bird-counting technique.

Please contact Colin Miskelly for details.

Hakawai@xtra.co.nz

2. Shag Survey

This is an ongoing survey of shag nesting sites in the Wellington Region. A separate communication will be sent to members in the near future.

Geoff de Lisle.

<http://wgtnnzbanders.blogspot.co.nz/>

For details of the next banding session please contact Peter Reese.

CROW KILLS... Researchers for the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority found over 200 dead crows near greater Boston recently, and there was concern that they may have died from avian flu. A bird pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was definitely not avian flu. The cause of death appeared to be collisions with road vehicles. However, during the detailed analysis it was noted that varying colours of paints appeared on the bird's beaks and claws. By analysing these paint residues it was determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, while only 2% were killed by an impact with a car. MTA then hired an ornithological behaviourist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills. The ornithological behaviourist very quickly concluded the cause: When crows eat road kill, they always have a lookout crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "Truck." So, you see, for one's survival it pays to speak the right language! Submitted by Ian Armitage.

Transfer of fairy prions from Takapourewa / Stephens Island to Mana Island

In January a number of Wellington OSNZ members helped in the transfer of 100 fairy prion chicks from Takapourewa / Stephens Island to Mana Island. This is the fourth lot of fairy prion chicks translocated to Mana Island. Three lots of chicks were transferred between 2002 and 2004 and as a result there are now 6 pairs breeding on Mana Island. A further 100 chicks will be transferred next year with the expectation that the latest two transfers will result in the recruitment of an additional ~28 adult birds in 2-3 years time.

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2015/01/27/a-box-of-fluffy-birds-moving-fairy-prions-from-takapourewa-stephens-island-to-mana-island/>

<http://explorediscovernature.blogspot.co.nz/2015/01/feeding-fairy-prions-volunteers-week-on.html>

What's wrong with this hihi?

The following picture was taken of a female hihi at a sugar water feeder at Zealandia. A similar case had previously been pointed out to us on Kapiti Island by Nick Fisentzidis (DOC). The condition is due to a sub-lingual oral fistula (a hole in the bottom of the mouth) and has been recognised for a number of years. Similar oral fistulas have not been recognised in other bird species and is usually only recognised in hihi when the tongue protrudes below the bird's jaw from a hole in the oral-cavity floor. A study from Massey University found that the majority of birds with fistulas had a small localised lesion alongside the edge of the jaw without the tongue protruding. Oral fistulas were generally not associated with any reduction in the bird's condition or productivity, but if the tongue consistently deviated through the fistula it affected nectar-feeding efficiency. No fistulas were found in nestlings, but 9% to 10% of adult birds had some form of oral fistula, suggesting that it developed after fledging. The cause of oral fistulas has not been determined but is not thought to be a primary genetic condition, since the condition has been observed in the source population of hihi on Little Barrier Island as well as in the transferred populations.



Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop

Reference

Matthew Low, Maurice R. Alley and Ed Minot (2007) Sub-lingual oral fistulas in free-living stitchbirds (*Notiomystis cincta*). *Avian Pathology* (April 2007) 36(2), 101_107

10,000 Checklist Milestone

Nikki McArthur, Wellington Regional Recorder reports.

Thanks to our collective efforts the [New Zealand eBird](#) database has just passed a significant milestone with the submission of the 10,000th complete bird checklist for the Wellington/Wairarapa region.

This milestone was reached by Joanna McVeigh on the evening of Monday, 16th March when she submitted a checklist that she had compiled earlier that day at Riversdale Beach in the eastern Wairarapa. And as far as checklists go, it is a pretty good one! Not only does it include a very respectable ‘haul’ of shorebirds, including five pied stilts, one variable oystercatcher, two NZ dotterels, 26 banded dotterels and a wrybill, but Joanna has taken care to record her search “effort” and to add age structure data and other relevant notes to her species observations. So for our 10,000th list, it is a very a good example of a high quality eBird checklist.

