

**Waikanae Estuary Newsletter
No 71 January 2013**

<http://kapitibirdtours.co.nz/>

The Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve is a Nationally Significant Reserve
Waikanae Estuary bird tours 9051001



Roger Smith Photograph

Let us all start the New Year--looking after each other.
No, these are not decoys.

Most of the paradise ducklings have now fledged and can be seen in groups, flying together, from the farmers' fields to the river and back again as they gain strength.

Unidentified flying object



Can you identify this bird for me? It was photographed on the Waikanae River with the black-backed gulls. It had been in the river, dip diving up and down in the water before coming to the shore.



What a handsome harrier hawk on the topmost branch. It had been surveying where its next feed was coming from. The tips of its wings look a bit bedraggled, but that is not so. That shape with finger-like feathers, lets it quietly fly or hover as it quarters the estuary looking for its prey. Hawks like to fly against the wind as it allows them to fly very slowly as they scan below for their dinner. These birds nest in the Estuary Reserve, tucked away in the middle of the scrub.



It was a beautiful Christmas day and a swim in the sea was beckoning. Wading into the surf I was reminded of the large white-pointer shark that was sighted not far from here. Directly in

front of me was a large swirl in the water. I stopped, scanning the water for that tell-tale black fin. There was no sign of it so I gingerly continued to wade deeper into the sea. I had a large fish pass between my legs and then all the seagulls on the beach arrived. The swirling I saw must have been the kawhai chasing the little fish, as the terns started to dive one after the other and the seagulls were also dip-diving, much to my relief.



The kingfisher alighted on a flax bush and was minding its own business when along came a little swallow. The swallow didn't think much of a kingfisher invading its patch so it started to dive-bomb. The swallow is half the size of the kingfisher but flies very fast and is very agile, diving down and then away, then back down again. With that swift flight of theirs it was just too much for the kingfisher who took off to pastures new. What a bully!

Roger Smith Photographs

Hits last Month—Seventeen thousand one hundred and sixty four.

Mik Peryer the Birdman of Waikanae
Sponsored by Chris Lee Sharebroking