



Tiakina ngā manu tā ia ripanga, tā ia ripanga
Saving the birds (and bats) one spreadsheet at a time

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Fun FALCON fact



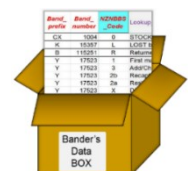
The Pīhoihoi (New Zealand Pipit) is an endemic passerine, which can be found from the coast to the alpine shrublands. According to the [FALCON database](#), only 60 individuals have been banded in New Zealand (45 of which were adults and 15 as juvenile/ pulli), and of that only three have ever been recaptured/ resighted! The earliest first marking event for New Zealand Pipit in FALCON is from 29 May 1963 at Whataroa Flat and the most recent marking event was 15 January 2008 at Cape Kidnappers.

If you have New Zealand Pipit banding data, but unsure if it is in FALCON please get in touch! bandingoffice@doc.govt.nz

Updated Price List, Order Form and Data BOX

Please note that orders placed during June or December will be processed the following month.

- [Banding Office Price list](#)
- [Banding Office Order form](#)
- [Data BOX v.FALCON.1f](#) – May 2023 version: this is the standardised template for submitting marking records (older versions will still be accepted)



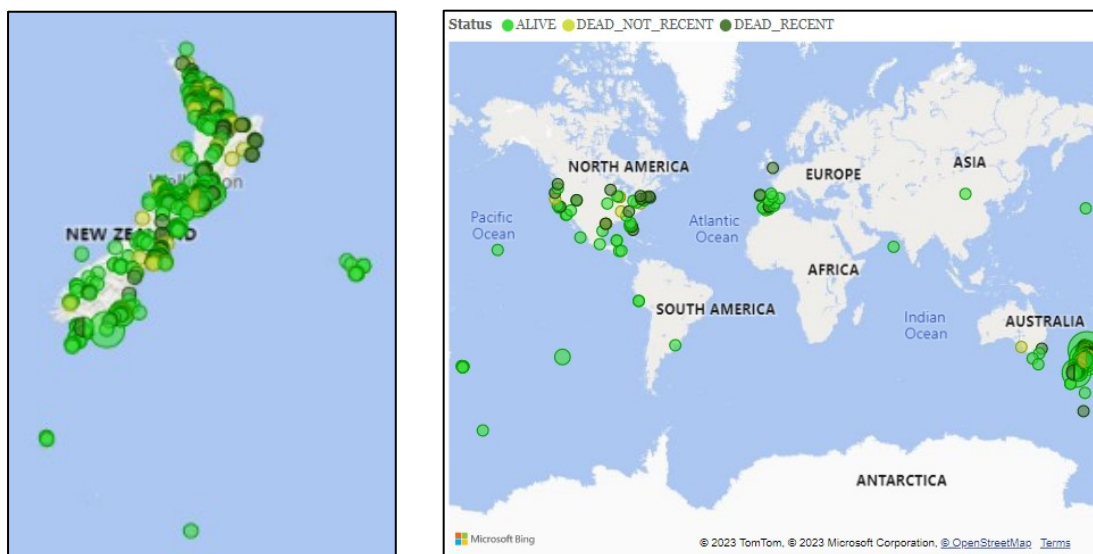
FALCON fantastic

The [FALCON Bird Banding App](#) now has over 600 active users, of which more than two-thirds are external to the Department of Conservation (DOC). There are 148 active Project Managers of over 300 projects and a further 306 active Team Members.

The number of Certified Operators now exceed 1320, up from 400 in 2016 – that is a *new operator* signing up every 2.8 days for the past 7 years (not counting certification upgrades)!

Operators are uploading their own banding records directly onto the FALCON System via spreadsheet or web-form, with 130 spreadsheets submitted so far this year (compared to 40 in 2016). Banding Office effort required to assist in data upload is decreasing (processing efficiency enhanced): File format errors on spreadsheet upload decreased from 21% in 2021 to 5% in 2023.

We have received reports regarding banded birds from members of the public via the [Sighting Form](#) on a daily basis over the last three years. These reports are received from all over New Zealand (including the Chathams and Sub-Antarctic islands), as well as from further afield, though many foreign records are not of birds that were marked here.