Although Joanna had the great good fortune to be the person to hit the “submit” button for the 10,000th time in the Wellington region, this milestone could not have been reached without the help of all of you – our core community of Wellington-based “eBirders” and regular visitors from other regions. Together we’ve now recorded over 52 000 observations of 167 bird species in the Wellington region and by doing so are well on our way towards creating the most detailed picture ever assembled of the distribution of birds in our region.

As well being a valuable source of information for other birdwatchers, I am pleased to report that your eBird observations are now being used by local conservation managers and environmental policy makers to make better-informed decisions about the conservation of birds and their habitats in the Wellington region. This means that whenever you are out watching birds, you are not just indulging in a hobby (some might say “obsession”!), but you are also making an indirect contribution to regional efforts to conserve birds and their habitats.

One recent example of this is a project carried out by local Regional Council and Department of Conservation staff to identify coastal and freshwater sites in the Wellington region that possess significant habitat values for indigenous birds. With a lot of local birdwatching effort concentrated along our coastline, this project drew heavily on available eBird data to identify sites that met a set of pre-determined criteria for being ‘significant’ habitats for indigenous birds. In the end, fifty-two ‘significant’ sites were identified and subsequently listed in the region’s draft Natural Resources Plan, meaning that in time, each of these sites will receive a higher level of protection under the Resource Management Act. For those of you who may be interested, reports describing this work can be found here and here.

So on behalf of Birds New Zealand and the team of eBird regional reviewers, a very big thank you and well done for all of your efforts to record your bird observations in eBird. All bird observations are of value, and when you take the step to ensure they make their way into eBird you’re not only improving our collective knowledge of the distribution of birds in the Wellington region, but you are also contributing towards their future conservation and management as well.

New Te Papa Blogs - <http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/>

[A new bird for New Zealand – dusky woodswallow](#), Posted 2 March 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)
[Life through a burrowscope lens \(Part 5\) – subterranean Takapourewa / Stephens Island](#)

Posted 20 February 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

[Birds and mammals of Takapourewa / Stephens Island](#), Posted 16 February 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#) **[A box of fluffy birds – the sequel. Fairy prion chicks fly from Mana Island](#)**

Posted 10 February 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

[Antarctic blog #7 – Wildlife of Gould Bay](#), Posted 5 February 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

[A box of fluffy birds – moving fairy prions from Takapourewa / Stephens Island to Mana Island](#)

Posted 27 January 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

Antarctic blog #4 – The southernmost penguin colony, Posted 26 January 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

Antarctic blog #3 – Camping with emperors, Posted 23 January 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

Antarctic blog #2 – Camping at 79 degrees south, Posted 16 January 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

Travels with Betsy – the zine!, Posted 15 January 2015 by [Susan Waugh](#)

Antarctic blog #1 – Flying south, Posted 13 January 2015 by [Colin Miskelly](#)

Fossil Bonanza Reveals the History of New Zealand's Animals, Posted 6 January 2015 by [Alan Tennyson](#)

Travels with Betsy – exploring the world of albatross personality, Posted 10 December 2014 by [Susan Waugh](#)

Bird man!

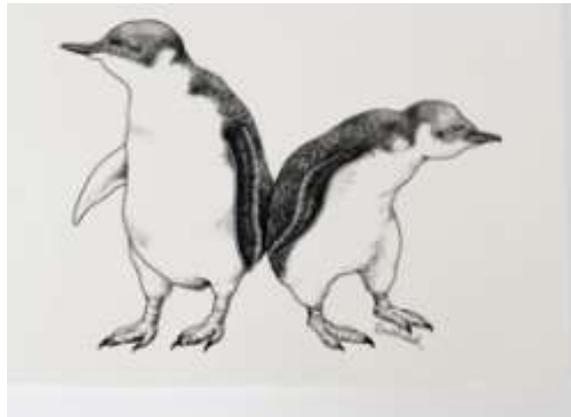
Posted 19 December 2014 by [Ruth Hendry](#)



Meet Betsy the cow, a small plastic 'space-hopper' toy. She was used in testing albatross personality as a 'novel object' and birds reactions to meeting her were evaluated. Photo: Susan Waugh. Copyright Te Papa.



