



OSNZ news

Edited by PAUL SAGAR, 38A Yardley Street, Christchurch 4,
for the members of the Ornithological Society Of New Zealand (Inc.)

Please note that sightings recorded in this Newsletter are subject
to confirmation.

No.35

June, 1985

Note: Deadline for the September issue will
be 12th August.

AGM — Hamilton

The annual conference of the Society was held at Waikato University, Hamilton, from 24-26 May 1985. I will remember this year's conference for the splendid organisation achieved by Folkert Nieuwland and his team and for the many advantages of the 'live-in' arrangements for such weekends.

Council met on the Friday, although several members arrived late due to disruption of travel by the weather. As usual a long and varied agenda was tackled by an enthusiastic Council and this business took a full day to complete. Consideration of committee and scheme annual reports took most of the morning session. Most of these are published elsewhere in this newsletter. A special vote of thanks was passed to David Crockett for convening the Nest Record Scheme for so long and Council also thanked Hugh Robertson for taking on this role. Among the other business the Projects Assistance Fund warranted special attention. Funds were made available to the Totorore Expedition, a proposed visit to one of the Fiji islands by a NZ ornithologist and plans to get data from the Society's Nest Records, Beach Patrol and Moulting Recording Schemes onto an accessible computer file. The continuing need to increase our membership, particularly with younger people was discussed at Council and at every other meeting during the weekend. The appointment of Enfy's Graham as RR for Canterbury was confirmed.

Regional Representatives met on Friday evening and again on Saturday morning. The high attendance at this meeting was an indication of the good health of the Society. The regional reports reflected a high level of membership support for the Society schemes and in some regions, for individual research. Ornithology in New Zealand depends to a large degree on the enthusiasm and competence of RRs and their ability to encourage members in their pursuits. Those not attending the RRs meeting were able to

visit the kiwi house and aviaries at Otorohanga which has become world renowned for its success in keeping and breeding native birds in captivity.

The afternoon session focussed on two of our endangered species. John Innes, Hugh Best and Dick Veitch spoke on management research on the North Island Kokako. Alan Saunders gave an excellent account of the present status of Brown Teal and efforts underway to save the remaining populations. Tony Roxburgh spoke about the Whangamarino Swamp and the fragile habitat that it provides for so much wildlife. Members welcomed the attendance at this session of people undertaking a Continuing Education course in ornithology. The opportunity to hear these addresses from the frontline of conservation in New Zealand was too good to be missed.

The annual dinner and preceding happy hour provided time to discuss not only birds but past events, plans for future trips and those half-baked theories on where Cattle Egrets breed or why *Notornis* is late. These informal sessions are a very real part of what makes ornithology so much fun.

The AGM was held on the campus in the Lady Goodfellow Chapel. The President briefly reviewed the Society's activities over the past year and paid tribute to the many voluntary workers who maintain the Society's functions. Special mention was made of our Treasurer, Doug Booth, who has kept our finances under control and has developed an efficient system of maintaining membership rolls. The Falla Memorial Award was awarded to Maida Barlow for her contributions to the Society and to ornithology in New Zealand. In her absence, the Secretary read an inspiring letter of acceptance. The A.T. Edgar Junior Member Award was presented to Phillip Batley of Wanganui. The President also paid tribute to Mr R. B. Johnson who has left Council after many years of service to the Society. Members' support of this tribute was shown by a standing ovation. A motion to increase the subscription was amended to a 25% increase for each class of membership. After consideration of the greatly increased costs of printing *Notornis* the amended motion was passed without dissent.

David Crockett was elected Vice President and Jenny Hawkins, Brian Gill and Ben Bell were elected to Council. Brian Bell was co-opted onto Council to take David's former position. The annual meeting then ended in plenty of time for members to resume their less formal activities.

On Sunday the programme continued with two practical sessions. Ben Bell gave instructions on methods of observing and recording moult. Hopefully, the Moulting Recording Scheme will receive more contributions as a result. Mike Imber, David Crockett and Chris Robertson provided some useful hints for beach patrollers in indentifying storm wrecked seabirds.

For the last session we returned to the frontline where Don Merton brought us up to date with Chatham Island Black Robin and Kakapo projects, and then related some of his birdy experiences on Mauritius. Tim Lovegrove had the final word, on recent transfer operations with the Saddleback.

PETER GAZE

Nest Record Scheme — Report for year ending 30 April 1985

There are now 17,055 nest record cards covering 150 species. This year 61 members contributed 589 cards covering 71 species.

Substantial contributions to the scheme were received from Don Haddon of Christchurch with 85 cards of 31 species and Colin O'Donnell of Christchurch with 80 cards of 18 species. 76 cards of 18 species were received from Brian Chudleigh of Katikati. Bill Cash of Blenheim contributed 42 cards of 19 species, and Derek Onley of Charleston 37 cards of 10 species. Other significant contributions were received from: M. Dennison (11), J. G. Hamilton (17), M. Lane (16), N. Miller (13), F. Nieuwland (10), P. Reese (13), H. A. Robertson (13), K. V. Todd (12), M. & P. W. Twydale (11), I. D. Wilson (34).

105 Colonial cards were received covering the following 15 species: Gannet, Black Shag, Pied Shag, Little Black Shag, Little Shag,

King Shag, Spotted Shag, Royal Spoonbill, Pied Stilt, Black-backed Gull, Red-billed Gull, Black-billed Gull, Caspian Tern, Black-fronted Tern, White-fronted Tern.

The Nest Record Scheme provides an ideal opportunity for individual members to contribute valuable information to a permanent store of facts that are available at anytime to members and research workers.

My sincere thanks to all contributors to the scheme and to those who have encouraged members to take part. To my wife Ruth my grateful thanks for most valuable assistance.

