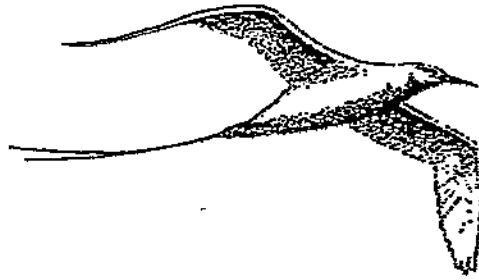


AMOKURA



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

June 2010

Amokura 98

RECENT SIGHTINGS

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| REEF HERON March 6 th 2010 | Albany Road, Ruakaka | 2 Adults & 1 young Pauline Smith/Kevin Hayes |
| TOMTITS April 16 th 2010 | Tangihua | Alan Willis |
| WHITE HERON April 19 th 2010 | Rawene | Ruth & David Crockett |
| ROYAL SPOONBILL April 19 th 2010 | Rawene Ponds | 40 Ruth & David Crockett |
| CIRL BUNTING May 4 th 2010 | Suburban garden, Kamo | 1 Ruth & David Crockett |
| ALBINO SPARROW May 2010 | Otaika, Whangarei | 1 Janet Snell |
| FAIRY TERN May 2010 | Portland | 14 Tony Beauchamp |
| LITTLE TERN May 2010 | Tapora | 14 Tony Beauchamp |
| GREY-FACED PETREL May 2010 | Matakohe/Limestone Island returning birds | 2 Gerry Brackenbury |
| WEKA May 2010 | Russell area Released 7 yrs ago and recently sighted again | 1 Tony Beauchamp |

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Northland Branch of the O.S.N.Z. are held each month on the second Thursday for the period FEBRUARY to MARCH.

TIME: 7-30p.m.

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

ALL WELCOME

COMPLEMENTARY GROUP

At our May meeting we were joined by a delegation from the recently formed PUKENUI-WESTERN HILLS FOREST CHARITABLE TRUST who spoke to us of their work to date in the Western Hills area and outlined their hopes for the future. The area has high conservation value, with a number of historic and cultural sites.

Alan Martin, Sheryl Mai, Dennis Hewitt and Margaret Pohe of the Trust explained their backgrounds, and detailed their hopes to restore the habitat after a series of both expensive and extensive vermin and predator eradication programmes. Efforts from then onward would aim at sustaining the flora and resident fauna. A number of our members indicated their willingness to assist with a "five minute" or spot survey to establish a "benchmark" population of birdlife present in the Reserve.

GARDEN BIRDS

Photographed at Takahe Street, Whangarei on 20th December 2008.



BIRDS AND THE TREES – Not the birds & the bees!

A quick trip to Blenheim on May 16th & 17th 2010 to attend a family funeral saw me staying with cousins Christine and Noel Donelley on their small dry stock unit at Dumgree, just west of Seddon, near the Awatere Valley. As you fly into Blenheim Airport, there are grape vines as far as the eye can see – miles upon miles to the North, South, East and West, with their autumn leaves glowing yellow and highlighting a distinct lack of trees anywhere near the vineyards.

Noel's farm-let is absolutely flat and completely surrounded by grapes. The four boundaries of his property were planted by the previous owners with trees, to act as shelter-belts from the wind. These trees have now become a "thorn in the side" of the neighbouring grape growers whose vines are planted in very neat, orderly rows; well weeded and tended, with a notable absence of any trees or shrubs that might provide a nesting place or shelter for the dreaded menace of the grape – BIRDS!

One owner was telling us that the little Silvereyes were the worst, because they fly from bunch to bunch taking pecks here and there from the grapes, which spoils the bunches. One way in which the growers are attempting to combat this menace, is by luring the New Zealand Falcon into the area by feeding them among the vines. Dead chickens are obtained from local poultry farmers and deep-frozen until needed when they are thawed and portions thrown into the air as the Falcon flies overhead.

