

The Wrybill

Newsletter of the Canterbury Region,
Ornithological Society of New Zealand

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February 2014

To members on e-mail:

The latest Canterbury Region Newsletter is attached. It will also be sent by postal mail to members not having an e-mail address. If you would prefer a paper copy please ask. The newsletter will also be placed on the OSNZ website.

**What's on at OSNZ Canterbury:
January to June 2014**

Indoor Meetings

Evening Meetings take place at 7.30 pm on the last Monday of the month at Mahaanui Area DOC Office, 31 Nga Mahi Road, off Blenheim Road, Sockburn. Plenty of parking is available.

MONDAY 24th February: Members night. Please let Jan know if you have something to talk about at this meeting. A few photos or cuttings etc. plus descriptions of something birdy is great. 10 minutes max per person please. shesagreen@gmail.com or 322 7187

MONDAY 24th March: Short AGM followed by a talk by visiting Canadian birder Barry Giles. Nick has been corresponding with Barry and says he is keen to talk to us. We are calling for nominations for the usual office holders. RR, Sec., Recorder, Treasurer, Editor, Committee. Please get all nominations for anyone new to a member of the Society (see Contacts list at end of the newsletter) at least 2 weeks before the AGM.

MONDAY 28th April: Dave Kelly from the University of Canterbury [Biological Sciences] has been working on the links between native plants and native birds. The decline in bird populations because of predation has affected plants which are no longer being pollinated sufficiently.

MONDAY 26th May: Paul Sagar will present the results of recent research on population trends of Salvin's Albatrosses at the Bounty Islands and population trends and at sea distribution of Snares Crested Penguins.

MONDAY 30th June: Ron Nilsson will give us an "Update on the South Island Kokako – Does it really still exist?"

The Wrybill - February 2014

Field Meetings

SATURDAY 22nd February: Lake Ellesmere BIG Birdcount #2. Meet at DOC office Sockburn to carpool to your section, or go directly to your section, or come to Embankment Rd as we usually do to be allocated somewhere. Plans are not finalised yet, but we hope as many as possible can come and help. The time is probably 8.30 a.m. at DOC or 9 a.m. at Embankment Rd. Beginners will have more experienced birders with them. Bring lunch, sunblock, hats, bins, scopes, water, footwear you don't mind getting wet or gumboots, mobile phones. If you want to do a special patch of lake shore, please email your choice to shesagreen@gmail.com

SATURDAY 15th March: The postponed trip up the Okuku Valley Road, north of Loburn. Meet 9 a.m. in pub car park at Belfast, last pub on the left before the northern motorway. Contact Jan shesagreen@gmail.com

Sat 12th April: Downhill ramble at Panama Rock reserve above le Bons Bay, Banks Peninsula. Meet 9 a.m. Halswell Bowling Club Carpark opposite the Halswell Rd/Lillian St junction. Bring lunch and water, sunhats etc. Contact Jan 03 322 71787

May: To be advised - see below under Ramblers Dates for proposal.

Sat 21st June: Winter Wader Count Lake Ellesmere. Meet 9.30am far end of Embankment Rd to get a section to walk and count. More details later.

RAMBLES - Dates and information:

TUESDAY 11th February - Ashley Estuary

TUESDAY 11th March - The Groynes

TUESDAY 15th April - Travis Wetland

TUESDAY 13th May - to be confirmed. We hope to have a joint Field Trip and Ramblers Group visit to Peacock Springs.

TUESDAY 10th June - Botanic Gardens

For all Rambles please contact Bev at birdiebev@xtra.co.nz or 03 313 7009 to confirm details on where to meet, weather etc.

Members Matters

A new arrival:

We would like to congratulate Andrew Crossland and his family on the birth on October 11 of Ashton Louis, 7.1 pounds (interesting, Andrew – do they still weigh babies in lbs and ozs?!)

