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## New Checklist = New Species list in FALCON!

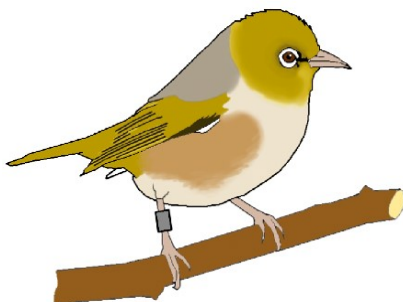
Following the updated [Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand](#), the Banding Scheme will soon update the [FALCON Bird Banding Database](#). This will be used for data uploads, species searches and inform band size error checking. The next iteration of the [Bander's Data BOX](#) will therefore also use the same list.

Changes include:

- 26 taxa not previously listed
- 87 changes to species names (including changed taxonomy or spelling)
- 46 changes to common names (including updating Te Reo names)
- 143 edits in the comments field (explaining changes made)

You can [download the updated species and band size list](#) from the [FALCON Dashboard](#).

## Fun FALCON fact



@mieke\_masterpieces

Tauhou go by many names such as Silvereye, Waxeye, White-eye, *Zosterops lateralis* etc. While only colonising New Zealand in the 1850s this wee native bird has been extremely successful and it is commonly seen throughout the country, especially when flocking in winter.

According to our online database, [FALCON](#), 124,852 individuals have been banded in New Zealand. The earliest marking event is from 27<sup>th</sup> July 1941 in Masterton and the most recent marking event was a flock of 23 birds caught and banded on 18 September in Waitarua.

If you have Tauhou banding data, but unsure if it is in FALCON please get in touch! [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz)

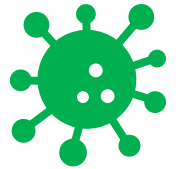
# Avian Influenza

Please ensure that you keep informed regarding the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak in the Northern Hemisphere - if this is detected in New Zealand, we *may need to restrict or suspend banding activities with immediate effect*. All banders are reminded to take particular care to **adopt the highest hygiene standards possible** while capturing and marking any species at any location or visiting colonies of waders or seabirds.

**Download:** [MPI & DOC: Bird Flu advisory for wildlife managers and bird banders](#)

**Download:** [World Organisation for Animal Health - Avian influenza and Wildlife Risk Management](#)

Biosecurity New Zealand has primary responsibility for exotic disease surveillance and investigation of unusual mortality clusters in animals. For more information see: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/how-to-find-report-and-prevent-pests-and-diseases/surveillance-programmes/>



## What should you do?

- Maintain a heightened awareness of disease risk when working with wildlife.
- Always maintain good biosecurity and hygiene practices to prevent spread and protect yourself.
  - Scrub and disinfect all your equipment, boots, and clothing between sites/species. - *Including equipment used for capture, handling, marking, holding (e.g., transport boxes).*
  - Use clean bird bags for each bird to avoid faecal contamination.
  - Clean your hands and equipment between handling each bird e.g., alcohol wipe.
  - Employ good personal hygiene.
  - For captive birds, undertake the measures above and deter wild birds from access to aviary or food/water sources, and/or treat water sources.
- Report sick or dying birds to the **Exotic Pest and Disease hotline 0800 80 99 66**
  - If a significant number of birds are observed in a group sick or dying, report it.
  - Record a GPS reading or other precise location information.
  - Take photographs and/or videos of sick and dead birds.
  - Identify the species and estimate the numbers affected.
  - Note the total number of birds present, and how many of these are sick or freshly dead.
  - Follow Biosecurity New Zealand instructions for handling of sick or dead birds.

## Further resources:

- [BTO's guidelines for hygiene best practice](#) (link to pdf)
- <https://www.woah.org/en/disease/avian-influenza/> (link to website)
- [World Organisation for Animal Health Q&A Avian Influenza](#) (link to pdf)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/wildbirds.htm> (link to website)
- [ACAP Guideline for working with albatrosses and petrels](#) (link to pdf)
- [MPI Avian influenza surveillance programme annual report](#) (link to pdf)

## Re-using bands

Under no circumstances should metal bird bands be re-used on birds because re-used bands are weaker and pose a welfare risk to birds (refer to [Feb 2022 BirDBanD](#) article).

However, that does not mean that bands can't be re-used and attached to models or toy birds!

