

# Rare and Vagrant Birds in the Falkland Islands 2009

Mike Morrison and Alan Henry

*This report summarises the sightings of rare and vagrant birds submitted to Falklands Conservation or made by the authors, volunteers and staff of Falklands Conservation during 2009.*

## **Northern Rockhopper** *Eudyptes moseleyi*

A single bird observed with the Rockhopper Penguin colony at Diamond Cove, Johnsons Harbour. This was seen on the 22nd November by Falklands Conservation staff doing the penguin counts. It was still in the same location on the 26th November when it was seen and photographed by Alan Henry, Mickey Reeves, Saphena Berntsen and Mike Morrison.

## **Atlantic Petrel** *Pterodroma incerta*

Alan Henry saw at least eight birds off Cape Pembroke point on the 25th January.

## **Soft-plumaged Petrel** *Pterodroma mollis*

Brian Aldridge reported seeing a single bird at Brenton Loch, Saladero on 11th November. This was a day of strong winds, snow and hail squalls, which may explain why it was driven into inland waters.

## **Cocoi Heron** *Ardea cocoi*

A single bird near the *St Mary*, Whale Point, Fitzroy on 24th March was seen by Alan Henry, Andy Clarke, John Croxall and Stig Tore Lunde. Another single bird was seen in Douglas Creek by Nick Pitaluga on the 16th June. Phil Overton and Carol Green saw a single bird at a small creek near the Argentine cemetery, Goose Green, on 11th July; this is probably the same bird which was seen near Burnside house on 9th August by Kurt Whitney, 11th August by Alan Henry, 16th August Sue & Mike Morrison.

## **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

Two birds near FIPASS sighted by Mickey Reeves on 26th March. Two birds were also seen on 28th March, one south of the Bypass road and the other one just south of the Cable & Wireless Earth Station both in association with horses (Sue and Mike Morrison). On 3rd April Alan Henry saw seven birds in front of the Cemetery (nine were seen here later in the day Alan Henry and also by Nic Huin), and one on the beach near Government House and six up at Moody Brook (Alan Henry). One bird was seen sheltering in a ditch near Stanley Airport on 5th April by Sue and Mike Morrison. Shannon Aazia reported one in Malvina paddock on 6th April. A single bird was seen flying over the Garden Centre on 21st April Sue and Mike Morrison. Val Berntsen saw approx one hundred birds



Northern Rockhopper Penguin. Mike Morrison.

landing near Government House on 23rd April. A single bird in the yard at 10 Fitzroy Road East seen feeding on earwigs; this bird was seen in the yard most days between 25th April and 4th May. Another two birds were seen in flight over Davis Street on 25th April (Sue and Mike Morrison). Five birds were seen in Cape Pembroke on 27th April by Alan Henry. Alan Henry also had a bird in the yard and picking at the patio door on 2nd May. A single bird was seen on Fitzroy Road by Sue Morrison on 23rd May.

## **Black Faced Ibis** *Theristicus melanopis*

One bird observed on Saunders Islands in early November and still present at the turn of the year (Tony, David & Suzan Pole-Evans). Two birds also seen at Port North on 12th November (Roy McGie).

## **Coscoroba Swan** *Coscoroba coscoroba*

All of the reports are from the Fitzroy area: up to twenty-four birds early in 2009. However it is thought that some may have dispersed during the winter as only five adults were seen in late November. A single cygnet was seen on Big Pond, Whale Point, in late December with the two pairs there and another pair was seen on Bertha's Beach Pond. Observers – Sue and Mike Morrison and Alan Henry.



Cattle Egrets, Stanley. Alan Henry.



Red Shoveler. Mike Morrison.

**Cinnamon Teal** *Anas cyanoptera*

A pair was seen on a small pond on the south side of Motley Point, Walker Creek on 21st February by Sue & Mike Morrison.

**Red Shoveler** *Anas platalea*

A single female on the pond in Cattle Point, North Arm on 11th January Alan Henry and Sue & Mike Morrison. This bird was seen again on a nearby pond on 12th March by Mickey Reeves and Sue & Mike Morrison. On 25th January Tim Earl and Allan White saw a pair on Betts Pond, Pebble Island. Another single female was seen on Swan Pond, Cape Dolphin on 22nd February by Alan Henry. On 7th June Sue & Mike Morrison saw a pair on a small pond where the road crosses the Estancia Brook and Alan Henry saw them two days later in Estancia Creek with a large flock of Speckled Teal.

**Cinereous Harrier** *Circus cinereus*

Brian Aldridge reported seeing a female or immature bird near Salinas Beach, Goose Green on 18th October.

