



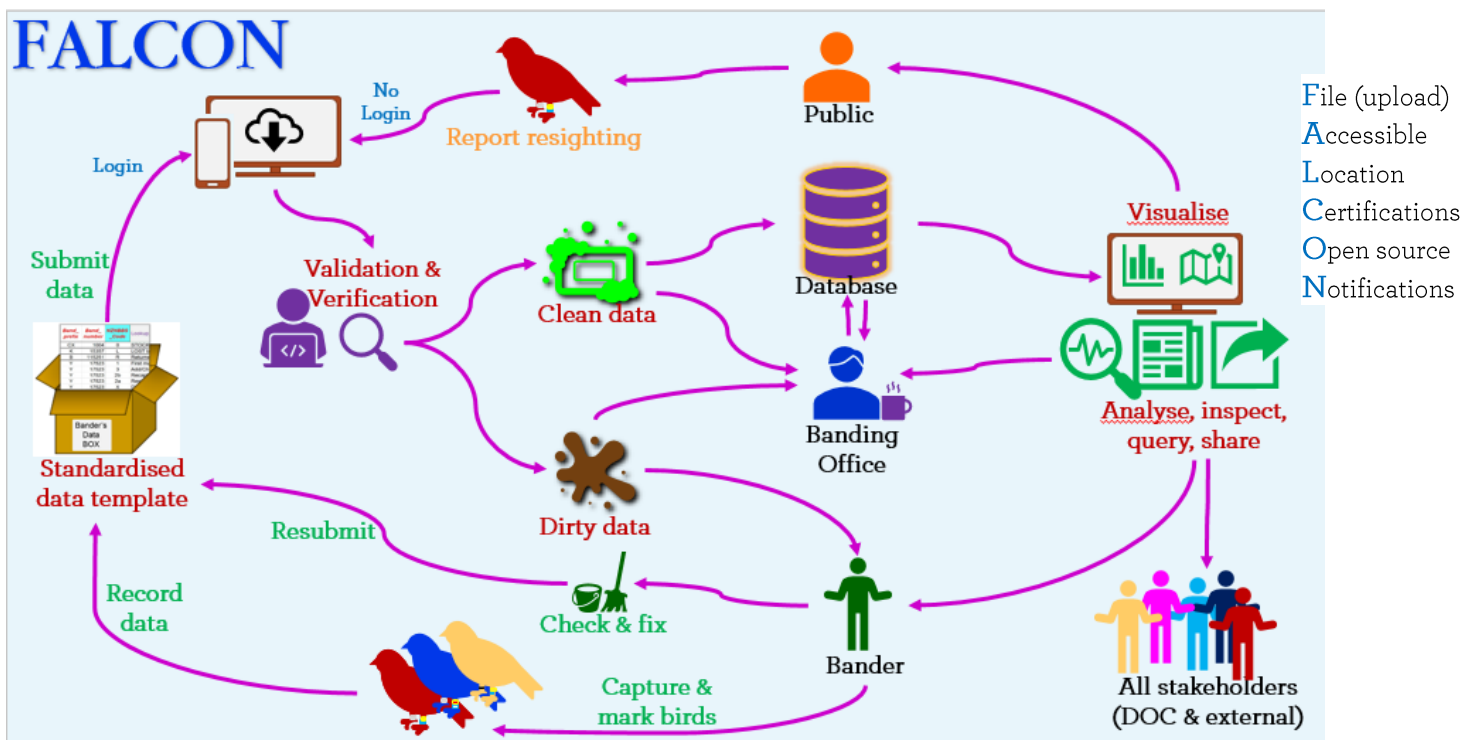
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Banding Banter

We close off the year with the 11th *BirDBanD* – wishing all our feathered friends a good breeding season!
 Previous *BirDBanD* newsletters can be downloaded from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/>.

Bird Banding Database: “FALCON” has hatched!

Join us in celebrating a turning point in the New Zealand National Bird Banding Scheme: DOC has approved funding to build a new database and website for managing bird banding data. The system (dubbed “FALCON”) will provide improved data management, data integrity and reporting ability – a “game changer”!



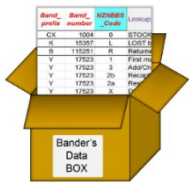
Bander's Data BOX – version 10!

In parallel with designing and building the FALCON system, we have had to make some changes to the standardised data template that banders have been using to submit banding records.

Why do we need another new version?

The FALCON system design will be based on the fields in Bander's Data BOX 10. Standardised spreadsheets will be directly uploaded to FALCON via a user interface. Changes from previous versions include incorporating feedback from operators. The new design draws on the strengths of the previous versions of spreadsheets to:

- Maintain familiarity, while
- Reducing duplication and ambiguity



Banders will find Version 10 of the Data BOX fairly intuitive, with the column order easier to navigate and a more robust method to record band changes or removal. Level 2 and Level 3 banders are required to familiarise themselves with the new template; please note that FALCON will only accept data submitted using the latest Data BOX template.