Hutton's Shearwaters, Kaikoura:

Geoff Harrow reports that by the end of November the new colony on Kaikoura peninsula had 10 eggs and all birds were "sitting tightly", implying this year the birds returning to nest on the peninsula had matured enough to be successful.

Wot Bird?

Regional Rep, Jan Walker, has a nice little story from her husband, John. He took this photo of a Dunnock's nest in a Eucalyptus growing in a planter bag at his forest experiment site in Harewood Nursery. Another planter bag had a 4-egg Pukeko nest, of which three hatched!



Akaroa Weekend – November 2013 (1) (see p.8 for (2))

As a keen beginner birder, I was looking forward to the trip to Akaroa as a chance to add plenty of new birds to my life list. I had high hopes of seeing lots of new species at sea, and in the forest and lakes along the way.

On Friday I took a slow trip over to Akaroa, making lots of stops along the way. At Lake Forsyth I was surprised to see a Black Swan with nine cygnets in tow, making me wonder if they were actually all hers. Among the seven Crested Grebes there were two that appeared to be doing a courtship display. The highlights at Montgomery Park were the two Tomtits plus a Grey Warbler. At another stop, Hinewai Reserve, I was disappointed not to see any Brown Creeper. There were lots of Redpoll about, though, looking particularly resplendent in their bright red breeding plumage. In Akaroa itself a quick walk through the Garden of Tane was rewarded by at least six fantails.

Saturday was the much anticipated boat trip. Unfortunately, I didn't see as many birds as I had hoped after becoming seasick less than an hour in. I only caught glimpses of petrels and albatross out the cabin door, and was unable to focus enough to identify different species. Still, I managed to see a few new birds, like the Blue Penguin, Australasian Gannet, Hutton's Shearwaters and Sooty Shearwaters. When I returned to land, I recovered quickly and later in the afternoon went on a walk with Bev and Jan in hopes of seeing Brown Creeper. After a diversion to Smith Street for a close up look at Tui we headed to a patch of bush at the top of Rue Grehan. Sadly no Brown Creeper could be seen or heard, although there were plenty of Kereru and Bellbirds. There was also a Kingfisher nest but the adult didn't visit while we were watching.

On Sunday I went on a historic, audio-guided walk around Akaroa, and also visited the museum. I should have gone on the walk with Jan to Panama Rock Reserve, since she reported plenty of Brown Creeper plus a Shining Cuckoo (a bird I've heard but not yet seen). At least there were no Riflemen about since I really would have kicked myself if I'd missed the

chance to see them as well! That afternoon, I made the trip back to Christchurch with just a few stops. I took a detour up Prices Valley Road as I'd been told by Bev and Keith that Sulphur-Crested Cockatoos were found there. I did see at least four birds from a distance, although it was difficult to get a good look at them. Other interesting sights were a California Quail running by the roadside and a pair of Spur-Winged Plovers clearly irritated by our stopping nearby. Stopping at Lake Ellesmere, I was pleased to identify four Caspian Terns, a Royal Spoonbill, a Little Egret and three White Herons. With the Little Egrets and the White Herons standing side by side, it was easy to compare their sizes.

So, although I didn't see as many new birds as I had hoped, it was still an enjoyable and rewarding trip.

Eleanor Gunby



Photo: Sandra Wallace
Eleanor in action

Recent Sightings

July: 20th Lake Ellesmere Survey included of special interest: Selwyn Huts – LITTLE EGRET which had been present for a week; Jarvis – 2 Lesser/Red Knots overwintering; Selwyn District Council part of lake – 4 W-Herons at separate locations; 122 Caspian Terns in last year's nesting site; Greenpark Sands – 2 G-billed Terns. 24th Andrew, Lake Forsyth – 115

The Wrybill - February 2014

Cr-Grebes. Jan, Selwyn Huts – 3 W-Herons, 17 Caspian Terns and lots of Bl-billed Gulls. 24th Grahame, Avon Heathcote Estuary, B-t Godwit banded February 2013 on Manawatu Estuary, settled and part of approx 240 overwintering birds after initially being picked on earlier in week. 30th Jan, Lake Forsyth – 1 Little Egret and 1 W-Heron (Great Egret) seen together, 2 Cr-Grebes doing courting displays; Wigram Retention Basin, Canterbury Agricultural Park – 10-20 Coots.