List of contributors: R. Balm, Ben D. Bell, D. Bettsworth, M. Blake, A. Bonniface, D. Buzan, W. E. Cash, B. Chudleigh, J. A. Cowie, P. Cozens, R. Crockett, D. Crouchley, M. Dennison, T. C. Dennison, B. Elliot, C. Elliot, J. Fennell, P. Fitzsimmons, I. A. Flux, D. G. Geddes, B. J. Gill, A. F. Gordon, G. Grant, D. Haddon, J. G. Hamilton, R. M. Hamilton, M. Lane, P. C. M. Latham, D. Lewitt, J. L. Lloyd, C. A. MacKinder, C. F. McRae, D. V. Merton, N. Miller, C. Miskelly, A. Munn, F. Murphy, F. Nieuwland, C. O'Donnell, D. J. Onley, S. Pitts, M. H. Powlesland, R. G. Powlesland, K. Priston, P. Reese, H. A. Robertson, A. S. Rowe, P. M. Sagar, I. W. Sangster, P. Schweigman, E. B. Spurr, B. M. Taylor, G. Taylor, M. J. Taylor, K. V. Todd, O. C. Torr, M. Twydale, P. W. Twydale, S. Walker, I. D. Wilson, P. Wilson.

List of species contributed during 1984/85: Little Blue Penguin 3, Southern Crested Grebe 9, Gannet 2, Black Shag 2, Pied Shag 3, Little Black Shag 1, Little Shag 3, King Shag 5, Spotted Shag 1, White-faced Heron 3, Royal Spoonbill 1, Canada Goose 4, Mute Swan 1, Black Swan 8, Paradise Shelduck 3, Grey Duck 2, Mallard 6, NZ Scaup 1, Harrier 3, NZ Falcon 1, Brown Quail 1, Californian Quail 2, Marsh Crake 1, Pukeko 23, Australian Coot 1, SIPO 5, Variable Oystercatcher 14, Chatham Island Oystercatcher 4, Fairy Tern 1, Spur-winged Plover 16, NZ Dotterel 2, Shore Plover 10, Wrybill 4, Black-fronted Dotterel 2, Banded Dotterel 11, Pied Stilt 14, Black Stilt 4, Black-backed Gull 28, Red-billed Gull 10, Black-billed Gull 17, Black-fronted Tern 16, Caspian Tern 12, White-fronted Tern 18, NZ Pigeon 2, Kaka 1, Red-crowned Parakeet 1, Kingfisher 1, South Island Rifleman 4, Skylark 10, Welcome Swallow 21, Hedge Sparrow 8, North Island Fernbird 2, South Island Fernbird 3, Brown Creeper 1, Grey Warbler 10, Chatham Island Warbler 3, North Island Fantail 7, Chatham Island Fantail 1, South Island Fantail 15, Yellow-breasted Tit 4, Chatham Island Tit 5, White-backed Magpie 2, Song Thrush 57, Blackbird 33, Silvereye 12, Chatham Island Tui 2, Yellowhammer 3, Chaffinch 12, Greenfinch 7, Goldfinch 45, House Sparrow 3, Starling 9.

DAVID E. CROCKET, *Convenor*

Beach Patrol Scheme — Preliminary Report 1984

In 1984 some 4295km of coast were patrolled (4559 in 1983) during 615 patrols (570 in 1983). 10,235 dead seabirds were found (5991 in 1983). The most notable feature of the 1984 results was the wreck of several species during August. Although more cards have been sent in since the following results were calculated, already the numbers of Kerguelen Petrels (483) and Blue Petrels (613) found are nearly double the number of each species found during the last major wreck, in 1981. Associated with these petrels were large numbers of Fairy Prions (2564), Antarctic Prions (182) and Thin-billed Prions (390). Other species to be found in greater numbers than usual in 1984 were White-headed Petrel (155), Black Petrel (39), Buller's Shearwater (310), Fluttering Shearwater (706), Hutton's Shearwater (73), White-faced Storm Petrel (44), Gannet (276), Pied Shag (37) and Black-backed Gull (420).

The following are provisional totals for each region of coast patrolled.

Coast	km	Birds
Auckland East	661	1485
Auckland West	1797	4920
Bay of Plenty	217	506
Canterbury North	144	243
Canterbury South	196	357
East Coast NI	148	265
North Coast SI	33	27
Outlying Is. (Chatham Is.)	27	63
Otago	54	36
Southland	24	45
Taranaki	85	277
Wairarapa	1	1
Westland	34	1
Wellington South	176	117
Wellington West	701	1892

The continuing success of the Beach Patrol Scheme in 1984 was due to the efforts of many members and their friends who took part in patrols, and particularly to those people who organised regular patrols of beaches. This year was the first time the data have been entered into a computer. My thanks to Ross Pickard for writing the programmes that enabled the data to be efficiently entered and analysed, and to the Wildlife Service for use of their computer. Hopefully, it will only be a year or two before all the data from previous years (1939-83), which are present on some 10,000 cards, are entered into a computer so that summaries for a particular species or coast are readily available for members.

RALPH POWLESLAND, *Convenor*

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Checklist Committee Report 1985

A good deal of material has now been prepared in the form of first drafts by Committee members. In view of this a request for funds to provide for typing was made to the Council, with the suggestion that the drafts be entered on the Auckland Museum's Xerox 821 word processor. This will enable Committee members' comments to be circulated for discussion and amendments agreed upon to be made without re-typing. The Committee is most grateful to Dr Brian Gill for the suggestion that this method be used, and to the Director of the Museum Mr G. S. Park for his permission to make use of the Museum's word processor. The OSNZ Council's grant of \$350 towards expenses of the word processor operator is much appreciated by the Committee.

It is hoped that authorities in various groups will be prepared also to examine drafts in addition to discussion by members of the Committee. We are grateful to Dr Murray Williams who has commented on and amended the *Anseriformes* section.

E. G. TURBOTT, *Convenor*

SW Pacific Records Scheme — Annual Report 1985

Field notes received during 1984 all relate to Norfolk Island and a report based on Norfolk Island data received to March 1985 has now been prepared for publication.

Contributions to the scheme during 1984/85 were received from: H. Wakelin for November 1971, March 1974 & March 1976; T. Lovegrove for September 1982; J. L. & M. Moore for December 1984.