With a background in biology and geology, James Innes, Kimberley and Janet Andrews have turned their understanding and love of the natural world into a t-shirt business. All the design and print work is done by them in house, from rough sketches to finished art work, transferring the art to silk screens and printing. They have formed fund raising partnerships with conservation projects around New Zealand, donating \$5 of each adult t-shirt sold to specific conservation groups. They also sell sweatshirts, tea towels, prints, notebooks and bags.



Details - <http://www.tumbleweedtees.com/>

Otaki Sewage Ponds and Pharazyn Reserve – Monthly Counts, 2014

In 2014 Enfys Graham, Rosemary Heather and Brian Harding carried out monthly counts of birds on the Otaki sewage ponds and the ponds at Pharazyn Reserve. The Otaki Sewage ponds are on Riverbank Road and are approximately 4.1 hectares in area. The Pharazyn Reserve is on Rutherford Drive and was formerly the sewage ponds servicing Waikanae. The area has been transformed into a reserve with extensive plantings round the ponds. There are two ponds with a total area approximately double that of the ponds at Otaki. In 2014 a bird hide was erected on the southern pond in Pharazyn Reserve.

A total of 23 species were recorded with 14 for Otaki and 22 for the Pharazyn ponds. Black-fronted dotterel (maximum of 5 in the March count) were only observed at Otaki. Birds only observed at Pharazyn Reserve are summarised in the following table.

Species	Max. number	Month max. recorded
Black shag	2	4 months
Pied shag	37	November
Little shag	4	February
White heron	1	March
Royal spoonbill	9	March
Canada goose	180	December
Australasia harrier	2	March
Banded dotterel	1	February
Red-billed gull	1	January

The high number of pied shags recorded in Pharazyn Reserve reflects the presence of a nesting colony in trees bordering the northern pond.

A notable observation was an Australasian little grebe in October and November at Pharazyn Reserve and at Otaki in November.

The importance of the two areas for waterfowl is shown in the following graphs. The following points are noted;

- There was a large variation in the number of birds recorded throughout the year.