Refer to <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/how-to-submit-banding-data/>

Banding experts flock for annual meeting

September 20th this year saw the annual gathering of the group of bird enthusiasts, researchers, watchers, banders, handlers and all-round 'bird nerds' we call the Banding Advisory Committee. For those of you that are new to the NZ banding community, the Banding Advisory Committee, known more affectionately by us as the BAC, is a group of 12 bird banding experts. The BAC comprises individuals both within and external to DOC and is recognised as a formal group working under a DOC-led Terms of Reference. The BAC meet officially once a year to provide advice to the Banding Office on all things bird related. They are also the team that assess all banding certification applications via email and provide advice to the Banding Office on certification levels as well as other aspects of managing the Banding Scheme. Between them, the BAC have over 200 years of banding experience. Needless to say, they're an integral part of the functioning of the Banding Office, and we cannot express our gratitude enough for all of the time they have volunteered over many years!

This year's meeting saw the addition of three enthusiastic new faces. Bex and Mailee, our two DOC Operations representatives (see [May's newsletter](#) for introductions), came to the table with a fresh perspective and an engaging discussion on how we can improve our systems from a practical perspective – such as how we can provide sufficient training opportunities for enthusiastic DOC rangers to upskill so they have the necessary skills to undertake their work. Our newest member, Dr Kristal Cain, is on board as an additional representative of the academic world. Kristal is a senior lecturer at Auckland University, with her research focussing on the evolution of complex song and bright plumage in birds. Kristal also has intimate knowledge of the certification application process – having mentored several students through the ins and outs of the process and all its associated paperwork.



Dr Kristal Cain

Throughout the day many other topics were covered. A rigorous discussion was undertaken on the certification application process, and how this process can be made more transparent and streamlined (both for applicants and us here at the Banding Office). The possibility of increasing iwi representation/consultation on bird-banding related issues was raised. The beginnings of a new revision of the Bird Bander's Manual was brainstormed. Most exciting of all, however, was a presentation by DOC's IT crew, which walked us through how the new banding system, FALCON, will look and function once complete. Everyone present was thrilled with the progress so far and we all eagerly await the impending launch.

Tītipounamu chicks hatched at ZEALANDIA

Joint Media Release: Greater Wellington Regional Council and ZEALANDIA; 25 October 2019



Tītipounamu chicks have hatched at ZEALANDIA, a great start for the hopeful establishment of a viable population of Aotearoa's smallest native bird in Wellington.

Sixty tītipounamu (rifleman) were introduced to ZEALANDIA ecosanctuary following a translocation from the Wainuiomata Mainland Island in March this year, in partnership with Greater Wellington Regional Council.

"It's very exciting that we have discovered fledglings and eggs this early in the breeding season. The tītipounamu are absolutely making themselves at home in ZEALANDIA," says Dr Danielle Shanahan, Director of ZEALANDIA's Centre for People and Nature.

Rangers have found seven nests with incubating eggs in total, two in provided nest boxes and the rest in natural nests.

"We are especially excited that some birds are building their nests in the boxes we have provided as it will allow us to monitor them very closely," Dr Shanahan says.

"Our follow up surveys suggest at least half the tītipounamu are settling in well in the valley. There are also a few birds that have flown just outside the sanctuary, with some sighted in Birdwood Reserve adjacent to ZEALANDIA.

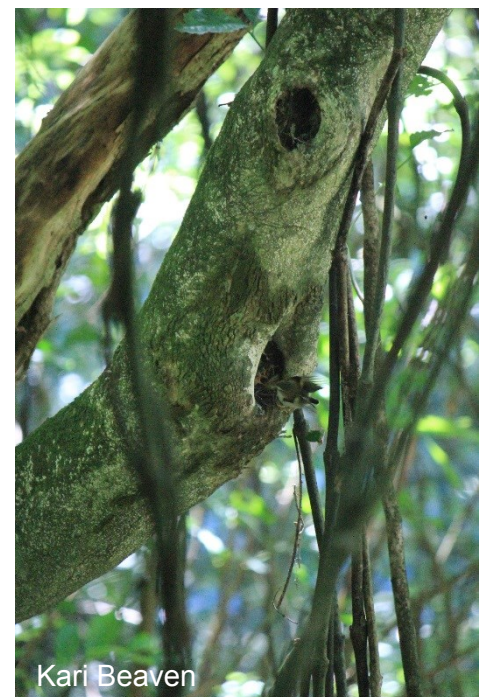
"We hope they continue to breed successfully both inside and out, helped by rat and stoat control done by the community," Dr Shanahan says.

Greater Wellington Land, Ecology and Climate team leader Philippa Crisp says it is fantastic to hear the translocated birds are breeding.

"We moved these birds from Wainuiomata Mainland Island, a Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) site, because our bird counts showed a 78 per cent increase in the number of tītipounamu in the area between 2005 and 2018.

"This KNE provides an important breeding habitat for a large range of forest bird species and due to significant pest control efforts in the area, birds such as tītipounamu are able to thrive.