New Release of FALCON: Version 5.6.66

The following improvements were included in an update on the [FALCON Bird Banding System](#) on 27 April:

1. Species list updated to match updated [Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand](#)
2. Abbreviations added to facilitate searching for species common names, such as SI, NI, NZ, SIPO
3. Add flag and colour info in csv export (*we'll run a webinar on how to interpret this csv file*)
4. Prevent selection of future dates (*you'd be surprised how often this has happened!*)
5. Add "not captured" for capture code (*some birds are sighted but not actually captured*)
6. Status Code have "Alive" at the top, add "dead: taxidermy" (*most birds are alive, some are stuffed*)
7. New "Time-accurate" option for date accuracy (*some operators diligently record the exact time*)
8. Marking Configurations:
 - Band Form includes "DOC Weldable" and "other"
 - New colours: "aqua/teal", "violet" and "other" (*oh, we have had some colourful discussions regarding the names of colours!*)
9. Bird details:
 - Valid band prefixes updated (*next iteration will include new band prefixes EP and RO*)
 - Increase box width for morphometric data (*this was causing some frustration, apologies!*)
10. Additional fields & status detail drop down options included
11. Include Fish and Game Regions

If you come across any issues or have suggestions of additional improvements that we should consider, please contact us at falcon@doc.govt.nz

Banding Office out-and-about – Coming up:

Come along and say hi at:

- [2023 NZ Birds Conference](#) 3-5 June 2023 in New Plymouth
- [2023 National Kiwi Hui](#) 7-9 June 2023 in New Plymouth

Banding Office out-and-about – Michelle Bradshaw



Penguin symposium 2023 attendees. Image by Elvisa van der Leden

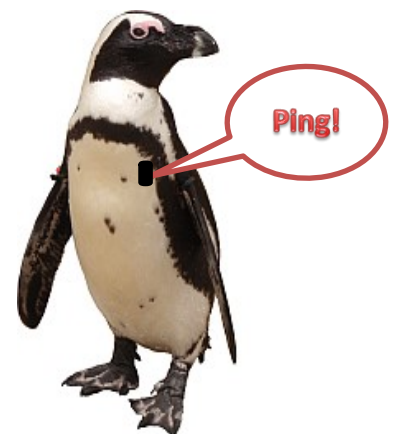
It was great to connect with all the Penguin People at the recent Oamaru Penguin Symposium. I gave a presentation on '**Banding Office Red Tape**', clarifying the [requirements of capturing and marking birds](#). A little bit of tongue-in-cheek humour helped to keep the audience engaged during an otherwise dry topic – did you know that I used to have the African Penguin's call as my phone's ringtone while based in DOC's National Office? For those unfamiliar with the 'Jackass penguin'... it sounds like a donkey braying!



Here's a summary of the Red Tape:

The Certification System assesses the competency of operators (**can I do it?**) and this is required in addition to permission (Wildlife Act Authority; **may I do it?**). Best Practice Manuals and Standard Operating Procedures provide written guidelines (**how do I do it?**) – if these are not in place for a particular activity, then separate Animal Ethics approval is required. Finally, all the associated data need to be stored in a central repository (the [FALCON Bird Banding System](#)) under a registered project that outlines the purpose of capturing and marking birds (**why do it?**), otherwise the birds may be wearing those marks for nothing.

A second presentation, entitled, '**Are pinging penguins promising?**' described a feasibility study that I conducted in South Africa on the use of ultrasonic acoustic telemetry to track African Penguins. This species is currently at 1% of its original population numbers, and conservation decision-making can be improved through knowledge of dispersal and foraging of penguins at sea, to complement mark-recapture studies on land. An existing extensive array of ultrasonic acoustic telemetry receivers around the South African coastline provided the opportunity to test the feasibility of tracking penguins at sea using this technology. Captive penguins (and seals) did not change their behaviour in response to the 69 kHz signal (ping) in air or underwater, and attachment of the transmitter (pinger) using cloth tape lasted up to 11 months. Pings from pingers attached to a model penguin and a live bird were detected by receivers up to 300 m at sea. Three rehabilitated penguins released wearing pingers were detected up to 350 km from the release site three months later – pinging penguins are promising as a method to track at-sea movements.