J. L. MOORE, *Recorder*

Annual Report of the OSNZ Rare Birds Committee

A variety of rare birds were recorded during the 1984/85 year and two species, Ruff and Common Tern, were added to the New Zealand list. Some records are still being examined by the Committee but those records accepted during the past 12 months are listed below.

The Committee members have a wide range of experience covering most bird families. However, the Committee wishes to acknowledge the valuable help from various overseas authorities, especially Chris Corben (Australia), Jon Dunn (USA), Brian Finch (Papua New Guinea), and Peter Grant (UK).

Records accepted by the Committee during 1984/85 are:

Moseley's Rockhopper Penguin — A bird of this subspecies was found at Moa Point, Wellington and after being kept at Wellington Zoo was released at sea, Jan-Mar 1984 (P. J. Moores & D. M. Cunningham).

Red-tailed Tropicbird — A single bird seen at sea N of the Three Kings in March 1984 (A. McBride).

Black-tailed Native Hen — A bird stayed at Karamea from August until November 1984 (N. Stopforth & F. D. Richards).

Marsh Sandpiper — One at Hawkesbury Lagoon in February 1985 (P. Schweigman, R. F. Smith, K. C. Gager).

Ruff — One bird known to be at Lake Ellesmere from Dec 1984 until at least March 1985. Two birds were recorded on 14 Jan 1985 (K. C. Harrison, J. F. M. & J. S. Fennell, C. O'Donnell, K. Hughey).

Snipe sp. — A bird seen at Lake Tekapo on 31 December 1983 & 1 January 1984 could not be specifically identified, however, it was probably a Japanese Snipe (R. J. Pierce).

Great Knot — One bird was seen at the Manawatu Estuary in Nov 1983 (J. & M. Moore).

Wilson's Phalarope — Further to last year's record of a bird at Lake Ellesmere details were received confirming that two birds were actually present in Dec 1983 (K. C. Harrison).

Long-tailed Skua — One was seen at sea, just off the Three Kings, in March 1984 (A. McBride).

White-winged Black Tern — A bird in non-breeding plumage was photographed in Tauranga Harbour in January 1985, and stayed for several weeks (B. Chudleigh).

Common Tern — This species was added to the NZ list when one was seen and photographed at the Rangitaiki Rivermouth. It was not possible to confirm that the bird was of the Eastern race (P. C. M. Latham, B. Chudleigh, W. Hutton).

Orange-fronted Parakeet — One was seen in the Hawdon Valley, Arthur's Pass National Park in February 1984 (A. Read, P. McClelland).

Oriental Cuckoo — One was photographed at Tukurau, Golden Bay in December 1984 (W. R. L. Wilkins).

Australian Tree Martin — One was seen in the Eglinton Valley in October 1983 (K. & J. Morrison).

Fairy Martin — Three records from the north, Cape Reinga in Nov 1983, Leigh in Nov 1984 and Papakura in Jan 1985 (D. Riddell, K. J. Taylor, B. Brown).

JOHN FENNELL, *Secretary*

Library Report 1985

I am pleased to be able to report that as a result of a suggestion by Dr Brian Gill, the library is being integrated with the Auckland Museum & Institute library, giving it a secure home for the future. This was started by moving the periodicals onto shelving provided by the Museum, and paid

for by them and the Society jointly. These are in the Periodicals Room, and we owe Ian Thwaites and his staff a hearty thanks for spending time to assist with this task.

Currently the books and reprints remain in their usual place and access by members is as usual.

Interloan borrowing has been constant but borrowing by members has been negligible, with only 16 items going out. However, it is hoped to have an updated library list available at the AGM and this may stimulate interest (see separate note regarding this list elsewhere in this issue — Ed.).

The journal circulation scheme continues to be popular, with 29 members seeing 31 journals and newsletters.

We are now receiving *Naika*, the newsletter from the Vanuatu Natural Science Society. However, Bird Study will no longer be available as it is being published separately by Blackwells now. Instead we shall be sent *Ring and Migration*. It is also probable that *Auk* will be replaced by the *Florida State Museum Bulletin*.

This year 19 books, 1 tape and 25 other items were added to our collection, some of these were donated by B. D. Heather, L. B. McPherson, J. L. Moore, M. J. Taylor, G. A. Tunnicliffe and S. I. Anderson and we are grateful to all of these members.

A. J. GOODWIN, *Hon. Librarian*

Grey Warbler on overhead wire

Near our home in Belmont, Lower Hutt, Grey Warblers are present in the bush and scrub of Speedys Stream, and they frequently visit nearby gardens, including our own. Recently I was surprised to observe a warbler fly from our garden and onto one of the overhead powerlines in the street. It remained there for about 30 seconds and broke into song briefly before flying across the street and into a ngaio tree. Warblers are so typically birds of cover that this sighting of one using an exposed perch such as a powerline is worth putting on record.

Far North/Northland Beach Patrols — 1985

The dates for Far North/Northland beach patrols during the remainder of 1985 are as follows: 90 Mile Beach — 13 July, 17 August, 14 September, 12 October, 9 November, 21 December; Dargaville — 13 July, 10 August, 21 September, 19 October, 16 November, 7 December.

Members from other regions who may be visiting Far North/Northland at any of these times are most welcome to participate in these patrols.

Laurie Howell

Taupo Summer Camp

Pencil in the OSNZ summer camp at Mission Bay, Lake Taupo for Saturday 11 January to Saturday 18 January 1986.

Good accommodation in peaceful and spacious surroundings is available; including some cabins for families. We hope to survey the entire shoreline of Lake Taupo, and of course poke into lots of other interesting Volcanic Plateau habitats. Any boats, from cabin cruisers to canoes will be valuable. Enquiries to John Innes, RR Volcanic Plateau. Full details will be included with the September issue of *Notornis*.

There is a rumour that this camp even has a train, did you know?

JOHN INNES

Membership of OSNZ Committees

Atlas: Dr Peter Bull (Convenor), Peter Gaze, Barrie Heather, Chris Robertson

Checklist: Graham Turbott (Convenor), Sandy Bartle, Don Brathwaite, Dr Brian Gill, Dr Phil Millener, Dick Sibson.

Christmas Cards: Russell Thomas (Convenor), Chris Robertson.

