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Otago Region Newsletter 8/2024

August 2024



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/birdsotago/>

Ornithological Snippets

A pair of Black Swans/Kakīānau in Balclutha were sitting on a nest 29 July, but it was apparently washed out over the next day or so. Spur-winged Plovers were on nests in South Otago from 18 July. An adult and immature Great Crested Grebe/Puteketeke were reported by multiple observers from Broad Bay on the Otago Peninsula on 11 August.

After a lengthy absence a Marsh Crake/Kotoreke was seen at Tomahawk lagoon on 26 July. A roost of SIPO/Tōrea at Lake Hayes/Arrowtown contained 68 birds on 31 July, while 24 Banded Dotterel/Pohowera were nearby at Speargrass Flat on 19 August. A large inland flock of 150 Red-billed Gull/Tarāpunga was at Te Houka on 18 August, and a Caspian Tern/Taranui has been seen occasionally in Balclutha over the last couple of months.

2 Red-crowned Parakeet/Kākāriki were seen on the Government Track at Waipori on 20 July.

Maureen Howard reports that on 12 August in Dunedin Botanic Gardens 13 Tūi started joining each other high in the sky above the bush, with a NZ Falcon/Karearea amongst them. The karearea was soaring with a fanned tail while the tui were swirling around, keeping their distance but clearly trying to disturb the falcon. The drama lasted about 2 minutes before the falcon departed. It looked bigger than a feral pigeon so it was probably a female.

Finally a recently fledged Bellbird/Korimako was reported from Sinclair Wetlands on 20 July.

Please send any interesting reports to cluthaphotos@gmail.com

Richard Schofield

BirdsNZ Otago Branch News

Notes from the Regional Representative

I ran a workshop for new and prospective birders in Queenstown promoted by the Whakatipu Wildlife Trust. It was attended by 17 people who were mostly new to birding. The session focused on how to use the Merlin and eBird apps.

I will also be leading birding field trips in areas where Whakatipu Wildlife Trust predator control groups are active. These will be on 17 and 31 of August.

As Vanessa Barry is unable to provide her talk on the 27 August I will be speaking about opportunities to grow interest in birding through support to other community conservation groups before our AGM.



The Birding Weekend in Paradise 13 – 15 September is at capacity with 12 people expressing interest and most confirmed. We'll be staying in the huts at Paradise Trust, just out of Glenorchy on Friday and Saturday nights. We'll have handheld bat detectors for Friday evening

and hope to do some crake surveys in the Glenorchy Lagoon on Saturday night. Get in touch with Dawn Palmer if you'd like to join us, there is now a waitlist in case someone cancels. M:0274427348/ E:birds.otago@birds.nz.org.nz

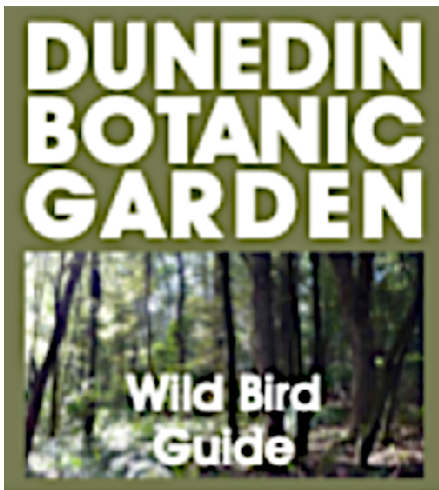
Matuku Muster

The Bittern Conservation Trust (BCT) are carrying out a national survey of Australasian Bittern/Matuku-hūrepo (Matuku Muster) this spring, with counts around 13 September, 19 October and 16 November. If you are interested in taking part, either contact the BCT at bitternconservationnz@gmail.com, or let me know and I can supply further information.

Richard 027 281 8701 or cluthaphotos@gmail.com

Tomahawk Lagoon Bioblitz

Help wanted with Bird Identification at Tomahawk Lagoon Bioblitz. Friday 20th September
 Enviroschools is running a Bioblitz of the rocky shore, dunes and Tomahawk lagoon with about 50 students and teachers and would appreciate a couple of Birds NZ people to be on hand to help identify the birds. Let Mary (02102980504 nzmaryt@gmail.com) know and she will put you in touch with Enviroschools.



Birdwatching Walk in the Dunedin Botanic Garden

10am Sunday 8 September

Thanks to all of you who have shared your expertise for these outings in the past. We need you again please to take small groups of members of the public to observe and identify birds in the Botanic Garden.

The event runs from 10am to 11.30am but the guides need to be at the Information Centre at 9.45am.

New Birds NZ members who would like to volunteer are very welcome, or come along and learn from the experts. Birds Otago and Dunedin Botanic Garden shared the event on their Facebook pages. So if you follow either of them you can share it on your pages. Please let me know if you are available to guide.

There will be biscuits.

Thanks in advance



Bruce McKinlay brucejmckinlay@gmail.com 0273891477

Outside Orokonui Robin Monitoring 2024

The 8th year of monitoring kakaruai presence and breeding success at our study site outside Orokonui Ecosanctuary is due to begin Saturday 17 August. This is scheduled to be the last year of the project. We try to locate all robin territories, band robins, and monitor the breeding success of as many pairs as possible.

We meet every second Saturday morning between mid-August and December (dates are below), with carpooling options usually available. No previous experience is needed and, although the ability to walk off track is useful, it is not essential.

Saturday dates for 2024:

17 & 31 August

14 & 28 September

12 & 26 October

9 & 23 November

7 December



Photo credit: Nick Beckwith

If you are interested in coming along and/or would like to join the mailing list to receive updates through the season, please email George (gpickerell@outlook.com).

Programme 2024

Birds NZ Otago meetings have returned to the **Benham Seminar Room, Department of Zoology, 340 Great King Street, Dunedin**

Birds NZ Otago Monthly Meeting Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83922655184?pwd=QapM32iZ0YWPrKuNYdCKPWwaYS36eg.1>

Meeting ID: 839 2265 5184

Passcode: 633186

Aug	Tuesday 27	Dawn Palmer	Opportunities to grow interest in birding
Sept	Tuesday 24	Bruce McKinlay	Birds of the Solomon Islands
Oct	Tuesday 22	Te Arawhetu Waipoua	GPS tracking kuaka / Whenua Hou diving petrel
Nov	Tuesday 26	William Perry	Annual Quiz Night
Dec	Sat & Sun 7 & 8		Weekend Field trip to Nugget Point and beyond. Spoonbill nesting colonies and crane surveys. Look for more information in September newsletter.

Regular Field trips are held, usually on first Saturdays or Sundays. Check for details within the newsletters. We carpool for these trips and share expenses.

Suggestions for locations for field trips and atlassing trips, and offers to help lead trips would really be appreciated, please contact Dawn birds.otago@birdsNZ.org.nz

Contributions for the next newsletter should reach the editor by **17 September** sodlin@gmail.com

Disclaimer

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