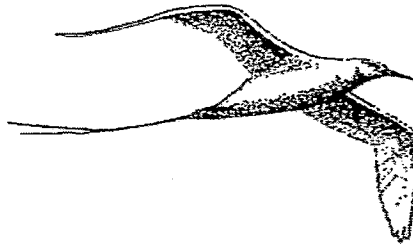


AMOKURA



Newsletter of the Northland Region of the

Ornithological Society of New Zealand

February 2014 Amokura 109

(Published in February, July and October of each year)

MEETINGS of the Northland Branch of the O.S.N.Z. are held each month on the second Thursday, for the period FEBRUARY to DECEMBER.

TIME: 7-30p.m.

VENUE: Founders Room, Alzheimers Society, 321 Western Hills Drive, Whangarei.

COST: A donation of \$3-00 per person per meeting is requested toward the cost of hall hire, supper and the production and distribution of "Amokura".

ALL WELCOME

PROGRAMME TO JULY 2014

FEBRUARY		AMOKURA 109
	13	MEETING – 7-30p.m. Graham and Querida Smith
	23	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	26	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
MARCH	13	A.G.M. – 7-30p.m.
	23	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	26	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
APRIL	10	MEETING – 7-30p.m. – Whangarei Bird Recovery Centre
	20	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	23	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
MAY	8	MEETING – 7-30p.m.
	18	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	21	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
	31	O.S.N.Z. Conference & A.G.M. (Palm. Nth.)
JUNE	1 & 2	Queens Birthday – OSNZ Conf. continues
	12	MEETING – 7-30p.m.
	22	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	25	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL
JULY		AMOKURA 110
	10	MEETING – 7-30p.m.
	20	WEST COAST BEACH PATROL
	23	EAST COAST BEACH PATROL

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RECENT HAPPENINGS

Our October speaker was former Northland man Dai Morgan who now lives and works in Australia on the programme to conserve the GLOSSY BLACK COCKATOO. The problems faced there, are very similar to those confronting our wildlife workers here – Predation, Human intrusion, competition for habitat and the fickle application of natural selection and adaptation. Thank you Dai for a fascinating and well compiled presentation that show-cased the efforts of yourself and the rest of the team.

Pete Mitchell, the Head Ranger for the Bream Head Trust, gave our November meeting an up-date on the steady progress being made at Bream Head by their team which now comprises three part-time personnel. This effort is made possible by working in conjunction with the Land Care Trust, Refining N.Z. and a good team of volunteers. Their work includes predator trapping on the many kilometres of steep tracks through the dense bush, vegetation re-planting and educational tours. The return of both bird life and flora is certainly noticeable.

The usual December get-together included a shared meal and animated discussion based around the "Recent Sightings" list. Congratulations were conveyed to Ilse Corkery and to John Ballinger who have announced their engagement.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

White Heron	2	Kohukohu	19-09-13	Dale Calvert
Royal Spoonbill	12	Waipu Estuary	21-09-13	Nathan Burkepile
Shining Cuckoo	1	Takahe Street	24-09-13	Pauline Smith
Morepork	?	Takahe Street area	24-09-13	"
Spotted Doves	8 - 12	Maungatapere	Regular	Terry Toohill
Ring-necked Doves	2	Maunu-appear tame	Regular	Jean Hawken
Fernbird	1	Wairua D.o.C Reserve	28-9-13	Thalia Sachtleben
Royal Spoonbill	26	Waipu Lagoon	31-08-13	Janet Snell
Fairy Tern	2	Johnson Point	15-09-13	"
Australian Pelican	7	Waipu Spit	15-09-13	"
Red-billed Gull	300+	Mata paddocks	23-09-13	"
Royal Spoonbill	16	Adj. to Waipu Fishing Club	28-09-13	Julie & Janet
Fairy Tern	2	Johnson Point	28-09-13	"
N.Z. Dotterel	26	Johnson Point	28-09-13	"
Bar-tailed Godwit	48	Johnson Point	28-09-13	"
N.Z. Dab-chick	1+chick	Lake Ora, Kamo	02-10-13	Den Carter
N.Z. Falcon	1	Tongariro Nat Park	14-11-13	Karen Miller
Kereru – NZ Pigeon	4+	Pahi	07-12-13	Janet Snell
Fairy Tern (chick)	1+	Waipu Sandspit	09-12-13	Julie & Janet
Australasian Bittern	1	Flyger Rd. Mata	10-12-13	John Ballinger
Kereru – NZ Pigeon	1	Old Mill Lane Ngu.	11-12-13	Melva Ward
Ring-necked Dove	2	Maunu	11-12-13	Jean Hawken
Ring-necked Dove	1	Onerahi Yacht Club	02-12-13	Tony Beauchamp