Rare Birds: John Fennell (Secretary), Dr Ben Bell, Brian Bell, Barrie Heather, Paul Sagar, Dick Sibson.

The President is an *ex officio* member of all committees.

The conveners of the Society's permanent schemes are listed on the inside front cover of *Notornis*.

A. T. Edgar Memorial Award for Junior Members

At the November 1984 Council meeting it was decided to endow the Junior award and name it in honour of the late Sandy (A. T.) Edgar.

Sandy had a long association with the Northland and Far North regions and was well known to members elsewhere as Secretary of the Society in the 1960's, and as recorder of many field study activities throughout NZ.

The association of the Junior Award with Sandy is most appropriate as it recognises his great support and interest in young ornithologists.

An endowment fund was established with a contribution from the Edgar family, and now members are invited to make a financial contribution to this fund by forwarding it to: Doug Booth, Hon. Treasurer, OSNZ, P.O. Box 35-337 Browns Bay, Auckland 10. Contributions should be marked A. T. Edgar Memorial Award.

D. E. CROCKETT

National Wader Count — November 1984

This report summarises the preliminary results of the National Wader Count held during November 1984, when over 230 members and friends counted 166,088 waders at a total of 114 sites. As in November 1983, participants were encouraged to concentrate on counting arctic migrants, especially Bar-tailed Godwit, Lesser Knot and Turnstone but to count all waders species whenever possible.

Total numbers: A summary of wader totals by region is given in Table 1. However, when reading this Table please note the following: (1) Southland counts were made on 3/1/85, whereas all other regions completed their counts in November 1984; (2) Spur-winged Plovers are particularly widespread and numerous in the South Island but are still colonising the North Island, counts of this species in North Island regions only are included in the Table.

The grand total of over 166,000 birds exceeds the November 1983 count by about 24,000. However, more sites (114 in 1984, 61 in 1983) were covered in 1984 than in 1983 which accounts for at least some of the difference. Once again Bar-tailed Godwits topped the species totals with 82,776 (71,671

in 1983), followed by Lesser Knot — 51,935 (46,834) and Turnstones — 5,920 (5,514). Among the migratory waders these are followed by Golden Plover — 300 (368), Red-necked Stint — 186 (231), and Curlew Sandpiper — 61 (78), and fewer numbers of 15 other species. These results follow the same pattern which was found in 1983.

Distribution: Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted are listed in Table 2. These show the same general pattern of distribution that occurred in November 1983, namely that in summer at least most of the migratory waders are concentrated in the north (Parengarenga to Kawhia), Bay of Plenty, Nelson and Southland. Within the Nelson region there were marked changes over 1983 counts at two sites with 41,896 at Farewell Spit (28,007 in 1983) and Motueka Estuary 3,817 (1,716 in 1983). The Manukau Harbour total is about 8,500 less than in November 1983 but this is probably a result of the count being undertaken in atrocious weather conditions, and many birds were probably missed.

Within each region there are obviously localities of regional importance and it is important that members continue to count waders in as many localities as possible.

The effort and coverage in most regions

is very good and I would particularly like to thank participants from the Far North/Northland, Bay of Plenty, West Coast and Southland, where we have few members and greater distances to travel but excellent coverage of wader haunts.

Table 2. Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted in November 1984.

Location	Number
Farewell Spit	41,896
Manukau Harbour	31,515
Firth of Thames	13,806
Parengarenga	9,796
Kaipara Harbour	8,953
Rangaunu	7,031
Whangarei Harbour	6,162
Invercargill Estuary	5,495
Kawhia Harbour	4,115
Henderson-Kowhai	4,088
Motueka Estuary	3,817
Ohope Spit	3,281
Bowentown Shellbanks	2,825
Sulphur Point	2,597
Waimea Estuary	2,294
Golden Bay	1,863
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	1,478

TABLE 1. Waders counted in New Zealand — November 1984

	Far North Northland	Auckland S. Auck	Waikato	BOP	Hawkes Bay	Manawatu Wanganui	Wellington Wairarapa
S. I. Pied Oystercatcher	691	6765	1174	101	3	31	10
Variable Oystercatcher	262	2	8	128	—	17	15
Golden Plover	88	68	—	12	19	34	39
Grey Plover	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
Spur-winged Plover	18	9	—	—	15	18	94
N.Z. Dotterel	191	46	9	41	—	—	1
Banded Dotterel	35	14	18	41	17	21	50
Ringed Plover	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Mongolian Dotterel	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Black-fronted Dotterel	—	—	—	—	3	3	—
Wrybill	28	44	—	—	—	4	6
Far-Eastern Curlew	13	9	—	1	—	3	—
Asiatic Whimbrel	—	25	—	9	—	2	—
American Whimbrel	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whimbrel species	33	12	—	—	—	—	—
Bar-tailed Godwit	13845	27843	2806	9024	374	468	222
Hudsonian Godwit	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Marsh Sandpiper	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Terek Sandpiper	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Tattler species	—	—	2	1	—	—	—
Turnstone	2159	513	—	229	2	207	7
Lesser Knot	9848	16341	—	158	3	—	73
Great Knot	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	8	6	—	7	—	—	6
Pectoral Sandpiper	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Curlew Sandpiper	—	15	—	—	—	—	1
Red-necked Stint	3	20	2	10	4	—	4
Sanderling	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pied Stilt	777	2536	275	176	266	144	577
Black Stilt	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
TOTAL	28001	54274	4294	9939	706	953	1106

Localities covered during the November 1981 survey were: Far North: Herekino, 90 Mile, Twilight, Tapotupotu, Spirits Bay, Tom Bowling, Parengarenga, Henderson-Kowhai, East, Rangaunu, Karikari, Taipa — Mangonui.

Northland: Pataua-Taiharuru, Whangarei Harbour, Ruakaka, Waipu.

Auckland/South Auckland: Kaipara Harbour, Manukau Harbour, Firth of Thames.

Waikato: Aotea Harbour, Kawhia Harbour.

Bay of Plenty: Kaituna Cut & Maketu, Little Waihi, Sulphur Point, Ohope Spit, Bowen-town Shellbanks, Waitohi Rivermouth.