At one corner of Noel's land, adjacent to his driveway, there is a small platform on the top of a two metre tall pole where the Falcons are fed. These birds seem to very quickly learn about the chicken meals provided for them and usually arrive one at a time either early in the morning, or late in the day. We had seen a few New Zealand Harriers in the air and asked whether they also fed upon the chickens, but "No" said the grower, "the Falcons are much faster flying than the Harriers and even if they dropped a bird, they can swoop down and retrieve it before the Harrier can get there!" I was sorry to miss this feeding routine, but Noel was the only one up and about at that early hour!

The next morning while having our morning tea, Christine said "Look out the window into the Banksia tree in the garden, there are two Bellbirds hopping about and calling to each other." We walked quietly outside and watched them fly from tree to tree in the garden and Noel said that he thought that they were young birds because their call had not yet developed into the proper Bellbird call. It was a special treat for me to see them really close-up with such a great view of their subtle colours.

Noel then proceeded to tell me that he was, many years ago, a member of the first group to go with David Crockett to the Chatham Islands in the early stages of the "Taiko" Project. Do you remember that David? I think that Noel and Christine are biding their time before selling out to the grape-growers and returning to their Northern roots at Waikaraka and One Tree Point where the BIRDS and the TREES are very precious.

Janet Snell.

LAKE AND POND SURVEYS 2009/10

JACK BISSET WETLAND – 18th March 2010

CONDITIONS: Bright, hot sunshine and a gentle southerly breeze. Our visit was from 4-00p.m. until 6-00p.m. hoping to see more birdlife during the early evening, but this was not the case. Most noticeable was the reduction in the number of passerines. Two staff of the Contractor Siteworx left just after 4-00p.m. They have a transporter parked down on the river margin and are working with two diggers on the far side of the south-eastern pond.

There has been very little rain since our last visit and the ground is dry and hard with sparse cover. Only the kikuyu grass is green, but the grazing cattle are in good condition. The water level in the main pond is down, possibly by 40 plus centimetres. Birds seen were;

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Paradise duck | 54 |
| Grey/hybrids | 36 |
| Scaup | 2 |
| Black Swan - mature | 91 |
| Black Swan – juvenile | 29 |
| Black Shag | 2 |
| Little Shag | 4 |
| White faced heron | 1 |
| Pheasant – female | 1 |

Thanks to the Northland Fish and Game staff for their assistance with access to the wetland.

Pauline Smith, Kevin Hayes.

WARO LAKE, HIKURANGI – 2nd June 2010

I left my autumn survey of Waro Lake until late in the period to see how much difference the shooting season made. I went on the morning of June 2nd to find that the lake was shrouded in fog at 9-00a.m.

Returning at 11-00a.m. when the fog had cleared I found –

| | |
|---|----|
| Mallard | 18 |
| Grey Duck | 4 |
| Hybrid | 4 |
| Muscovy (Someone must have Tired of them!) | 2 |
| Little Shag | 1 |

As I drove in the second time, I noticed a Police car following me but when I stopped, it turned around and drove off. (I wonder what he thought I was doing?) When I left after completing my count there was a similar car down the road with the driver talking to someone.

I stopped and asked if he had been at the lake and was told "Yes", so I informed him that I had been doing a bird count.

Audrey Williams.

WHAU VALLEY DAM 19th May 2010

Claire did her count on May 19th and it produced –

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Black Swan | 2 |
| Mallard | 104 |
| Paradise Shelduck | 14 |
| Grey Duck | 5 |
| Dabchick | 1 |
| Little Shag | 1 |

When a gunshot rang out, over 100 other ducks appeared in small groups, from various sections of the Dam and flew off in all directions. On the road in to the dam there were Pigeons (Kereru) both in the guava trees in the gardens and in the Taraire trees.

Claire Burt.