"Being able to monitor the nests in ZEALANDIA will provide valuable information about how successful the translocation was in terms of establishing a breeding tītipounamu population in the sanctuary," Philippa says.



Kari Beaven

Natural rifleman nest in Zealandia

Obituary - Leaving a legacy: Russell Evans - May Evans

Russell grew up in the country, near the bush. As a youth, he had wild ducks as pets, and a few years after his marriage to May in 1968, a small aviary was given to them and they started with budgies and cockatiels. This hobby grew to include many exotic parrots and eventually, natives – redcrown kakariki became a favourite. Russell banded most of these birds so became an expert bander early on. In 1986 the family moved to Otatara and several years later proudly held Antipodes Island parakeets, after some intervention was needed at the ICC park. May later became the captive co-ordinator for this species for some years.

Over the years many friends were made throughout the country with involvement in the captive breeding of both native and exotic species. Russell was always keen to have a yarn about birds and regularly sold birds on his own and others' behalf around the country. He was known as a reputable and honest person to deal with.

From 1998 an occasional kererū was handed into the Evans' care from vets or Department of Conservation and this began a more concentrated interest in the native birds and several kererū and tūi were treated and released over the next few years. A further permit to rehabilitate and hold injured native birds was granted by DOC.

In the winter of 2002, a kererū chick which had fallen from a nest in a storm was handed to May and Russell from DOC. This bird was successfully hand-raised but due to it being completely raised by humans, it was at first feared it would not be able to cope with release to the wild so it was kept and fed in the aviary for some time.



In 2004 DOC commenced a three-year project to evaluate the kererū and tūi in an urban setting and May and Russell became an integral part of the project, as, while continuing to care for injured birds, they also took several kererū caught in mist-nets by DOC staff which 'sulked' for a few days, sometimes weeks when caught to have transmitters attached for the research. These birds were later released either with or without transmitters.

At the end of March 2005 it was decided to release the hand-raised chick, named 'Bubs' with one of these transmitters on and she became a valued part of the research, finding a mate, building four nests and raising two chicks on nearby properties in the first year 'out'. Two of her nests were videoed and this provided valuable knowledge of kererū nest-building and chick rearing, as the transmitter stayed on her tail feathers for over a year before the feathers moulted and the transmitter was consequently dropped. Bubs is still living in her home area of Bryson Road, and comes for feeds regularly. For many years she reared several chicks.

After Jeanne Lobb died in 2003, Russell (having been asked by Jeanne before her death) rehomed many of her exotic birds and was influential in the pair of South Island kākā that she had rehabilitated from injuries at Codfish Island years before, going to the ICC Park aviaries. They bred the first kākā chicks in captivity in many years and the ban was lifted at around that time. The first chick from that pairing went to the Evans' property at Otatara with the older single male, and eventually to Willowbank, but she never bred and has since been released at Bark Bay, Abel Tasman Park. Later two females went to Otatara and when one died in 2013, a mate was sought for her which eventually led to 24 chicks being raised by the pair, all of which were successfully released to the wild at Abel Tasman and Orokonui. Russell considered this his greatest achievement and was very proud of 'his' birds'. So many visitors to the property had never seen kākā up close before.

The Bush Haven Native Bird Rehabilitation Trust was set up in 2008 when May took early retirement – Russell had been semi-retired for some time - so that they could obtain funding to continue in the rehabilitation work. To comply with our Charitable Trust status, primary schools and other groups were welcomed to visit the property, and Russell delighted in speaking to both children and parents, to increase awareness of our precious native birds, especially the kererū, which he always made sure children knew were the MOST IMPORTANT BIRDS in New Zealand, because of the vital part they play in preserving the bush ecosystem.

In 2011 a DOC banding permit was issued and Russell later became a Level 3 bander, so bands were fitted on tūī, and bands and leg jesses to kererū on release, thus giving a visible reminder of the birds that had been in care if they ever came to attention again.



In 2006 May and Russell received an Environment Southland award for their work with the kererū and tūī, in particular for their assistance with the DOC project. They also in 2009 received an Environment Citation awarded by the Invercargill City Council. In 2018 they were awarded a Long-Service Award from Environment Southland.

In 2010 the couple were successful in getting the Invercargill City Council to erect several signs saying 'Caution Kererū', on some Otatara roads. This has brought the low-flying birds more to the notice of motorists but there are always some people who don't care, and speed.

For most of the time operating, Bush Haven held bodies of deceased native birds in a freezer so that local iwi could collect them and use the feathers for cloaks, etc. In recent years, because of the need to be sure no person or animal could eat the bodies, after being plucked the birds are now cremated and the ashes are scattered back at Bush Haven.

In 2009 Russell had a triple bypass after several months of ill health. In 2011 we had a fire and Russell's health again suffered for a while, resulting in doctors deciding to fit two stents and in 2012, a pacemaker with defibrillator. Since then his health was reasonably good and we were both able to continue our work with the birds. However 2018 brought new problems, as Russell's femur broke in April and after two operations was just starting to heal when he had to begin dismantling aviaries as we had decided to retire and move to town, and the new owners didn't require aviaries. After some months of stress, some close friends decided to take over the injured bird hospital and the release aviary will be on another property.



