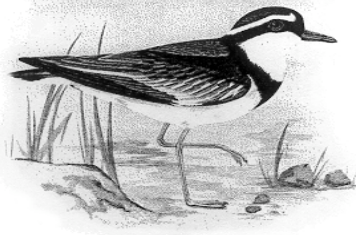


Ornithological Society of New Zealand  
Wairarapa Region.



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SEC./TREASURER. JENNY DORING.

**MAY 08 NEWSLETTER.**

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**MAY MEETING.** 7 30 p.m. at 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown.  
Christine Reed will present **AN UPDATE** on the **BLACK STILT.**

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**SATURDAY MAY10 FIELD TRIP**

meet at Colombo St. carpark 1.30 p.m.

**HENLEY LAKE BIRD CENSUS, & TWITCHITHON.**

Bring friends, family, grandchildren to participate in identifying & counting the variety of birds on Henley Lake. This will provide important data, and be a fun day out. The Henley Trust will be donating a mystery prize, for the top score. If you do not consider yourself to be an expert birder you can team up with the more experienced birders. As this date will be at the beginning of the duck-shooting season, there will be many avian refugees on Henley Lake.

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**Report on the March meeting, compiled by Brian Boeson.**

Only four members joined Janet and Tenick Dennison at their home for the meeting, which was to be "Personal Birding Experiences."  
After the usual monthly recording of bird-sightings, the talk drifted into "Personal Experiences", and not always things ornithological. We learned, for instance, how to hypnotise a rabbit, and to put to sleep a domestic hen. Rabbiting with an albino ferret was also graphically described, as was the experience of a beheaded domestic hen racing around the farmyard. Story-telling experiences and motoring adventures were also recalled.  
With our Editor / R.R overseas, we expected to get a rap over the knuckles when she

returned, for not keeping strictly to the ornithological format of the meeting. However, all in all, we did enjoy the experiences, and as supper was originally prepared for at least twelve plus, the evening concluded royally.

Editor / R.R.s footnote.....

Well ! We've been known to change the plan before .....

A paucity of birds on a field trip, converted into a very successful botany trip.

A committee meeting interrupted for some immediate bird-watching.

And now the above creative use of opportunity. What more can I say !

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### Report on the March field trip, compiled by Colin Scadden.

Ten people from the Wairarapa attended the "Farewell to the Birds" at Foxton Estuary. After a brief introduction by members of the Manawatu estuary Trust about 100 of us trekked out to the sandspit. Wrybills appeared on the sand before we got to the sandspit proper, a prelude to what was to come. The tide was right and we were able to get really good views with the numerous telescopes present. **Birds seen were Godwit, Knot and Golden Plover with many in their distinctive breeding plumage. Pied stilt, SIPO, White Fronted Tern, Caspian Tern, Banded Dotterel, Red Billed Gull, Black Billed Gull, Welcome Swallow were there too. Probably the highlight was to see Sharp Tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper and best of all, a solitary Shore Plover which was unfazed by all the attention.**

Back at the parking area we were able to view the plans for the proposed observatory, construction of which is expected to start soon.. All in all a most satisfying day especially as this correspondent won the Raffle.!

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### REPORT ON THE MARCH MEETING

Tenick Dennison gave a well-researched talk and video presentation of

#### **THE HISTORY of the OSNZ WAIRARAPA REGION 1988 to 2008.**

Our foundation members were Tenick and Janet Dennison, Brian Boeson, Jack Luttrell, Colin Scadden, Helen Cook, Dave Sim, Ian Buchanan, Jason Taylor, and Paula and Martin Bell.

A course, " Bird Watching for Beginners " involving eminent lecturers, and field work was attended by 21, of whom 8-10 were local members. This course stimulated interest and brought in new members.

In 1990 a very successful Junior OSNZ camp, at Boggy Pond, on Lake Wairarapa, was attended by 12 participants ( 7 Wai. 1 Hawkes Bay, 1 Manawatu ) plus 16 helpers. Mist-netting & Bird-banding, Wader Counts, Black-fronted Dotterel & Dabchick Surveys, field trips to Porangahau, Cape Kidnappers and Ward, Marlborough, were some of the highlights of the following years.

