

*Caspian Tern Survey*

Reports were received from all districts but this year nesting success was very low and most colonies failed. Many colonies were flooded by high tides but this did not explain the failure at all colonies.

The successful North Island colonies were:

South Kaipara Head	c. 200 chicks
Whangarei Harbour	c. 40
Whangapoua	c. 40
Onoke	c. 20

and in the South island:

Farewell Spit	c. 200
Invercargill Estuary	c. 12

It can be seen that apart from the two major colonies production was very low. As nesting success is about 1 chick per pair and the present estimated total population of terns in New Zealand is about 1,000 this year's production was about half the breeding potential.

Because of this year's erratic breeding behaviour it is considered that one further year's study should be made before the findings are written up for publication. I would ask that all regional representatives make a real effort to locate all colonies to record the number of adults and nests and that each colony is followed through to determine the number of chicks which actually fledge. This final year's effort should round the study off and enable a really worthwhile statement on the breeding distribution and status to be made.

Once again I would like to thank all regional representatives and other members for their work and effort on this project.

B. D. BELL, Convener

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## RARE BIRDS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 1974-75

*Members:* F. C. Kinsky (Convener)  
 Sir Robert Falla  
 B. D. Bell  
 D. H. Brathwaite

Since last year's AGM, the Committee received 6 submissions, as set out below.

Submission A, B and C were received during the Convener's absence from New Zealand and Mr B. D. Bell kindly looked after them.

- A. Mr A. Habraken, Papakura, concerning a Crested Tern (*Sterna bergi cristata*) sight record in the Firth of Thames. The Committee confirmed the identification.
- B. Dr K. E. Westerskov, report on "probable first breeding of the Cattle Egret in New Zealand." The Committee considered the record as being acceptable.

- C. Mr R. J. Pierce, "White-winged Black Terns nesting in New Zealand."  
The Committee was not so happy with this report and suggested a change of title to the report and, although accepting the record as probably correct, recommended a cautious approach to avoid the merest possibility of error.
- D. Mrs B. Brown, Papakura, sight record of a Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) in the Kaipara Harbour.  
The Committee accepted and confirmed the identification, although only 3 out of the four members of the Committee commented.
- E. Miss L. J. Stopforth, Karamea, through Mr B. A. Ellis, Wellington. Sighting of a flock of 12 Plumed Whistling Ducks (*Dendrocygna eytoni*) near Karamea in January 1975.  
The Committee was satisfied with the report and confirmed the identification.
- F. Mrs Moncrieff and Mr Ross, Nelson, through Mr F. H. Boyce, Nelson, concerning the alleged sighting of an eagle in the Nelson District in January 1975.  
This report was not circulated to members, but was only discussed by the Convener and the President. Both agreed that the report was not only not adequate but also confusing and by lack of details conveyed no impression of the bird concerned. From the "facts" submitted, it was not even possible to guess at the Order the bird, if it was a bird at all, could be classified into. This submission was rejected.

A suggestion for simplification of the set up and workings of the Rare Birds Committee in the future was conveyed to Council through the Hon. Secretary.

F. C. KINSKY, Convener,  
Rare Birds Committee



## BEACH PATROL SCHEME 1974

During 1974 there was a good level of activity by patrollers on all coasts except Fiordland. An average number of patrollers covered a slightly greater length of beach than in previous years. The total number of birds found is some four times more than ever before due to two large wrecks, both of which are considered to be due to food shortages for the species concerned.

The first wreck occurred mainly in the Auckland East area and partly in Auckland West during April and was composed entirely of Blue Penguin. The second wreck occurred along the whole of the West Coast of New Zealand during June and July, and consisted of Prions in the following order of abundance:

*Pachyptila salvini*, *P. desolata*, *P. turtur*, *P. vittata*, and *P. belcheri*. Rare species included one Soft-plumaged Petrel (*Pterodroma mollis*) and one Grey Ternlet (*Procelsterna caerulea*).