Banding Office out-and-about – Annemieke Hendriks

As part of the Banding Office's commitment to bander engagement and feedback, I think it's incredibly important to connect with NZNBBS operators in person and a great chance to disseminate information in another format. Of course, the opportunity to also handle and mark wildlife is a big drawcard and serves as a great tool to discuss capture, handling and marking techniques for different species. In March I was able to go out to the Chatham Islands and be involved in the Black Robin census on Mangere and Rangatira Islands. While I had been previously been a few years ago as a volunteer, it was great to attend as a Department of Conservation staff member and be involved with the banding side. I was surprised at how many changes on the islands were visible since I was last there. It was also incredibly valuable to engage with other mainland banders who were also in attendance both on the conservation islands, and on Rekohu (main Chatham Island). The Black Robins seem to have had a good season (over 100 birds banded this season), and it was great to see the success of our conservation programmes first-hand. I look forward to continuing to engage with NZNBBS operators around the country.



Annemieke with Black Robin (OO-TA).
Image taken by Shane Cotter



The Chatham crew photographed at Rangatira hut: L to R, top to bottom Johannes Chambon, Jenna Hoverd, Jemma Welch, Grant Maslowski, Annemieke Hendriks, Shane Cotter, Jamie Cooper. Image by Grant Maslowski

They grow up so fast!

As part of a [Birds New Zealand](#) sub-permit to band birds regionally across Wellington, Hugh Robertson and Annemieke Hendriks banded two Northern NZ dotterel pulli at Waitohu Stream estuary in January 2023 – this was a great opportunity as it is the first known successful breeding by the species in this area since Hugh began beach patrolling here many years ago. Temporary coloured bands to distinguish the chicks have proven very successful. DP-10352 (referred to as Chip – yellow band on right tibia) was resighted in April by Neill Haggarty and looked very spiffy in fluff-free plumage.

Chip has since been seen a few more times by other keen birders. We can't wait to hear if Chip is sighted again, and hopefully we might get a report about where Chip's sibling (green band on left tibia) has gotten to.