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

- Our A.G.M. is coming closer and we need "new blood" on the Committee. Please offer to take your turn at the helm!
- The new headquarters for the Alzheimers Society is under construction on Cork's Road, Tikipunga, and already looks impressive. We hope to be able to hold our meetings there later this year.

PHALACROCORAX Sp. (Shags or Cormorants)

For some years now, the Northland Branch has maintained a Register of colonies of Shag species in the north, including the Far North area (because there was no active branch there for a period). Janet Snell has recently revived the register that was maintained by the late Brian Simpkin and has taken this project "under her wing".

On Saturday 26th October 2013 Julie Hudson and I headed north to check on the current status of a Pied Shag colony which had not been visited for 34 years, so we were not sure that it remained where it had been earlier recorded, on the northern side of the Hokianga Harbour near the Tapuwa River. Passing through Dargaville on S.H.12, our first stop was at the Kai Iwi Lakes to check on a colony of Little Shags amongst the dead mangrove trees in a back-water near the main lakes. The number of both birds and nests – 37 adult and young birds plus 31 unoccupied nests - were much the same as they were when Claire Burt and I checked them in September 2010. After a picnic lunch we headed for Rawene where we would tent for the night. At the Rawene sewage ponds we counted 36 Pied Stilts, 1 Black Shag, 8 Royal Spoonbills and numerous duck species. Later that evening we walked along the boardwalk in Rawene, but heard or saw no bird-life.

The next morning we filled the car with petrol before we were ferried across to Kohukohu where we put up the tent in the grounds of the Tree House Lodge. With our map and co-ordinates at the ready, we set off heading westward to locate the site and wait for the Shags to appear. Nothing! So we waited some more, but no birds present. While eating our lunch on the side of the road, we were asked by two separate car loads of locals if everything was O.K. Finally, we moved off back down the road where we spied a couple working in their woolshed, "aha we thought, we'll go and talk to them!"

They were locals and thought that they knew where the Pied Shag colony had moved to, so the guy hopped onto his quad-bike and shot over to the back of the farm to check for us, that the birds were still there while we talked animals and farming to his Partner. He came back, rather perplexed, with the news that the Shags had all gone. Thanking him profusely, we returned to our camp-site in Kohukohu where we were chatting with the owners of the property. They suggested a 'phone call to a local identity who may know about them, but he could only tell us that his grandchildren had spoken of seeing a large shag colony while rowing up a side-creek during the holidays. I asked him to 'phone me if he could get a more definite location for the colony, but have not as yet heard anything.

The next morning we packed up our gear and headed out to S.H.1 and turned south to Horeke on our way home in case the White-faced Herons were still there, but no luck this time, although some locals at Rawene had said that they regularly saw 2 big white birds sitting on old piles by the wharf. (*Incidentally, the December 2013 issue of APTERYX, the newsletter of the Far North Branch, reported on page 3 "sightings of two Little Egret on 28 Sept." and on 12th Oct. one was seen south of Rawene in a roadside wetland area and, on 26th December near Pakaraka, a White-faced Heron – a pure white one.*)

At Horeke, one guy called them White Heron, while another person said they didn't seem big enough. Unfortunately, we did not see them, but counted around 100 Pied Stilt and 50+ White-faced Heron, 3 S.I.P.O. and 2 Brown Quail in a roadside paddock. Any takers for another weekend excursion looking for Shag Sp? – it's quite a lot of fun, especially when the weather is fine.

Janet and Julie.



The Northland Bird Recovery Centre recently hosted this young Albatross which was recovered in a distressed state from a West Coast beach following an off-shore storm.

