

The Wrybill

Newsletter of the Canterbury Region,
Ornithological Society of New Zealand

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November 2016

What's on at OSNZ Canterbury:
November 2016

Indoor Meetings

Evening Meetings take place at 7.30 pm on the last Monday of the month at Mahaanui Area DOC Office, 31 Nga Mahi Road, off Blenheim Road, Sockburn. Plenty of parking is available.

November 7 – Mailee Stanbury will talk to us about about the state of the Fairy Tern population and current management techniques for the terns.

November 28 – Yvonne Curtis will speak on “Encounters with birds while self-driving and camping in Zimbabwe and Botswana”.

Rambles

November 15 – Pegasus Wetlands. Meet just inside the entrance to Pegasus Township at 9:30am. If you would like to carpool meet at the Belfast Hotel car park at 9:15. Please contact Bev if you intend to come on 03 313 7009 or birdiebev@xtra.co.nz.

Field Trips

November 12 – Ashley/Rakahuri River bird survey. Meet at the picnic area just before the bridge to Loburn at 8:30am. We will then split into four groups to cover the different sections. Be prepared for some river crossings and bring a drink and something to eat. The survey should be finished by 1pm. If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact Bev, and we look forward to seeing lots of helpers. Please let Bev know if you intend to come on 03 313 7009 or 027 318 4713.

November 19 – Summer wader count at Lake Ellesmere. Meet at the end of Embankment Road at 9am to split into groups to cover the lake. If you are a beginner birder you will be paired with someone more experienced. Make sure you bring binoculars, and a scope if you have one. Contact Jan if you plan on attending on 322 7187 or shesagreen@gmail.com.

Bird Nests



This Blackbird's nest was found during our October ramble in the Botanic Gardens. Photo by Janet Burton.

A South Island Pied Oystercatcher's nest in a drilled wheat paddock on Johns Road, Rangiora. Since the photo was taken, the parents and their two offspring have been seen in the next paddock. Photo by Bev Alexander.



This female Paradise Shelduck visiting her nest in the tree hollow was also observed during our October ramble. Photo by Janet Burton.



A Spur-winged Plover's nest on a vacant section in Pegasus Township. Photo by Bev Alexander.

Volunteer Positon: Great Barrier Island

Biz Bell is looking for a volunteer to assist with a Black Petrel project on Great Barrier Island. You will be monitoring study burrows during the day and doing ground surveys and catching birds on the surface some nights. The project runs from 28 November to 14 December. Travel to the island plus food and accommodation will be provided. For more details email biz@wmil.co.nz or phone 0212010541.

Volunteer Positon: Malborough Sounds

Mara Nydegger Bell is an MSc student at Massey as well as working for DOC in Nelson. This summer she'll be researching the nesting success of South Island Robins in Duncan Bay, Malborough Sounds, following the last 1080 drop two years ago. She's looking for volunteer field assistants of above average fitness who are happy to camp in the outdoors with minimal home comforts. Back country navigation experience is preferred and some rope experience would be handy. Food and accommodation provided. Ideally volunteers could commit to a whole month but even a weekend would be appreciated. For more details email marabell2014@gmail.com.



A return visit to the nest on October 24 found one egg and two dead chicks in the nest. There was no sign of the parent birds. Photo also by Bev Alexander.

White Heron Sightings

Murry Cave, who spoke to us in April, is interested in any sightings of White Herons, excluding those within a 30km radius of Okarito. He's especially interested if you can differentiate between birds with and without incipient breeding plumage. Please email your sightings, along with any photos if available, to murrycave@murrycavephotography.co.nz.

Recent Happenings

Our fieldtrip to Orana Park in August was well attended by more than ten members. We walked through both aviaries, stopping to observe the different native species being fed, and the Kiwi House. One of the keepers talked to us about some of the park's captive breeding programmes for species such as the Kea. The evening meeting that month was a talk by John Dowding about a trip he took to Alaska. His pictures included some species familiar to us, such as the Ruddy Turnstone, as well as some more exotic birds. A chilly walk through Kaiapoi's N.C.F Reserve during August's ramble was made worthwhile by the sighting of two Cattle Egrets. We all looked hard but didn't manage to find any Marsh or Spotless Crakes.

In September, our scheduled speaker sadly couldn't make it, but Anita Spencer's talk provided an enjoyable and much appreciated alternative. Anita spoke about Bitterns around Christchurch, including the birds released at Te Rauakaaka Wetlands late last year, and the wildlife of Kaitorete Spit. Our ramble that month to Westlake Reserve turned up two pure Grey Ducks, which we have never observed on previous outings there. A lone Redpoll was seen, along with the other usual passerines and waterbirds.