August: 2nd Bev, Ashley Estuary, Taranaki Creek – NZ Falcon. 3rd Andrew, Kaitorete Spit Chch City Council Reserve – 9 “White Herons” - flocking behaviour suggests they are possibly of Australian origin. At least 1 and probably 2 of them noticeably smaller, shorter and thinner necked with shorter wings suggesting they may be Intermediate Egrets. 4th Stevex2, Lake Forsyth – Little Egret still there in company of W-Heron and W-f Heron. 5th Dave, Cathedral Square, CBD - NZ Falcon seen taking a pigeon. (PS Andrew – sightings of NZ Falcon at both ends of Port Hills and Harriers now hunting over Avon River and red zone as far upstream as Stanmore Road, in heart of suburbia!). 6th Jan, Rushbrooks Road - 18 Cattle Egrets. 10th Rowey, Caton's Bay Reserve, Lake Forsyth – Little Egret, W-Heron, Spoonbill and W-f Heron in a group. 21st Rossco, farmland adjoining Mimimoto Lagoon, Amberley Beach – W-Heron and Cape Barren Goose. 22nd Bev, Ashley Estuary – 93 Wrybill. 24 hours later only 4 seen. Birds on the move to breeding sites on the braided rivers. 24th Rob et al, Kaituna – 6 W-Herons and 1 Little Egret. 24th/25th Bev, Rushbrooks Road – 18 Cattle Egrets. 28th, Jan, junction McDrury's and Leadleys Rds – 4 Guineaefowl; Andrew, Kaitorete Spit, 3 R-n Stints (4 seen by Grant a few days earlier), 3 Knots, 4 Godwits.

September: 1st Nick, Harts Creek, 2 female turkeys and at least 2 Bitterns booming and at Pegasus Town wetlands – 2 Mute Swans. 3rd Colin and Steve, Embankment to Yarr's – 40 Wrybills, 5 Bandies, 50 Stilts; Jan, N Hagley Park, pair of Spur-winged Plover with 4-week old chick oblivious to human and canine disturbance. 6th Andrew, Hussey Downs Road and Amberley Beach Road wetland – 1 Cape Barren Goose. 7th Niall, Ellesmere near Kaituna Corner – 2 Little Grebes which, after

being followed up by Jan, Phil and Bev, was changed to a report of POSSIBLE FIRST SIGHTING at the Lake of 2 Hoary-headed Grebes. 8th Andrew, Victoria Park, Port Hills, 1 Cirl Bunting; Nick, Hagley Golf Course clubhouse – 2 Little Owls calling and another in tall oaks opposite end of Matai Street. 9th Andrew passed on report of possible sighting of 2 White-necked Herons at Boggy Creek, western side of Ellesmere. 14th Colin and Steve, Yarr's to Clark's – 81 Stilts, 1 G-billed Tern, 1 W-Heron, 2 Bandies. 12th Andrew, Avon Heathcote – FIRST 250 GODWITS BACK – showing residual breeding plumage. By 16th another 50 birds had arrived. 17th GraemeNZ, Travis Wetland – 2 Cr-Grebes – a NEW SPECIES for the site. 18th, Nick, Quail Island, small number of Black-billed Gulls passing in singles or up to four birds all heading up harbour about 4 p.m. - NEVER OBSERVED before in this area over the 10 years Nick has been doing censuses on the island. 21st John, Sumnervale – NZ Falcon. 21st Tina, Pigeon Bay, Shining Cuckoo. 24th Sue, Robinsons Bay, Akaroa – Shining Cuckoo – possibly been calling for one week. 25th Bev, Drains Road – 3 W-Herons. 26th Bev, Hagley Park, Armagh St Bridge, at least 135 Yellowhammers; Igor, Jarvis Road - 1 Greenshank. 27th Bev, Ashley Estuary – Bl-billed Gull with leg bands – banded on Ashley River 1997. 29th Frances Schmechel, Hart's Creek - numerous Bitterns heard booming, maximum seen at any one time 6 and several seen flying in what looked to be aerial breeding displays and 22 Cr-Grebes, several displaying. Timberyards – 6 W-Herons. Patrick, Ellesmere Road Wetland, Lincoln - 5 young Mute Swans.