A recent flipper band found in Kaikoura was proudly attached to a toy penguin by its finder. It is a great re-enactment and a lovely way to display a very special beach find!



Photo credit: Andy Owen

## Buried alive!

As the clean-up continues in Nelson and other affected areas, spare a thought for our wildlife. One Little Blue Penguin in Waiharakeke Bay had a near death experience by being buried alive when the hidey spot it was using became part of a 20-metre-long landslide. Fortunately for the penguin, DOC was at the site restoring the track by digging out the slip, when out of nowhere the penguin appeared.

Seemingly none the worse for wear, it still tried to peck at one of the ranger's hands when being extracted. After a once-over health assessment, the penguin was released and waddled straight to the beach, no doubt in search of a meal, and perhaps a lotto ticket!



*The very lucky Little Blue and the landslide. Read more about this story on the [DOC Facebook page](#).*

## Checking in for a check-up – Annemieke Kregting

On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022, I was catching up on correspondence and data work (never a dull moment). I was behind my laptop in the clinic with the doors open. Suddenly I heard a swoosh, and a kererū flew inside. Landing just a metre away from me. Somewhat bewildered I looked at it and thought. “What on earth?!”

He wasn't moving and I noticed an odd-looking wing position. I decided to catch him and check him out. Well, that was easy, I just picked him up. While checking him out I also noticed an ID band on his fluffy leg. A recent patient perhaps? I took the number down and left him in a cage so I could check the history on my database. Sure, enough I was right. “Jill” came in last August with significant fractures from hitting a window. He/she spend two months recovering at KBRT (Kūaotunu Bird Rescue Trust) and was banded and released again.

Not often you get the opportunity for a re-check, so I decided to X-ray him again to check up on how the fractures had healed. I had other kererū needing X-rays as well, so he came along for the same. It all looked great and obviously this kererū knew it was time for a check-up!



*Jill the kererū, right image shows a good mend! Images from Annemieke Kregting.*

## Birds NZ Conference wrap up

As anticipated the 2022 [Birds NZ Conference](#) in Christchurch was fantastic and it was lovely to meet with so many banders in one place.

Banding Office staff Michelle and Annemieke both delivered presentations, and the Bander's gathering (an informal meeting) had a good crowd in attendance. It was great to see how many people are interested in monitoring the birds of Aotearoa and ensuring bird welfare and succession of banding skills. We hope to meet with many of you at the [2023 BirdsNZ conference](#) in Taranaki.

A particular highlight for this year's conference was our own Banding Advisory Committee member, Graeme Taylor, being presented the prestigious [Birds NZ Robert Falla Memorial Award](#). This award recognises Graeme's significant and long-term contributions to ornithology and avian conservation in New Zealand.

It was evident how well-deserved this recognition was for Graeme (especially for those who attended the conference) as most (if not all) seabird presentations referred to Graeme's assistance or work. Further information on Graeme's achievements can be found [here](#).



*Graeme accepting his award.  
Image by Annemieke*

## FALCON shout-outs



### **Most engaged bander:**

We would like to commend the immense and meticulous efforts of “Bander Number One”, Adrian Riegen (his Bander ID is NZNBBS 0001), in working towards reconciling records of over 30,000 bands spanning more than three decades.

### **Project with the most spreadsheets submitted this year**

Pūkoro Mirinda Passerine Banding (Bander Number One again 😊): Fourteen spreadsheets, totalling 1787 records – all error-free!

### **Project with most Single Record Form submissions this year**

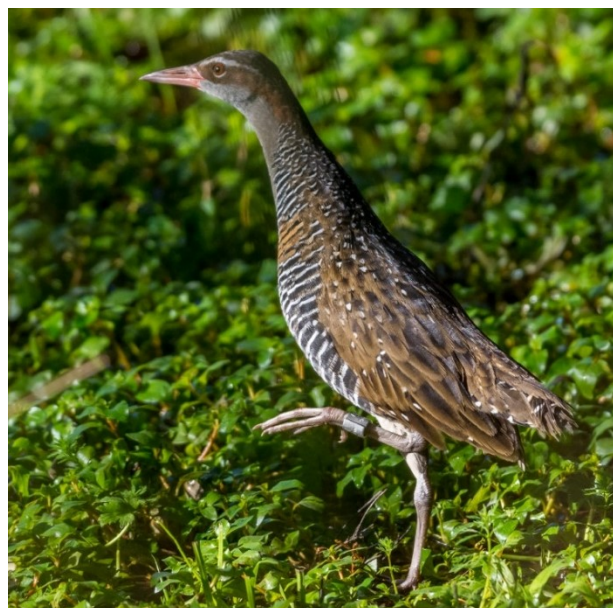
Bird banding studies Canterbury: 893 records submitted one-by-one by Peter Reese and his banding team, using the Single Record Form (which conveniently has a ‘duplicate’ function to speed up this type of data entry).

