

**Waikanae Estuary Newsletter
No 72 February 2013**

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

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



Photographer Roger Smith

Fernbird

The Fernbird has young so there must be quite a group of these birds within the Reserve. It's no wonder that they hadn't been reported earlier as they are very hard to see.

Magpies

We have had two magpies relocate from up river to the estuary reserve. They are not afraid of people at all. However our local gulls don't think having magpies invading their patch is a good idea. My wife, Moira, has two pet red-billed gulls which spend a lot of their day perched on our bird feeder. When hungry they fly down, walk up to our window and tap on the glass, as much to say "Where's our food?". The magpies are known for their aggressive behaviour but when they alighted on our front lawn the gulls took off from the feeder and gathering speed swooped down from above and dive bombed the magpies. The magpies at first ignored the gulls, but as the gulls were so persistent, continuing to dive, soar away and back again, eventually flew off up river. The gulls chased them until they thought they were far enough away, then came back to again alight on the bird feeder. They not only don't like magpies, when any thing different turns up on the hill they alert everyone with their loud screeching.



Eastern rosella

This Australian import visits the Estuary at times, but is usually seen up river where there is more bush, shelter and food.



Photographer Roger Smith

Twitchers

When taking four tourists around the Estuary I found that it was interesting to observe them observing the birdlife as we progressed. Recently I had three locals and one Scotsman. Two of the local people were very knowledgeable, having been involved not only with Forest and Bird but were very keen to also introduce their grandson to the wonders of nature. The young lad had only been photographing for a short while, but was very keen and knew his birds.

There are two kinds of people who enjoy birding. One like this young fellow, like to know what the birds get up to and photograph them. Now, in taking photos of the birds you get to observe what they are doing. The other person who observes the birds is called a “Twitcher”. Twitchers” can also be in the category above. However, the vast majority of them are only interested in seeing how many species they can count over a certain period. I think my Scotsman was in that category as he was delighted to spot two species he hadn’t seen before to add to his list, one being a royal spoonbill and the other a shoveler duck.



Wrybills

There are around fourteen little wrybills on the sand-spit at the moment. Look how hard it is to see them on the sand or river verge. It’s not until they fly or run along the spit with that swift flight or gait of theirs that they can be picked up. The large photo by Roger Smith shows their curved beak. This one is scratching its head, standing on one leg.



A dead sperm whale was washed up on the beach, just south of here. It’s really sad to see these monstrous creatures like this. Although it has been suggested that it died of old age.

Photographer Roger Smith

Hits last Month—Twenty two thousand one hundred and eight.

Mik Peryer the Birdman of Waikanae

Sponsored by Chris Lee Sharebroking