Otaki Sewage ponds

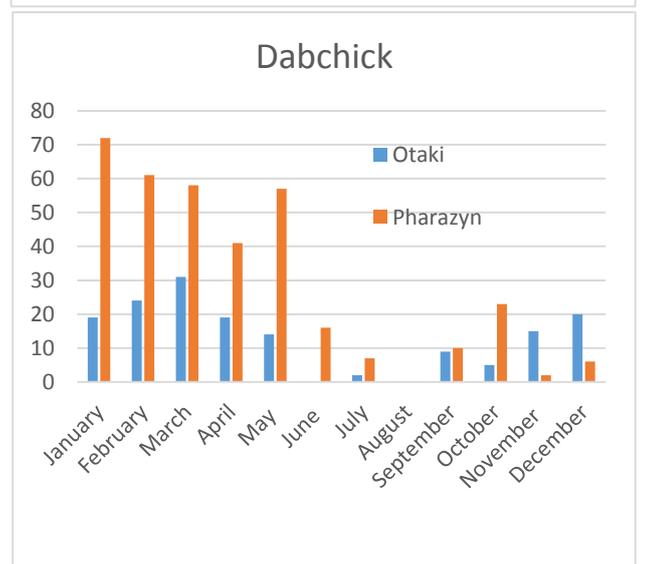
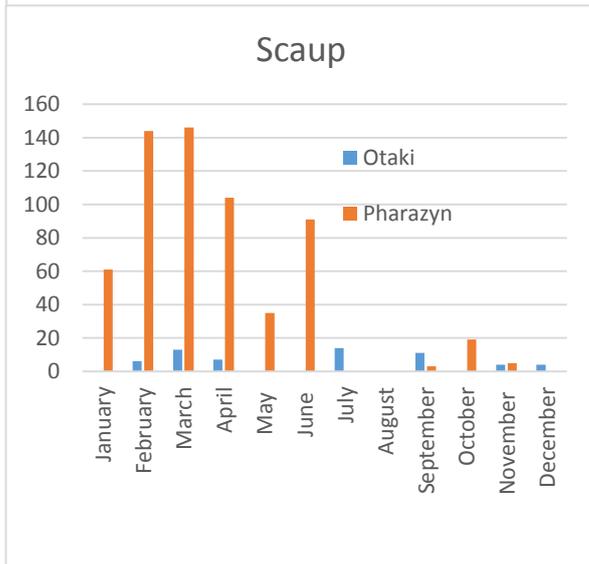
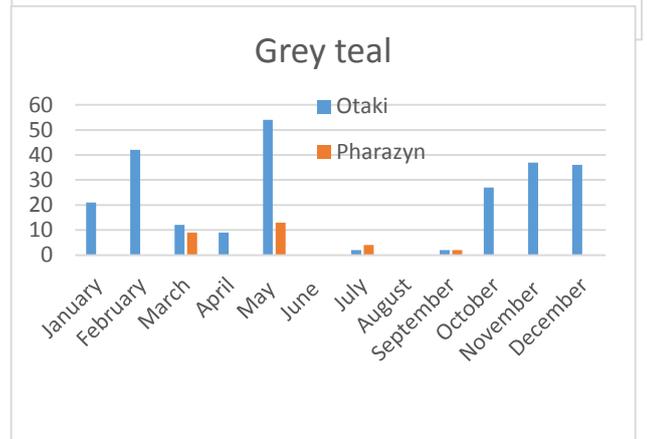
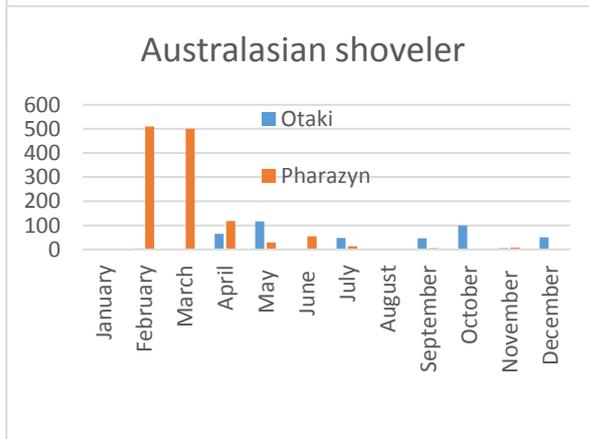
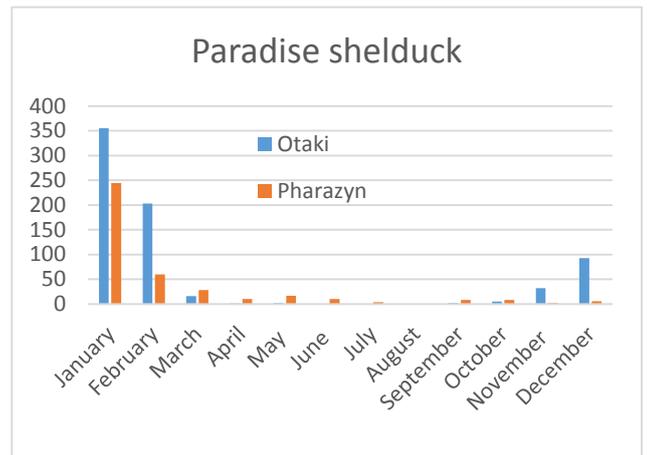
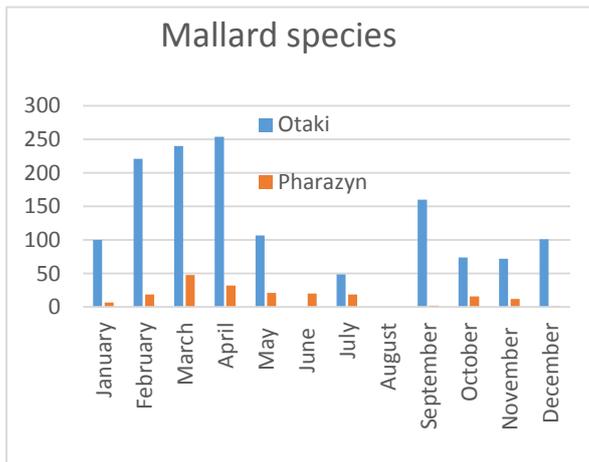


