

White Heron



Photograph Graham Field

A white heron has been visiting the area in the last week or so. It was seen on the southern edges of the river and the Waimanu and the Waimeha lagoons. White herons don't visit very often but like to check out our wetlands now and then. Previous visits have had the local resident birds ganging up and chasing the heron away. I don't know if this occurred this time but I wouldn't be surprised as the local birds are very possessive.

Black-fronted Tern



Photographs Roger Smith

Youngster

Mature bird

Black-fronted terns are not seen in the estuary very often, but there is a small group of around half a dozen on the far end of the sand-spit at the moment, they are with the white-fronted terns who sometimes, are here in their hundreds. They, the white-fronted terns come and go, one day here and the next not a sign of them. They follow the food and if there is a shoal of little fish out to sea, that's where they will be.

Black Swans

The black swans haven't been breeding on the lagoons as they have in the past. There have been up to now nests on both the Waimanu and Waimeha lagoons regularly, every six months or so. Perhaps they are waiting for spring to arrive. They do breed throughout the year if conditions are right.

Kingfisher

What an attractive looking bird this kingfisher is, photographed at the Estuary by Roger Smith. Sitting very still, all of a sudden off it goes with its very swift flight and next thing it has food in its beak, be it an insect, dragonfly, or if it dives into the water, a small fish. Kingfishers like to sit on the high deer fences around farmers' fields and from that advantage they can see the insects in the long grass and take their refreshments from there, slowly working around the paddocks.



Ring-necked Pheasant.



Quite often these birds can be seen when taking the back road to Peka Peka, running along the roadway or ducking into the verges of the road. They also live within the Estuary Reserve. They were introduced by our early settlers, bred as game birds and are now wide-spread here on the Kapiti Coast. This colourful bird had better watch out as it's now the shooting season. On the other hand it's pretty safe as it's in a built up area with no shooting allowed.

Royal Spoonbills

How many birds can you count in this evening shot by Charles Lloyd?

The Royal Spoonbill have changed their pattern lately and have taken to roosting in the tree by the weir that the little shags and the little black shags have claimed as their own. They roost right on the top-most branches so don't interfere with the resident shags. At times they also roost on the top of the shag tree on the northern lagoon and they like those large mature pines upriver at Otaihanga where they feel quite safe high up in the tree-tops. All in all, they have many favourite roosting posies including the river and the fallen logs on the riverbank where they settle during the day, when not feeding.



My new book *“Whatever Next –More Tales of Waikanae Estuary”* is now being printed and will be launched after Moira and I move into our new address at 20 Barrett Drive Waikanae Beach, on the 1st July 2014.

**The “Waimea Café” Waikanae Beach is the launch pad, on the 20th of July 2014.
[Hits last Month—Twenty-five thousand Seven hundred & Sixty-nine](#)**