



*Newsletter of the Northland Region of the
Ornithological Society of New Zealand - trading as Birds New Zealand*

October 2021 Amokura 132

(Published in February, July and October of each year)

MEETINGS of the Northland Branch of Birds New Zealand are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER. TIME: 7-30p.m.

VENUE: Founders Room, Alzheimer's Society, 148 Corks Road, Tikipunga, Whangarei.

COST: A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of Hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

Or you can pay an Annual fee of \$30.00 to the Northland Branch bank account **12-3099-0614160-00**.
Payment Due after the AGM

Be sure to include your Surname and the word Sub in the details.

ALL WELCOME

PROGRAMME TO February 2022

OCTOBER

14 MEETING – 7-30p.m. Guest Speaker – Cathy Mitchell – White Faced Petrel translocation.

WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760

19 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

NOVEMBER

11 MEETING – 7-30p.m. Guest Speaker – Emma Williams – Bittern & other highly mobile species.

WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760

16 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

DECEMBER

9 MEETING – 7-30p.m. – Northland Branch Christmas party.

WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760

14 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

JANUARY

13 MEETING – No meeting

WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Contact Prue Cozens Ph. 09 4377760

18 EAST COAST BEACH PATROL (Meet at the Kensington Carpark 12:30pm)

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Previous Issues of Amokura <https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/publications/regional-newsletters/>

Health and Safety – It is a request from the Birds New Zealand Council that:

- Any incidents that result in harm need to be notified to President and EO immediately, so they can be acted on.
- Don't hesitate to call 111 in incidents, even if they appear minor.
- Safety briefings need to be held on all field trips.

JULY – The highlight of our July get together was Scott Brooks giving his account of his recent visit to the sea area around the Kermadec Islands that he arranged for a group of keen birders to see our pelagic birds in a different area. Scott also arranges local pelagic day trips out from Tutukaka that visit the Poor Knights area and beyond. If interested contact Scott by email at scott@ourspot.nz



Photo of a White-capped Mollymawk/Albatross and Fairy Prion were taken by Stephen Collins taken on Scotts local pelagic trip.



AUGUST - Sue Sinclair spoke about Pycrofts Petrel Translocation at Motuora Island near Mahurangi.

On August 31st a group of our local members landed at Hilton and Melva Wards wetland at Old Mill Ln, Ngunguru. There were many Mātātā (Fernbird) sightings and on a few occasions Puweto and Mioweka were heard.







SEPTEMBER – Meeting cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions

Stories - Adventures – Yarns – Sightings

Heather O’Brian - A few photos from our walk on Saturday July 24th. Te Whara / Peach cove track at Bream Head to complete the 5 minute bird count monitoring for this quarter. It was amazing to see the fog that rolled in, Mt Mania looked like an island in the clouds.



This little guy saw this worm from way up in a tree next to the walk way.



More from Heather O'Brian. Out and about in the Whangarei harbour area looking for birds to photograph.

I found a reef heron and was lucky to see him/her catch a fish! Heron photos are heavily cropped as the bird was rather distant.

Then, I found the leucistic variable oyster catcher. I've seen photos that others have posted of this bird but this is the first time I've actually seen it.







Stephen Collins gets some great shots even though he states "I find these tough so today's challenge was Warou (Welcome Swallow)
S 1/6400th A f7.1 ISO 2200
Work in progress.





Quite liked this one.
"Speedy Gonzalez!"
stated Steve.



He also snapped the Weweia
(NZ Grebe or Dabchick) at the
Lake Rd pond in Kamo,
Whangarei.



And Taranui (Caspian Tern) taken at Tongatu Rd shore (Ngunguru)
“I liked the pop of red in otherwise grey images.”



Stephen Collins was out and about as much as possible between lockdowns. Here he managed some great Poaka (Pied Stilt) shots at Tongatu Rd, Ngunguru.