In 1995, Colin Scadden organised the first of many mini-bus birding trips centred around attendance at the OSNZ annual meeting and conference. This first trip was to Stewart Island, and is still recalled with much enthusiasm.

One year, our region hosted the OSNZ conference, and did so with with creative flair. This event, too, has become part of the annals of our region. Latterly, our BIG BIRD QUIZ , initiated in 2004, has become another annual highlight.

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The above precis was compiled by the editor from Tenick's notes and video. The Editor / R.R. suggests that we could learn anew from our history, and once again initiate training sessions, workshops and become pro-active in increasing our own birding knowledge, and also widening our membership.

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**The following article has been submitted by Jenny Doring.** Apart from the content of the article, it also reflects the ornithological attitudes of the time.

I was perusing the Paperspast web site the other day and found this little gem. The Hawera and Normanby Star 1st April 1901. The "St James' Gazette' says: "A very fine collection of birds has just been received at the Natural History Museum from Lord Ranfurly, Governor of New Zealand, who made a special expedition to the Auckland, Bounty, and Campbell Islands for the special purpose of obtaining rare species, which were not represented in the Museum collection. Every creek and river on the coastline was searched for rare specimens, and among the pair of I goosanders, a species which is 'on the ! verge of extinction."

Jenny'd footnote. Obviously this species is now extinct - I could find no reference to it in The Field Guide to the Birds of N.Z.

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**WEBSITE.** [www.eBird.com](http://www.eBird.com) Paul Scofield reports that OSNZ is well advanced in adapting the American eBird system for use in NZ. Your editor suggests you access the above website to understand how this system functions.

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Your Editor / R.R. has recently returned from a 6 week "" Cherry Blossom Cruise "" to Japan,ex. Sydney, via The Whitsundays and Great Barrier Reef, Torres Strait, and across the Gulf of Carpentaria, & the Sea of Arafura to Darwin. Then on to Sabah, Brunei, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Pusan in Sth Korea, Hiroshima, Osaka, and Yokohama. Sailing south again to cruise around the tiny island of Iwa Jima, then on to Saipan, Guam,in the Marianas, Chuuk Atoll,in Micronesia, Rabaul, PNG and southwards through the Coral Sea to Brisbane and Sydney. Bird sightings were generally disappointing . On a hike in Mt. Kinabulu National Park in Sabah, birds were generally heard but not seen. This may have been due to the time of day ( mid-day ) and rain. However, the botanising was stunning , especially the exquisite native orchids. The smog haze in Hong Kong and Shanghai probably wasn't very conducive to bird life. Pusan in Sth Korea was a literal "" breath of fresh air ""after the Chinese ports, and the first cherry blossoms were seen there. Japan's Cherry Blossom Festival was at its most glorious. Cherry blossoms were everywhere, in public places, along riverbanks, in the hills, and in many tiny private gardens in front of homes and apartments. It is called the Sakura Festival and heralds

the coming of Spring. Families and friends gather under the cherry trees to picnic, drink saki, and celebrate the beauty of the blossoms, and the end of Winter. From Japan the ship sailed south to cruise around the tiny island of Iwa Jima, noted for its famous World War 2 Battle and the iconic picture of the 5 Americans raising the American flag. En route the ship was escorted for about an hour by 5 white morph Red-Footed Boobies and 10-12 Brown Boobies. ( Identified later from bird books and Google search ) [Google quote....](#)

Few seabirds display such a variety of colour phases as do Red-footed Boobies. They nest in colonies, often with Great Frigate Birds. They are the only Boobie that nests in trees and coastal shrubs. Nesting late January to September, one chalky blue egg is laid in a stick nest in a tree. Incubation is 44 - 46 days, followed by fledging at 3 months, but extensive flights are not until 5 mths. They feed on flying fish and squid, and dive from up to 30m. They feed singly or in mixed species flocks. Red-footed Boobies have a distinctive blue beak, and red feet . They are the most pelagic of all the species, and are often seen accompanying ships.