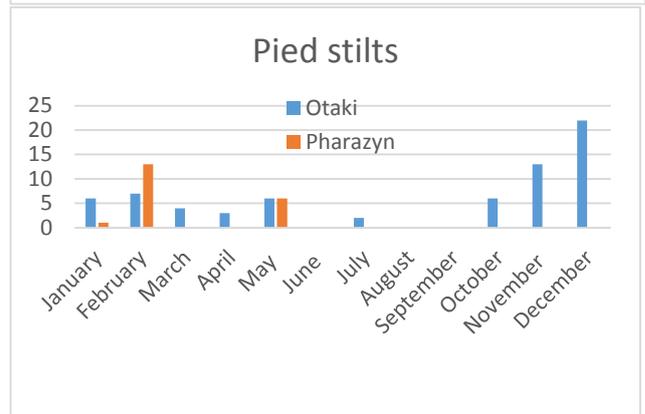
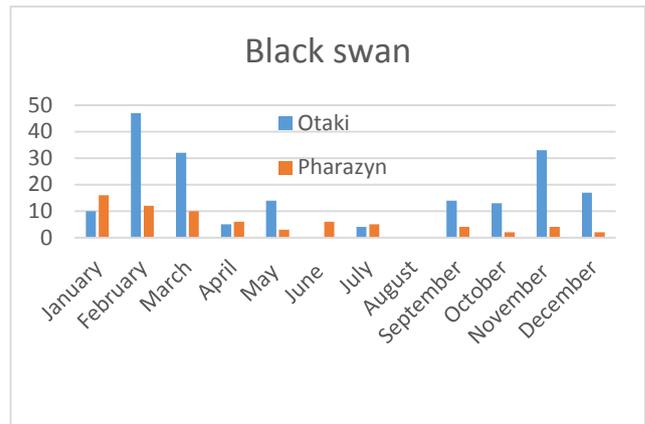
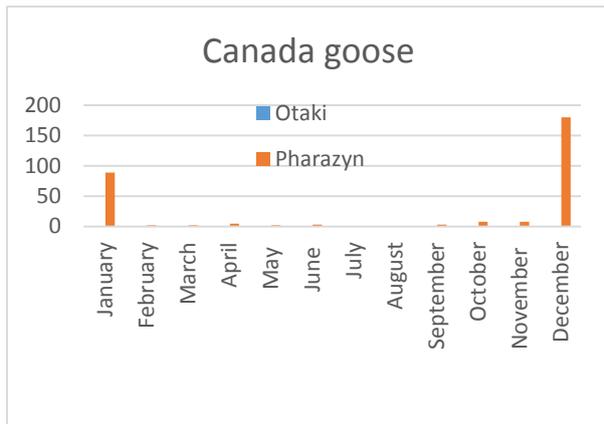
Pharazyn Reserve



New hide – Pharazyn Reserve

- While there was some differences between species, the lowest numbers were recorded in the winter months.
- There were some notable differences in the numbers of birds recorded at Otaki and Pharazyn.
- Higher numbers of mallards, paradise ducks, grey teal, black swan and pied stilts were recorded at Otaki.
- Higher numbers of Australasian shoveler, scaup, dabchick and Canada geese were recorded at Pharazyn Reserve.





Note: The June counts for Otaki were abandoned because of heavy rain.

The August counts were not carried out because of illness.

500th Kākāriki Banded at Zealandia!

This season saw increased numbers of Kākāriki banded from last year, and the total number banded at the sanctuary has now exceeded 500. The banded birds have mostly been nestlings and juveniles but also a few adults.

107 Kākāriki were caught and banded on Kapiti Island and translocated to ZEALANDIA in 2010. A big thank you to Pharazyn Trust, for funding the Kākāriki translocation and establishment of the birds here.

