



NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER JULY 2014

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MEMBERS came in from the cold and filled the meeting room on the evening of July 7th and after our customary technical hitch or two Leone Plaiser gave an enthralling account of living on Macquaire Island for 13 months, with her two dogs trained to sniff out rodents and alongside both the summer and winter teams on the island. Accompanying it all were her wonderful quite dramatic photos of birds and mammals. I loved the mug shots,- beaks, bills and muzzles. Penguin, albatross, and seal species with the scavenging skua and giant petrels were the stars. But especially I loved the equally dramatic shots of the aurora Australis. What a treat. Macquaire Island has had a dedicated pest eradication programme and through the monitoring of Leone and others with sniffer dogs, can now be said to be rabbit free, rat free and mouse free. Along with the cats, horses, stray dogs and weka previously removed. Thank you Leone.

MEMBERS MEDLY

Join us this Monday night with Pete Gaze, Paul Bennett, Don Cooper and Gillian Pollock with their birding presentations, from both near and far.

A bucolic winter scene, but where?



Ken George photographer, 2014

MYSTERY PHOTO

Last month's photo by Nick Smith: some said kea, some said kaka, they were in fact kea from a flock of 12 Nick spotted. The hut was Mt Brown, up above Lake Kanieri..... a bit of a trick question, not in our region at all.

This month's mystery question: What was the first fully protected native bird in NZ?

The answer is attached in a document from Colin Miskelly.

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2014/07/03/what-was-new-zealands-first-fully-protected-native-bird/>

WEKA WATCH

Along with continuing reports of weka hanging around front door steps at Tophouse, Arapiki and Saxons Road, Atawhai residents are being visited too, at Brooklands Road, and further along at Todd Valley.

NEWS FROM GOLDEN BAY

Ken George sent in some birding delights from his patch.



Ken George Photographer 20 July 2014

.....'Further to our local Pohara Beach/Port Tarakohe Reef Heron's – I knew they lived in the rocks around the boat marina here in Tarakohe, but maybe they live in the actual marina itself. There were people working on their boats and generally moving around quite close to the herons – they didn't seem to take much notice. I guess if they're born in the marina and grow up with regular contact with people then they're just part of the environment.'

But not all is peace and quiet –..... ‘I just witnessed an almighty fight between two of three tui in the back yard. Normally there’s a lot of posturing and noise and threatening poses but this time it was truly all on- two of them physically locked together and really going at each other, fell out of the trees and rolling around the ground, first time I’ve ever seen that. It went on for about a minute through the foliage; till finally one got sent off by the other, yelping like a puppy, and went about a couple of hundred meters further along the bank, still yelping for another couple of minutes.’

Fernbird Findings

....’And last evening; and first time for this particular area, fernbirds around on Wainui Bay, in the scrub right beside the entrance structure for the Abel Tasman Park track. I heard at least two and saw one when it came out of one bunch of scrub and ‘flew’ (more of a wing assisted lurch, with the tail hanging down) over to another scrub bush. I’ve seen the fernbirds around at Milnethorpe, but I didn’t realise they are round this eastern side of Golden Bay too.’ KG.

Paramata Flats, Delaware, - another good place for viewing fernbirds but I wouldn’t recommend taking your nice shining recently cleaned car over the paddocks at the moment, and the potential for having to be towed out is quite high also.

ALSO FROM GOLDEN BAY

After reading one of the short notes in the latest *Notornis* re finding Holocene records of Australian pelican and NZ musk duck at Harwood, Otago Harbour, Mac Harwood sent in the following:.... ‘The place ‘Harwood’ on the Otago Peninsula is named after my Gr Grandfather Octavious Harwood. Octavious and Janet farmed at Harwood and built a house, which is still there. On the farm Octavious ploughed up moa bones which led him to taxidermy. He re-assembled moa which are now at the Dunedin Museum along with surplus bones’.

THINKING ABOUT SPRING

A masked lapwing pair have built a nest and laid an egg along the road at the Tarakohe wharf. KG.

This side of the Hill, the longest day has passed, and I have a bit more sun in my kitchen, and Peter Field counted 6 cygnets of the black swan type on 19 July and commented “ We had a walk round the wetlands at the Haven on Saturday afternoon. No sign of either dabchicks (a temporary blip, I hope), though we did see 3 separate sightings of Marsh Crakes, which was very nice indeed!

NEWS FROM MOTUEKA

Pauline Samways is working hard organising two events involving local birds. ‘**Welcome the Godwits**’ will be on Sunday 28 September, held near the wreck of the *Janey Seddon*, more on that next newsletter but pencil it in now. And the one day ECO Fest, Sunday 21 September in Motueka will have bird related activities. Take a trip to Motueka, chat with fellow birders and introduce OSNZ/Birds NZ to others.

PROGRAMME 2014

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 4 August
Indoor meeting

Members Medley
Pete Gaze, Paul Bennett
Don Cooper, Gillian Pollock

Monday 1 September
Indoor Meeting

Sunday 21 September

ECO Fest Motueka

Sunday 28 September

Welcome the Godwits
Motueka

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for August newsletter by 25th, please email, snailmail, or
phone:
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