Hawkes Bay: Ahuriri Rivermouth, West-haven Ponds.

Manawatu/Wanganui: Wanganui River-mouth, Whangahu Rivermouth, Turakina Rivermouth, Rangitikei Rivermouth, Mana-watu Estuary, Hokio Stream, Ohau River, Waikawa Stream, Otaki Rivermouth.

Wellington: L. Hautuma, Parangahau Estuary, Herbertville, L. Onoke, Lake Wairarapa.

Marlborough: L. Grassmere & Marfell's Beach, Ure Rivermouth, Vernon Lagoons, Awatere Rivermouth, Kaikoura Peninsula.

Nelson: Farewell Spit, Westhaven, Golden Bay, Motueka Estuary, Waimea Estuary, Nelson Haven, Delaware.

West Coast: Kohaihai Rivermouth, Oparara Lagoon, Karamea Estuary, Kongahu Estuary, Mohikinui Rivermouth, Ngakawa Rivermouth, Waimangaroa Rivermouth, Orowaiti Lagoon, Buller wetland, Okari Lagoon, Fox Rivermouth, Porarari River-mouth, Punakaiki Rivermouth, Barrytown Ponds, 7-Mile Creek, Cobden Lagoon, Blaketown Lagoon, Taramakau Rivermouth, L. Poerua, Arahura Rivermouth, Hokitika, Mikonui Rivermouth, Totara Rivermouth, Wanganui Rivermouth, Okarito Lagoon, Cook Rivermouth, Manakiaua Rivermouth, Jacobs Rivermouth, Haast Rivermouth, Mahitahi Rivermouth, Okura Rivermouth, Waitatoto Rivermouth, Arawhata River-mouth.

Canterbury: Ashley Estuary, Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Brooklands Lagoon, Kowhai Rivermouth, Waipara Rivermouth, Lyttleton Harbour, Akaroa Harbour, L. Forsyth, L. Ellesmere, Coopers Lagoon, Ashburton Rivermouth, L. Wainono.

Otago: Hawkesbury Lagoon-Karitane, Blue-skin Bay, Hoopers Inlet-Papanui Inlet, Aramoana, Clutha Delta, Catlins.

Southland: Riverton Estuary, Waimatuku Rivermouth, Invercargill Estuary, Awarua Bay, Waituna Lagoon, Fortrose.

Stewart Island: Freshwater Mudflats, Old Neck.

Species distribution: The northern har-bours, Bay of Plenty and Nelson regions were the most important areas for Bar-tailed Godwits and Lesser Knots. Turnstones were concentrated at Parengarenga — 1,500, Invercargill Estuary — 1,150, Farewell Spit — 754, Rangaunu — 510, Manukau — 404, Motueka Estuary — 300, Waituna Lagoon — 211, Bowentown Shellbanks — 200 and Kaikoura Peninsula — 128. While Golden Plovers centred on the Firth of Thames — 62, Parengarenga — 50, L. Wairarapa — 38, Whangarei Harbour — 35 and Manawatu Estuary — 32. Among the rarer species Red-necked Stint (89) and Curlew Sandpiper (33) favoured L. Ellesmere.

Acknowledgements: The success of a major project such as this depends entirely upon the efforts of the many participants. I would particularly like to thank the following coordinators: Laurie Howell, David Crockett, Mike Kearns, Michael Taylor, Beth Brown, Doug Booth, Paddy Latham, Folkert Nieuwland, Kathleen Todd, Lindsay Davies, Hugh Robertson, Russell Thomas, Pauline Jenkins, Jenny Hawkins, Stewart Lauder, Colin O'Donnell, Peter Schweigman, Wynston Cooper. E & OE.

PAUL SAGAR

Nelson	Marlborough	West Coast	Canterbury	Otago	Southland	Stewart Island	TOTAL
3312	45	280	924	340	2011	80	15767
179	18	67	1	5	28	12	742
10	—	—	11	—	19	—	300
3	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	154*
—	—	—	—	—	—	8	296
49	154	106	281	8	230	7	1031
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
—	—	—	38	—	1	—	121
7	—	—	2	—	11	—	46
—	—	1	1	—	—	—	38
—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
19	—	—	—	—	2	—	66
21883	123	799	1172	1702	2515	—	82776
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
—	2	—	1	—	3	—	9
1082	128	—	3	—	1590	—	5920
24494	—	34	41	4	938	1	51935
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
—	—	—	1	—	6	—	34
—	—	—	1	—	—	—	3
5	—	—	33	—	7	—	61
16	8	—	89	—	30	—	186
2	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
24	180	80	676	293	573	—	6577
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
51088	658	1368	3275	2352	7965	108	166088

Farewell Spit, Autumn 1985

Terry Summer, Pat McNamara and I visited the Lighthouse at Farewell Spit from 26 March — 1 April 1985 to look at migrating land birds. We managed to avoid the waders and watched from the eastern tip of the Spit from dawn for about three hours, and from the western edge of the pine plantations from late afternoon until dusk. The rest of the time was spent attempting to trap and band the large numbers of birds attracted to a small clump of willows near the pine trees. We spent a total of 32 hours 35 minutes recording all birds seen.

The most obvious migrating birds we saw were Goldfinches and Welcome Swallows. Goldfinches arrived at the tip of the Spit from the west soon after dawn. Of 1,500 birds we counted about half would stop and feed on the mudflats, continuing seawards later in the day, whilst the other half passed eastwards along ocean beach to sea, on a line that took them just north of D'Urville Island and would, if they continued on, take them to Levin in the North Island. Goldfinches also arrived at the pine plantation in the evening, with a maximum of 110+ roosting overnight.

Swallows arrived at the tip of the Spit from the west along the ocean beach about an hour after dawn, and slowly trickled eastwards to sea. They passed at a rate of 63 per hour.