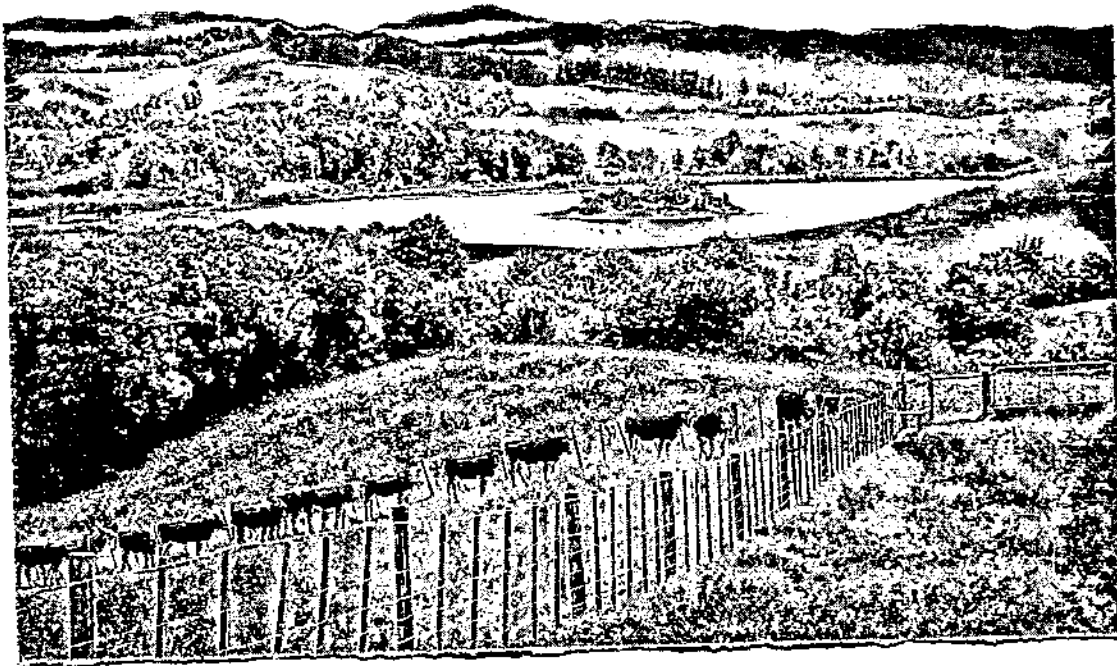
HAWKENS POND

Up to 12 Mallard have been seen on various occasions on this pond at Maunu.

Jean Hawken.

.....
OVERVIEW OF THE JACK BISSET WETLAND MAIN POND

Photographed 11th December 2009.



NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 31 Jan 2009

Tide Height: 4-00m

Time: 2-40p.m.

Weather:

* includes birds at Waikare

| | Borcks | Oneriri | Ngamotu | Batley-Tanxa | Tinopai | Pahi-Whakapirau | Ruawai | Taingahae-Kellys Bay | Okaro Creek | TOTAL |
|------------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|-----------------|--------|----------------------|-------------|-------|
| Black shag | | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | 3 |
| Pied shag | | | | 3 | 1 | | | | | 4 |
| Little black shag | | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| Little shag | | 3 | | 2 | | | | | 35* | 122 |
| White-faced heron | | | 55 | 30 | 2 | | | | | |
| White heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reef heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Royal spoonbill | | | | | | | | | | |
| SI pied oystercatcher | | 300 | | 600 | 450 | 180 | 350 | 850 | 750* | 3480 |
| Variable oystercatcher | | | | 7 | 14 | | | | | 21 |
| Pied stilt | | 500 | | 24 | 18 | 4 | 200 | 59 | 44 | 912 |
| NZ dotterel | | | | 3 | | | | 2 | 8 | 13 |
| Banded dotterel | | | | | | | | | 21 | 21 |
| Wrybill | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pacific golden plover | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spur winged plover | | 8 | | | | | | | 35 | 43 |
| Turnstone | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesser knot | | | | 2 | | | | | 345 | 347 |
| Far-eastern curlew | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asiatic whimbrel | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bar-tailed godwit | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black-backed gull | | 24 | | | | | | | | |
| Red-billed gull | | | | | | | | | | |
| Caspian tern | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| White-fronted tern | | | | 12 | 87 | | | | | |
| Fairy tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle egret | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black swan | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arctic Skua | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | 832 | 85 | 1028 | 1612 | 304 | 597 | 1004 | 2087 | 6549 |

