

# TE WAIHORA/LAKE ELLESMERE WETLAND BIRD COUNT 21 FEBRUARY 2015

Average lake level (20/2/2015) was 0.55m and the lake was closed to the sea. Weather (Christchurch Airport): Minimum 11°C, maximum 23°C, wind (S) peak gust 43kmh; early morning fog, clearing as wind turned southerly.

Species	Kaitorete Tip	Kaitorete Spit	Birdlings Flat A	Birdlings Flat B	Kaituna Lagoon	Halswell Flats B	Halswell Flats A	Osbornes	Eastern Greenpark	Embankment Road	Yarrrs Flat	Selwyn	Rennies Bay	Doyleston	Harts Creek	Lakeside	Taumutu	SPECIES TOTALS 2015	SPECIES TOTALS 2014	SPECIES TOTALS 2013			
Aus Crested Grebe							1											1	3	2			
Black Shag	21	55	2	53	11	17	8	1	30	7	8	8	39	16	16	42	5	339	615	396	Shags		
Pied Shag		6	3	4	1	7	8	3	1	2	4	11	25		8	1	53	137	240	159			
Little Shag												1						6	51	28			
Spotted Shag																		0	482	4		910	585
White Heron													2		2			4	3	5		Heron	
White-faced Heron	1	1	1		2	2		1	1	49	1		7	2	6	3	1	78	92	99			
Australasian Bittern																		0	0	1			
Royal Spoonbill	6	22	3	64	4	215	145	1	3		8	95	42	2	45	18	16	689	771	871	966		531
Mute Swan		1																9	14	6	Waterfowl		
Black Swan	55	716	65	242	42	482	593	8	1106	341	726	526	248	154	73	95	56	5528	7473	8598			
Feral Goose						5	15						211	14		45	1	291	443	530			
Canada Goose	35	51	121	315	97	219	59		50	35	223	643	926	137	34	367		3312	3777	5576			
Cape Barren Goose												1						3					
Paradise Shelduck		3	54	580	164	1056	97		144	64	79	15	1028	844	418	2		4548	5148	4163			
duck sp		607	32	110														749	696	1942			
Mallard (& Grey Duck hybrids)	31	354	30	99	262	61	158		68	17	212	8	12	428	432	1316	122	3610	5173	5916			
Australasian Shoveler		1788	70		40		32		1	3	122	1		7	2	4		2070	5893	5173			
Grey Teal	222	1561	151	82	840	3133	380		1144	714	3222	373	1077	164	48		34	13145	12504	13102			
grey teal/shoveler	202	2124		136		472			13									2947	780				
New Zealand Scaup									7								50	70	36282	12		41913	82
Australasian Harrier	3	5	3	8	9	3	7	2	2	4	5	2	6	5	6	5	1	76	67	67			
Pukeko				26	26	10		1						10	12	5		90	97	114			
Variable Oystercatcher																		0	2		NZ waders		
Pied Oystercatcher	3				2	10			1							2		18	17	33			
Pied Stilt	12	198	6	172	320	1821	7	7	11	431	687	58	139	46	28	827	7	4777	4959	3726			
Black Stilt						2												2	2	2			
Hybrid Stilt						1						1						2	0	4			
Banded Dotterel	226	167	67	280	9	117	89		906	130	92	161	70			11		2352	1496	1228			
Wrybill		1									2	162	2					167	243	429			
Spur-winged Plover	15	55	4	32	34	2				8				4	7	4	4	169	7487	328	7047	197	5619
Turnstone																		0	4	1	Arctic waders		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		3																3	18	12			
Red-necked Stint		3									22	36						61	44	34			
Bar-tailed Godwit		11		3		175												189	120	436			
Pacific Golden Plover		10																10	45	7			
Red Knot		40																40	44	9			
Curlew Sandpiper		3		3								3						9	18	2			
Pectoral Sandpiper																		0	6	3			
Sanderling		1																1	2				
Common Greenshank																		0	313	1		302	
Black-backed Gull	67	42	2	13	8	58	27	6	127	2	16	24	15	339	19	34	13	812	691	1733	Gulls & terns		
Red-billed Gull	1	7		2		3			8	3	17				2			43	38	57			
Black-billed Gull	2	19	2	46	4	38	27	5	42	24	30	10	90	3	41	22	28	433	2359	829			
Black-fronted Tern	2	16		1									3					23	61	46			
White-fronted Tern	10																38	48	175	59			
Caspian Tern	5	10	1	2			38		9	1	1	2	41	1		1	1	113	386	405			
Gull-billed Tern	1	1									1?							2	1474	16		3726	7
New Zealand Kingfisher								1				1	1	3	4			10	6	4			
Welcome Swallow		23	38	56	45	175	32			67	300	70	26	23	44			899	127		Not recorded		
Site totals	920	7904	655	2329	1920	8084	1723	36	3679	1902	5777	2212	4010	2202	1271	2804	430	47858	55164	55728			

The 2015 survey occurred during a period of very dry weather and prolonged low lake levels. Consequently, it was noted that some bird species (most notably Black Swan, Canada Goose, Black-backed Gull, Black-billed Gull and White-faced Heron had moved off the lake and were feeding in farmland inland from the lake shore - particularly on irrigated or ploughed paddocks. As these birds were not within the delineated area of the Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere bird counts, they were not included in the formal survey, although the presence and size of some of these flocks (but not all) were noted by some of the survey teams. In future when count data from this current series of Te Waihora bird counts are analysed and reported on, it should be noted that aberrantly low numbers of certain species in the Feb 2015 count are likely due to this temporary "dry-conditions" movement of birds from the lake.



Photos courtesy Steve Attwood