Wellington Region Contacts

Regional Representative: Geoff de Lisle (04) 527 0929 or osnzwelly@gmail.com

Regional Recorder: Nikki McArthur nikki.mcarthur@gw.govt.nz

Birds New Zealand Regional Roundup: Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop (04) 527 0929

osnzwelly@gmail.com

Shag Survey - Geoff de Lisle

Mist netting and passerine banding - Peter Reese (04) 387 7387 or Ruth.peter@actrix.co.nz

Zealandia 5 minute counts - Colin Miskelly Hakawai@xtra.co.nz

Catchpole – Orongorongo Valley 1898

....with three other men I made an expedition into the Orongorongo Valley. The valley was little visited in those days and surveyor Climie's track from the Wainui to Catchpole Ridge was completely overgrown. We had to use slashers to cut a way through. We camped the first night on the Catchpole just above the Orongorongo River, finding wild goats, pigs and native birds in abundance. At dusk the mournful call of the weka echoed from the surrounding gullies, and little brown owls hovered round the outskirts of the camp catching moths and insects attracted by the firelight. We were awakened at daylight by a flock of kaka launching themselves from the top branches of a big rimu. Then, as the sun topped the main range, flocks of popokatea, the little white-headed bush canary, white-eyes, and excitable little fantails and tomtits flew about the camp. The bush rang with the voices of tuis and bellbirds, while pigeons could be heard and seen in the surrounding trees. We had scarcely left the camp before a strange, deep melodious whistling-call came from the undergrowth not far away. The note was new to all of us, and we immediately turned in its direction. To our delight, on imitating the call, we saw two strange birds hopping along the ground, occasionally making short flights from branch to branch and coming straight towards us. Approaching quite fearlessly, they finally perched within a few yards and regarded us with curiosity. They were a pair of the exceedingly rare and beautiful huia. They made a wonderful picture as they sat there, their glossy-black plumage gleaming and the long, curving ivory bill of one contrasting strangely with the shorter beak of its mate. Their long, white-edged tail feathers, adopted by the Maori as insignia for persons of rank, were spread now and then like fans as they commenced to move about prior to taking flight. Then they disappeared in the undergrowth. On the following day, while making our way up one of the leading ridges of Mount Matthews, we came upon another pair which we also enticed to within close range. Altogether during this trip we sighted five separate pairs of these beautiful birds and decided that it was in their best interest to say nothing about them when we returned to civilisation. Although we visited this region again in later years, only once more were we privileged to sight a single huia in one of the big ranges flanking Mount Matthews. The cause of their disappearance is a mystery, and may be due to unscrupulous collectors, or to the presence of stoats and weasels imported about this date to cope with the rabbit pest. Being largely birds of the ground and undergrowth they would no doubt fall an easy prey to any of these predators. Perhaps deep in the Tararua or Ruahine Ranges the huia may yet be found in existence. *J H Messenger. The above "trip report" was published in the Evening Post on 26 July 1952.* Submitted by Ian Armitage.

The Dark Side of Being An Urban Parrot - Kaka and Lead

Alison Balance – Our Changing World Radio New Zealand. The following is a link to a blog and a recording of the programme.

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld/audio/20171238/the-dark-side-of-being-an-urban-parrot-kaka-and-lead>

Alison Balance talks to Aditi Sriram, a wildlife veterinarian from Massey University who is working at the Wellington Zoo. Aditi is doing a project investigating the lead levels in kaka from Zealandia. As part of this study she is taking samples from kaka chicks to determine at what stage the birds are getting exposed to lead. Egg shell samples will be examined to find out whether lead is vertically transmitted through the egg. The study has been undertaken in response to the previous finding of clinical cases of lead poisoning in Kaka from Zealandia. The source of lead is probably lead roofing nails, lead flashing on roofs and lead paint on old houses, and the problem arises because lead tastes sweet, and being parrots, kaka are inquisitive by nature and keen on chewing things. Lead poisoning has also been recognised as a problem in kea.