Russell (often with help from May or other family and friends) had built all the aviaries at Bush Haven, and it was heartbreaking for him to deconstruct many of these. When we finally moved into Invercargill mid-April, Russell was happy to settle for a quieter life and he continued to keep busy with minor improvements around the house. Sadly in mid-July Russell developed a chest infection and went into hospital on 22nd July when he was diagnosed with a very serious pneumonia, which was unresponsive to major antibiotics, and he died on 28th July.

Russell's legacy with Bush Haven will live on, although fraught with several problems at present, such as permits, etc. Daughter Lisa Stuart is a renowned large and small animal and bird vet at Invercargill. May is now Chairperson and son Gavin is a Trustee of Bush Haven Native Bird Rehabilitation Trust.

A Walk On The Wild Side - Lance Kevey

A Visit to The Manawatu River Estuary

In one short walk along the foreshore of the Manawatu River's estuary at Foxton beach recently, we passed pied and black oystercatchers feeding on a nearby sandbar, pūkeko picking their way deftly through shoreline grasses, a pair of mallards sitting on a pair of rocks watching people watch them, a magpie who clearly didn't like us blocking its path (and after it had flown by at knee height, it shot us a filthy look that clearly said "Don't be here when I return!"), and a female mallard trying to protect her 5 or 6 babies from an over-enthusiastic photographer who kept crowding into her space. Eventually she had to charge angrily at him and he backed off – but the bird should never have had to resort to such action. It's a reminder to all of us: respect our wildlife and keep your distance!

Moving on from the mother duck and her babies, we paused to watch a colourful kingfisher diving for crabs and admired two stately white-faced herons who were obviously working in tandem to catch their morning tea. A few moments later however, this pair were joined by a third heron – and seconds later two of the three were rolling head over heels in the muddy sand, locked in mortal combat! As soon as it could, one of the pair broke off from the fight and took to the air – followed closely by the second bird! After a high-speed flight of some 200 metres, the chase was called off and the second bird walked back towards his sweetheart – except she was nowhere to be seen; clearly, she couldn't be bothered with guys who were going to fight over her!



The path finally spilled out onto a vast expanse of sand with the river somewhere out in front of us, and beach buggies and trail bikes roaring over the sand dunes behind us. It was time to retrace our steps – but only after taking some photos of southern black-backed gulls and red-billed gulls.



Approaching our motel, we noticed a big white bird just off-shore; it was obviously a heron... but – um – what sort of heron? Identification could wait; now was the time to get some photos – lots of photos. A few days later, Michelle from DOC's Bird Banding Office helped identify the bird as a little egret, a bird which (um) I never knew existed in NZ!

Whilst 'shooting' the little egret, it became obvious that a group of 3 or 4 children and their dog were right in the midst of the area of estuary that the birds roosted in! The children meant no harm; they were just doing what children do - exploring, but this was and is surely a reminder to parents anywhere in the country - make sure you and your children know what areas can be entered and what areas can't be. As it happened, no birds were disturbed or hurt, but the children – or their dog – could easily have done some catastrophic damage!