## The story of a banded banded rail

So far this year, eight Banded rails / moho pererū have been rehabilitated at [BirdCare Aotearoa](#), Auckland.

Rather than release them in urban predator-filled environments where they were found, the last batch of birds were banded and released in a native predator-controlled environment, [Matuku Link](#) wetland in the Waitakere Ranges.

At least one banded banded rail decided that it did not want to live in this paradise, and within one week had traversed 15 km back to industrial Auckland where a member of the public spotted and reported it.



*One of the banded banded rails – image by Stefan Marks taken on the day of release at Matuku Link.*

## Banding Workshops

Birding and bird banding are activities that bring people of all ages and backgrounds together. In our endeavour to enthuse the next generation, the Banding Office has presented banding workshops to Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and High School students, Birds NZ members and registered banders from all walks of life. Despite being indoor activities (no live birds involved, only puppets and 3-D printed bird legs), these have proved very popular.

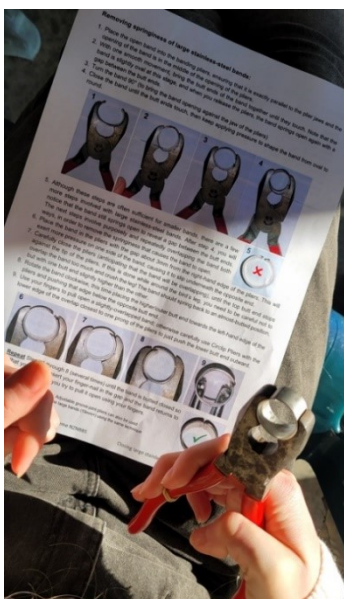
### A noisy flock of curious colour-banded kids



On a recent trip to Rotorua, Michelle was invited to give a banding workshop to 43 Year 5-8 students at a local school after one student found a gannet band on a beach and reported it to the Banding Office. In preparing for the workshop, the classes prepared posters on native birds, including learning about their diet, habitat, predators, prey, lifespan, migration, etc. [see next page for some excerpts], which had them in the right frame of mind to learn about bird banding. Coloured strips of paper attached around the students' legs, coupled with various games, taught them how to record colour combinations (left leg then right leg, top to bottom) while sharing an interesting fact about their favourite species. A mist-net held up by the teachers stood up well to having bird puppets thrown at it and then carefully extracted, and the display of banding equipment ended up with at least a few students being banded. Even after the school holidays, the students still remembered the **first rule of bird banding: don't do it – unless there is a Purpose, a Permit, People that are competent, and Please send all the data to the Banding Office.**

### A keen collection of trainee banders

The Banding Office then teamed up with [Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust](#) to host two banding workshops for registered banders; available spaces were fully booked within a few days of advertising.



The focus was on providing an overview of the Banding Scheme, followed by a practical session where banders had the opportunity to practice band closure and removal using different band sizes. The large stainless-steel bands used on species from Kererū (10 mm internal diameter) to Roroa (22 mm) require a special technique to ensure a proper closure, and practicing doing this using 19 mm bands (that fit well on fingers) has resulted in another flock of banded humans!

Feedback from these workshops – though very positive overall – had a common theme: participants wanted more time, more equipment, and more Level 3 banders to team up with. If you would like to host or present a banding workshop, get in touch with us at [bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz).