Participants: C. Burt, D. Calvert, D. Crockett, R. Crockett, P. Cozens, C. Hojem, M. Jensen, S. McCusker

S. McPherson, J. Steer, B. Stevens, J. Snell, L. Snell, P. Smith.

NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 27 Jun 2009 Tide Height: 3.9m Time: 2-09p.m. Weather:

| | Borcks | Oneriri | Ngamotu | Batley-Ianoa | Tinopai | Pahi-Whakapirau | Ruawai | Taingahaekellys Bay | Okaro Creek | TOTAL |
|------------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|-------------|-------|
| Black shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pied shag | | | | | 1 | 20 | | 5 | | 26 |
| Little black shag | | | | | | 16 | | | 2 | 18 |
| Little shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| White-faced heron | | | | 3 | | | 40 | 22 | | 67 |
| White heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reef heron | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Royal spoonbill | | | 52 | 5 | | 20 | | | | 77 |
| SI pied oystercatcher | | 492 | 2 | 315 | 600 | 300 | 1800 | 145 | 688 | 4342 |
| Variable oystercatcher | | | | 11 | 6 | | | 5 | 18 | 40 |
| Pied stilt | | 14 | 2 | 110 | | 20 | | 61 | 47 | 275 |
| NZ dotterel | | | | | 4 | | | 2 | 15 | 21 |
| Banded dotterel | | 33 | | | | 1 | | | | 34 |
| Wrybill | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pacific golden plover | | | | | | | 10 | | 21 | 34 |
| Spur winged plover | | | | | 3 | | | | | |
| Turnstone | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesser knot | | | | | | | | | | |
| Far-eastern curlew | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asiatic whimbrel | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bar-tailed godwit | | | | 7 | | | | 38 | 38 | 83 |
| Black-backed gull | | | | | 1 | | | | 28 | 29 |
| Red-billed gull | | | | | 1 | | 40 | 10 | 1 | 52 |
| Caspian tern | | | | 1 | | | 9 | 6 | 10 | 26 |
| White-fronted tern | | | | 9 | 200 | 20 | | 59 | | 288 |
| Fairy tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle egret | | | | | | | 47 | | | 47 |
| Black swan | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | 539 | 56 | 465 | 813 | 476 | 1929 | 292 | 890 | 5460 |

Participants: D. Calvert, D. Carter, P. Cozens, M. Jensen, L. Forrest, J. Hawken, C. Parkes,

S. McPherson, M. Smith, J. Snell, L. Snell, B. Stevens, P. Yardley.

NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 7 Nov 2009 Tide Height: 4.0m Time: 2-30p.m. Weather: Fine, warm, overcast, SW wind.

| | Borcks | Oneriri | Ngamotu | Batley-Tarua | Tinopai | Pahi-Whakapirau | Ruawai | Taingaha-Kellys Bay | Okaro Creek | TOTAL |
|------------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|-------------|-------|
| Black shag | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Pied shag | | 3 | | | | | | | | 3 |
| Little black shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| White-faced heron | | 27 | 11 | 7 | | 8 | | 11 | | 64 |
| White heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reef heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Royal spoonbill | | | | | | | | | | |
| SI pied oystercatcher | | | | | 40 | | | 175 | 12 | 227 |
| Variable oystercatcher | | | | 6 | | | | 3 | 6 | 15 |
| Pied stilt | | | 101 | 17 | | 26 | | 34 | | 178 |
| NZ dotterel | | | | 6 | | | | 2 | | 8 |
| Banded dotterel | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wrybill | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pacific golden plover | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spur winged plover | | 7 | 4 | 30 | | | | | 14 | 55 |
| Turnstone | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesser knot | | | | | | | | | | |
| Far-eastern curlew | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asiatic whimbrel | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bar-tailed godwit | | | | 1500 | | 350 | | | 100 | 1950 |
| Black-backed gull | | | | | | 2 | | | 1 | 5 |
| Red-billed gull | | | 1 | 10 | | | 18 | | | 29 |
| Caspian tern | | 2 | 1 | | | 6 | | 2 | 8 | 19 |
| White-fronted tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fairy tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle egret | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black swan | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | 36 | 121 | 1576 | 40 | 392 | 448 | 184 | 153 | 2950 |