October: 1st Christian, Avonside Drive - 1 Kereru; Allan, Ashley Estuary - 50+ Godwits, 2 Knots, 1 Turnstone, 1 Whimbrel (overwintered), 20+ Wrybills, 2 immature Black Stilts. 3rd Rowey, Lake Ellesmere, possible juv. Curlew Sandpiper, Wrybills and 4 G-billed Terns. 5th Sam, Ellesmere – numerous Stilts and Wrybills, several Bandies, 30 Godwits, 22 R-n Stints, 9 Golden Plovers, some still in breeding plumage, 5 Turnstones, 3 Curlew Sps, 2 Knots. 7th Colin and Steve, Embankment – 10 Stilts; Jarvis – 56 Stilts, 8 Bandies, 37 Wrybills; Greenpark – 2 Turnstones; Clarks Road – 46 Godwits, 20

The Wrybill - February 2014

Stilts, 6 SIPOs, 8 Wrybills. 18th Philip, Kaitorete Spit - 1 LITTLE TERN roosting with Wh-fr Terns, 6 R-n Stints, 1 Sharpie, 1 Pectoral S-p, 19 Wrybills, 67 Bandies, 16 Stilts, 5 Caspian Terns. 19th Ann, Mt Oxford - 3 Riflemen - 1 seen and 2 heard. 27th Colin and Steve, Jarvis - 36 Stilts, one hybrid, 35 Wrybills, 2 Red Knots, 30 Turnstones - the 4TH HIGHEST TOTAL they have found of this species since March 2005; Embankment 100 (+/- 10) Wrybills, 3 Pectoral Sps, 3 Sharpies, 10 R-n Stints, 6 Bandies, 8 Stilts. 29th, Christian, Charlesworth Reserve - 1 W-Heron. Bev, Ashley Estuary - 1 Sharpie, 3 Turnstones, 3 Knots, 100 Godwits.

November: 2nd Jan, Victoria Park - 2 Cirl Buntings. 5th Jan, Conway River - c2000 Black-billed Gulls nesting. 6th, Andrew, Kaitorete Spit - 76 Turnstones, 4 Godwits, 320 Wrybills, 42 Bandies, 13 Stilts, 3 Sharpies, 4 Curlew Sps, 29 R-n Stints, 1 PG Plover, 5 SIPO; Greenpark Sands - 365 Wrybills, 17+ R-n Stints. Stevex2, Ashley Est - 1 Juv Bl Stilt, 1 pair Turnstones, 6 Caspian Terns, ~10 Wrybills, ~20 Bandies, 50 Godwits, 8 Spoonbills et al. 8th Kevin, paddock near Birdlings Flat, 20 Sulphur-Crested Cockatoos. 22nd Brent, Ashley Estuary - 1 COMMON TERN, 1 Curlew, 1 Whimbrel. 25th Australian visitors, Riccarton Bush - possible 2 Tuis; Andrew, Brooklands Lagoon - 1 pair Bitterns nesting; Scott, Bexley Wetlands - 2 Bitterns; Geoff, Major Hornbrook Rd - 1 Pipit's nest; Jan - wetland area near Cashmere Road - 4 Pied Stilts' nests, one with well grown chick and one with small chicks. NEW SIGHTING FOR THIS AREA.. 28th Andrew, Ashley Estuary - 1 SANDERLING, associating with Turnstones, Red Knot and Wrybill. 29th, Andrew, Bromley Oxidation Ponds - 2 pairs Little Bl- Cormorant nesting - ONLY KNOWN BRDG SITE ON S I AND SOUTHERN-MOST BRDG SITE ON THE PLANET! Lake Forsyth - pair of B Swan with 16 jealously guarded cygnets!

