



NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER JULY 2013

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GRAPHS AND NUMBERS were used by Rob Schuckard to kick off our last meeting. Rob has spent many hours collecting, collating and analysing local wader census figures from 2001 - 2012 to come up with a summary, not all good news though. Our migrant waders show a decline, but VOC show an increase. Thank you Rob and thank you to all of those who lurk around the coast with binoculars at wader count time.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE charitable trusts, pest control, and enthusiastic volunteers can make to restoring habitats to their former glory. Following Rob's talk, Peter Gaze discussed two such projects he's involved in, one a mainland National Park, Project Janszoon, and the other an island in the Sounds. Both Abel Tasman NP and the middle Rangitoto Island, Puangiangi Is. are now losing invasive wilding trees such as pines, macrocarpas, and Australian weeds, invasive little furry animals with voracious appetites and in the Sounds, four footed herbivores. It's not long before results are seen, more bird song, insects and reptiles, making the way for future fauna translocations. Check out: www.janszoon.org and www.faanarecovery.org A big thank you to Pete and the many others with a passion for wildlife whose volunteering in many localities really is making a difference.

AUGUST 5th

Join us at Monday's indoor evening meeting to hear Robin and Sandy Toy give us a talk/picture feast on the Falklands after a brief discussion on the 5min bird counts coming up in Kahurangi NP.

WELCOME THE GODWITS

From Pauline

Sunday 29 September, 9am – 12noon. At the Old Wharf, Motueka Quay, next to the wreck of the Janie Seddon. All OSNZ members invited, especially those with telescopes, but binoculars will do as well.

SHADOWY PASTIME

In the August newsletter last year we had a paragraph or two on a birds JIZZ (GISS - General Impression Size and Shape.) You can practice this observational skill in the evening when the lights are low, over the Haven, or else down at your own local favourite estuary. Look at the shadowy outlines of waders at a distance and deduce their identification. Some bird books have great illustrations of silhouettes.

Kingfishers are still numerous around coastal areas.



Photo by Willie Cook

GREY GHOST

Alec Milne from Golden Bay reports on developments from the South Island Kokako front.

“Eleven of the best sightings 1990- 2008 were submitted to the RAC who consider unusual bird reports. One (Rainy crk, Reefton, March 2007) was ‘accepted’, the rest considered ‘probable’ or ‘possible’. The sightings came from the Marlborough Sounds, N-W Nelson, West Coast and the Catlins. These same sightings were forwarded to the Threatened Species panel (DOC) in June 2012, and led to the SI kokako being taken off the ‘extinct’ list (current status ‘data deficient’).”

If any members have been sitting on SIK sightings, would be really keen to hear from them (or lodge them at the www.greyghost.org.nz website). AM

(RAC - Records Appraisal Committee, previously Rare Birds Committee)

JUST TO RECAP AND UPDATE April - July

Dabchick Watch:

Lake Killarney: 1 in April, DC; Ingrid watched one only for over half an hour 22/4; and reports during May/June/July were all of single birds. WC;DC.

Wakapuaka Sewer Wetlands: first report of the year, 1 on 25/5, PF; and regular sightings of a single bird during June and July. PF; GDQ; et al.

WEKA WOES

Weka sightings have been a bit quiet lately but Jim C reports from a friend, of a weka on Rabbit Island recently, unfortunately in the dog exercise area and sadly killed by one, but If you were to send a visiting birder somewhere to see a weka, the Brook Motor Camp area is a good bet.

HOUSEKEEPING

I may suggest delaying your backyard cleanup (next newsletter) but now is a good time to tidy up office work. Thank you to those who have paid their 2012 subscriptions, and to those who no longer wish to be members a short email to me will suffice – “Dear Gail, I wish to resign, love and kisses.....” And to those who have slipped up with this year’s sub and don’t want a gap in publications on their library shelves, please send off your dosh promptly. Unfortunately notices for next year’s subs will be pretty much hot on your heels.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

SHAG WATCH

Spotted Shags come into Nelson harbour in April and roost on Fifeshire Rock, and Haulashore Mole at night. Where else do they night roost in Tasman Bay? – and Golden Bay? Where are they breeding in Golden Bay? Can you name the island.

Pied Shags have 7 colonies in Tasman Bay, Can you name them? Could you find breeding pairs throughout all seasons?

Little black shags from the North Island, come to our harbours and estuaries in winter. They feed in gregarious groups. Have you seen any more than 100 at a time?

Little shags have several plumage types. They are resident throughout our region all year. Where do they roost and nest in company with other shags?

Black shags have been persecuted in the past for taking too many fish. Do you know of any river colonies?

King Shags breed in only one locality in NZ. Can we claim Marlborough Sounds within our region?

Answers in next newsletter. I might need some help on some of these!

A MORNING IN THE SUN AT SEWERSIDE, July 31st

In Absentia: dabchick, recently reported **marsh crakes**, falcon, the recently spotted **Australasian Coot**, curlew buntings, and pipit. But several birders enjoyed the sun, whilst spotting amongst the waterfowl and other roosting birds, >50 scaup, grey teal in pairs, shoveler in pairs, and a black swan shuffling eggs around on a nest. WC,DC,GDQ,RB.

PS. A case of the early bird didn’t catch the worm. Graeme M later on that day shot a great sequence of **marsh crake** photos in the afternoon sun.

SEPTEMBER 2nd

Come along to our indoor meeting and hear Rob talk about Alaska and see some of Rebecca's sumptuous photos from her visit there.

Bald Eagle in Homer, Alaska, photo by Rebecca Bowater



PROGRAMME 2013

We meet **usually** on the 1st Monday of the month, at 7.15 pm in the "Solander Fisheries Building", Cross Quay, off Akersten Street, Port Nelson (opposite the red Cruising Club building). All birders are welcome! Contact: Don Cooper 03-544 8109 or Gail 03-5450456.

Monday, 5 August
Indoor Meeting

Robin and Sandy Toy

Talk/picture-feast of Falkland Island birds

Monday, 2 September
Indoor meeting
Alaska

Hear about 2 different visits.

Sunday, 29 September
Motueka

Welcome the Godwits

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for the August newsletter please email or phone by 23 Aug.

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