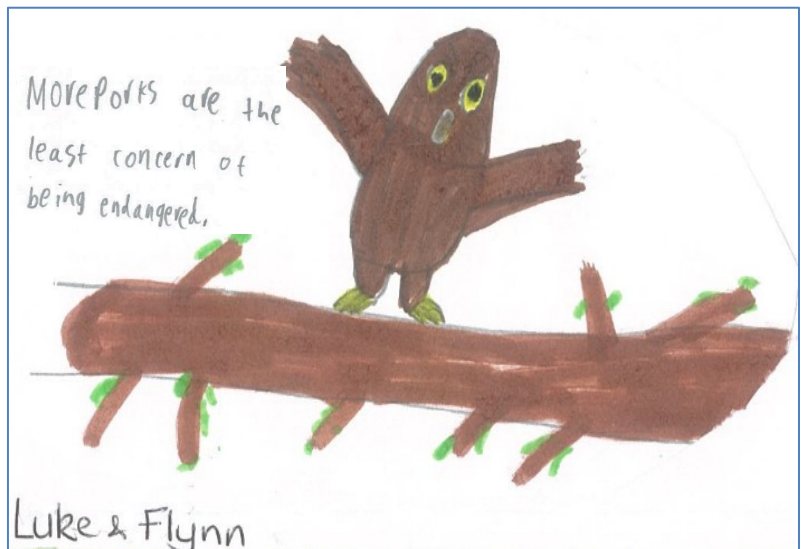
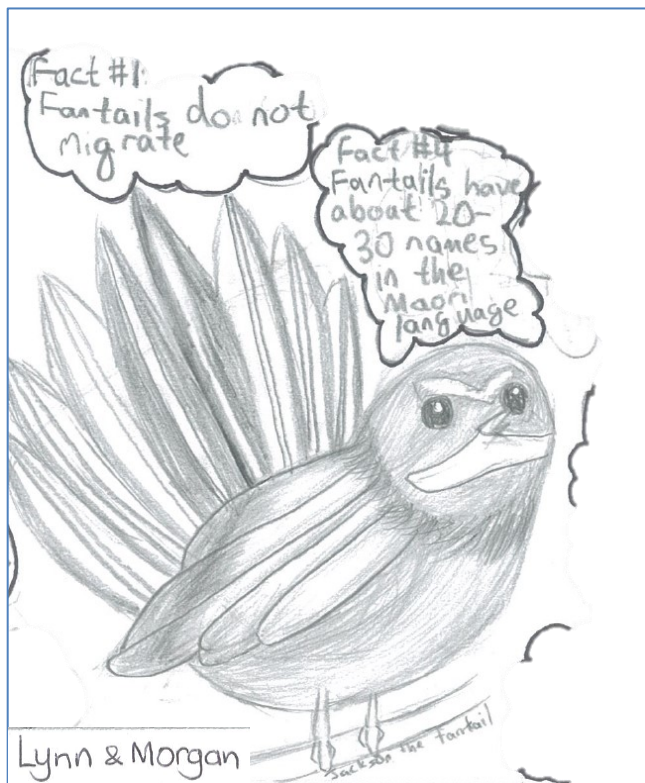
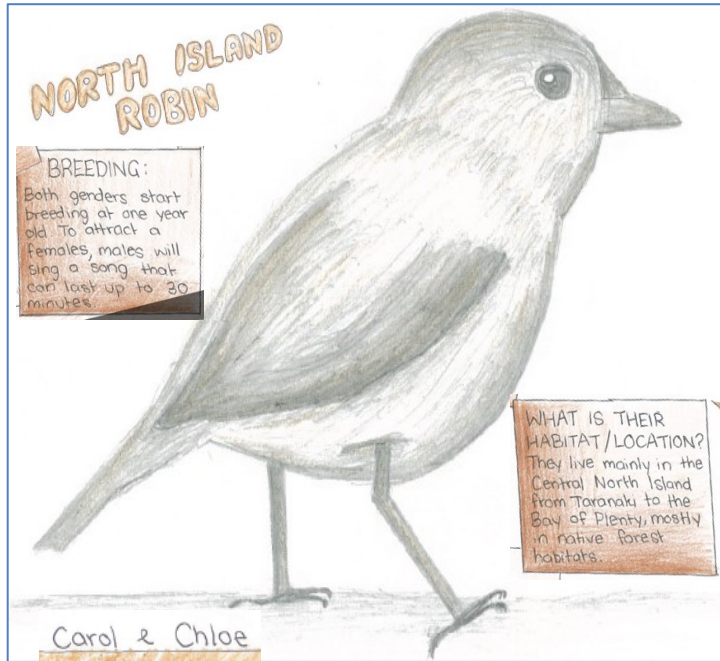


(A Kiwi is considered vulnerable not extinct)

Prey or PREDATOR?

