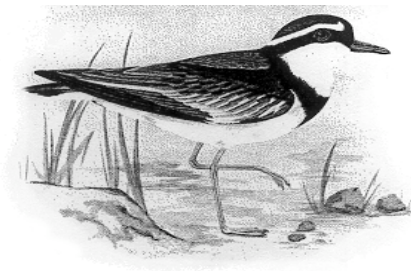


Ornithological Society of New Zealand
Wairarapa Branch.



REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
BARBARA LOVATT
4 CLARA ANNE GROVE,
GREYTOWN 5712
PH: 063049948
<barbara.lovatt@slingshot.co.nz>

REGIONAL RECORDER
COLIN SCADDEN
95 SOUTH RD.
MASTERTON.
PH ; 06 378 6423
<cescad@xtra.co.nz>

AUGUST 2007 NEWSLETTER.

THURSDAY AUG.9 MEETING, at 7.30 P.M. 129 Renall St Masterton.

North and South members will compete in a quiz for **THE BIG BIRD CUP.**

Quiz-master will be Chris Day, Education Officer, at Mt. Bruce Wildlife Centre. This will be another hotly contested event, so be there to support your team. Will the Cup migrate south this year?

MONDAY, AUGUST 13. 5.30 p.m. at GOVERNMENT HOUSE.
BOOK LAUNCH of the ATLAS OF BIRD DISTRIBUTION IN N.Z. Those who put their names forward for this event will have received their official invitations.

N.B. All financial members will receive a free copy of this tome.

TUESDAY AUGUST 14 at 7.30 P.M. at 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown.
EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING.

OUR OSNZ PRESIDENT, PROF. RICHARD

HOLDAWAY, will be in the Wairarapa to meet our members and speak to us on the OSNZ and where the Society is heading in the next 2 yrs. Richard is fitting us into a busy programme, so please come to welcome him and to hear his presentation. He will overnight at 4 Clara

Anne Grove, Greytown.

Due to the above extra events, there will be no field trip in August.

REPORT ON THE JULY MEETING.

compiled by Eileen van Trigt.

Earlier this year, the members of OSNZ visited Dr. Neil Hayes ' property, "Gretel Lagoons "adjacent to Taumata Lagoon, an experience we all enjoyed. Neil was our speaker at the July meeting , which was held at the home of Narena Olliver. Neil began with some autobiographical notes. He was born in the U.K. in Nottinghamshire, and came to N.Z. in 1962. Over the years he became a conservationist of bird-life, rather than a hunter.

His particular interest is in the **NZ BROWN TEAL (PATEKE)** a species almost on the verge of extinction, before Neil and like-minded colleagues began a recovery programme in 2000. Many birds were successfully bred and raised in captivity, and released into the wild. He formed the Brown Teal Conservation Trust in 2004.

Features of the species include their monogamous pairing, prolonged parental attention to their young; they are nocturnal, good climbers, and their mode of getting around is a kind of scuttling. They do not readily fly. This, of course, makes them extremely vulnerable to predation. As Neil pointed out, the rearing of Brown Teal in captivity has been very successful, but it is essential that areas in which they are released are predator-free. This being the case, they may survive for many years. He cited one he had had in captivity as living for 24 years.

It is obvious that saving this NZ icon from extinction is an abiding passion for Neil, his family and his colleagues. We thank him for his efforts over the years and also (for those of us at the meeting) an insightful address.

REPORT ON THE RIVER MOUTHS SURVEY.

This proved to be an interesting exercise, taking members to places they wouldn't ordinarily have visited., and at the same time sharpened their power of observation . On many occasions, the river mouths were closed by sand-bars, and on one occasion, the bar had gone. This had quite an effect on the bird populations , as was illustrated at Kaiwhata. On the summer count there were a large number of Black Swans enjoying the lagoon, while on the winter count, when the bar had gone, the numbers of Swan had decreased. A large area of mud had been exposed when the water-level dropped, and nine Black-fronted Dotterel were making the most of the opportunity.

Another river that changed between summer and winter was the Motuwaireka at

Riversdale. A storm had blocked the mouth, and at the same time formed three new outlets. The storm had dumped a huge amount of seaweed on the beach and with the seaweed were a miriade of " sand-hoppers " which provided a great food source for the 50 or so Banded Dotterels.

During the course of the survey, members covered over 4500 kms by road, 30kms by boat, as well as considerable distances by foot. In all, nine members contributed 292 man-hours, to the survey. In addition, members were helped by two kind people with their boats. Many thanks to all who took part in the survey.

EDITOR'S NOTE. Thank you to Colin Scadden for organising this survey, and for compiling this report.

We welcome the following new members.

ALAN WILKINSON from MARTINBOROUGH

VALERIE CLEGHORN from WOODVILLE.

It is great to have our membership geographical boundaries extended. We look forward to meeting you both, in person, and hope that you will be able to join in our various activities.

The position of **OSNZ Membership Secretary** has become vacant., with the retirement of Roger Sharp.

If you are interested, your R.R. has a job-description.

The **SPRING PROGRAMME** is nearly completed and will appear with the Sept. Newsletter. It will take us through to Dec. and the annual Pot-luck Dinner.

**THE BIG BIRD CUP. BE THERE !
THURS. AUG.9. 129 RENALL ST. MASTERTON.
QUIZMASTER : CHRIS DAY.**