



BIRDS

NEW ZEALAND

Te Kāhui Mātai Manu o Aotearoa

MANAWATŪ

Newsletter August 2024

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From the Regional Representative

The branch has had a busy June and July. We have had two censuses and a meeting.

I am very pleased that members are willing to step up and organise census and Meetings while I am in Europe. Thank you to all of you.

Thank you to Neill Haggarty, Chris Tuffley and Cleland Wallace for sending material for the Newsletter and Thank you to Jennifer Wasley for making sure everything is paid for on time.

Please send me photos and notes about your bird adventures and sightings for the newsletter on kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com.

Talk at the July 2024 meeting

Around 18 people attended the meeting. Caitlin Lavery, the ecologist at the Te Ahu a Turanga Highway Project, talked about how the charismatic NZ pipit quickly became a favorite of hers as she spent hours with them, trying to understand their behaviors to protect them during the construction of the highway.

The talk created a very interesting discussion.



Regional bird sightings

Neill Haggarty has provided information below:

Stephen Legg and Kirsten Olsen found one or maybe two White Heron(s) during the Royal Spoonbill census 6 July 2024. They saw one in Voss Lagoon on private land and one in the Oxbow lagoon on Poplar Road. Whether it was the same bird or two different is difficult to say.



Kōtuku | White heron. Image taken by Neill Haggarty
in June at Ohau Estuary

Upcoming meetings

Birds NZ Manawatū meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month, **7:15pm in Val Kenward Room at the Palmerston North Community Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street.**

Wednesday 14 August 2024

Talk: **Daily tui migrations in the Manawatū revealed by Atlas monitoring** Speaker: **Cleland Wallace**

Cleland is a technical staff member in the Zoology and Ecology Group, School of Food Technology and Natural Sciences, Massey University.

Tui are known to move around for food sources throughout the year, in Palmerston North areas such as the Victoria Esplanade with the large Gum trees, College street where the Banksia are planted and the Pohutukawa spread city wide are important.

Cleland started counting the tui movements as part of the Birds NZ Atlas project in July 2019 after previously noticing flocks of tui flying up the Turitea valley. It quickly grew into a longer-term project as more and more tui were seen moving up the Turitea valley each evening, mainly over winter in the last few hours before sunset. An attempt to characterise their behaviour was developed as it quickly became obvious the numbers, location and heights varied depending on the local weather conditions. What are the implications of their behaviour? How can you help them?



Photo by Cleland Wallace

Wednesday 11 September 2024

Talk: Red Knots reluctantly reveal their secrets

Speaker: Associate Professor **Phil Battley**, Zoology & Ecology Group, Massey University

Despite being the second-most numerous Arctic shorebird species to visit Aotearoa, the migrations of red knots / huahou to and from their Russian breeding grounds have been largely mysterious. Early work based on band recoveries and resightings of marked birds provided some information, but these methods are heavily biased towards where people are looking. In 2013, geolocators (small light sensor dataloggers) were used on knots from New Zealand, and while they gave good information on migration timing, they lacked the resolution for pinpointing locations used on migration. There followed several frustrating attempts to track birds with GPS or satellite tags, which repeatedly failed to answer our questions. Is 2024 the year when we will finally track birds from Aotearoa to the breeding grounds? Fingers crossed...



Wednesday 9 October 2024

Topic: Chatham Islands birding

Speaker: **Chris Tuffley** is a tramper, photographer and mathematician who became a birder too, through contributing to the NZ Bird Atlas.

In January Chris went to the Chatham Islands on a week long eight-person share-cost pelagic birding trip organised with Owenga Charters by Steve Wood. The group had four days on the water, making offshore visits to The Pyramid, The Forty-Fours, Rangatira South-East Island and Mangere Island, as well as spending time in open ocean. The rest of the time was spent on Rēkohu Chatham Island finding and photographing land- and coast-based Chathams endemics.

The group saw a total of 68 bird species, including almost all of the main endemic target species. Come along and see some pictures and hear all about it.



Chatham Island mollymawk | Toroa © Chris Tuffley

Winter wader census Manawatū 22 June 2024

Five people went to the Rangitīkei River estuary. Chris Tuffley took a very atmospheric photo. It looks as if it was pretty cold.



Chris Tuffley also went to Kotiata and Whangaehu on 28 June 2024, the weekend after the winter wader census, to do counts for the census. There were around 20 Black fronted Dotterels at Koitiata, plus some banded dotterels. Here is link to Chris' eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S184132056>. The Checklist has many very good photos of some of the birds that Chris saw. Here is one of the amazing photos that Chris took.



National Royal Spoonbill census.

Birds NZ Manawatū conducted the regions, part of the National Royal Spoonbill census on 6 July. It was coordinated with Wellington Whanganui and Wairarapa.

Thank you to Jan & Ash Keast, Tertia Thurley, Chris Tuffley, Cleland Wallace, Stephen Legg, Kirsten Olsen, Neill Haggarty, Dave Coles, Janet Wilson, Russell Tock and Owen & Royce Mills who helped looking for the spoonbills at 22 places where we searched for them.

We found Spoonbills at six sites, three around Manawatu River and Estuary (12, 2 and 9 spoonbills) 6 spoonbills at Ohau Estuary, 7 spoonbills at the lagoon at Poplar Rd near Opiki, and 1 Spoonbill at Voss Lagoon.

Thank you to Neill and Iola for having the Spoonbill team around after the census for a cup of coffee/tea.



Image © Craig McKenzie by Craig McKenzie

Notices

Youth Birding Camp 28 Sept to 4 Oct 2024

Mark Ayre sent this notice for the youth birding camp in Tasman/Nelson region 28th Sept to 4 Oct 2024.

Start and finish Nelson airport.

Expression of interest to:

Mark Ayre

Birding Guide

Birds NZ RR for Tasman / Nelson

Ph: 0272404045

email: Tasman.NelsonRR@gmail.com



New Zealand Dotterel photo at Ohau Estuary in June
taken by Neill Haggarty

Contribution to future Birds NZ Manawatu newsletters

Please send me photos and text that would be appropriate for this newsletter. If you want to be the future editor or help with format and design please email me (Kirsten Olsen).

Deadline for the September 2024 issue is 25 August 2024

Please send your contributions to:

kirsten.b.olsen@gmail.com

Contacts in Birds New Zealand Manawatū Branch:

Regional representative: Kirsten Olsen

email: birds.manawatu@birdsnz.org.nz

SO MANY WAYS TO HELP OUR BIRDS



Rock Wren
(Image: Ben Ackerley)



Rifleman
(Image: Michael Szabo)



NZ Tomtit
(Image: Michael Szabo)

The Birds New Zealand Research Fund is funding new research on our endemic wrens and tomtits to help inform evidence-based conservation management.

www.birdsnz.org.nz/membership/join-now/

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