The most numerous birds we recorded were Silvereyes (3,525 observations). There appeared to be a resident flock of about 1,000 birds that roosted in the pine plantation and dispersed during the day. This flock was supplemented by other birds arriving from the west. Apart from 28 birds that headed seaward with finches, movement was not very obvious. However, nearly 80% of observations were of birds flying in an easterly direction. On the morning of 29 March, the low vegetation at the tip of the Spit was alive with Silvereyes (well over 1,500 birds) and on the same morning we saw a flock of 30 birds circle forever higher until lost from view, even through a pair of 10 x 50 binoculars. By evening all these birds had disappeared and we concluded that many Silvereyes passed the Spit, but that they flew too high for us to see them.

Smaller numbers of Chaffinches (600) and Redpolls (244) also showed a predominately easterly flight pattern, and one flock of 7 Skylarks flew 'purposefully' east in contrast to the behaviour of the resident population.

Mist netting was rather exasperating at times in windy and sunny conditions. We trapped 75 Silvereyes, the majority of which were near the end of primary moult, 3 juvenile Goldfinches, 4 Blackbirds, 3 Fantails, and 3 Grey Warblers. We also caught 16 Dunnocks, which seems a high number for two mist net sites, especially when compared with the 16 I have caught on the West Coast

in 3 years banding. Four birds caught in one small isolated gorse bush at the end of the Spit suggested that some movement may have been occurring — or are there just a lot of Dunnocks? We also caught a female Tomtit (we did not hear or see any during our stay) and a Morepork which regularly frequented the pine plantation, where there were roosting birds. Both appear to be new records for the Spit.

Of other birds, 90 White-faced Herons and 450 Little Shags provided a spectacular evening spectacle as they came to roost in the pine plantation, and out on the Inner Beach an adult dark-phase Pomarine Skua frequently chased Caspian Terns.

We are very grateful to the Department of Lands & Survey for their help and co-operation, and especially to Pat Riddett who made us welcome in his house.

DEREK ONLEY

Request for photos — Rockhopper Penguins at Campbell Island

The Rockhopper Penguin population on Campbell Island is not in healthy shape, and numbers now are much less than they were 40 years ago. At the moment our investigations of the decline are handicapped by a lack of information on the past abundance of the birds, although a valuable series of photographs taken by J. H. Sorensen shows that they were plentiful in the 1940's. In order to work out the timing and extent of the decrease, we are building up a collection of dated photographs and field observations made by visitors to the island.

We are looking for dated photographs of Rockhopper Penguins (except close-up portraits), penguin colonies, and coastal scenes which might include distant views of colonies, together with relevant diaries and field notes. Photos and notes made before 1975 are especially important, but more recent ones will also be helpful. We are keen to have a look at **any** material which is available — even one photo of part of one colony could give us a vital clue to understanding what has happened.

We are seeking the temporary loan of field notes, diaries, photographs (plus negatives) and slides, together with permission to copy them. They will all be treated with the utmost care and returned as soon as possible. If you can assist, or have any comments about the past and present status of the Rockhopper Penguins, or know other people who could help, please write to us at the Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington. We look forward to being deluged with mail!

PHIL MOORS &
DUNCAN CUNNINGHAM

A National Bird Congress & Campout in Queensland

This year the Queensland Ornithological Society is hosting the 1985 Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union's Congress at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Toowoomba and the Campout on a property, 'Bullamon Plains', Thallon from 27-29 September and 30 September — 4 October respectively.

The eminent ornithologist Professor Jiro Kikkawa will open the Congress early Friday afternoon (27 September), after which a series of paper presentations by amateur and professional ornithologists will follow until closure, on Sunday morning (29 September). Topics covered will include; bird populations, distribution, field identification, behaviour, breeding biology, conservation, education, and techniques of photography and cinematography. The Congress barbecue will be held on Saturday night in the friendly atmosphere of the licensed campus club. Early Sunday, members of the Toowoomba Bird Club will lead an outing to a popular local bird spot.

The campsite at 'Bullamon Plains' boasts many facilities; caravan and tent sites on the Moonee River, limited accommodation in the shearing quarters which have kitchen facilities, hot showers, and drinking water. The aim of the campout is to survey the birds of 'Bullamon Plains' by habitat. Several activities are scheduled to run; mist netting, basic bird photography, identifying plants used by birds, sound recording to survey land rails, survey of prey available to birds, and independent birdwatching forays to see such delights as Jabiru, Painted Button-quail, Brogal, Bustard, White-winged Fairy-wren, Crimson and Orange Chat, plus many more.

For further details, send for a Congress brochure and information sheet on the Campout to: 1985 RAOU Congress, c/o External and Continuing Education, Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, P.O. Box Darling Heights, Toowoomba, Queensland 4350, Australia.

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Updated Library List

Over 100 books and new periodicals have been added to the OSNZ library since the last catalogue was produced. A list of these additions is now available and any member wanting a copy should send their request, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to the Hon. Librarian, Miss A. Goodwin, R. D., Clevedon.

ANTHEA GOODWIN, *Hon. Librarian*

Banding Mail Bag

Time does not permit a complete rundown of recoveries reported over the last couple of months but the following are some of the more interesting ones:

An Australian-banded Banded Dotterel was found breeding in the Macaulay River system (South Island), four years and seven months after it was banded near Stockton, NSW.

H-8911, Snares Cape Pigeon, banded as an adult of unknown sex on 4/6/61 at Tory Channel Whaling Station was recovered alive and healthy on 13/1/84 on North East Island (the Snares), nearly 23 years after banding.

L-19612, Westland Black Petrel, banded at Scotchman's Creek, Punakaiki on 10/11/81 was caught by fishermen on 20/10/83, near Tumbes, Chile (35° 38'S, 73° 58'W).

B-31752, Banded Dotterel, banded as a juvenile of unknown sex in the Cass River basin on 28/12/82 was recaptured with a cannon net on 2/6/84 near Queenscliff, Victoria, Australia (38° 15'S 144° 40'E). The Victorian Wader Study Group sexed the bird as a female.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

Band and Tag

First, I have to apologise for the absence of this column in the last four issues of *OSNZ news*. I hope though that all of you will understand that it is a matter of priorities and that keeping the Banding Office going is my first priority. Having said that I am switching to more practical matters.