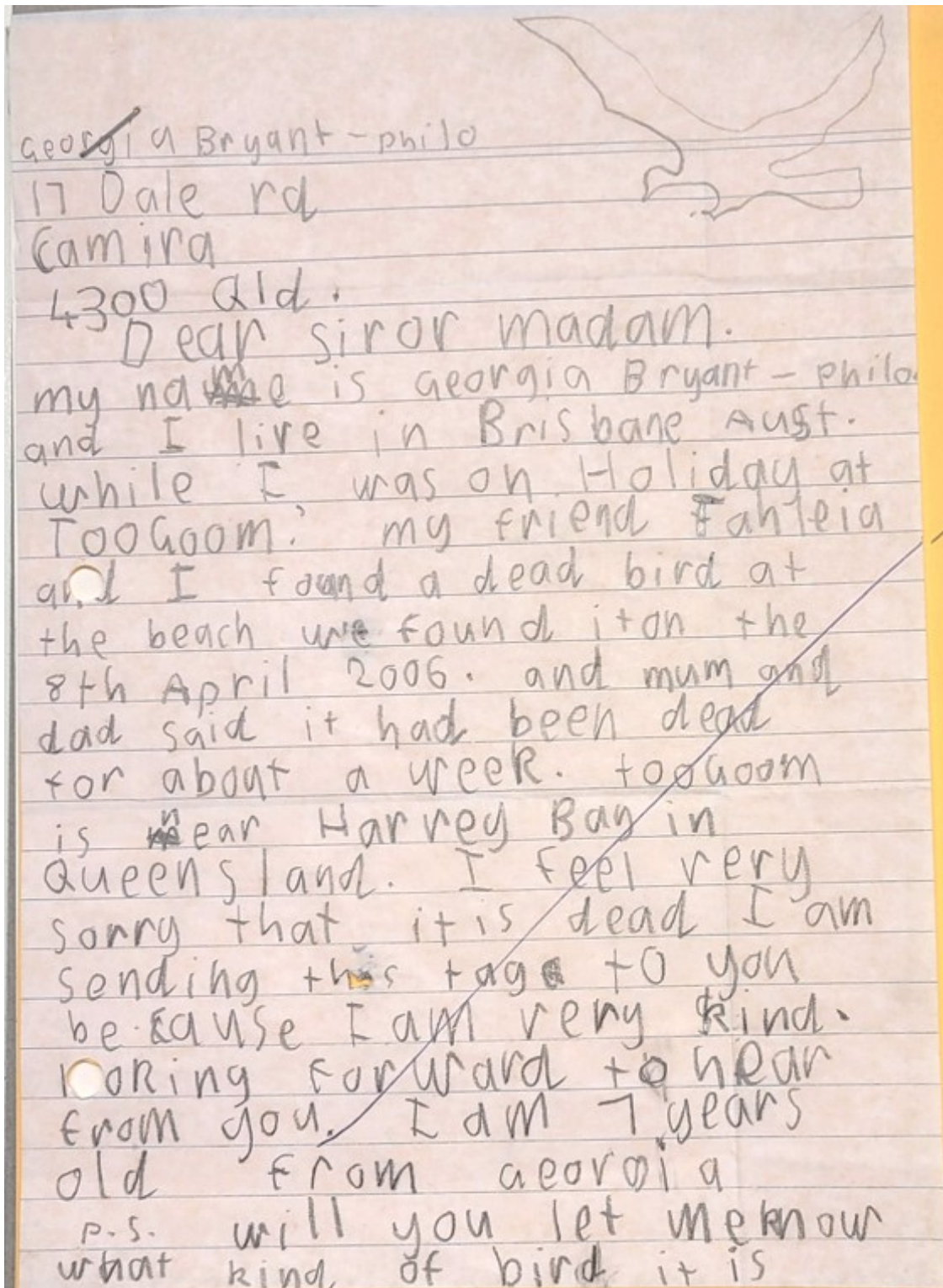


DP-10352 23 Jan 2023. Image by
Annemieke Hendriks



DP-10352 29 April 2023. Image by
Neill Haggarty

Because I am very kind – Georgia Bryant-Philo



X-15707 was placed on an adult Hutton's shearwater at Kowhai stream in Kaikōura range in October 2004 and recovered by Georgia over 2,600 km away in April 2006 on the coast north of Brisbane. This is one of only seven records of banded Hutton's shearwaters recovered or recaptured in Australia, out of 7,032 first marking records.



Birds Without Borders – Sandy Taylor

Albatrosses are frequently found washed up on New Zealand shores, which isn't really surprising given the numbers that breed and feed in and around New Zealand islands and the subantarctic. Since several countries are involved with studying this long-lived species group, it occasionally means that, not only is the found bird banded but, it wears a 'foreign' band.

Late last year a French banded Wandering Albatross was found dead at Karioitahi Beach. Now another one has turned up at Rapid Bay, Great Barrier Island. It was found by Jed on the 13th May 2023, who reported the finding to the Banding Office along with some quality images of the bird and the bands it was wearing. The metal band with the text OIS MUSEUM PARIS, was the clear giveaway that this bird was part of a French research project. Karine Delord, from the Centre d'Etudes Biologiques de Chizé (CEBC) France, confirmed this and was able to provide details of the dead bird.



Images by Jed



Image by Jed

This female Wandering Albatross (*Diomedea exulans*) was banded as a chick on 26/09/1987 at the Kerguelen Islands (Southern Indian Ocean – French Southern Territories). It was last seen in 2022 breeding at the Pointe Morne colony on the Kerguelen Islands. Jed says, "Thanks for that info, she was only a few years younger than me, incredible". She was found at a location that is "quite exposed to the SW wind and swell which we'd had in the days prior to discovery. She was facing out to sea on the high tide line with her wings spread so perhaps had been trying to get airborne again?" Jed has kindly said that he will see that she is buried at her final resting spot of Great Barrier Island.

This bird was banded as part of the "Seabirds and Marine Mammals as Sentinels of Global Change in the Southern Ocean" project. (Project: 109 ORNITHOECO, PI C Barbraud), supported by the French Polar Institute Paul Emile Victor (IPEV)).

"The program uses seabirds and mammals as indicators of global changes affecting the Southern Ocean ecosystems. Through a network of four observatories from Antarctica to the subtropics, populations of 25 species of top predators have been monitored for 50 years." The study of the Pointe Morne colony of Wandering Albatross (using the capture-mark-recapture method) began in the year 2000. "Long-term individual information, combined with annual studies, particularly on the feeding ecology of the species, is used to understand the processes by which climate affects marine ecosystems and to make predictions on the future effects of climate change. The programme also integrates the impact of fisheries in order to propose conservation measures". (<https://www.cebc.cnrs.fr/research/monitoring/ornithoeco/?lang=en>).

So, when you are taking your stroll along the beach, please keep an eye out for dead birds and check if they are banded – interesting birds do turn up, particularly after some wild weather.

