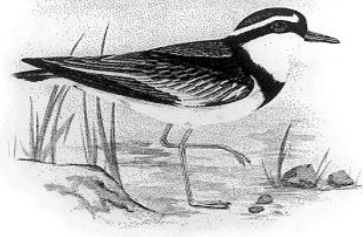


ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY N.Z. WAIRARAPA BRANCH



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MAY2007 UPDATE

REPORT ON THE APRIL MEETING.
submitted by Eileen van Trigt.

Twelve members congregated at the home of Tenick and Janet Dennison to recount recent and historical encounters with birds which, to them, were particularly memorable.

Geographically, the stories ranged from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, the United States, Galapagos Islands to the U.K, not forgetting Janet's memory of a Glossy Starling during a visit to Kenya.

Colin Young's observation of learning, (rather than mimicry) by juveniles from adult birds, was of particular interest. He had observed a male adult Blackbird "showing" his offspring how to crack the shell of a snail, which, he reported, took some little time before junior "got the hang of it". In similar vein (i.e. mimicry/learning) one member quoted an instance where a

"breakaway" group of juvenile finches had matured on an island without adults, resulting in their never progressing to adult song - in this case because there was no adult to mimic. Much discussion ensued regarding different bird calls including the several alarm calls used by the Chickadee to indicate the presence of a particular predator. Fascinating stuff!!

Encounters with Frigate birds, Harriers, White Heron, Little penguin, Shag, Tui, to name a few, were well documented by members. We heard of a vicious Takahe, a pursuit by Pukeko, but to my mind, the piece -de -resistance came from Peter Griffith who had photographed a Morepork, early one evening. The morepork complete with a dead sparrow in its talons, was sitting on a clothes basket on the deck of Peter's holiday cottage, just asking to be "on camera".

An interesting and fun evening for us all.

Editor's note. In preparation for our field trip, Narena Olliver presented a short resume on Cirl Buntings and how to identify them. Many thanks, Narena.

MONTHLY BIRD OBSERVATION NOTES,
compiled by Brian Boeson (Colin Scadden our Regional Recorder was absent from the meeting.)

Is it the season ? but TUIS were recorded in the Dennison's garden in Masterton and in Greytown at Eileen's and Brian's garden while one of the two in Barbara's has quite a different call. she also has two MAGPIES visiting Maybe it is the season, but MOREPORKS were recorded in Coradine St , Masterton

and in Upper Plain Road, while the one Frank had been watching didn't appreciate the attention and has returned to the Tate Reserve, Greytown.

When a glider with raptor like wings flew over the Greytown oxidation ponds over 400 PARADISE SHIEL DUCKS took flight Also in the Papawai area of the Ruamahanga River 6 PIED STILTS were observed

A ROYAL SPOONBILL made a brief appearance at Henley Lake and this made it the 52ND SPECIES to have been seen at the lake.

REPORT ON THE FIELD TRIP " IN SEARCH OF THE CIRL BUNTING."

compiled by Barbara Lovatt.

By prior arrangement we were divided into two groups to cover the Upper Plain area, near Masterton. and the eastern Lake Wairarapa area.

In this latter area, the Ciril Bunting remained elusive, but the group of 8 made use of a sunny late autumn afternoon to enjoy the birds we did see. We visited Matthews' lagoon, the Boggy pond area. Birds seen here were..... HARRIERS, DABCHICKS, WELCOME SWALLOWS, LITTLE PIED SHAG & BLACK SHAG(carbo) PARADISE SHIEL DUCKS, CANADA GEESE, REDPOLL, HARRIERS, SILVEREYES, CHAFFINCH, GREY WARBLER, YELLOW HAMMER, THRUSH, GREENFINCH, MAGPIES, EASTER ROSELLAS, STARLINGS.

We moved on to the Wairio Wetlands Restoration area, where we were impressed with the progress of restoration. Birds observed here were WHITE-FACED HERON, BLACK SHAGS, GOLDFINCHES, BLACK SWANS, SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, BLACKBIRDS,

AND HARRIERS.

The 3 people who visit the Upper Plains area saw 21 different species. The Ciril Bunting remained elusive, too, to this group, although they did not rule it out. Sightings of Yellow Hammers could have been Ciril Buntings if better views had been obtained to distinguish either birds.

GODWITS / KUAKA

Have you been following the latest news on these remarkable birds?

As a result of tracking, via satellite, their flight path and flight duration have been recorded accurately for the first time.

10,000kms. in a week-long flight to the Yellow Sea region. Then on to Alaska for the breeding season.

For more information go to

www.werc.usgs.gov/sattrack/shorebirds/overall.html

OSNZ Conference & AGM. New Plymouth, Queens Birthday Weekend June 1-3

Due to insufficient numbers, the proposed minibus trip is not eventuating. Instead, we shall be going in private cars. If you need a seat, please contact Barbara Lovatt. Registration forms need to be completed preferably before the end of April, After April there is a small penalty payment.

DATES for your CALENDAR.
see the attached Winter programme, and please note, especially, that some of the dates differ from our usual monthly times.