

## Greetings to all OSNZ members in the Bay of Plenty and the Volcanic Plateau

Here is the first newsletter for 2012 for Birds BoP.

Attached is the programme for the year, with still a few gaps to go in the evening speakers, though I do have one or two possibles up my sleeve. Trying hard on the field trips again this year. The first is in March - let me know if you want to come to Miranda, or just see you there anyway. The arctic migrants were already colouring up nicely on Saturday. Sorry if any non-email members missed the announcements re our first meeting of the year. I just ran out of time to get anything out via the post. For new members, a reminder that I do send out frequent emails with updates. If you have an email address and I don't have you on my list, please send your address to [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz). If anyone would like to produce a more professional-looking newsletter, I should be **most** happy to co-operate.

Special welcome to our new members, Dave Richards and Kate Steeds.

You will all have read in Southern Bird that our region is hosting the national OSNZ conference this year. I hope to see many of you at Bureta Park in Tauranga during Queen's Birthday weekend in June. Details of the conference were sent out with the December issue of Southern Bird. Also available now on the osnz website. If you have missed the registration form and can't access [www.osnz.org.nz](http://www.osnz.org.nz) to download a copy, please write to OSNZ Conference, PO Box 13102, Tauranga 3141. If you don't usually attend conference, this is a great opportunity to do so, for many without the expense of paying for accommodation away from home.

A small committee is presently organising this important event, but we will need more help, especially over the weekend of the conference.

### **Other news -**

Reports coming in from round the country of shining cuckoos in full song, unusual for this time of year, some say I have heard them around now other years. Maybe they are gathering to set off to the Solomons. Do let us know if you hear that lovely song. Check it out on [www.whatbird.co.nz](http://www.whatbird.co.nz).

Peter Langlands wants us to look out for bands on wrybill and SI pied oystercatchers, both species now heading back to our northern harbours for the winter. If you have good binoculars or a telescope, this is a good excuse to get down to the shoreline with your note book in your pocket.

*As part of a breeding productivity study on wrybill and SIPO in Canterbury, birds have been marked with a white alpha-numeric band on right tibia. Sightings of these birds are sought outside of the breeding grounds - Please email details of band (one letter and two numbers), date and location of sighting to Peter langlands - [langlands@xtra.co.nz](mailto:langlands@xtra.co.nz)*

**In addition to Peter's project, OSNZ Nelson is also marking SIPOs with engraved FLAGS.**

**These FLAGS are YELLOW with 3 black characters [2 letters and 1 number] - some of the flags are getting faded and may look creamy.**

**Please send FLAG sightings to Rob Schuckard:**

**[rschckrd@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rschckrd@xtra.co.nz)**

While you are on the shore, it would be good to have solid records of what birds are using any areas that have been cleared of mangroves. Suggest recording date, species, numbers, time of the tide, birds just loafing or feeding. there is a lot of anecdotal comment about how there were birds in certain spots before the mangrove explosion, and also about birds returning to cleared areas, but good hard evidence, even photos. i will happily collate any data.

Peter Langlands is a busy boy - he also wants your harrier sightings

Hi all - I am working on a popular article about the role of harriers as predators of native birds - Interested in any observations.

Personally I have seen harriers kill adult Scaup.

Keen to collate records also of any active predation behaviour of harriers (such as on introduced birds, fish and mammals as well). Will summarise observations within my article-

Thanks

Peter Langlands-

[langlands@xtra.co.nz](mailto:langlands@xtra.co.nz)

Ph 03 338 5373

Forest & Bird has launched a nationwide survey of kereru. The inaugural Kereru Count allows the public to contribute to the national scientific study by recording sightings of kereru (New Zealand wood pigeon) from February 19 to 27 on [www.kererucount.org.nz](http://www.kererucount.org.nz). Good to get behind this. Kereru are a really important bird in our native environment, often the only agents of seed distribution of many native tree species etc. check it out on F&B website.