December: 3rd Stevex2, Kaituna end of Lake Ellesmere - COLONY OF CASPIAN TERNS - conservative estimate of 100-150 nesting pairs, possibly near the top end of that range. 235 adults counted overhead and 103 chicks seen about 20 days old, with a good number of younger chicks still in the colony. 7th Philip, Lake Ellesmere - 1 Sanderling (opp Crescent

Island), 67 Godwits, 56 Knots, 31 Turnstones, 304 Stilts, 26 Bandies, 2 Wrybills; Spit Tip - 5 Curlew Sps, 3 Sharpies, 46 R-n Stints, 86 Godwits, 1 Knot, 4 Stilts, 33 Bandies, 6 Wrybills. 14th, Stevex2. Ashley Estuary - 6 Wrybills, at least one pair displaying protective behaviour, breeding Bl-fr Terns along length of river walked and Bl-b Gull colony full of chicks, 2 Bl-Stilts now almost totally in adult plumage. 23rd Colin and Steve, Kaitorete Spit - 58 Godwits, 36 Knots, 4 Wrybills, 4 Curlew Sps, 5 Sharpies doing aerial chasing, 3 R-n Stints, 10 Spoonbills; Andrew and Phil, Crescent Island, Kaitorete Spit - 113 Godwits, 22 Knots, 3 Sharpies, 2 SIPO, 6 Spoonbills, 32 Turnstones. 24th Mark, Ashley Rivermouth - 1 Sanderling among small number of Godwits and Knots. 25th, Mxyzptik, Lake Alexandrina, at least 2 Cr-Grebe pairs nesting.

January: 1st Andrew, Kaitorete Spit - 14 Curlew Sps - BIGGEST GROUP HE HAS SEEN for many years. 2nd Sheila et al, Ashley Estuary - 1 Bl-Stilt, 1 Sanderling, 1 Little Bl-Cormorant among nesting Cormorants. 4th Paul et al, Harts Creek, 72 Spoonbills, 108 Stilts, 1 BL-FR DOTTEREL in full breeding plumage. 6th Sheila, Taumutu - Little Tern, 3 Godwits, 2 Spoonbills; Timberyards - 400 Stilts; Cooper's Lagoon - 20 Mute Swans. 8th Jan, Ellesmere - Caspian Tern colony - 200 adults, some on nests, as well as number of well-grown chicks.

A Talk with Tina Troup

We are very lucky to have excellent speakers at our evening meetings, who give their time to inform us about the interesting lives they lead and the work they do involving birds. Recently Tina spoke to us about the way her interest in birds developed during her career.

Early on in her life Tina was caught up in snow, ice and mountains, involved in ski touring and mountaineering. It was while living and working at Temple Basin, seeing keas in action, that birds were first brought into focus for her. At University she studied for a Degree in Linguistics and Phonetics with some Biology. Interestingly, linguistics and the physiology of speech and the study of sound is something Tina has found useful to the study

The Wrybill - February 2014

of bird calls.

Tina learned to speak French when she spent a year in France at the age of 11. She returned to France in 1973-1978 to continue her studies at the University of Grenoble, surrounded by mountains to explore, and close to the Mediterranean Sea where she learned to sail.

On her return to New Zealand Tina worked in a number of areas. She was involved in outdoor education at Arthur's Pass and Mount Cook. She worked as a Science Technician on an inventory of New Zealand's glaciers, a global study co-ordinated from Switzerland in which baseline inventories were compiled in order to map changes in glaciers worldwide. In the summer of 1980-1981 she worked in Antarctica as a Field Assistant studying glacial hydrology – monitoring glaciers, glacial lakes and meltwater streams – early research on what has become a huge scientific area looking into global warming.