To start with, could all banders please check their permits to see if they are still valid. If not, and you still require a permit, please apply as soon as possible. Our reminder exercise last year indicated that there were quite a lot of people banding under outdated permits, and that is not exactly within the law. So please make sure that you don't overstep the mark.

Banders who had their permits renewed recently will have realised that permits have been validated to 1987. This is to cut down at least part of the workload of this office. However, if you feel that your permit needs extension to other species or areas within this period, by all means apply for an extension.

The current hunting season is creating a lot of work now, with bands from waterfowl and upland game pouring in. Our policy is to give priority to band recoveries by the general public, both for gamebirds and protected species. This keeps the public interested enough to send in bands. During the hunting season this may cause delays in correspondence with and supplies to banding operators. I apologise for this but you will understand that banding can only be successful if recovered birds are reported.

This brings me to another point — schedules. We can only give a quick response to people reporting a bird recovery if we are in possession of the relevant schedules. Therefore please send in your schedules as soon as they are full. It saves us the trouble of sending out requests for banding details as well. A quick response to the public is a form of public relations to keep them interested and this in turn will benefit the banding scheme.

We have received word from the Australian Wader Study Group that Red-necked Stints and Curlew Sandpipers in south-eastern Australia were colour-dyed during January-April this year as follows:

Tasmania

Red-necked Stints (juveniles)	— green underparts
Red-necked Stints (adults)	— yellow underparts
Curlew Sandpipers (juveniles)	— green underparts
Curlew Sandpipers (adults)	— yellow underparts

Victoria

Red-necked Stints (juveniles)	— not dyed
Red-necked Stints (adults)	— yellow underparts
Curlew Sandpipers (juveniles)	— yellow underparts
Curlew Sandpipers (adults)	— yellow underparts

If any of these birds are observed I would be grateful if details of the observations, together with information about the extent to which the birds have developed breeding plumage, could be sent to me or to: Australasian Wader Studies Group, c/o RAOU, 21 Gladstone Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039, Australia.

Our computer data base is now updated to 1 May 1985 for recoveries made by the public. However, there is a backlog in processing of operators' recoveries, for which we do not seem to have the time.

Since my last contribution new permits have been issued for Yellowhead in Southland; Rook on Banks Peninsula; Shining Cuckoo, Red-crowned Parakeet, Yellow-crowned Parakeet and all passerines on Little Barrier Island; Wrybill, Banded Dotterel and SIPO on the Ashley and Rakaia Rivers; Southern Blue Penguin on Otago Peninsula; North Island Saddleback on Kapiti and Little Barrier Islands; Antarctic Tern on the Snares Islands; Marsh Crane, Spotless Crane and Banded Rail near Lake Tuakitoto; Rifleman in Kowhai Bush, Kaikoura; and Black-backed Gull around the Richmond Borough tip and Waimea Estuary.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

Regional Roundup

Auckland: There continues to be a wide gap between the attendance of 60-80 at talks and the turnout of fewer than 10 at many field trips. A small group seminar at Scott's Point, Mahurangi in March included searches of coastal and bush habitats, tallying 35 species which included Banded Rail but missed Kookaburra which were found the following weekend. At Easter six members visited Ponui Island in the Hauraki Gulf where night vigils were rewarded with Kiwi calls from up to 10 birds in quite a small area. Tracing the records shows these Kiwis are the descendants of 12 which were released on the island in 1964-66. The island, from which possums are absent, has good bush cover and also extensive swamp in which Spotless Crakes were located with the aid of taped calls.

A patrol of 20 km of Pakiri east coast beach on 25/4 picked up 37 birds of 12 species; least expected was not a seabird but a Kaka, perhaps from Little Barrier Island. Live birds of interest included two pairs of NZ Pipits, 37 Variable Oystercatchers and 35 NZ Dotterels. The latter were mainly in pairs consisting of one white — and the other a red-breasted bird. Two of the 15 Little Blue Penguins found as beach wrecks were heavily covered in oil. Meanwhile, elsewhere in Auckland, a number of these birds were being treated for oil contamination.

Various North Shore habitats were surveyed on 29/4 under the leadership of Mel Galbraith. On Lake Pupuke the Pied Shag colony was active, and Little Shags and Black Swans were also numerous, but coots were absent. However, coots are present on Western Springs Lake, adjacent to Auckland Zoo where they appeared in 1983 and now have bred to reach a present total of 16. Members who took part in the North Shore outing were interested to visit the aviaries of Bill Ormond. (Michael Taylor).

South Auckland: This year we are tackling the usual monthly field trip, beach patrol and in addition, a three roost count (Lime-works, Access Bay and Taramaire) in the Firth of Thames. The new venture is going well with about four volunteers needed each time. We hope to learn a great deal more about what species are where, and when. So far this is proving to be a valuable exercise. February's search for Bellbirds in the ARA's Waharau Reserve produced little this year, possibly due to the very dry conditions. Still all was not lost for on the same day a huge flock of Fluttering Shearwaters had invaded the Firth to shelter from gales in the open sea, and these were seen in great rafts and rapidly moving lines in their thousands. I have not recorded them there before. In March a weekend trip took us to Kokonga, well south of Port Waikato, to beach patrol an isolated area and later to spend the night at David and Pam Walters farm at Wairam-

arama. Next day, after a delightful evening, we visited Lakes Waikare and Whangape during a roundabout trip home. The latter had big numbers of Black Swans and Waikare was notable for a nice flock of Spur-winged Plovers. Later, Spotless Crakes and a very friendly Fernbird rounded off the day. April's outing was to oxidation ponds near Tuakau where there were; 20+ Grey Duck, 300 Mallard, 250 Shoveller, 200+ Grey Teal, 2 Canada Geese, 8 Black Swan, 1 Dabchick, 21 Black Shag, 1 Little Black Shag, and 35 Pied Stilt. Later we walked to a nearby Black Shag colony, situated in a big stand of kahikatea trees close to the Waikato River. There were a few old nests to be seen and some birds showing breeding plumage. This colony has a ready food supply in the feral goldfish which abound in the river.