Bird Snippets – Wellington

White-winged Black Tern at the Pinnacles, Wellington, Peter Hodge Dec 17, 2014

Last Friday evening I was kayaking off the Pinnacles, at the entrance to Wellington harbour (eastern end of Breaker Bay). White-fronted Terns and Spotted Shags are nesting here. I spotted a small tern, standing near a much larger White-fronted Tern. Unfortunately the sea was rough, so I couldn't get close to the rock, or make a detailed observation, but I took several photos with a small compact camera from some distance away, then cropped them later.

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Nikki McArthur told me that he thinks it may be a White-winged Black Tern. I think he's probably right, but I'm interested in the views of others. BirdingNZ.net

Terns, pipits and a surprise at Plimmerton, imogen » Dec 21, 2014

Spent a lovely afternoon walking round the coast at the old quarry in Plimmerton with numerous good views of pipits. If you walk round far enough there is a small white-fronted tern colony (you smell it before you see it!). Young birds of all stages of development present with good views from above. Nesting on the adjacent rock were several birds. Nice way to spend some time watching the adults bring home the fish. On the way back I saw what I thought was a seal in the water but it turned out to be a ray of some sort. Very cool. BirdingNZ.net

Long-tailed Cuckoos (and a Falcon) in the Orongorongos, Peter Hodge Dec 26, 2014

Today I was clearing several trap lines above the Whakanui Stream and Turere Stream, in the Orongorongo ranges (near Wellington). Heard many Long-tailed Cuckoos - I counted 17 - along a 6 km traverse through hill forest, and two Shining Cuckoos. There were many Whiteheads, Grey Warblers, Tui and Tomtits about, also a Yellow-crowned Parakeet, and a Falcon hunting over Nikau Gully.

Incidentally, there were four stoats, two rats and a hedgehog in the traps (three trap lines, approximately 55 traps in total). BirdingNZ.net

Rifleman, Days Bay / Eastbourne, Geoff de Lisle & Dallas Bishop, Dec 28, 2014

On the ridge track between Days Bay and Eastbourne 2 groups of rifleman seen. Duncan Watson saw 6 in the same area on 23rd January.



Kakariki in Rimutaka Forest Park, ledzep » Sun Jan 18, 2015

At Butterfly Creek today I saw at least 2, possibly 3, Yellow-Crowned Parakeet. Not a great photo, but no doubt about the yellow crown. The birds were just behind the popular picnic area. Higher pitched chatter and seem to be more active and flighty than the RC Parakeet (which are commoner here - Somes Is, Karori Sanctuary, Kapiti Is). BirdingNZ.net



Photo, Duncan Watson.

"This is a really exciting observation - it's the first record we can find of this species in East Harbour Regional Park since the mid 1980s! MIRO and Greater Wellington Regional Council have been doing five-minute bird counts in the park since 1998 and haven't ever picked up YC kakariki (RC kakariki are reported fairly regularly though).

Checking on eBird I see there's a record of two YC kakariki seen behind Day's Bay in December 2009, but there's no photo or description, so its difficult to know how reliable this record might be. Great work!" Nikki McArthur, Regional Recorder.

Canada geese, Pharazyn Reserve, Viola Palmer and friends, Jan 8, 2015

A total of 300 Canada geese on the two ponds.



VOC family Eastbourne, Wellington, andyf Jan 11, 2015 10:39

I was surprised to see an adult variable oystercatcher and 3 chicks on rocks between Point Howard and Sorrento Bay this afternoon. I've always assumed there's too much traffic (vehicles, people, pets, predators) for birds to nest on Eastbourne's beaches.

I watched them for about 10 minutes. At one point the adult flew away to the next set of rocks, leaving the chicks behind. They kept still for a while but then wandered around a little on their own. The adult returned after a few minutes with food.

