

Ornithological Society of New Zealand

Summary of National Waders Censuses 2009

Compiled by Adrian Riegen
August 2010

Results of National Wader Censuses Undertaken by OSNZ in June – July and November – December 2009 and January – February 2010

There was good coverage at most sites on the winter and summer 2009 censuses with all key sites counted except for the Bay of Plenty in June. There was rather poor coverage in January - February 2010 with the Bay of Plenty, the Waikato Harbours and the Nelson region and Canterbury being the only major sites covered. The poor coverage means comparisons between November 2009 and February 2010 counts are rather limited.

Table 1 shows sites or regions covered during the three counts. Tables 2 and 3 show count totals for June and November along with the June average from 2005-09 and the November average for 2006-09. Tables 4 and 5 show sites with the highest wader counts. Tables 6,7 and 8 show comparisons between November and February where that data exists.

Table 1. Regions and Sites covered 2009

1 = Counted	Win	Sum	L		Win	Sum	L
x = Not Counted	09	09	10		09	09	10
Parengarenga H.	1	1	x	Porangahau Est	1	1	x
Rangaunu H.	1	1	x	Aotea H.	1	1	1
Houhora H.	1	1	x	Kawhia H.	1	1	1
Whangarei H.	1	1	x	Raglan H.	1	1	1
North Kaipara H	1	1	1	Manawatu	1	1	1
South Kaipara H	1	1	x	Lake Wairarapa	x	x	1
Mangawhai Est.	1	1	x	Tasman Bay	1	1	1
Auckland East Coast	1	1	x	Golden Bay	1	1	1
Waitemata H.	1	1	x	Farewell Spit	1	1	1
Manukau H.	1	1	x	Kaikoura/Marlborough		x	1
Firth of Thames	1	1	x	Canterbury	1	1	1
Coromandel	1	1	x	Lake Ellesmere	1	1	1
Bay of Plenty	x	1	1	West Coast	1	x	x
Gisborne/Wairoa	x	x	x	Otago	1	1	x
Hawkes Bay	1	1	x	Southland	1	1	1

Table 2. June 2009 Count Summary

Species	Count June 2009	Average June 2005-09
Pied Oystercatcher	79,373	82,344
Variable Oystercatcher	1,812	2,022
Oystercatcher Hybrid	11	16
Pied Stilt	14,021	15,451
Black Stilt/Hybrids	22	22
New Zealand Dotterel	490	426
Banded Dotterel	5,212	5,670
Black-fronted Dotterel	101	89
Large Sand Dotterel	1	1
Wrybill	4,612	5,185
Pacific Golden Plover	0	4
Spur-winged Plover	1,423	1,404
Turnstone	141	252
Lesser Knot	1,730	2,659
Curlew Sandpiper	2	2
Red-necked Stint	15	25
Whimbrel	1	13
Bar-tailed Godwit	9,719	9,278
Hudsonian Godwit	1	1
TOTAL	118,687	124,864

Table 3. November 2009 Count Summary

Species	Count Nov 2009	Average Nov 2006-09
Pied Oystercatcher	16116	17986
Variable Oystercatcher	1706	1675
Pied Stilt	4450	4225
Black Stilt/Hybrids	5	3
New Zealand Dotterel	395	311
Banded Dotterel	534	572
Black-fronted Dotterel	6	7
Large Sand Dotterel	2	3
Mongolian Dotterel	1	1
Wrybill	35	319
Pacific Golden Plover	167	246

Grey Plover	1	1
Spur-winged Plover	845	1392
Turnstone	1024	1618
Lesser Knot	26996	32469
Sanderling	1	2
Curlew Sandpiper	8	11
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	13	23
Red-necked Stint	86	144
Eastern Curlew	2	11
Whimbrel	14	40
Bar-tailed Godwit	87590	79401
Terek Sandpiper	1	1
Total	139998	140456

Table 4. Sites with more than 2,000 waders
Counted in June 2009

Manukau Harbour	28403
Kaipara Harbour	24704
Firth of Thames	16970
Farewell Spit	10643
Golden Bay	9009
Tasman Bay	6503
Kawhia Harbour	3962
Avon-Heathcote	3238
Aotea Harbour	2380