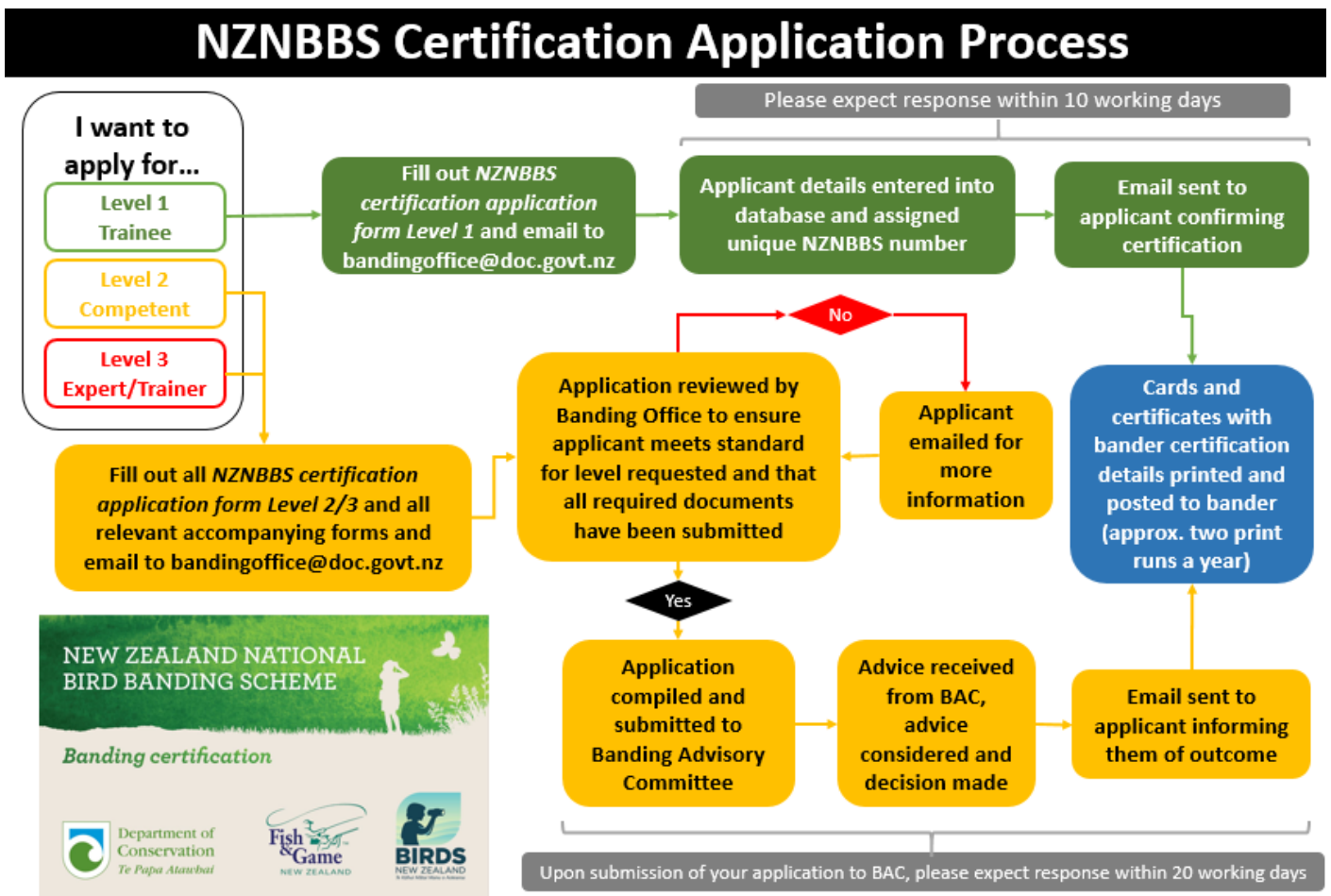
All too soon it was Sunday morning, and time to return home. Unlike the previous day, Sunday was wild and wet, with a very strong westerly howling in from the Tasman sea, but we had to check the estuary one last time... and there, just a few metres off-shore, were a flock of 15 or so bar-tailed godwits (recently arrived from their epic non-stop mega-journey from northern Alaska), with 5 or 6 black-billed gulls (the most threatened gull in the world) tucked in behind them, 3 or 4 Caspian terns behind them, and with a black oystercatcher and a couple of pied oystercatchers added for good measure. Perhaps best of all, two of the godwits wore bands on their legs! Unfortunately, the birds were too far out to read these bands, and just to deepen the mystery, there appears to be some uncertainty over who might have banded these birds in the first place. That aside, it was a thrill to actually see these amazing birds! Anyway, so ended our "getaway" weekend... but we'd only seen a few of the 94 or 95 varieties of birds that call the Manawatu River estuary home - we will obviously have to return!



Certification application process: Admin update

In the interests of transparency, here are some insights as to what happens in the background when the Banding Office receives a certification application. Often, applicants (and their L3 endorsers) focus on their ability to apply a metal band to a bird; however, other aspects are taken into account when certification applications are assessed. These include (but are not limited to):

- The detail and *accuracy* of information in all submitted paperwork (can numbers in different forms be reconciled?)
- Previous evidence of data management eg. submission of banding schedules and stocktakes
- Compliance with Wildlife Act Authority permit conditions
- Demonstrated knowledge of band sizes (relevant to species in question) and materials (for instance, stainless steel versus incoloy)
- Evidence of understanding and complying with the Bander's Code of Conduct
- Demonstrated knowledge of and concern for bird welfare



<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/native-animals/birds/bird-banding/banding-certification-flowchart.pdf>

Evidence of experience and competency

ALL banders applying for L2 or L3 certification must undergo the same application process. Certification cannot be granted without evidence of experience and competency, therefore ALL applicants have to submit the same paperwork outlining their experience (training log or similar) and endorsements from trainers. This applies whether the applicant has only a few years of experience, or 50+ years of experience. As the BAC does not have the capacity to physically observe and assess your skills, the evidence you provide in your paperwork is critical to ensure they can make an informed assessment. Therefore, the more detail, evidence and letters of support you can provide in your application paperwork – the better!

Timeframes for processing applications

It is important to organise your application well in advance of your intended banding sessions/projects – it can take a while to collate all the required information and Level 3 endorsements.

As a guide, we advise that:

- A **Level 1 application** will be processed within 10 working days of receiving the application
- For **Level 2/3 applications**, upon submission of your application to the Banding Advisory Committee (BAC), you should expect a decision within a month. Incomplete applications will delay submission to the BAC (*moral of the story: check that your application is complete and meets all the requirements before submitting*).