Worms, woodlice, millipedes, centipedes, slugs, snails, spiders and insects.

Stoats, weasels, Dogs, Possums, Cats, Vehicles and ferrets.





## With a leg to stand on! – Marie-Louise Myburgh

These feet belong to a beautiful, black-billed gull, which started out with two legs. However, the image also demonstrated a sad case of a fishing line injury. This bird (now a veteran at 17 years old) was sighted and photographed at the Maraetai wharf. It was banded E-210387, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and from various reported sightings the amputation must have happened in 2019. It has been seen in the wharf area several times in the last two years, happily mingling with other gulls and various other water birds and people in the area.

Image by Marie-Louise Myburgh

## Having a hoot of a time!

Late shifts in Ōpōtiki are never dull, but this one turned into more of a ‘hoot’ than usual

In between dealing with two traffic matters where drivers blew over 1000mgs/l and dealing with a serious crash, Senior Constables Marty Madsen and Willy Searle's night was interrupted by this feathered friend who needed a bit of assistance.

It had been a busy night racing from one job to another when Willy came across the wee morepork in the middle of the road after it had been clipped by a car. After initially mistaking the native bird for a hedgehog, Willy rescued the stunned bird off the road.



“I put him in the car and shot back into town as Marty is a bit of a bird whisperer,” says Willy. “By the time I got back to town he started to warm up and flap around a bit.”

After recovering enough to pose for the camera and giving Willy a nip of thanks, the bird was well enough to be returned to Waioatahe Beach and released back into the wild.

While it was all jokes on the night, Willy reckons his close-up encounter was “a bit of a privilege really” and definitely made for a welcome break in the steady stream of jobs.

Story taken from the New Zealand Police [facebook page](#).

## Third time's the charm: Another PAP-date



Photo: Liliane Guisgant

You may remember the Banded Dotterel with the leg flag “PAP” from the [September 2020](#) and [May 2021 BirDBanD newsletters](#). PAP, our favourite traveling banded dotterel, has once again successfully come back to Eastbourne.

This is the third consecutive year that PAP has wintered in New Caledonia, and who can blame him! A tropical island getaway is a great plan during winter, especially if you can avoid airline fees!

There are concerns that PAP may not have such a relaxing holiday next year, as the locality at Noumea in New Caledonia that PAP frequents for winter is destined to become a marina and will not be available for waders to utilise.

## Party Party Kakerori! – Hugh Robertson

In 1987, Hugh was working with Dr Rod Hay at the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, who had previously identified the kākērori as one of the most endangered birds in the South Pacific. Rod and Hugh hatched a plan to save the kākērori from extinction. By the time Hugh came to DOC in 1989, they had set up a recovery programme for the birds, whose population was dwindling with just 29 remaining. They had become one of the ten most rare birds in the world.

Kākērori, otherwise known as the Rarotonga monarch, is endemic to the Cook Islands and is preyed on by ship rats. Through the annual efforts of the recovery programme – a mix of locals, ex-pats, and volunteers using rat control methods developed in Aotearoa – the kākērori population reached 100 in 1995. Hugh and Lynn Adams of our Biodiversity Group are hoping to improve on the 500+ in the COVID-delayed census, which is finishing up right now.



*Some of the Kākērori team (including DOC volunteers Kate Simister from Westport on the far left, Hugh, and Cinzia Vestena from Kerikeri in the centre) along with Cook Islands National Environment Service staff, and staff from the NGO, Te Ipukarea Society. Photo supplied by Kate Simister*

The Cook Islands might sound like your dream holiday location, but Hugh says the mahi is pretty similar to what a lot of our own biodiversity rangers do in the field in Aotearoa.

"It's a lot of sweat, mud, and mosquitoes," says Hugh.

Many of the species conservation problems on South Pacific islands stem from the same ship rats and feral cats that have wreaked havoc on native bird populations in New Zealand. The recovery programme team transferred rat control lessons learnt on our motu to a different setting and upskill locals in activities like mist-netting and colour-banding. Hugh notes that there's a high turnover of local staff so he has conned DOC people to join them in beautiful Rarotonga – without mentioning those mozzies or the steep hills!

Hugh's travel is usually funded by external organisations and sometimes self-funded, and he's been known to use his annual leave to go and work on the recovery programme.

