



NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER

March/April

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The birds round my neighbourhood have been working on their dress code in recent weeks and now they're emerging from skulking in the shrubbery, sleek and shiny.

Daughter Tess lives in the middle of Waiwhetu in Lower Hutt and showed me a **falcon** feather to prove the cause of a crash she heard on her top storey window (1st April, but after mid-day!), with the subsequent sighting of said bird, quietly subdued and flexing a leg possibly quite sore. The falcon perched on a neighbouring roof for several minutes before flying off.

Closer to home, falcons are spotted regularly in Teal Valley, Tahuna and Richmond. DC; DH; AC,&TJ.

Ken G. over in Pohara reports:

"The abundant welcome swallows are providing great NZ Falcon tucker, had somebody say they'd seen a falcon plucking one out of a group, and I saw another falcon take a swallow out of a group myself. Interesting to watch the swallow try and bunch themselves into a tight ball when they see the falcon coming, obviously an instinctive defensive measure. Didn't work though.



Photo Ken George 2016

Also from Ken: “Our local **Cattle Egrets** are back, there’s been a group of 5 hanging around with the cows in a paddock around at Wainui Bay for the last couple of weeks We’ve also got a second **reef heron** around too, the normal resident bird on Pohara Beach and the second one around at Wainui.”

A welcome report is sightings of **rifleman** in Anniseed Valley, Paul B.

Last month’s **weka** playing chicken on QEII Drive apparently lived to tell the tale, not so lucky the weka on Appleby bridge recently. Young broods of weka in March have been reported from Teal Valley, Atawhai, St Arnaud and Richmond.

Asian Stop-over

Willie spotted and forwarded on a sighting from the Waimea Est, of **Godwit, flagged orange, J4**, on 21 November 2015. Information came back with a history of the bird being recorded in Mokpo in SW Korea in 2012, 2013 and 2015 and recently seen there again on 27 March this year.

Ducking around the Corner.

Wood ducks (before duck shooting season) have been seen at three different ponds in the Tasman area, numbering just less than ten. Let’s hope these newly arrived natives won’t be mistakenly added to the duck shooter’s bag. A public information pamphlet instigated by Willie should help to educate the shooters, land owners etc.

Last month’s photo was a **juvenile king penguin** taken by Rebecca Bowater on her Antarctic regions trip. She kindly showed us other stunning photos at the last meeting. A plethora of penguins, you could almost smell the colonies! Wonderful southern habitats. Thank you Rebecca.

Accurate describing in identifying unfamiliar, or familiar birds, is key to positive ID especially when reporting sightings. Check out our website (OSNZ Birds NZ) for a helpful guide in sketching birds, under ‘resources’.

And to accompany the lovely photo of whio, (next page), end of March, Ken G writes:“Murray Gavin and I have spent the day today up the Cobb clearing the traplines from Trilobite to Chaffeys hut and came across a group of 4 whio having a bath in the river right in front of the Chaffey’s Hut picnic table. I only had my little snapshot camera with me but got these record shots of the family. They were very relaxed and let us come quite close, in fact they were so relaxed that they kept tucking their heads in and going to sleep.....not at all bothered by us being there.”

Photo Ken George 2016 – two out of four.



PROGRAMME 2016

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 2 May
Indoor Meeting

Don Haddon photos,
And OSNZ bird lecture No 2
'Breeding'

No June meeting

Annual AGM and conference
June 4,5,6. Napier

Winter Wader Count

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for May newsletter by 20th, please email,
stagefrightmusic@xtra.co.nz