Table 5. Sites with more than 3,000 waders
Counted in November 2009

Manukau Harbour	26173
Kaipara Harbour	20488
Farewell Spit	17323
Tauranga-Maketu	10536
Firth of Thames	9803
Tasman Bay	5804
Golden Bay	5095
Kawhia Harbour	5054
Ohiwa Harbour	4082
Southland	4071

Parengarenga Harbour	3310
Rangaunu - Karikari	3529
Avon-Heathcote	3235

Comparison of three key migrant species between November and February for sites counted on both occasions show some variation in numbers particularly with Bar-tailed Godwit at Farewell Spit and to some extent in Tasman and Golden Bays where the combined February total was about 10,000 higher than the November count. Lesser Knot figures also showed an increase at all sites counted between November and February and although only three of the sites that were counted had significant numbers of Turnstone, all of these had more in February. However as the Auckland region was not counted in February, comparisons are impossible on a national level.

Table 6. Bar-tailed Godwit differences between November and February

	North Kaipara	Aotea	Kawhia	Raglan	Manawatu	Tasman Bay	Golden Bay	Farewell Spit	Canterbury	Otago	Southland	Total
Nov.09	1950	1612	3998	1055	181	3897	2937	6950	2612	1457	2951	29600
Feb.10	71	2909	3387	950	177	4344	3696	15723	2744	1789	3165	38955
Difference between Feb & Nov	-1879	1297	-611	-105	-4	447	759	8773	132	332	214	9355

Table 7. Lesser Knot differences between November and February

	Manawatu	Tasman Bay	Golden Bay	Farewell Spit	Canterbury	Southland	Total
Nov.09	88	780	39	8730	15	98	9750
Feb.10	143	800	200	9450	10	350	10953
Difference between Feb & Nov	55	20	161	720	5	252	1203

Table 8. Turnstone differences between November and February

	Tasman Bay	Farewell Spit	Canterbury	Southland	Total
Nov.09	50	399	9	129	587
Feb.10	2	469	11	297	779
Difference between Feb & Nov	-48	70	2	168	192

Key Species Summary

Pied Oystercatcher w 79,373 – s 16,116

The Manukau Harbour had 20,146 in June and the whole Auckland region accounted for 49,128. The Waikato harbours held 5,448 and a further 19,692 were counted in the Nelson region. In November the Manukau held 5,545 almost five times more than any other site.

Variable Oystercatcher w 1,812 – s 1,706

The Bay of Plenty usually has high numbers in June but was not counted in 2009. The Nelson region had 688 and Whangarei Harbour 157. November saw 542 in Tasman and Golden Bays and 308 in the Bay of Plenty.

Pied Stilt w 14,021 – s 4,450

The Kaipara Harbour led with 4,014 in June followed by the Firth of Thames with 3,465 and the Manukau Harbour 1,995. Parengarenga Harbour had 550. Lake Ellesmere had 1,901 in November the Firth of Thames had 676, Hawkes Bay 519 and the Kaipara Harbour 443.

New Zealand Dotterel w 490 – s 395

Mangawhai Estuary and Kaipara Harbour both held 95. Matarangi on the Coromandel had 77 and Southland 82.

Banded Dotterel w 5,212 – s 534

In June, Farewell Spit topped the list with 1,921, the Kaipara Harbour had 520, Kawhia Harbour 500 and the Manukau Harbour had 359.

Wrybill w 4,612 – s 35

The Auckland region as usual held the bulk of the wintering Wrybill with 4,435. Houhora Harbour in the Far North had 51 and was the only other site with more than 50.

Turnstone w 141 – s 1,024

November saw 399 at Farewell Spit, 167 on the Kaipara Harbour, 154 on the Manukau Harbour, and 129 in Southland.

Lesser Knot w 1,730 – s 26,996

A very low summer number with just 8,730 at Farewell Spit, 7,637 on the Manukau Harbour, 4,375 on the Kaipara Harbour, 1,785 on the Firth of Thames and 1,200 on the Whangarei Harbour.

Bar-tailed Godwit w 9,719 – s 87,590

The Kaipara Harbour leading the way with 13,913 in November followed by the Manukau Harbour with 12,417 the Bay of Plenty with 9,522, Farewell Spit with 6,950, Firth of Thames with 6,187 and the Far North harbours had a combined total of 7,481.

Compiled by Adrian Riegen with help from many counters and coordinators around the country.

(Count Summary Spreadsheets attached to email)