Participants: C. Burt, D. Calvert, D. Carter, P. Cozens, M. Jensen, C. Hojem J. Hawken,

S. McPherson, M. Smith, J. Snell, L. Snell, R. Roadley, P. Smith.

NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 28 Feb 2010 Tide Height: m Time: 11-00a.m. Weather: Fine, gentle breeze.

| | Borcks | Oneriri | Ngamotu | Batley-Tarua | Tinopai | Pahi-Whakapirau | Ruawai | Taingahae-Kellys Bay | Okaro Creek | TOTAL |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Black shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pied shag | | | | | 3 | | | 17 | | 20 |
| Little black shag | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little shag | | | | 1 | | | | 5 | | 6 |
| White-faced heron | | 7 | | 14 | 1 | 189 | | 30 | | 241 |
| White heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reef heron | | | | | | | | | | |
| Royal spoonbill | | | | | | | | | | |
| SI pied oystercatcher | | | | 493 | 2360 | 224 | 1884 | 590 | | 6081 |
| Variable oystercatcher | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pied stilt | | | | 210 | | | | 30 | | 272 |
| NZ dotterel | | | | 2 | | | | 3 | | 32 |
| Banded dotterel | | | NO BIRDS | | | | | | | |
| Wrybill | | | PRESENT | | | | | | | |
| Pacific golden plover | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spur winged plover | | 5 | | | | | 11 | | 20 | 36 |
| Turnstone | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesser knot | | | | | | | | | | |
| Far-eastern curlew | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asiatic whimbrel | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bar-tailed godwit | | | | 22 | 3 | | | 4 | 42 | 71 |
| Black-backed gull | | | | 18 | | | 13 | 14 | 7 | 43 |
| Red-billed gull | | | | | 2 | | | 22 | 3 | 83 |
| Caspian tern | | | | 7 | | 56 | 16 | 20 | 10 | 53 |
| White-fronted tern | | | 1 | | 24 | 50 | | | | 75 |
| Fairy tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Little tern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle egret | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black swan | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Arctic Skua | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | 12 | 0 | 751 | 2401 | 330 | 2113 | 684 | 723 | 7014 |

Participants: C. Burt, D. Carter, D. Crockett, P. Cozens, L. Forrest,

M. Smith, J. Snell, L. Snell, P. Smith.

NORTHLAND WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Code NW - SUMMARY