These pics were taken by Barbara & Des Lovatt, from the ship's observation bridge. The bird ( above) has a rather tatty-looking left wing. The blue beak is apparent but it is difficult to make out the red feet, although they are reported to be visible in flight. The pic of another red-footed boobie ( below ) shows the distinctive black patch on the underside of the wing.





This pic is of one of the Brown Boobies. The yellow bill is apparent, and the white underpart is just visible.

Both the Red-Footed Boobies and the Brown Boobies were similar in size, and were flying together but in their own individual flight paths. In graceful, effortless sweeping arcs they glided across the bow of the ship, sometimes dropping astern then re-appearing to escort the ship onwards.

After Iwa Jima, the ship called at Saipan and Guam, in the Marianas. It was shocking to view historical pictures taken immediately after the great Pacific battles of World War 2. Total defoliation. To restore vegetation, on Saipan, tree seeds had been hurriedly brought in from Australia and elsewhere, with the resultant present hotch-potch of flora. There remains a strong American presence on these islands.

On Guam the birdlife has been almost entirely wiped out by the Brown Tree Snake whose diet is eggs, chicks and incubating adult birds. A native of PNG, tropical Australia, Indonesia and the Solomons, it is thought to have arrived on Guam via military hardware, during the Pacific War. Birdlife and the endemic snakes had existed in a state of equilibrium until the arrival of the Brown Tree Snake. Everywhere, on Guam, snake traps can be seen in the trees. NZ has possums, Guam has Brown Tree Snakes.

On Saipan, beautiful Red-Tailed Tropic Birds, soared, hovered, swooped and wheeled above the clifftops. They were accompanied by white tern-like birds, of similar size, which were possibly White Terns. They were certainly reminiscent of the White Terns that the writer had previously observed on Norfolk Island.

The highlight of the visit to Rabaul, PNG, was a harbourside volcano erupting throughout the day. In 1994 the town had been totally buried by a huge eruption of ash. In 2008, the volcano turned a white ship and its awe-struck passengers grey, and left an indelible memory!

Sunny Brisbane was a welcome relief. Sailing up the river to the new overseas terminal, the ship was accompanied by gulls, terns and the odd pelican. For the writer, Australia was, once again, synonymous with Birds.

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Geoff and Jenny Doring are about to leave for the African continent to join Glen Holland on a birding expedition. We wish them amazing birding and a safe journey.



## 2008 WINTER PROGRAMME.

**THURSDAY MAY 8**, 7.30 p.m, at 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown,  
Christine Reed will present **An UPDATE** on the **BLACK STILT**.

**SATURDAY MAY 10**, 1.30p.m. Meet at the Colombo St. car park at  
Henley Lake, Masterton, for a **BIRD CENSUS & TWITCHITHON**.  
see attached Newsletter for further details.

**THURSDAY MAY 29 - MONDAY JUNE 2. OSNZ AGM KAIKOURA**

**THURSDAY JUNE 12** at 129 Renall St. Masterton. The 5 members who  
attended the AGM / Conference, in Kaikoura, will present  
**A REPORT-BACK & HIGHLIGHTS** of **KAIKOURA 2008**

**SUNDAY JUNE 15**, 1.30 p.m.Meet at entrance to Soldiers' Memorial Park,  
Kuratawhiti St, Greytown, to observe **BUSH BIRDS**, and then continue  
on to Tates Reserve, on Papawai Rd. Followed by afternoon tea and de-  
briefing at 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown.

**THURSDAY JULY 10** 7.30.p.m at 4 Clara Anne Grove, Greytown, Narena  
Olliver will give an educational presentation on the **PUKEKO**.

**SATURDAY JULY 12** 1 30 p.m.Meet Farmlands Greytown for a field trip  
to Wairarapa Lake Reserve, for a follow-up to Narena's educational  
presentation on Thursday night.

**IN SEARCH OF PUKEKO FAMILIES.**

**THURSDAY AUGUST 14**, 7.30.p.m at 129 Renall St. Masterton for the 5th  
**BIG BIRD CUP QUIZ**. Chris Day, Educational Officer at Mt. Bruce /  
Pukaha, once again,has bravely consented to be quizmaster.

**THE AUGUST FIELD TRIP** will be advised later.