Royal Spoonbills have been seen again, with two at Coromandel and one each at Whitford and Wattle Downs, Manurewa.

A White-winged Black Tern was seen at Karaka on 9/2 and 20/3, when it was reported to be going into breeding plumage. Ray Pierce checked through 411 Banded Dotterels at Karaka on 11/4 but none bore bands. Also seen were a Marsh Sandpiper, 345 Turnstones, 2 Terek Sandpipers, 8 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and 2 Pectoral Sandpipers, among other species.

Up to 3 Terek Sandpipers have been seen in the Firth, as well as a Grey Plover, a Mongolian Dotterel, a Ringed Plover (still there on 12/5), and many people have reported a partial albino godwit. On 25/3 a Black Stilt was seen in the upper Wharekawa Harbour, Coromandel Peninsula. (Beth Brown).

Waikato: The trip to Lake Rotokawau under the guidance of Murray McLea saw us literally coming to grips with the muddy wetlands surrounding the lake. The first thing which greeted us on the site was a drilling rig going full blast. This was an indication of what lies ahead for this area, and was probably responsible for the general scarcity of birdlife. Nevertheless we managed to attract a Fernbird with the help of a taped call. Afterwards we continued on to Rangiriri, where we saw four Cattle Egrets, and on the way home Mary Skinner spotted a single bird near the Main Highway. (Folkert Nieuwland).

Bay of Plenty: Recently Brian Chudleigh photographed two unusual terns on the Bowentown Shellbanks — one was a juvenile White-winged Black Tern and the other was probably an Arctic Tern. Up to 40 Black-fronted Terns have been frequenting the region so far this winter.

Manawatu/Horowhenua/Wanganui: The summer count at the Manawatu Estuary provided good birdwatching in good weather. The results were: 10 Black Shag, 54 White-faced Heron, 2 Royal Spoonbill,

71 SIPO, 31 Golden Plover, 57 Banded Dotterel, 21 Wrybill, 2 Far-Eastern Curlew, 259 Bar-tailed Godwit, 187 Knot, 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 1 Terek Sandpiper, 1 Turnstone, 306 Pied Stilt, 6 Variable Oystercatcher, 97 Black-backed Gull, 167 Red-billed Gull, 232 White-fronted Tern, 22 Caspian Tern, 2 Little Tern. The main features of the census were the good range of 12 wader species and the two Little Terns.

On 8/4/85 J. L. & M. Moore saw six skuas engaging in piratical activities among a flock of 700 White-fronted Terns over the ocean beach near the mouth of the Manawatu River. Four of the skuas were a typical mixture of light and dark phase and juvenile Arctic Skuas. A fifth bird had a conspicuous pale rump, was generally dark with large white windows on the wings and could have been a Pomarine Skua. The sixth bird appeared different from the others, being smaller and greyer raising the possibility of a Long-tailed Skua. Clearly, large flocks of terns are worth checking for skuas. (Lindsay Davies)

Wellington: A banded and colour-flagged Cattle Egret has been sighted at Levin by Walter Jackson. On 28/4 a flock of 150+ Rooks was seen a couple of kilometres north of Lake Ferry in the Wairarapa. (Russell Thomas)

Marlborough: 12 Cattle Egrets arrived at Grovetown about 25/4 and another two appeared at Bells Road again; by 29/5 55 were at Grovetown but none of these appeared to have been banded.

About five Yellowheads have been reported feeding with a flock of Brown Creepers in the Mt Stokes area. (Pauline Jenkins).

Canterbury: Several interesting sightings have been reported recently and include; eight Asiatic Black-tailed Godwits on the Avon-Heathcote Estuary in June, a Green-shank at Lake Ellesmere and 12 Royal Spoonbills and a small grebe (Hoary-headed?) at the Bromley Wildlife Refuge.

Some good counts of terns have been made so far this winter with Kathleen Harrison reporting 160+ Black-fronted Terns at the Ashley Estuary in May, and Ken Hughey counting 56 Caspian Terns at the Rakaia Rivermouth in June.

Cattle Egrets continue to move back to their favourite haunts with 28 being reported from Lakeside, 3 at Bromley, 11 at Waikuku and 15 at Clandeboyne. (Paul Sagar)

Otago: In April, Royal Spoonbills were still occupying Hawkesbury Lagoon, although they seem to wander a bit as one was seen flying near Taiaroa Heads and one was observed downstream of the Henley Ferry Bridge. However, by Queens Birthday weekend all the spoonbills had gone, perhaps because of the dry conditions?

Ken Gager reported the early arrival of Cattle Egrets this autumn, with nine being seen near the Contour Channel in West Taieri on 5/4. John Darby reported 3 CEs at Manapouri on 3/6.

Chestnut-breasted Shelducks are still present in the region; three were seen at the Pleasant River in May, they have also been reported from Waikouaiti in April, and four were seen at Glenorchy.

Malcolm Foord reports one and possibly two Kakas in the Blue Mountains, South Otago. (Peter Schweigman)

Classified Summarised Notes

Members are reminded that the period for notes is 1 July to 30 June, and these should be with your RR by 31 July. All material must go to your RR, who will prepare a regional summary. However, if you have visited another region, send those notes on the visit to that region's RR. Would members sending in reports please use the format of the CSN published in the June issue of *Notornis*.

Remember that our observations build up over the years and provide valuable information for the future. Don't keep your observations to yourself. Send them in promptly, but make the job of compiling them easier by following the standard format.

P. D. GAZE & L. HOWELL,
CSN Compilers

Christmas Card Report 1984

As indicated last year, the sale of Christmas Cards was facing a serious decline. This in fact has occurred but fortunately the bulk sales to a very limited number of outlets early in the year has ensured that we have again made a profit of around \$3,500.

The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society has indicated that they will no longer be promoting the sale of our cards through their mail orders as they have sufficient alternative products. Our own members purchased (by mail order) only 200 packs during the year.

We must now find an alternative retail outlet for our remaining stock and if we are successful, we can then evaluate any further printing requirements.

I wish to thank Mr C. J. R. Robertson and his team for the work they have done this year in the distribution of our cards.

R. N. THOMAS, *Convenor*