Our own Ian McLean is keeping a keen eye on the tara on the old bridge on 15th Ave causeway. He wrote (8/2/12)

*WF terns on the 15th Ave causeway (old bridge)*

*Max 13 nests this year on the first and main nesting attempt.*

*Most nests on the remaining old wooden cross beams supports - the terns place nests in the small indentations that are presumably for bolts into the concrete. Two were placed on concrete support columns used for the new bridge, so are within 1 m of the people walking past. But those terns started last, and were always quite nervous. I don't think either of these nests was successful.*

*A couple of nests were built directly onto the concrete support beams - over small indentations. Survival depended on whether there was drainage from those locations as those sites would flood in rain. Use of these sites and the columns suggests that the best nest sites are all being used.*

*3 and up to 5 chicks survived to feathering from the first nesting. One fell through or off its support beam, but was lucky enough to end up on the beam below and survived. There it would get significant spray at high tide, and nests would likely be hit by the odd high wave in windy weather at high tide - no nests attempted that low down.*

*5 second nest attempts and possibly a few third attempts. Don't know about survival as the second attempts were through the Christmas period when I was away.*

*Today (9 Feb) there is still one small chick being brooded, and 1-2 just feathering up. One is on the lower beam, so presumably fell off the top beam where it would have been hatched.*

*There is potential to improve nest sites for this small colony during the winter in order to provide more and better sites, and protect the sites that are used - e.g. to stop chicks being blown off or from falling through.*

*Interesting sightings:*

*- blue heron was reliably at Maketu (Little Waihi side) near the estuary entrance on several days while I stayed there Anniversary weekend.*

*- Shining cuckoo chicks - 2 seen at Otanewainuku mid January (both being fed, one at the carpark and the second near the fallen rimu on the loop track) and one in the RRs garden on 26 January.*

*Ian McLean*

Especially for those who have been sending in band sightings, the following report will be of interest, or even the summary below.

The report on the OSNZ/DOC wader colour banding project is now available from the DOC website.

Movements of bar-tailed godwits and red knots within New Zealand

From: Science Publications [mailto:[science.publications@DOC.GOV.T.NZ](mailto:science.publications@DOC.GOV.T.NZ)  
<<mailto:science.publications%40DOC.GOV.T.NZ>> ]

Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2012 9:15 a.m.

To: [DOCSCIENCE-PUBLIN@LISTSERV.DOC.GOV.T.NZ](mailto:DOCSCIENCE-PUBLIN@LISTSERV.DOC.GOV.T.NZ)

<<mailto:DOCSCIENCE-PUBLIN%40LISTSERV.DOC.GOV.NZ>>

Subject: NEW sfc315 Battley et al.--Movements of bar-tailed godwits and red knots within New Zealand

Movements of bar-tailed godwits and red knots within New Zealand

By P.F. Battley, R. Schuckard and D.S. Melville

Science for Conservation 315. 56 p.

What's it about?

This study of the movements of two Arctic-breeding waders (bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica baueri*, and red knot, *Calidris canutus rogersi*) was commissioned in response to (A) a lack of knowledge of how individual birds use networks of sites around New Zealand, and (B) the threat of avian influenza viruses, as migrating waders are potential vectors of these pathogens. The Ornithological Society of New Zealand (OSNZ) ran a colour-banding programme to study the movements of these waders in New Zealand from 2004 to 2008. A total of 770 bar-tailed godwits and 345 red knots were colour-banded around the country, and OSNZ members and other observers made over 9500 sightings of 721 godwits and over 1500 sightings of 275 knots during the project. Most resightings were from the capture site, but movements of up to 1185 km (one way) were documented. On average, young birds of both species were more mobile than adults; knots were generally more mobile than godwits. Some juvenile or immature godwits wandered widely around New Zealand and apparently settled at long-term 'wintering' locations during these explorations. Small numbers of godwits were recorded making stopovers at northern sites upon arrival from migration before moving on to their eventual destination. Overall, it is clear that non-breeding knots use an extensive network of sites around New Zealand and probably move frequently between them. Knots banded in the Firth of Thames were recorded from Parengarenga Harbour in the north of the North Island down to Tasman Bay in the northern South Island, but it is not clear how regular these long-distance movements are. Godwits, in contrast, are much more likely to remain at one site or intertidal system and not venture far away when present in New Zealand during their non-breeding season.