If they are unbanded then please report them to BirdsNZ (OSNZ) using their beach patrol online form: <https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/schemes/beachpatrolscheme/>

Report all **banded** birds to the Banding Office (NZNBBS) using the online form: <https://app.birdbanding.doc.govt.nz/sightings> or email: falcon@doc.govt.nz.

Up the creek, for a NZ duck!

Check out these Newspaper articles from 10 May 1958! The article on the left refers to the longest known flight of a grey duck at the time from Wairau Lagoon (Nelson) to Darling River (Australia). Coming across data like this does raise interesting questions. The following article (right) goes into further detail explaining that "the bands are practically the only means of calculating accurately the mortality rate, life expectancy, breeding success and dispersal of the birds in New Zealand."

We especially appreciate the recommendation from the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr Anderton, to report band details to the Banding Office as soon as possible and couldn't agree more with the sentiment!

GREY DUCK

Wairau Lagoon To Darling River

A grey duck banded at Wairau Lagoon, Blenheim, in February, 1952, was recovered more than 1850 miles from New Zealand by an Australian sportsman late in December, 1957, on the Darling river. This is the longest distance known of a flight by a banded grey duck. In New Zealand the record is about 750 miles, but Australian biologists have recorded ducks as flying up to 1200 miles in Australia.

This information was given by the Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr Anderton) in an appeal to sportsmen in which he asked them to assist the Wildlife Division during the shooting season by returning bands on all game birds taken.

Other bands have been recovered from as far afield as the Chatham Islands. From what is known of the survival of grey duck it is unlikely that more than two birds remained alive out of the 285 at Wairau Bay banded in 1952. Based on the known mortality rate among the duck population it has been estimated that of the original 285 birds 77 were alive in 1953, 31 in 1954, 13 in 1955, five in 1956, two last year and probably none this year.

Large Number Banded

"During the last 11 years a large number of game birds have been banded in New Zealand," said Mr Anderton. "To date about 20,000 pheasants, 17,000 grey and mallard ducks and 5500 black swans, 5000 each of Canada geese and California quail have been banded.

"The bands are practically the only means of calculating accurately the mortality rate, life expectancy, breeding success and dispersal of the birds in New Zealand. Facts such as these enable biologists to build up a comprehensive picture of each species and plan for its future by ensuring adequate supply and uniform distribution.

"Over the opening week-end shooters will have collected numerous game-bird bands. It is important that they do not accumulate bands, but endeavour to send them in as soon as they can, and to supply the date and place where they were taken. The date is especially important as the whole pattern of life expectancy of our population is built up from it," said Mr Anderton.

Every band tells a story – “Made good soup”

We often get reports of seeing a banded bird feeding, so imagine the surprise of hearing about a bird being eaten! Godwit Y-5461 was banded in March 1993 in Kaipara, and during its 2006 migration to Nome, Alaska in June 2006, it was shot by a hunter and “made good soup”. Fortunately, this is not a common occurrence!

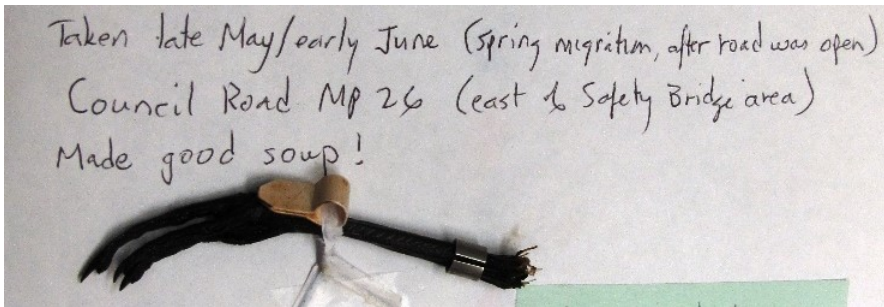


Image provided by David Melville

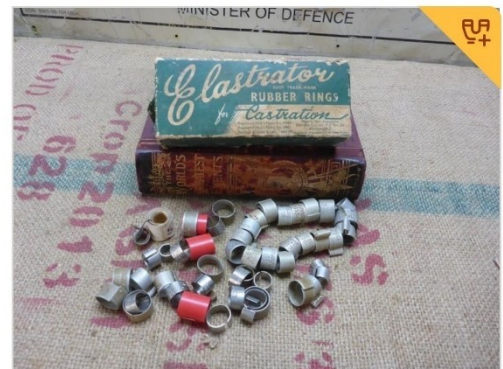
This rather unusual report demonstrates that while we can work towards positive conservation outcomes in our region or country, for our taonga migrating birds we need to keep in mind where they migrate to as well and ensure that we are working effectively across their entire functional landscape.