I hope they manage to fledge successfully and will keep an eye out for them in the next few weeks. BirdingNZ.net

VOC family Eastbourne, Wellington, SomesBirder Jan 14, 2015

Today I found out that a trio of Black-backed Gull chicks have been produced there as well, but it was impossible to get good photographs of them without being dive-bombed. BirdingNZ.net

VOC family Eastbourne, Wellington, SomesBirder Mon Mar 09, 2015

Sad to say, I don't think the chicks made it. I've seen no sign of them over the past month. BirdingNZ.net

Inner city biodiversity, Nikki McArthur, Fri Jan 16, 2015

Nice work-up of seabirds visible from my office window at Centreport (Wellington City waterfront) at the moment: 50-100 white-fronted terns, 1 dark-phase Arctic skua, 1 spotted shag, handful of fluttering shearwaters and black-backed gulls. A nice lunch-time distraction! BirdingNZ.net

NZ falcons, Kaitoke Regional Park, Michael Szabo Sat Jan 24, 2015

There were 2 NZ falcons perched in two adjacent trees by the Kaitoke River today at 11am, about 200m along from the car park just by the swingbridge, just down the track from the wooden sign that reads "River". After about 15 minutes they flew over the river and I saw them flying a couple of times nearby, the second time they were mobbing a third (smaller) falcon.

Red-crowned Kakariki Porirua Scenic Reserve, ledzep Jan 31, 2015



A pair of Red-crowned Parakeets at the start of the track at Porirua Scenic Reserve Rangituhi Crescent, 174 49' 14543" -41 7' 34.42797. I have seen them in this area before. BirdingNZ.net
Photo. Duncan Watson

Royal spoonbills, Hutt River mouth, Nina Woodman, Feb, 7, 2015

15 spoonbills at the Hutt River mouth, in front of the Steel and Tube building.

Yellow-crowned parakeet, Ian Armitage, 11, Feb, 2015

I watched a yellow-crowned parakeet in the Porirua Scenic Reserve this morning. I periodically visit this attractive location (Rangituhi Crescent entrance) to monitor birds in general and red-crowned parakeet in particular. A small red-crowned parakeet population has been living in the Porirua SR for several years but I really didn't expect to see yellow-crowned parakeet. I watched a single bird close up through binoculars for about 10 minutes right at the entrance of the track (where the track leaves the grassy area behind several suburban houses) and I'm very confident in what I saw and heard. The bird was feeding on berries in a mahoe tree and was easy to see

through binoculars at a range of about 4-5 metres. I suspect that the bird has flown in from Mana Island (where yellow-crowned parakeet are now quite common). Two bellbirds were also present in the same tree, one an adult (hen) the other a very fussy fledgling that was always getting in the way of its mother! Good to know that bellbirds are breeding here although I've suspected this for some time now.

[NZ Dabchick at Pencarrow Lakes](#)

by [Pongo](#) » Thu Feb 12, 2015 4:51 pm
We went out to the Pencarrow Head this morning. There was a lone adult Dabchick on the eastern side of Lake Kohangapiripiri. Across the lake and too far to make out clear through my binoculars there was another bird with three young all behaving like Dabchicks i.e. diving and surfacing elsewhere, they disappeared into the raupo when harriers started circling. I'm not certain if this is of interest

[Black-fronted Terns, Taputeranga Marine Reserve](#)

by [Michael Szabo](#) » Fri Feb 20, 2015 12:54 pm
There were 2 black-fronted terns with 26 white-fronted terns on rocks at the end of Te Raekaihau Point on the eastern side of the Taputeranga Marine Reserve at 12 noon today. These are the first migrating BFTs I've seen on this stretch of the south Wellington coast so far this summer.

[Pied stilts, Petone wharf, Reg Cotter, Mar 9, 2015.](#)

Ten meters East of Petone wharf saw 3 pied stilts. They have not been seen in this area for several years.

Farewell to the Godwits



"The brainchild of former Foxton Community Board chairman Neville Gimblett, the \$45,000 sculpture, in which the birds each have a 2-metre wingspan, was funded by the Horowhenua District Council.

"The really great thing is to see what it actually means to the community," Gimblett said.

"I guess when I first had the idea, it was about what was unique to Foxton and what will help put us on the map."

The sculpture was constructed by The Old Foundry in Levin, which created each piece of the birds, including individual feathers, out of steel before welding the creatures together." Manawatu Standard.