Please keep in mind that this process is not designed to impede your progress and activities as a bander, but to ensure that all active operators are sufficiently competent and acting according to Best Practice (as outlined in the Bird Bander's Manual or relevant SOPs). This is ultimately to ensure bird welfare and minimise impact or the risk of injury on birds.

While it may seem like a lot of paperwork and hoops to jump through, our requirements are in line with international standards and are designed to keep bird welfare and safety as the top priority. Furthermore, getting certified with the NZNBBS is entirely *FREE* and only requires renewal every 5 years (unlike many international banding schemes).

Updates for the certification application process

We have also been working hard behind the scenes to refresh the paperwork for the application process in order to make it more streamlined and easy to understand. This will include updated application forms and new prompted endorsement forms to replace the endorsement letters we currently accept for certification applications. Keep an eye out at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/bird-banding/how-to-become-a-certified-bander/> for these new documents, coming early 2020!

Please remember that if in doubt about any aspect of the process, you're welcome to get in touch with us at bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz. We are here to help, and happy to do so!

The art of bird ringing in Portugal - Daniel Santos

“The morning starts cold and the thermometer shows 0 °C, but this does not prevent the participants from getting to work. All the members of the group are volunteers from the most varied professional areas, but they all have something in common, a great fascination with birds and a great desire to contribute to nature conservation.”

For the rest of the story, visit <https://www.danielsantosphoto.com/Blog/The-Art-Of-Bird-Ringing/n-cSbT9v>

Banding projects register; updated Price List and Order Form

As part of the information required for FALCON to function, we will be collating information to create a register of all (current and past) banding projects. Project information will be requested whenever we receive banding records or equipment orders.

The Banding Office [Price List](#) and [Order Form](#) have been updated to reflect this; please also note new prices.

Project name: Project name Wildlife Act Authority: WAA/permit number

Locality of intended use: list localities where bands (metal or colour) will most likely be used

Attach a copy of your project's colour banding schema (how many colours per leg, cohort colours, etc.)

Did you know: bird banding can solve problems! – Frederick C. Lincoln

Frederick C. Lincoln's "INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIRD BANDING" (Department Circular 170, U.S. Dept of Agriculture. Washington: Government Printing Office, April 1921), ends with list of questions that can be answered using bird banding data. Almost a century later, these are still equally as valid – the main requirement being "many returns", so we encourage you to keep submitting these!

PROBLEMS THAT CAN BE SOLVED BY BIRD BANDING.

1. How fast do the individuals of any species travel on their periodic migrations; that is, how many miles per day will any one bird average during these journeys and what is the total time consumed in a trip?

2. Does any one flock continue in the van or is the advance made by successive flocks passing one over the other in alternate periods of rest and flight?

3. Do individuals of any species always follow the same route, and is it identical for both spring and fall flights?

4. Do migrating birds make the same stop-overs every year to feed?

5. How long do birds remain in one locality during the migration, the breeding, or the winter seasons?

6. What is the relation between the breeding and the wintering grounds of individuals; that is, do those birds that breed farthest north winter farthest south, thus jumping over those that occupy the intermediate zone, or do they merely replace the latter individuals as winter residents?

7. Do birds adopt the same nesting area, nest site, and winter quarters during successive seasons?

8. For how many broods will one pair remain mated, and which bird, if not both, is attracted next year to the old nesting site?

9. To what extent do males of a species assist in incubation and brooding?

10. How far from their nests do birds forage for food, and after the young have left the nest, will the parent birds bring them to the feeding and trapping station?

11. To what region do the birds go, particularly the young, that do not return to the vicinity of their original nests?

12. How long do birds live?

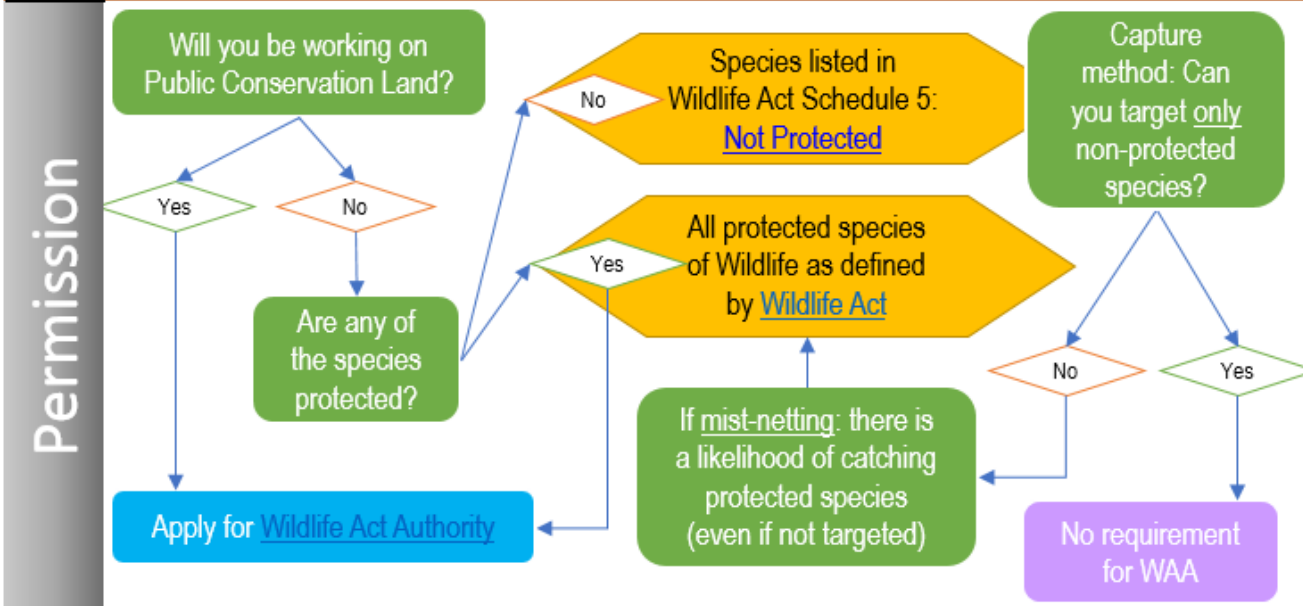
For the solution of these and related problems, it is important that the traps always be set on the original site, for birds already have returned to the same traps through four or five consecutive seasons. Many "returns" will, in the course of time, afford answers to the important problems here presented.