Compiled by Prue Cozens – Period JANUARY to JUNE 2009

| MONTH | 17-01-09 | 14-02-09 | 21-03-09 | 26-04-09 | 23-05-09 | 21-06-09 | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| FROM | Mahuta Gap | Glinks Gully | Mahuta Gap | Mahuta Gap | Mahuta Gap | Mahuta Gap | |
| TO | 3k Nth.Chases | Mahuta Gap | 3k Nth.Chases | 3k Nth.Chases | 3k Nth.Chases | 3k Nth.Chases | |
| DISTANCE | 10km. | 11km. | 10km. | 10km. | 10km. | 10km. | TOTAL |
| PATROLLERS: <i>D. Calvert,</i> | <i>K. Miller</i> | <i>C. Parkes</i> | <i>P. Cozens</i> | <i>L. Honor</i> | <i>S. Gardiner</i> | <i>Sam & Rory</i> | |
| Wandering Albatross | | | | | | | |
| Royal Albatross | | | | | | | |
| Black-browed Mollymawk | | | | | | | |
| White-capped (shy mollymawk) | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Storm Petrel Sp. | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Buller's Mollymawk | | | | | | | |
| Light-mantled Sooty Albatross | | | | | | | |
| Flesh-footed Shearwater | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Buller's Shearwater | | 3 | 1 | | | | 4 |
| Sooty Shearwater | 2 | 1 | | | 10 | 2 | 15 |
| Short-tailed Shearwater | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Fluttering Shearwater | | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| Hutton's Shearwater | | | | | | | |
| Little Shearwater | | | | | | | |
| Common Diving Petrel | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Black Petrel | | | | | | | |
| White-chinned Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Kerguelen Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Cape Pigeon | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Antarctic Fulmar | | | | | | | |
| Northern Giant Petrel | | | | | NO BIRDS | | |
| Fairy Prion | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Thin-billed Prion | | | | | FOUND | 1 | 1 |
| Antarctic Prion | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Broad-billed Prion | | | | | | | |
| Fulmar-billed Prion | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Prion sp | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Blue Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Pycroft's Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Cook's Petrel | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Black-winged Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Mottled Petrel | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Grey-faced Petrel | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| White-headed Petrel | | | | | | | |
| White-faced Storm Petrel | | | | | | | |
| Blue Penguin | 1 | | | | 4 | | 5 |
| Australasian Gannet | 7 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | | 12 |
| Pied Shag | | | | | | | |
| Paradise Shelduck | | | | | | | |
| Mallard duck | | | | | | | |
| Variable Oystercatcher | | | | | | | |
| Southern Black-backed Gull | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Red-billed Gull | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Caspian Tern | | | | | | | |
| Indian Myna | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| TOTAL | 13 | 8 | 5 | Nil | 22 | 11 | 59 |

OFFICERS:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Regional Representative: | David Crockett | 435-0954 |
| Treasurer: | Den Carter | 435-1650 |
| Secretary: | Ruth Crockett | 435-0954 |
| Amokura Editor: | Audrey Williams | 459-1931 |
| Amokura Printer: | Kevin Hayes | 437-6470 |
| Regional Report: | Claire Burt | 435-1166 |
| Regional Recorder: | Tony Beauchamp | 436-2224 |

CONVENORS:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| West Coast Beach Patrols: | Prue Cozens | 437-7760 |
| East Coast Beach Patrols: | Claire Burt | 435-1166 |
| Whangarei Harbour Census: | Tony Beauchamp | 436-2224 |
| Kaipara Harbour Census: | David Crockett | 435-0954 |
| Limestone/Matakohe Island: | Gerry Brackenbury | 437-7532 |
| Bird Recovery Centre: | Prue Cozens | 437-7760 |
| Supper: | Pauline and Marie | 437-6470 |
| | | 437-0214 |

PROGRAMME:

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| JUNE 10: | MEETING. (Report from A.G.M.) |
| JUNE 19. | WEST COAST BEACH PATROL |
| JUNE 20 | WHANGAREI HARBOUR CENSUS. |
| JUNE 22. | EAST COAST BEACH PATROL |
| JUNE 27. | KAIPARA HARBOUR CENSUS. |
| JUNE/JULY. | MOREPORK CALLS. |
| JULY 8. | MEETING. (Speaker—Rudi Hoetjes) |
| JULY 23. | WEST COAST BEACH PATROL. |
| JULY 27. | EAST COAST BEACH PATROL. |
| AUG. 12. | MEETING. (Speaker- Graeme Smith) |
| AUG. 22. | WEST COAST BEACH PATROL. |
| AUG. 24. | EAST COAST BEACH PATROL. |
| AUGUST. | SPOONBILLS—(Band Colour Combinations) |

New Zealand Registered Magazine

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Ornithological Society of New Zealand
C/- K. J. Hayes
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Tikipunga
WHANGAREI 0112
New Zealand**