Whilst in France Tina had heard about Jerome Poncet. Jerome had spent many years exploring the world with a friend in a yacht they had built and this lifestyle continued when he met Sally, a Tasmanian. They married, built a larger yacht and had children. In 1982-3 Sally (a biologist), working alongside British Antarctic Survey researchers, was one of a network of researchers from all around the Antarctic contributing to the BIOMASS project (the Biological Investigations on Marine Antarctic Systems and Stocks). A chance meeting in New Zealand, when Tina was introduced to the family through mutual friends, led to her being invited to accompany the family on a 5 month expedition to survey penguins and other seabirds on the Antarctic Peninsula and then on to the Falkland Islands.

In a 52ft schooner – Damien II, the second boat built by Jerome, the party set sail from Governor's Bay in early summer 1982 bound for the Antarctic Peninsula, a journey of about 5,000 nautical miles. They coped with some rigorous conditions but also experienced beautiful, cold but sunny conditions. The yacht then sailed down the coast of the Peninsula searching out penguin colonies, surveying the numbers of nesting birds. They carried on southwards deep into Marguerite Bay until eventually unbroken pack ice south of 68°S



Photo: Sally/Jerome Poncet
Tina at the Helm in the Southern Ocean

stopped their progress. By the end of the summer, 21 previously unknown colonies were surveyed as well as the many previously recorded ones, highlighting the advantage of a small boat that can work close to the coast. Cormorants and other sea birds seen on land or at sea were also surveyed. This experience stimulated Tina's interest in seabirds and was later to affect her choice of topic for a Masters Degree.

After heading back north up 1,000km of the Antarctic Peninsula coastline they sailed on to the Falkland Islands, and spent a month sailing around the various islands visiting seabird sites and farming settlements. In the aftermath of the Falklands War a year earlier, there were no flights to South America and the only available transport was by sea, then air, to England via Ascension Island. So Tina took the opportunity on her way home to spend some time in Europe visiting friends and family and giving photographic lectures on the Antarctic Peninsula trip.

Tina returned to New Zealand and worked in outdoor education at Mt Cook where she set up summer programmes organising walks and talks by specialists on alpine plants, geology, and the bird life of the region. She also met people working on riverbed nesting birds (including the Black Stilt Recovery programme) and mountain birds, which fostered Tina's interest in these species.

After qualifying as a teacher she taught in a high school for a year before moving into adult and community education, first at Christchurch Polytechnic, then the University of Canterbury and on to Lincoln University. During this time

The Wrybill - February 2014

from the late '80's to 2001 she also worked each summer as a Nature Guide, latterly for an American company, Lindblad, taking groups to National Parks throughout New Zealand. The knowledge Tina had built up over the years gave her the ability to inform visitors about our birds, plant life and geology. After 9/11, there was a big downturn in tourism and the company shut down its New Zealand tours. However, more recently, with some recovery in the tourism industry, Tina has been asked to act as a Nature and Trekking Guide on the South Island for a French travel company.

While working in academic support at Lincoln University Tina decided to do an Ecology paper herself, to see first hand what it was like for the students she worked with. Ecology was a subject which wasn't offered at University when she had been studying and part of the course was given by Kerry-Jayne Wilson, who Tina had met in 1980 in Antarctica, when Kerry-Jayne was working on penguins and then on aquatic algae in the Dry Valleys.

One thing led to another and one summer Tina went to Campbell Island as a volunteer research assistant with an albatross project. This gave her contacts that led to a very interesting project that came up in 1999 through the French National Scientific Research Centre – CNRS. One branch of this organisation working in Antarctic and Subantarctic territories, TAF, had done work on Wandering Albatross in the Indian Ocean on Crozet Island. They were interested to see how foraging strategies of the Southern Royal Albatross on Campbell Island compared with Wandering Albatross on Indian Ocean islands, so that became the subject of



Photo: Tina Troup
Southern Royal Albatross, Campbell Island

Tina's Masters research. She spent a summer field season undertaking a satellite tracking study of Southern Royal Albatrosses on Campbell Island during incubation, followed by three months in a laboratory in France working on the data. She then worked on it at a distance whilst the job of her partner Penny took them to Australia for a couple of years.