And finally, from Waipu a Tara iti. (NZ Fairy Tern) NZ's rarest endemic bird (c 40 birds) and a Ruddy Turnstone. An estimated 500 birds arriving each summer.

Scott Brooks – Things to do in Lockdown from home. On Saturday my 11 year old son Zef and I took part in a lockdown birding big half day with a bunch of other keen bird-nut mates from all around New Zealand. From 8am to 8pm we had to try and find as many bird species within a 5km radius of our home, all done by walking or bike and not breaking any lockdown regulations.

We had a great day darting around our home area in Ngunguru and we estimate we walked about 15km and rode another 25km, and got to cover a diverse bunch of habitats along the way (estuary, ocean, pasture, forest and wetland), all with the 5km radius.

We started the day with peacocks and turkeys and ended in the dark with a booming bittern, a couple spotless crane and at least 15 banded rail calling, and then with only 1 minute left to go we heard a kiwi call! By the end of the 12 hours we'd managed to find 58 bird species in our local area which we were absolutely stoked about 😊 An awesome day out in lockdown 😊

As usual my son Zef was a fantastic keen birding buddy. We were both asleep not long after we got home 😊 Here's the full list of the birds from the day:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| – North Is Brown Kiwi | – Black-backed Gull | – Fantail |
| – California Quail | – Black Shag | – Tomtit |
| – Turkey | – Pied Shag | – Skylark |
| – Peacock | – Little Pied Shag | – Fernbird |
| – Ring-necked Pheasant | – Royal Spoonbill | – Pipit |
| – Paradise Shelduck | – White-faced Heron | – Silver-eye |
| – Australian Shoveler | – Reef Heron | – Welcome Swallow |
| – Mallard | – Bittern | – Blackbird |
| – Brown Teal | – Banded Rail | – Starling |
| – Grey Duck | – Spotless Crane | – Song Thrush |
| – Fluttering Shearwater | – Pukeko | – Myna |
| – Buller's Shearwater | – Swamp Harrier | – Dunnock |
| – Australasian Gannet | – Kingfisher | – Yellowhammer |
| – Caspian Tern | – Morepork | – Chaffinch |
| – White-fronted Tern | – Tui | – Goldfinch |
| – Red-billed Gull | – Gray Warbler | – Greenfinch |
| | | – House Sparrow |

12 Old Mill Lane, Ngunguru – Melva Ward

After a full on winter of many silver eyes fighting over squeezed grapefruit skins and some nice full half grapefruit left out for the little dudes it has gone a tad quiet. We suppose they are all off building nests. Not sure how many piwakawaka are in this territory but we could have two pairs nesting close by the house this year. It seems our resident male, Toru, is not so territorial and lets others share the space, unlike Pi Bird who got rid of all intruders and he ruled the whole property. It has taken a while to have a general population of piwakawaka on the scene again.

We have also got the latest state of the art bug killer for our bio cycle sewage system and it is also delightful to watch.

Only thing is, the humans are once again under the control of one small bird. It sits on a nearby branch screeching, demanding our attention so that we open the bio cycle lid for it.

The humans don't really mind, but one of them feels guilty when they are not around to open the bio cycle :-)



The family of Goldfinches are back feeding on the puha flowers so we hope they make homesteads in the area along with all the others.

Dunnock has been about as well so we need to keep a look out for them feeding chicks.

Spotless Crake are chatting to one another in the wetland along with plenty of Matata chattering. Life is never dull with birds about.

View the video on YouTube at this link

[Piwakawaka feeding video](#)

Taurawhata Grey Faced Petrels – Hilton Ward

On August 19th I counted 28 active burrows. I count active burrows during May while mating, August after egg laying and, during late December prior to fledging. Over the past few years since counting there has been a steady increase in numbers. The predator control is working.

Australasian Gannet – Taurawhata Startup Colony – Hilton Ward

The lone, probably male, Australasian Gannet visitor departed the colony for the winter months but is now back and courting the decoys offering sea weed etcetera with no response from them at all. He needs to find a mate. The centre bird is the real one.