It was referred to in the media as a Southern Royal Albatross, but this may not be the case. The Revised Edition (Published 2005) of *The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand* by Heather, Robertson & Onley, published by Penguin Books, tells us on page 175 that "Albatrosses and Mollymawks (the common name in New Zealand for smaller albatrosses) are a clearly defined group of very large seabirds belonging to the tube-nosed petrel order (Procellariiformes) etc.....Albatrosses have long bills with a strongly hooked tip and small, raised tubular nostrils on either side near the base. The shape and colour of the bill plates can be useful in identifying beach-wrecked specimens, but at sea the head colour and pattern of black on the wings is also important to note".They say on page 22 that the ROYAL ALBATROSS (Toroa) *Diomedea epomophora* has bill massive (170 x 65mm), light pink with creamy tip and *with black cutting edge to upper mandible*. The WANDERING ALBATROSS *Diomedea exulans* is described as "Some pale adults are like Royal Albatross, but all have a huge bill (160 x 55mm), light pink with creamy tip and with *no black on cutting edges*;

Following the articles in the local papers, Kevin and Pauline went to Maunu to admire the bird and to take the above photograph which may well be incorrectly labelled. What do you think? We did not see any black on the bill, but this may be because the bird is a juvenile.

EAST COAST BEACH PATROL – SUMMARY – Code NE

Compiled by P. R. SMITH – Period JULY to DECEMBER 2013

MONTH	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTAL
FROM	Surf Club	Ruakaka	Uretiti Park	Ruakaka Riv.	Ruakaka Riv..	Sth.Uretiti Tip	
TO	Uretiti Tip	Waipu R.	Uretiti Tip.	Waipu Tip	Waipu Tip.	Ruakaka Riv.	
DISTANCE	8.0km	10.5 km	5.0 km	8.5 km	8.5 km	8.5 km	
PATROLLERS		M. Robinson J Snell	P. Cozens J. Hudson	A. McCracken			
Wandering Albatross							
Royal Albatross							
Black-browed Mollymawk							
White-capped (shy mollymawk)							
Grey-headed Mollymawk							
Buller's Mollymawk							
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross							
Flesh-footed Shearwater							
Buller's Shearwater						1	1
Sooty Shearwater					1		1
Short-tailed Shearwater						1	1
Fluttering Shearwater	1	4	3		1	2	11
Hutton's Shearwater							
Little Shearwater				NO			
Common Diving Petrel	1		1			9	11
Black Petrel							
White-chinned Petrel				BIRDS			
Kerguelen Petrel							
Cape Pigeon							
Antarctic Fulmar				FOUND .			
Northern Giant Petrel							
Fairy Prion	1					3	4
Thin-billed Prion							
Antarctic Prion							
Broad-billed Prion							
Lesser Broad-billed Prion							
Prion sp							
Blue Petrel							
Pycroft's Petrel							
Cook's Petrel							
Black-winged Petrel							
Mottled Petrel							
Grey-faced Petrel							
White-headed Petrel							
White-faced Storm Petrel						1	1
Blue Penguin					3	3	6
Australasian Gannet		1	1		2	1	5
Pied Shag							
Tui							
Shearwater Sp.							
Variable Oystercatcher							
Southern Black-backed Gull					2		2
Red-billed Gull					1	1	2
Caspian Tern							
White-fronted Tern							
Blackbird							
Mallard							
Morepork							
N.Z. Wood Pigeon							
TOTALS	3	5	5	Nil	10	22	45