What is the difference between certification and permission?

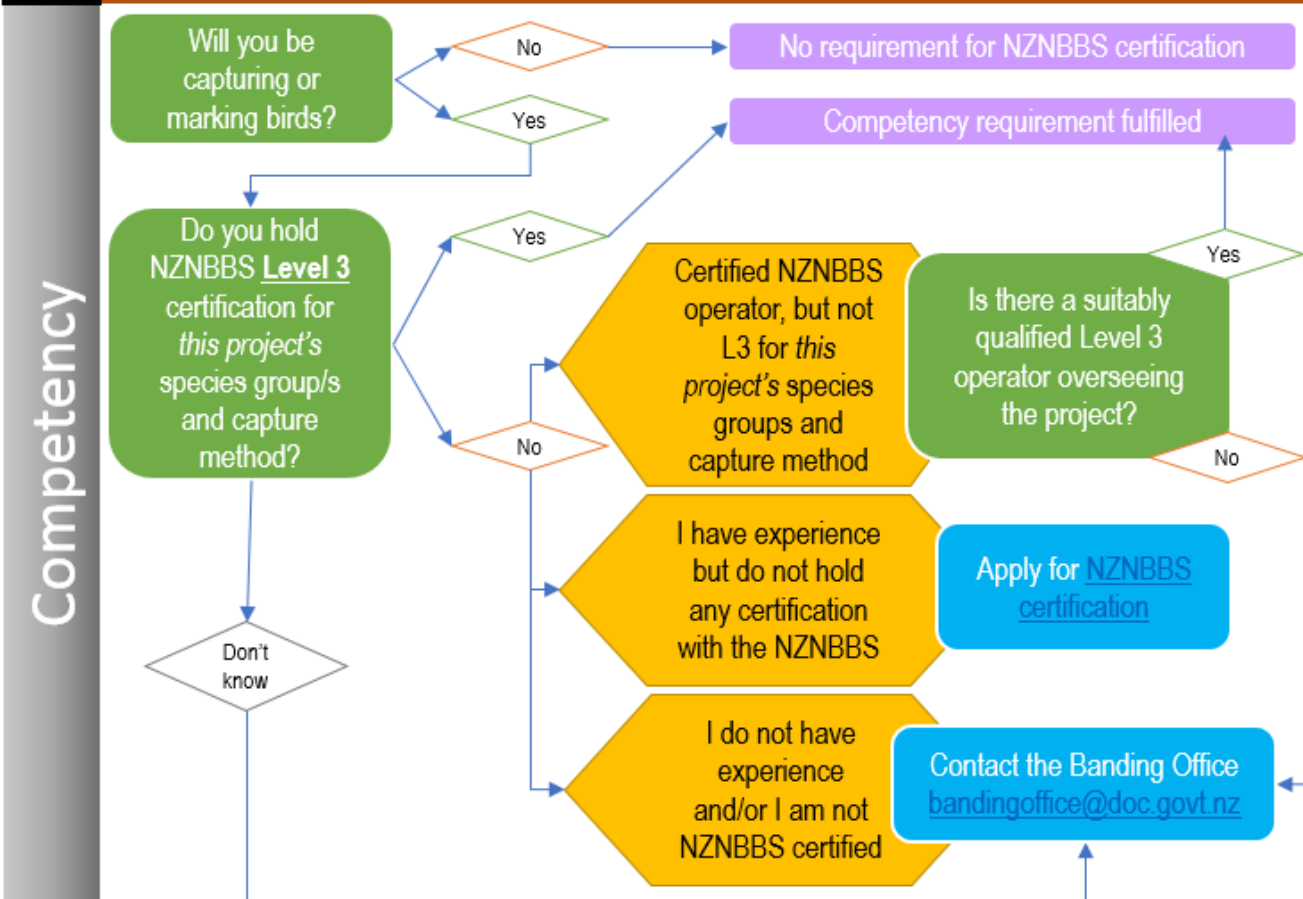
Capture / handling / marking / sampling of birds: Permission vs Competency