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The above new publication is now in press and can be downloaded from:

<<http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/sfc315.pdf>>

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/sfc315.pdf>

(4271 KB)

I understand it is not going to be available in print.

Happy birding

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Regional Representative  
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## BIRDS BOP

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand in the Bay of Plenty and the Volcanic Plateau [www.osnz.org.nz](http://www.osnz.org.nz)

### 2012 Programme

**Wednesday February 8<sup>th</sup> Evening talk** *True Confessions of Some BoP Bird Rescuers*. Members talk about their experiences in the aftermath of the Rena disaster.

**Sunday March 11th Field visit** A shared trip to Miranda Shorebird Centre for the Autumn Migration Open Day. Early start from Tauranga 0730 to see the godwit, knot *et al* at their colourful NZ best before they leave for the Alaskan breeding grounds. Miranda people will have telescopes trained on the birds when we get there. Stay on for 11.00am Guest Speaker: Gerry *Kessels* – ‘*Windfarms & Waders*.’  
[www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz](http://www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz)

Leader: Eila Lawton Preferably email [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz) or 07 549 3646 if no email. Say whether you can provide/require transport and leave phone number for further advice. Donation for car costs. Bring lunch, hot drinks available.

**Wednesday April 11th Evening talk**  
*Brown kiwi in exotic forests*. Speaker: Kerry Oates

**Saturday April 28th Field visit**  
Night walk round the Mount to see grey-faced petrel and penguins. Leader: Paul Cuming. *Bring torch*.

**Saturday May 12th, Sunday 13th if too wet on Saturday Field visit**  
Another chance to get to know your shorebirds, even practise counting them, at Maketu. All welcome but especially those interested in increasing their skills to help with the shorebird census next month. Meet 1030am at the recreation park as you enter Maketu.  
Leader: Eila Lawton

**Queen's Birthday weekend 2-4 June OSNZ AGM and conference, here in Tauranga.** For details of programme, inc. field trips, see *Southern Bird* or [www.osnz.org.nz](http://www.osnz.org.nz). The organising committee *will* be asking members (and other volunteers) to help when the time is right.

NO EVENING MEETING IN JUNE – we will all be tuckered out by organising a marvellously successful national conference the previous week! Plus the winter shorebird census!

**Saturday June 9th Shorebird census Tauranga Harbour**

**Sunday June 10th Shorebird census Maketu and Ohiwa Harbour**

Please email [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz) if you want to help. Novices welcome. Please try and attend the wader ID in May to get to know our local waders.

**Saturday July 7<sup>th</sup> Field visit**  
**Birds of fields and shoreline.** Meet at harbour end of Beach Rd, Katikati 10.00am. Leader: Eila Lawton

**Wednesday August 8th Evening talk**  
Speaker to be arranged.

**Sunday September Field visit**  
**Bush birds** at Puketoki Reserve, Leyland Rd, Whakamarama. Leader: Ian Maclean

**Wednesday October 10th Evening talk**  
Speaker to be arranged

**Saturday November 3rd Shorebird census Tauranga Harbour**  
**Sunday November 4th Shorebird census Maketu and Ohiwa Harbour**  
Please email [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz) if you want to help.

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*Evening talks are held at the Arts & Crafts Centre, corner of Elizabeth Street West and the Takitimu Expressway Meeting begins 7pm. Donation to cover costs. Members please come early and help set up the room.*

Any changes to the programme will be notified by email or through the What's On column in Western BoP newspapers. If you now have email but aren't on our list, please send your address to [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz). Informal e-newsletters/comments are emailed as content arises. Programmes are mailed to non-email members once or twice a year. If anyone would like to produce a regular newsletter, please contact Eila.

**Regional Representative:** Eila Lawton 07 549 3646 [birds.bop@osnz.org.nz](mailto:birds.bop@osnz.org.nz) (*Please note new email address*) General contact, membership enquiries, evening meetings, etc

**Regional Recorder:** Paul Cuming 07 5715125 [birido@post.com](mailto:birido@post.com) Contact Paul re unusual sightings, etc.

**Shorebird census organiser:** Garry Hill 07 544 4500 [hillgj@ihug.co.nz](mailto:hillgj@ihug.co.nz) Contact Garry re the census.