One of the Australasian Shovelers seen on our October ramble to the Botanic Gardens. Photo by Janet Burton.

Sadly, October's fieldtrip had to be cancelled due to unsafe walking conditions, but earlier in the month six members enjoyed a pleasant ramble around the Botanic Gardens. A Paradise Shelduck nest was of particular interest, along with a Blackbird nest containing chicks. Little Pied Shags are still breeding in the gardens, and we all enjoyed watching both the young and adult birds.

By Eleanor Gunby

Recent Sightings

Canterbury and West Coast Bird Report July/August 2016

This report covers the period 1st July to 31st August and is compiled from reports posted onto the Birding NZ internet discussion site and eBird. Your regional recorder would welcome news of any interesting bird sighting, unusual behaviour or searchable sources of other sightings. Email christchurchnzbird@gmail.com.

Key to letters after bird names:

A = all reported occurrences (for rare/scarce species or escaped/released species etc)

S = significant numbers/occurrences (for species regularly encountered in the regions)

V = vagrant

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Mute Swan (A) Pegasus Wetlands: 2 5/7 BA, 7 3/8 BA. Tutaepatu Lagoon: 1 7/7 BA. Ashley Estuary: 1 imm 19/8 'mpp26'. Opihi River Mouth: 4 18/8 PC. Spider Lagoon: 2 30/8 PS.

Black Swan (S) Ashley Estuary: 34 (unusually high number for site) 5/8 BA.

Grey Duck (S) Jollie River, Mackenzie District: 4 8/7 KR.

Grey Teal (S) St Anne's Lagoon: 122 3/7 MT. Washdyke Lagoon: 323 28/7 PS, 329 29/8 PS.

Muscovy Duck (A) The Groynes: 11 20/8 BA. Westlake Reserve Ponds: 4 29/8 PR.

New Zealand Scaup (S) Lake Clearwater: 345 (at least) 16/7 BA.

Peafowl (A) Factory Road, Sefton: 2 27/8 BA.

Australasian Crested Grebe (A) Lake Forsyth: 63 3/7 PC, 12 1/8 BA. Lake Camp: 2 16/7 BA. Lake Clearwater: 4 16/7 BA. Caton's Bay, Lake Forsyth: 4 29/8 PC.

Australasian Gannet (S) Moncks Bay: 1 imm 10/8 SG.

Little Black Shag (A) Pegasus Wetlands: 1 14/7 BA. Sandy Point, Avon-Heathcote Estuary 2 31/7 PC. Lower Heathcote River 1 7/8 MG.

Pied Shag (S) Timaru Harbour: 4 18/8 PC.

Australasian Bittern (A) Ataahua Point: 1 22/7 AC. Corbies Creek near Otematata 1 28/7 DN.

White Heron (A) Linwood Canal: 1 1/7 BA. Lake Forsyth: 1 3/7 PC, 1 1/8 BA. Kaituna Lagoon: 1 23/8 RP, 2 24/8 PC. Pegasus Wetlands: 1 14/7 BA. Little Ashley Stream 1 29/7 BA, 1 5/8 BA. Waikuku Beach Road: 1 20/8 BA. Pannetts Road: 1 7/8 PC. Spider Lagoon: 1 18/8 PC, 1 30/8 PS.

Little Egret (V) Lake Forsyth: 1 3/7 PC. Sunset Point, Kaituna Lagoon: 1 24/8 PC.

Reef Heron (A) Point Kean: 1 2/7 MT.

Cattle Egret (A) Rolleston Road, Clandeboye: 5 10/7 Mxyzptlk, 3 11/7 Mxyzptlk. The Lake Road, Lakeside: 2 20/7 BA, 10 7/8 PC, 12 20/8 BA. South of Raven Quay, Kaiapoi: 2 24/7 BA. N.C.F Park, Kaiapoi: 2 17/8 Birds NZ Canterbury.

Royal Spoonbill (S) Ashley Estuary: 7 4/7 BA, 5 5/8 BA, 5 5/8 BA, 6 23/8 BA. Lake Forsyth: 3 1/8 BA. Beacon Street Wetlands: 2 14/8 BA. Kaituna

Lagoon: 4 23/8 RP. McCormack's Bay: 1 25/8 RP.
Pukeko (S) Brooklands Lagoon: 120 14/8 BA.

