



NELSON REGION NEWSLETTER

January 2018

Regional Representative :

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The **'best conundrum'** of last year goes to David Melville. Towards the end of the year at one of our indoor meetings we were presented with a large tangle of wire. What is this? No 8 wire for a start. What was it doing in the midst of a tall pine tree? No, David has not taken up abseiling, the tree came down and the observant birder discovered and identified the remains of an innovative nest, - Magpie.

During the year we had a good turnout of members to our branch meetings, we saw many gorgeous photos, heard about kiwi translocation, king shags versus salmon farming, birding on members' travel, and a session on moult, in amongst other topics. Thanks to David Melville, Willie Cook, Rob Schuckard, Paul Bennett, Don Cooper, Robin and Sandy Toy, Don Hadden, Rebecca Bowater, Amber Calman and the other photographers and contributors. This year we'll have another round of interesting, informative and entertaining evenings.

Photo Richard Wells.



OUT FOR A DUCK

No, I haven't been craning my neck amongst others over the Saxton Oval ready to wave the black flag, but have been thrilled with members' water fowl sightings.

Wood-ducks: Three broods (of 6, 5, and 2) were reported from the same pond system in Tasman, 3 January (WC), 8 individuals were spotted at Hoddy's Park, 1 January, and 8 at Bells Is oxidation pond, 28 January.

Blue Duck: A drive up to the Cobb Power House proved worthwhile for Don and Willie last December, they spotted 2 adults and 3 well feathered juveniles just under the powerhouse. Ingrid spotted a couple of individuals along the Pupu Hydro Walk, 31 December, the next day watched a **falcon** attacking a wood pigeon in mid air.

ONE GOOD TERN DESERVES OTHERS

Solitary **gull-billed terns** continue to be noticed mostly from the Waimea and Motueka estuaries. Full breeding dress has been noted.

The capricious **blackfronted terns** weren't seen this season on a previously used local river but downstream from the Tapawera Bridge over the Motueka River, four pairs with a couple of chicks were reported back in late December.

The **Caspians** of Bells Island have had a successful colony with 40-50 nests counted in December and a banding session led by Willie C early January added avian bling to 85 young ones.

CATCH AND BAND

Rabbit Island was roughed up a bit by the storm surge of Cyclone Fifi, but before hand, Willie, Don and some valuable assistance from Holly tagged and banded **13 juvenile VOC** from c10 nests plus two adults previously uncaught. (Compare last year's tally of 1 juvenile being banded, see last newsletter).

WRECKED AND WRETCHED

Early January, One of 'Nature-land's' inmates included a **broad-billed prion**, and more recently the local newspaper reported on **fairy prion** refugees being looked after there. Large beach wrecks of these delightful sea birds dead and nearly so have been reported from around the region especially Delaware and Tasman Bays. One or two individuals made it inland onto city streets.

PROGRAMME 2018

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.

12 February Monday
Indoor meeting

Seasonal snaps and student presentation

Feb 16-19
Top of the South Wader Census

5 March Monday
Indoor meeting

Don Hadden – birds on camera and their stories

9 April (NB 2nd Monday)
Indoor meeting

More from Don and his photographic sojourns

Thank you to this month's contributors.

Contributions for February newsletter please email, snailmail, or phone:

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