NORTHLAND WEST COAST BEACH PATROL – Code NW - SUMMARY

Compiled by Prue Cozens – Period JULY to DECEMBER 2013

MONTH	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	
FROM	2.0k Nth Bayley	Mahuta Gap	Glinks	Mahuta	Bayleys	Mahuta Gap	
TO	Bayleys	3.5k Nth Bayley	Rocks 3.5k	3.5k Nth.Bayl	1k Nth.	3k Nth.Chase	
DISTANCE	2.0km.	11.5k.m.	0km.	11.5km.	1.0km.	0 km.	TOTAL
PATROLLERS:	<i>P. Smith</i>		<i>P. Cozens</i>	<i>J. O'Malley</i>	<i>M.Sudlow</i>	<i>D. Calvert</i>	
Wandering Albatross		1					1
Royal Albatross							
Black-browed Mollymawk							
White-capped Mollymawk				1			1
Storm Petrel Sp.							
Buller's Mollymawk				1			1
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross							
Flesh-footed Shearwater							
Buller's Shearwater							
Sooty Shearwater					1		1
Short-tailed Shearwater					3		3
Fluttering Shearwater		6	NO	1		NO	7
Hutton's Shearwater							
Little Shearwater							
Common Diving Petrel			PATROL			PATROL	
Black Petrel							
White-chinned Petrel							
Kerguelen Petrel			DONE			DONE	
Cape Pigeon							
Antarctic Fulmar							
Northern Giant Petrel				1			1
Fairy Prion	2	6					8
Thin-billed Prion							
Antarctic Prion							
Broad-billed Prion							
Lesser Broad-billed Prion							
Prion sp							
Blue Petrel							
Pycroft's Petrel							
Cook's Petrel							
Black-winged Petrel							
Mottled Petrel							
Grey-faced Petrel							
White-headed Petrel							
White-faced Storm Petrel							
Blue Penguin							
Australasian Gannet							
Pied Shag							
Grey-headed Mollymawk							
Shearwater Sp.							
Variable Oystercatcher							
Southern Black-backed Gull							
Red-billed Gull							
Shy Mollymawk		1					1
White Fronted Tern							
TOTAL	2	14	Nil	4	4	Nil	24

NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 22nd June 2013

Time: 9-00am Weather: Fine-blustery winds.

Tide Height: 4.2m

	Borcks	Oneriri	Ngamotu	Batley - Tanoa	Tinopai	Pahi-Whakapirau	Ruawai	Taingahae-Kellys Bay	Okaro Creek	TOTAL
Black shag							1			1
Pied shag			25	4	1	10			10	50
Little black shag					1				15	16
Little shag										
White-faced heron		14	2	3		20	7		10	56
White heron										
Reef heron										
Royal spoonbill				26		22				48
SI pied oystercatcher		1200		612	300+	500+	545	1192	840	5189
Variable oystercatcher		12		4	130					146
Pied stilt		26		194	4			56	140	420
NZ dotterel				4				11	22	37
Banded dotterel	NO	45								45
Wrybill										
Pacific golden plover	BIRDS									
Spur winged plover					2		9		15	26
Turnstone	PRESENT									
Lesser knot					2					2
Far-eastern curlew										
Asiatic whimbrel										
Bar-tailed godwit								99	180	279
Black-backed gull					5	6			2	13
Red-billed gull					27	20	73	8		128
Caspian tern					1	1	2	2	4	10
White-fronted tern					42		1		5	48
Fairy tern										
Little tern										
Cattle egret										
Black swan				4						4
Australian Pelican							2	1		3
TOTAL	0	1297	27	851	515	579	640	1369	1243	6521

PARTICIPANTS: D. Calvert, P. Cozens, P. Smith, L. Forrest, J. Snell, P. Yardley, J. Pyke, J. Hudson.

NOTE:

NATIONAL WADER CENSUS - NORTH KAIPARA

Compiled by David Crockett

Date: 16 November 2013 Tide Height: 3.3 m Time: 10.30 am. Weather: Hot, sunny and calm.

	Borcks	Oneriri	Ngamotu	Batley-Tanoa	Tinopai	Pahi-Whakapirau	Ruawau	Taingahae-Kellys Bay	Okaro Creek	TOTAL
Black shag									2	2
Pied shag	↑			3		8			10	21
Little black shag										
Little shag		1	1						15	17
White-faced heron		19	4	36		10		5	12	86
White heron			2			1				3
Reef heron										
Royal spoonbill						6				6
SI pied oystercatcher		12		5	60	50	1532		400	2057
Variable oystercatcher		1		2	11	4			80	18
Pied stilt		30	38	7			25		11	180
NZ dotterel				7			12			30
Banded dotterel										
Wrybill										
Pacific golden plover									20	20
Spur winged plover										
Turnstone										
Lesser knot										
Far-eastern curlew										
Asiatic whimbrel										
Bar-tailed godwit						306		20	625	951
Black-backed gull						8			10	18
Red-billed gull							37		15	52
Caspian tern				2		4		12	15	33
White-fronted tern			2		12	12	4	12		42
Fairy tern										
Little tern										
Cattle egret										
Black swan										
Australian Pelican							6			6
	↓									
TOTAL		63	47	62	83	409	47	1618	1215	3544

Participants: J Ballinger I Conkery P Cozens L Forrest J Hargreaves
 J Hudson J Pyke P Smith J Snell P yardley