Bands in weird places

The Banding Office receives reports of bands in weird places – such as the band found in a couch in Arkansas (see “Couched in mystery” article from [BirDBanD 6](#)). Some recent reports include:

- A duck band found in the backyard. The finder said “We found this band while digging in garden. No bird attached to it. We did not shoot anything”.
- “Awesome Old NZ Wildlife Vintage bird leg rings” for sale on Trademe! *Yikes! If you have bird bands you no longer want, please send them back to the Banding Office.*

It is also a good reminder that when you are updating your Will, please consider specifying that any bird bands and banding equipment should be returned to the Banding Office rather than ending up in an antiques or op shop.



Awesome Old NZ Wildlife Vintage Bird Leg Rings Large Collection From Canterbury

Native bird whakatauki



@mieke_masterpieces

Ko te manu kai I te miro, nōna te ngāhere
Ko te manu kai I te mātauranga, nōna te ao.

The literal translation of this whakatauki (saying) means: At a distant point in some time the bird ate Miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*) so the forest belongs to it. At a distant point in some time the bird ate knowledge/ wisdom, so the world belongs to it. More poetically translated this whakatauki reads: the forest belongs to the bird who feasts on the miro berry, the world belongs to those who feast on education.

This whakatauki is therefore often used to encourage individuals to seek out new knowledge and explore the world and is often used in educational settings.

New Zealand Garden Bird Survey 2023

The New Zealand Garden Bird survey is quickly approaching! **24 June – 2 July 2023**



Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research monitors changes in bird populations over time by comprehensively analysing bird counts gathered by New Zealanders.

This survey is one of its kind that informs policy makers, scientists, bird enthusiasts and other organisations who have an interest in the state of our garden birds and their environment.

More information about the survey and how to be involved can be found at: <https://gardenbirdssurvey.nz/>

What happens to research outputs which used banding?

Banding of wild birds in New Zealand must have a protective benefit for the individual, population or species. Generally, this benefit is focused on the research output and knowing more about the species, which in turn can feed back into best practice, threat classification and landscape management.

We would love to hear more about the publications and research resulting from monitoring of individually-marked birds! One recent example is “Recruitment, survival and breeding success in a declining rifleman population” by Khwaja *et al.*: [3507.pdf \(newzealandecology.org\)](#).




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NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ECOLOGY

RESEARCH

Recruitment, survival and breeding success in a declining rifleman population

Nyil Khwaja^{1, 2, 3*} , Stephanie A.J. Preston¹, Ben J. Hatchwell¹  and James V. Briskie² 

Request for transponder insertion information

Transponder insertion requires competency assessment and certification issued by the Banding Office, and the FALCON Database can manage the data similar to bird banding. However, the Banding Office does not currently stock transponders or associated equipment such as inserters or readers. To assess whether we should consider a more centralised and coordinated management of stock in terms of international sourcing and providing a local supply, we would like to obtain information from project managers and participants regarding their use of this marking technique.

Please download and complete [this spreadsheet](#) and send it to falcon@doc.govt.nz.

“He aha tēnei?” / “what is this?": the letter vs. number prefix series bands

The mysteries continue. Some observers may have wondered why the Banding Office sells some bands which are exactly the same size but with different prefixes e.g. R & 19, M & 13. Do you know why?