Australian Coot (S) Styx Mill Walkway: 15 8/8 'SLLT Bird'. Northbrook Ponds: 23 11/8 BA, 27 29/8 BA.

Black Stilt (A) Ashley Estuary: 1 4/7 BA, 1 30/7 BA, 1 5/8 BA, 1 16/8 MA. Embankment Road: 1 28/8 GBa.

Banded Dotterel (S) Linwood Paddocks: 75 1/7 BA.

New Zealand Dotterel (V) Ashley Estuary: 1 28/8 BA.

Black-f ronted Dotterel (A) St Anne's Lagoon: 27 3/7 MT. Washdyke Lagoon: 12 28/7 PS, 1 18/8 PC, 1 29/8 PS.

Wrybill (S) Ashley Estuary: 10 16/8 MA, 14 20/8 BA, 7 23/8 BA. Washdyke Lagoon: 3 29/8 PS.

Whimbrel (A) Linwood Paddocks: 1 1/7 BA, 1 18/7 PC. Southshore Spit: 1 3/7 GB, IT.

Bar-tailed Godwit (S) Ashley Estuary: 8 16/8 MA, 70 23/8 BA. Brooklands Lagoon: 42 14/8 BA.

Lesser Knot (S) Southshore Spit: 1 2/7 GB& ID. Embankment Road: 1 28/8 GBa. Washdyke Lagoon 4 29/8 PS&JS.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (A) Embankment Road: 1 28/8 GBa.

Red-necked Stint (A) Embankment Road: 1 28/8 GBa.

Black-billed Gull (S) Rangitata River Mouth: 1,510 18/8 PC.

White-winged Black Tern (A) Bromley Water Treatment Ponds: 1 18/7 PC. Ashley Estuary: 1 in almost complete breeding plumage 19/8 'Kathy', 1 in half-breeding plumage 16/8 MA.

Black-f ronted Tern (S) Lake Clearwater: 2 16/7 BA. Kairaki Beach: 1 banded FN on yellow flag 31/7 WMIL. Ashley Estuary: 110, some colour-banded 23/8 BA. Hokitika River Mouth: 19 7/8 NW.

White-f ronted Tern (S) Hokitika River Mouth: 550 7/8 NW.

New Zealand Pigeon (S) Christchurch Botanic Gardens: 5 20/7 BA.

Morepork (S) Puhi Peaks Station Homestead: 2

19/8, 2 22/8 Puhi Peaks Station.

New Zealand Falcon (A) Halswell Quarry Park: 1 8/7 JW. Victoria Park: 1 11/7 PC, 2 12/7 SG 1 13/7 PC. Jollie River, Mackenzie District: 1 8/7 KR. Bottle Lake Forest Park: 1 15/7 KR. Hanmer Springs Animals Farm: 1 23/7 DE. Upper Clarence River: 1 2/8 NM. Christchurch Akaroa Road near olive farm: 1 29/8 PC.

Kea (S) Jollie River, Mackenzie District: 1 8/7 KR. Shearwater Lodge, Puhi Peaks Station: 1 15/8 'first since summer last year' Shearwater Lodge, 1 30/8 Shearwater Lodge.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (A) Prices Valley: 84 came in to roost at dusk 22/7 AC, 18 1/8 BA.

Eastern Rosella (A) Victoria Park: 1 15/7 SG, 1 7/8 PC.

Tomtit (S) St James Hut: 1 in shelterbelt behind hut in otherwise open habitat.

Welcome Swallow (S) Puhi Peaks Station Homestead: 1 20/8 'first swallow I have seen on the property' Puhi Peaks Station.

Australasian Pipit (S) Pegasus Town: 1 on vacant section on Awatere Street 3/8 BA.

Cirl Bunting (S) Beach Road, Kaiapoi: 2 in a flock of 70 Yellowhammers feeding on freshly-sown grass 24/7 BA.

BA Bev Alexander, MA Michael Ashbee, GBa Grant Bawden, GB Grahame Bell, AC Andrew Crossland, PC Phil Crutchley, ID Israel Didham, DE D England, MG Michael Godfrey, DN Dean Nelson, SG Steven Gorinski, NM Nikki McArthur, RP Rachael Pelvin, KR Kenny Rose, PR Peter Reese, JS Joy Sagar, PS Paul Sagar, MT Mary Thompson, IT Iain Thorpe, JW Jan Walker, NW Noel Ward.

Contributions

The next Wrybill will be due out at the beginning of February next year. Please think about sending the editor a bird-related article or photos for inclusion in that edition by January 20. Any submissions would be very much appreciated.

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