"One year DOC paid my airfares while I took leave, and the then-DDG was very concerned that I shouldn't mention this Pacific "holiday" arrangement when I was interviewed by Radio New Zealand!"

Hugh says that the best thing about working on the recovery programme in Rarotonga is the experiences he has with the people he works with, who share a passion for conservation and this special endearing bird.

"One of the quirky things is that, like me, the kākērori changes colour from orange to grey with increasing age. The kākērori has orange plumage in its first two years, then a mix of orange and grey in its third year, and finally grey from four years onwards. This age-related change was not known until we started our work – it was thought that males were grey, and females were orange. This misconception arose because rats killed most nesting females when they were incubating or brooding chicks at night, so older males often ended up with a much younger partner each year.



*Young kākērori. Photo by Siva Gounder*



“Kākerōri, especially young orange ones, are attracted by human voices. When we’re working in remote areas, the less inhibited of us call out phrases like ‘*party, party, kākerōri*’ to attract them to the vicinity of our mist nets and playback systems. “We had a bit of a party when their population got to 100!”

The recovery programme is a partnership between DOC and the Takitumu Conservation Area Project, with Support from the Cook Islands National Environment Service, Cook Islands Natural Heritage Project and Te Ipukarea Society, an NGO like Forest and Bird.

“It’s really encouraging to see so many organisations and dedicated people tackling conservation problems in the South Pacific,” says Hugh.

“When we started this project in 1987, very little bird conservation work was happening in the region and many species were going down the gurgler. The success of our project has encouraged others to manage more endangered bird species – the Rimatara lorikeet was translocated to Atiu island soon after it became apparent that our translocation of kākerōri to Atiu was a success, and in Tahiti a closely related species’ population was down to the 20s but has now reached over 100 birds through intensive rat and exotic bird control.



*Hugh with the l’oi. Photo credit: Alanna Smith, Te Ipukarea Society*

“It’s especially encouraging to see the New Zealand methods of eradicating rats from Islands being applied to eradicate rats from larger and larger atolls in the South Pacific to allow nesting seabirds to once again thrive.”

DOC is currently in discussions with Cook Islands authorities about the possibility of attempting the eradication of rats from some atolls in the northern Cooks.

Check out [Te Tauranga o te Kākerōri on Facebook](#), and this video from [Cook Islands TV News](#) about the work Hugh and other volunteers do on the ground.

We’re eagerly awaiting the results of the kākerōri census that Hugh, Lynn and other DOC, ex-DOC and Cook Island volunteers are currently doing in the Cook Islands. So far this season at least 130 new birds have been banded this year. The total banded population sits at over 600, so it’s certainly looking promising compared with the 29 birds alive in 1989. It’s worth mentioning that most of the wraparound colour bands put on Kākerōri were rolled by Sandy (Banding Office); with each band taking up to 10 mins to perfect and each bird wearing 3 to 4 bands, it’s not just the field team who have

significantly contributed to this project.

The field team also had the unexpected by-catch of a l’oi (Rarotongan Starling), a relatively elusive bird, which they are hoping to resight in future years. It’s great to see the knowledge from New Zealand success stories being shared and creating positive trajectories of other Pacific islands and at-risk taonga species.

## **Native bird whakatauki**



@mieke\_masterpieces

**Homai te kāeaea kia toro  
- māhangatia  
Ko te kāhu te whakaora –  
waiho kia rere ana!**

This historic whakatauki (saying) translated means: The karearea must be snared, and the Kahu saved – let it fly on!



@mieke\_masterpieces

Of course, we equally love all raptor species today. However, at the time of creation for this whakatauki the Kahu (Harrier) was believed to be noble like a chief, while the Karearea (Falcon) was seen as bold, assertive and treacherous. This saying suggests that people should take care to identify their allies and their enemies, and not blindly assume that everyone is working with you.

## ***IOU Bird Marking Committee meeting - Michelle Bradshaw***

I attended the **International Ornithologists' Union Bird Marking Committee Meeting** (online at 2am on Saturday 3 September), chaired by Judit Szabo and co-chaired by Gudrun Hilgerloh. There were 33 participants representing 23 Banding Schemes.