While there she was asked to act as a Nature Guide and Lecturer on a small ship taking tourists to the Antarctic. She did a few trips at a time over two summers, flying to South America to board the vessel in Argentina and voyaging south to the Antarctic Peninsula and across to South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

On her return to New Zealand in 2003 Tina finished her Masters and worked for 4 years in Wellington for Te Ara, the Online Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, as a Science Writer and Researcher which involved lots of work on bird entries and other Natural History topics. Some were written from scratch, others involved revising or adding sections if a different focus was needed and what the editing team required – a job great for one's general knowledge!

Recently Tina and Penny have returned to live locally where she is involved in free-lance work on a variety of projects. She does long-term monitoring of wildlife and pests on covenants in association with the Banks Peninsula Trust, Ngai Tahu and other organisations. Tina is also involved with the Otamahua - Quail Island Ecological Restoration Trust, most recently conducting penguin checks. The day we spoke she had been out recording Rifleman calls in Hinewai to get sample recordings for reference purposes, as Tina is experimenting with the use of recorders for multi-species monitoring on the Peninsula. (She is particularly fond of Riflemen, especially since watching a pair rear their chicks in the eaves of their cottage on Banks Peninsula).

Tina and Penny have had their 7 acre Pigeon Bay paradise for nearly 25 years, and have enjoyed seeing bush regenerate and their native plantings flourish, providing more habitat for native birds. Being surrounded by bellbirds, kereru, brown creepers, grey

The Wrybill - February 2014

warblers, fantails, kingfishers and the occasional rifleman and shining cuckoo is their idea of heaven.

More projects are in the pipeline for the coming summer. As Tina says of her varied life, something new, interesting, challenging always comes along!

Ann Sherlock

Akaroa Field Trip (2)

The pelagic trip:

The following is a list of birds positively identified as having been seen on the pelagic trip which was sent to the BirdingNZ website, and which may be of interest to people without internet access.

Southern and Northern Royal Albatross; 1 or 2 Giant Petrel species, lots of White-capped Albatross, Salvin's Albatross, 1 or 2 Buller's Albatross, under 10 Westland Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, 1 or 2 Sooty Shearwater, Fluttering Shearwater seemed to be present but were hard to determine from Hutton's Shearwater, lots of which were seen close up diving for bait-fish being chased by kahawai; under 10 Cape Petrel, lots of White-flipped Little Penguins, 1 Gannet in the harbour, 1 Pied Cormorant, Little Cormorant, 100's of Spotted Shag on cliffs at nests and at sea, lots of White-fronted Terns fishing with Shearwaters; lots of Red-billed Gulls.

This is the second expedition we have taken with Coast up Coast and this time we went 2 miles out to sea. The birds seen were observed without the use of food to attract them to the boat – as one member put it, “in their nature state” - and perhaps what was seen was the more exciting for that.

Participants are keen to repeat the trip again around March so that a comparison of sightings can be made.

Panama Rock Reserve:

This is a new reserve, put under covenant when the land changed hands and there are plans to

extend it further to meet up with a neighbouring reserve.

I was keen to explore it and as we were in the area it seemed a good time to do it. I spent a couple of hours walking up to the hut and back, listening and watching large numbers of Brown Creepers, Bellbirds, Shining Cuckoos, Fantails, Pigeons and Tomtits but couldn't locate any Riflemen although I had been told there were “lots” there.

I heard Quail, Silver-eye, Grey Warbler, Thrush, Blackbird, Redpoll, Chaffinch and Yellowhammer. It is a lovely area worth visiting again and a field trip will take place on 12th April.