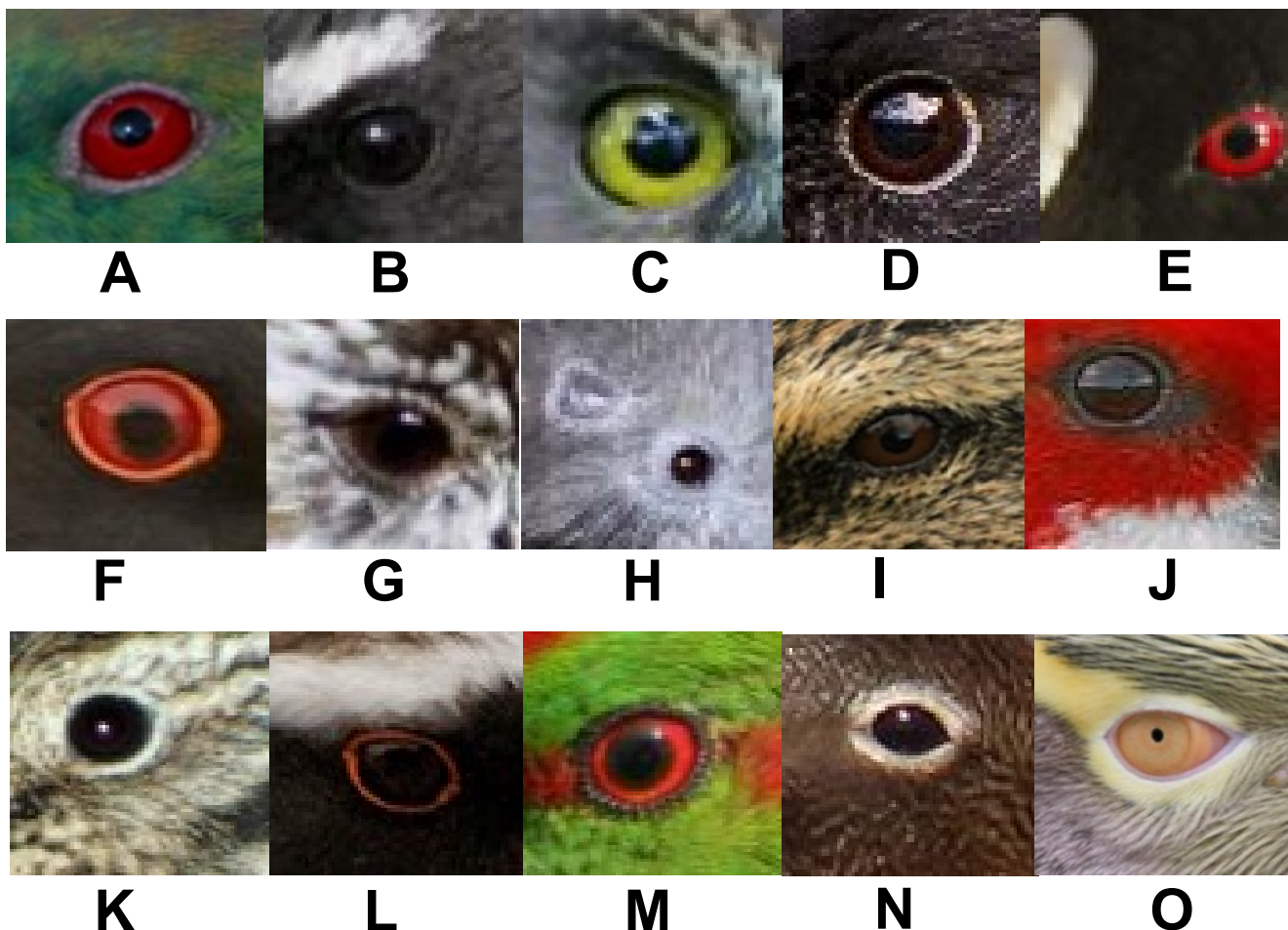
Answer to: “He aha tēnei?” – the P-prefix series bands

The NZ Banding Scheme has sourced metal bands from Swedish firm I.Ö. Mekaniska since 1959, and from Porzana (British Trust for Ornithology Services) since 2001. To differentiate similar-sized bands, a ‘P’ was added to the prefix for the Porzana bands, which are also made of different metal alloys. For more information on band sizes and materials, refer to the [Price List](#). The incoloy bands (CP, CX, DP, EP, YP and T) are thinner and should not be used on seabirds nor on the tarsus of waders – the stainless-steel bands are still considered the best for the marine environment.



Puzzled: Avian “Eye” spy

Can you identify the bird from just one eye?



Puzzled: Answers to Bird words

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Egg-cellent (excellent) | 6. Comedia-hen (comedian) |
| 2. Ill-eagle (illegal) | 7. Fowl play (foul play) |
| 3. Emu-nisation (immunisation) | 8. Cold turkey |
| 4. Proper-gander (propaganda) | 9. Stork exchange (stock exchange) |
| 5. Robin (robbing) | 10. Ostrich-sized (ostracized) |