Note: permission/authority is required in addition to competency/certification

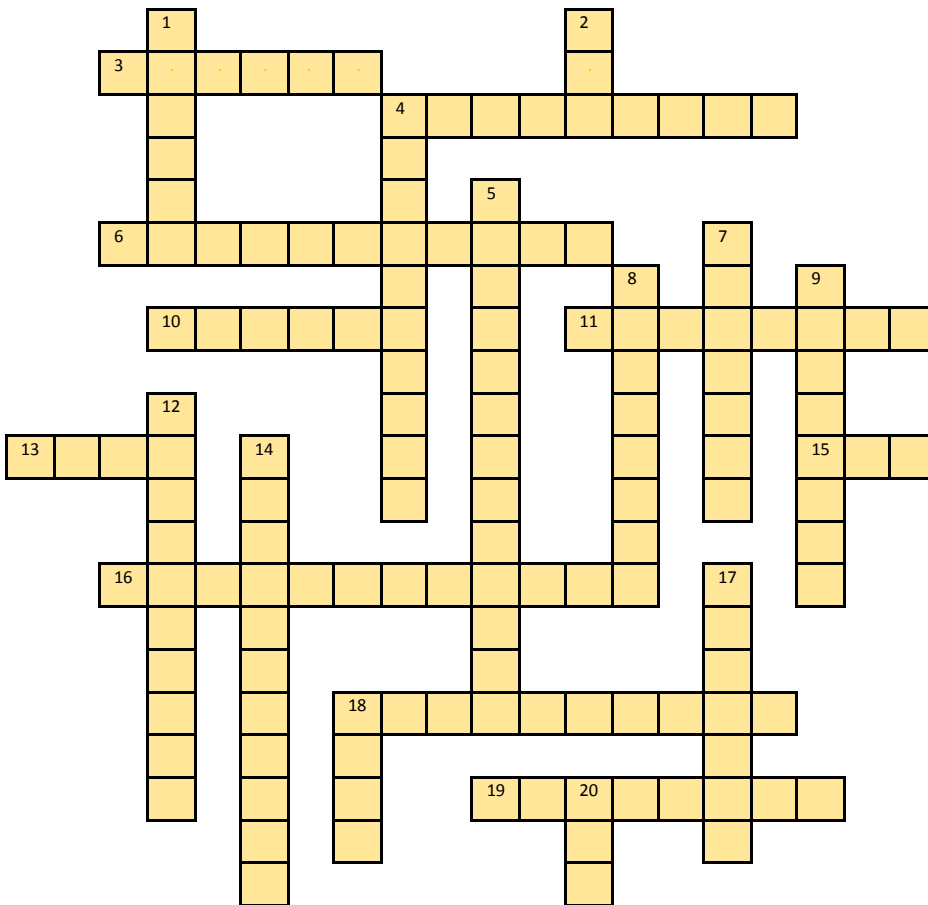
a) Do I need a Wildlife Act Authority?



b) Do I need to be registered as a Certified Operator?



Puzzled



ACROSS	
3:	Australasian bittern
4:	Large oceanic bird
6:	The act of saying that you approve or support someone's certification application
10:	Chick, nestling
11:	Undomesticated animal species
13:	A collection of records arranged in a convenient order
15:	Banding Office eXcel
16:	A notice or announcement
18:	Denoting a system whose origins and design are freely accessible (2 words: 4, 6)
19:	A place of settlement or activity
DOWN	
1:	NZ bird of prey
2:	NZ's only native land mammal
4:	User-friendly, within reach
5:	Process of providing someone with an official document attesting to their level of achievement
7:	Native to a particular locality or region
8:	NZ's smallest bird
9:	NZNBBS newsletter
12:	Mohua
14:	The study of birds
17:	Type of pliers used to remove metal bands
18:	The shape of an egg
20:	Significant predator of birds and lizards

Answer to previous Puzzle: Count the manu

How many Māori bird names could you build using these letters?

w	h	o
k	e	i
a	r	u

- whio (blue duck)
- kererū (wood pigeon)
- kākā (bush parrot)
- kākāriki (parakeet)
- ruru (morepork)
- kārearea (falcon)
- hihi (stitchbird)
- kea (mountain parrot)
- hoiho (yellow-eyed penguin)
- kororā (little penguin)
- kiwi
- roa, roroa (great spotted kiwi)
- weka
- riroriro (grey warbler)
- kāki (black stilt)
- weweia (dabchick)
- kōkako
- kāhu (harrier)
- kuaka (bar-tailed godwit)
- karoro (black-backed gull)
- ōi (grey-faced petrel)