Jan Walker

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CANTERBURY WINTER WADER COUNT JULY 2013

Species	Avon-Heathcote Estuary	Lake Forsyth	Ahuriri Lagoon	Kaitorete Spit Tip	Mid Kaitorete Spit/Crescent	CCC Reserve	Aggie Price's	Kaituna Lagoon	Ataahua - Kaituna	Motukarara Flats	Halswell RM	Greenpark Huts - Jarvis Rd	Jarvis Embankment	Embankment Rd-Yarr's	Lil Ponds	Lower Selwyn Huts	Rushbrooks Road	Lake Road S	Fishermans Pt	Subtotal Lake Ellesmere		
Counters/Not counted	AC	NM	AC,SB	PC	PC	PC	PC	AC,SB	AC,SB	AC,SB	AC,SB	DH,BD,JW,NA	GB	GB,CP	GB,CP	BA,S&EW	BA,S&EW	BA,S&EW				
Notes																						
Date counted	27-Jun	29-Jun	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	21-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul	20-Jul		
Aus Crested Grebe		120				4															4	
Black Shag												47			2	3					52	
White Heron		1				3									1				4		8	
Little Egret		1														1					1	
Cattle Egret																	18				18	
Mute Swan													2	7	4						13	
Australasian Bittern																					0	
Royal Spoonbill																					0	
Pied Oystercatcher	1953	36	2		2	2	8		2			2					4		5		25	
Variable Oystercatcher	50	46																			0	
Hybrid Oystercatcher																					0	
Pied Stilt	43	68	14	1	15	42	14	37	9	166	16	26	44	341	9	2			2		724	
Black Stilt																					0	
Hybrid Stilt																					0	
Banded Dotterel	54			40	10	26	10	2		31	17	100	43	81		2					362	
Black-fronted Dotterel																					0	
Wrybill	1									2											2	
Pacific Golden Plover																					0	
Spur-winged Plover	58	83	118	24	12	16	15	5		176	125	167	87	10	44	8	22	2			713	
Turnstone																					0	
Lesser Knot												2									2	
Curlew Sandpiper																					0	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper																					0	
Pectoral Sandpiper																					0	
Red-necked Stint													2								2	
Eastern Curlew																					0	
Whimbrel																					0	
Bar-tailed Godwit	195																				0	
Black-billed Gull		68										466	14								480	
Gull-billed Tern												2	4	1							7	
Caspian Tern	6	1		4	15			2				122	1			8					152	
White-winged Black Tern																					0	
Black-fronted Tern																					0	
White-fronted Tern																					0	
Site totals	2354	233	134	65	39	86	47	44	11	375	158	297	176	432	53	12	26	4	5		1830	
% of total count	43.80	4.34	2.49	1.21	0.73	1.60	0.87	0.82	0.20	6.98	2.94	5.53	3.28	8.04	0.99	0.22	0.48	0.07	0.09		34.05	
# wader species at site	7	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	2	4	3	5	4	3	2	3	2	2	1		7	
Counters	Andrew Crossland = AC			Niall Muga = NM			Brian Darlow = BD			Eleanor Gunby = EG			Jan Walker = JW									
	Phil Crutchley = PC			Grahame Bell = GB			Bev Alexander = BA			Grant Bawden = GB			Nick Allen = NA									
	Scott Butcher = SB			Colleen Philip = CP			Sandra Wallace = SW			Don Hadden = DH			Peter Howden = PH									
Lake level 0.58 m on 22/7, lake open to sea																						
Hybrid stilt Ashley Est was F node																						

ASHLEY/RAKAHURI RIVER SURVEY

	Nov 2012	Nov 2013
Black Shag	6	3
Little Shag	11	19
Pied Oystercatcher	38	23
Variable Oystercatcher	0	0
Pied Stilt	209	247
Black Stilt	0	0
Banded Dotterel	248	301
Wrybill	17	19
Spur-winged Plover	55	65
Black-backed Gull	11	17
Black-billed Gull	202	364
Black-fronted Tern	200	156
White-fronted Tern	6	2
Caspian Tern	0	0
White-faced Heron	22	
Totals	1025	1216