As a Working Group of the IOU, the [Bird Marking Committee](#)'s mission is to *enhance international collaboration and standardization on bird marking and associated data management issues of mutual concern by promoting communication, coordination and sharing of data, tools and best practices among bird marking schemes to achieve maximum conservation value while incorporating high ethical and scientific standards.*

After a round of introductions, the main meeting discussed a draft Program Standards Manual, as well as several aspects of managing bird marking Schemes, including:

- Data sharing and standardised codes
- Collating historic data
- Coordination of colour marking (such as [Flyway schemes](#))
- Encouraging banders to use the [Movebank data repository](#) to store electronic movement data
- Bander training processes and certification/competency assessments

Prompted by Antonio Celis-Murillo from the American [Bird Banding Laboratory](#) (he 'put me on the spot' a few times), I had the opportunity to provide input regarding:

- The [FALCON Bird Banding System](#) and how it keeps track of bands, banders, and banded birds, including auxiliary markers (colour bands, tags etc.) and ancillary data (moult, morphometrics)
- Data management and the Project-focused approach
- [Banding certification](#), including the option of restricted certification for narrow-focus projects
- 3-D printed bird legs as a tool for bander training and workshops
- Best Practice Manuals and how these tie in with requirements regarding Animal Ethics Approvals

For those that have a broader interest in the management of Bird Banding Schemes around the world, have a look at these links:

- The European Site for reporting colour bands: <https://submit.cr-birding.org/>
- A great example of use of banding data is the new Eurasian-African atlas <https://migrationatlas.org/>
- The North American Banding Council <https://nabanding.net/> website has manuals for various species groups, as well as [photographic guidelines](#)
- EURING exchange code: <https://euring.org/data-and-codes/euring-codes>
- Web training site for ageing/sexing birds in North America: <https://www.natureinstruct.org/piranga>
- Waterbird Populations Portal <https://wpp.wetlands.org/>.
- [Banders Without Borders Celebrates One Year of Making Connections Around the World | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)

## ***A Tale of two Deniers: Nylon versus Polyester Mist Nets***

Have you ever wondered what the difference is between Nylon and Polyester mist-nets? These synthetic polymers vary in composition, with [nylon](#) being slightly stronger and [polyester](#) more resistant to shrinking and stretching. Denier refers to the mass of a 9 m length of thread.

In a letter submitted to *Bat Research News* ([Volume 50:3 Fall 2009, page 57](#)), Arndt and Schaez report their microscopic findings comparing [Avinet's](#) 50-denier nylon versus 75-denier polyester mist-nets. It seems the polyester was 50% more dense than the nylon, but recommended field testing in terms of bat detectability.

## Updated documents

### Ordering bands/equipment

- [Price list](#)
- [Order form](#)

### BirdsNZ Checklist now incorporated into updated Species list:

- [Updated species and band size list](#)

### Banding Field Sheet:

- Download printable [Banding Field Sheet - PDF](#)
- Download editable [Banding Field Sheet - Excel](#)

### Level 1 and Level 2 operators: keep your Training Log up to date:

- Download a copy of the updated [Operator Training Log](#)

### Applying for bander certification or upgrade? Here's all you need to know!

- Download the [Certification Application Process guidance document](#)

## “He aha tēnei?” / “what is this?” Real life puzzles from behind the scenes: Coloured mist-net bags

The mysteries continue. Mist-netting operators may have wondered why each mist-netting bag is coloured, pink, blue, black, yellow etc. Yes, there is a reason, it's not random! Do you know why?



## Answer to: “He aha tēnei?” – Addresses on bands

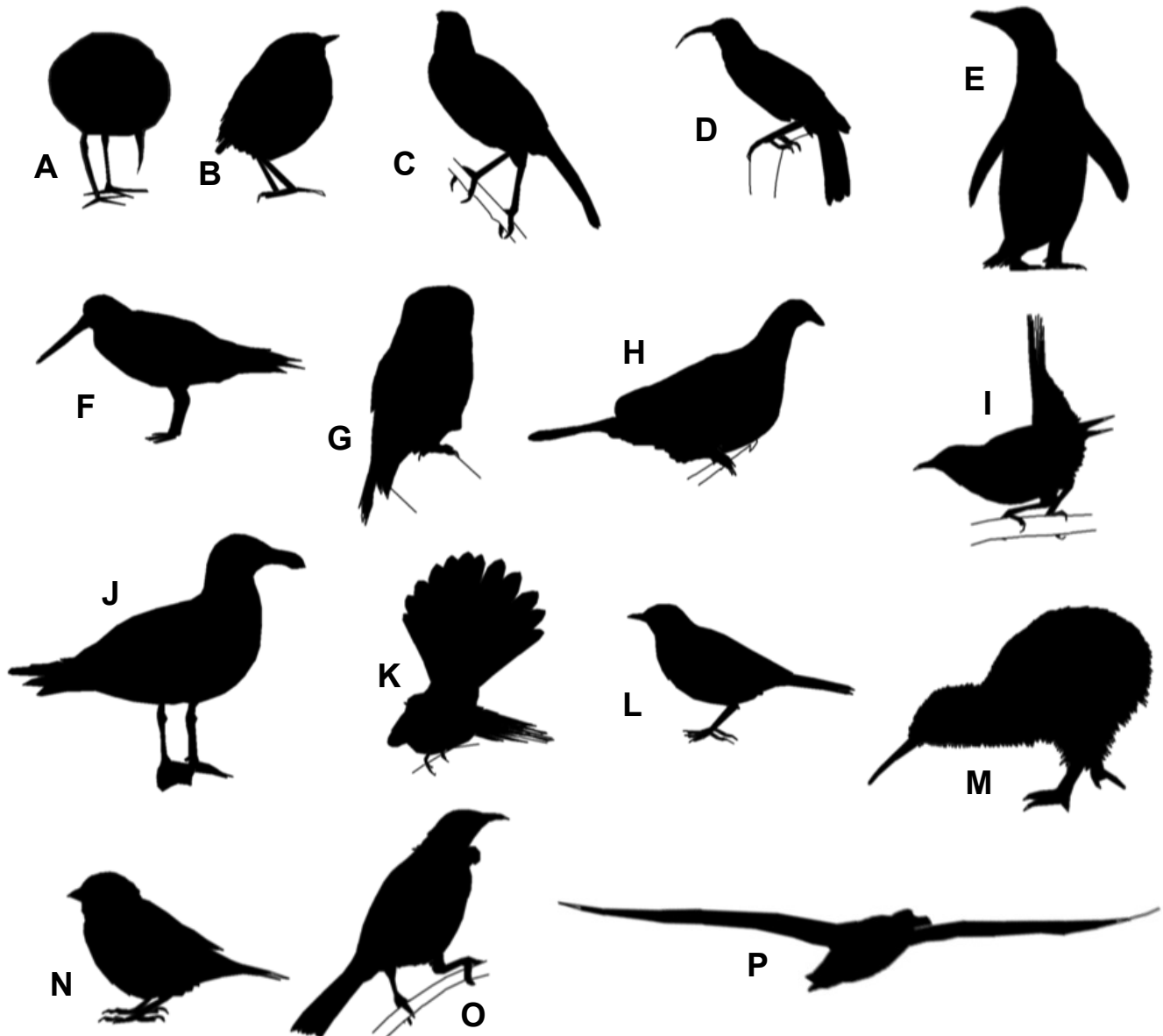
Most of the earliest bird banding which occurred in New Zealand was through the acclimatisation societies. The NZ National Bird Banding Scheme was started in 1950 by the Ornithological Society, and the scheme was passed to the National/ Dominion Museum, before coming to the Department of Conservation in 1987. Because of these changes, the bands have different addresses, depending on when they were made. Every band has a unique code, meaning you can still use these older addressed bands, so long as they are in an un-used condition. The current address on the most recently ordered bands is to send to the DOC PO BOX 108, WGTN.



## Puzzled: Who's that Manu?



Sometimes the birds just don't behave, you catch a glimpse of the shape, but don't actually see any details. Being able to quickly identify birds by shape (and size) in the field is important for monitoring and 5-minute bird counts! Have a go at the birds below:



## Puzzled: Answers to Who said NZ birds are drab??

- |                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A. Tūī                  | F. Kōtare / Sacred Kingfisher  |
| B. Kākāpō               | G. Mohua / Yellowhead          |
| C. Red-crowned Kākāriki | H. Hīhi / Stitchbird           |
| D. Takahē               | I. Kererū / NZ Wood pigeon     |
| E. Tīeke / Saddleback   | J. Pīpīwharau / Shining Cuckoo |