**White-winged Coot** *Fulica leucoptera*

Carol Peck saw a 'Coot' on a small pond on Carcass Island down towards Leopard Beach on 9th October which was possibly this species. A single bird was seen on Big Pond, Pebble Island, by a Lodge guest on 22nd December.

**South American Stilt** *Himantopus melanurus*

A single bird first seen on the football pitch by Jeremy Poncet on 23rd May. It was seen again later the same day on the shore line near the Golf Clubhouse by Sue & Mike Morrison, Mickey Reeves and Alan Henry.

**Southern Lapwing** *Vanellus chilensis*

A single bird on the harbour front at Ross Road East on 3rd May was reported by Carol & Terrence Phillips. This bird was seen in the area over the next few days and Mickey Reeves found a dead bird on the Bypass Road on 7th May which was possibly the same bird. Brian Aldridge saw a Lapwing at Saladero on 28th and 29th October.

**Hudsonian Godwit** *Limosa haemastica*

Three birds were at Whale Point, Fitzroy on 5th January and six birds in the same location on 5th (Alan Henry) and 15th February. Four birds seen on 15th March (Sue & Mike Morrison), and four birds seen again on the 24th March, two of these birds were going into summer plumage (Alan Henry, Andy Clarke, John Croxall and Stig Tore Lunde). Alistair Wilson saw four birds in Adventure Sound on 25th November. Four birds also seen near the St Mary on 28th December by Sue & Mike Morrison.

**(Hudsonian) Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*

The single bird seen at Kelp Point, Whale Point, Fitzroy as reported in the 2008 Report was sighted again several times in the same location during the early part of 2009. With sightings on 5th January, 5th & 15th February and 15th March. Observers Sue & Mike Morrison and Alan Henry. Another single bird was seen at Pebble Island settlement by Arina Berntsen. This bird was seen throughout the month of October around the settlement.

**Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca*

A single bird was seen in the creek by North-west Arm house on 10th January by Sue & Mike Morrison and



Southern Lapwing, Stanley. Alan Henry.



*Hudsonian Godwit, Whale Point. Alan Henry.*

Alan & Trish Henry. Possibly the same bird was seen in a creek close to North Arm settlement by Neil Goodwin on 11th March and identified from a photograph taken by Bruce Campbell.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes*

Two birds were seen in Island Harbour Creek from the MPA road by Sue & Mike Morrison on 31st January. On 19th October Alan Henry found a single bird at Yorke Bay Pond, this bird was seen in the area off and on up to 1st November. Another bird was seen in the same area on 9th November (study of photos indicate different bird from first - A Henry). This bird was seen again on 17th November. On 6th December another, different bird, was seen by Alan Henry, Darren Pattison and Alistair Ham.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Alan Henry saw twelve birds at Bertha's Beach on 27th February.

**Baird's Sandpiper** *Calidris bairdii*

Three birds at Bull Point, North Arm, on 10th January, and also on the same day five birds in the Race near North Arm settlement (Alan & Trish Henry and Sue & Mike Morrison). Seven birds seen at Sea Lion Point,

Salvador on 15th January (Sue & Mike Morrison) and seven birds were seen in Cape Pembroke on the south side of the road on 29th January by Sue & Mike Morrison. Four birds at Kelp Point, Fitzroy on 15th March: Sue & Mike Morrison. Two birds were seen on New Island on 26th October by Rafael Matias. All the remaining records are from the Cape Pembroke area starting with a single bird on 27th September, two birds on 3rd October (Alan Henry), and four birds on 29th October (Sue Morrison), three birds on 9th November (Robin Woods, Alistair Wilson and Mike Morrison), five birds on 14th November and seven birds on 6th December (Alan Henry) and two birds on 8th December (Mike Morrison).

**Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

Single bird seen by Sue & Mike Morrison on 29th January on the south side of the road in Cape Pembroke. Two birds seen on the beach at Kelp Point, Fitzroy on 15th March by Sue & Mike Morrison.

**Least Seedsnipe** *Thinocorus rumicivorus*

Mickey Reeves found a female bird on the potato fields at the Market Garden on 23rd May feeding with one of the Eared Doves. This bird remained in the area until 21st June when there was a heavy fall of snow.



*Least Seedsnipe, Stanley. Alan Henry.*



*Eared Dove, Moody Brook. Alan Henry.*

**Eared Dove** *Zenaida auriculata*

Martin Beaton reported a single bird on Weddell Island on 15th March. On 17th April Nick Stevens saw two birds on the potato field near the Seaman's Mission. The two birds were seen over the next few days, one remained in the area until 21st June. Bernadette Paver reported a bird in her hen run on 9th November. This bird was seen sheltering in the henhouse over the next few days during a particularly stormy period.

**White-crested Elaenia** *Elaenia albiceps*

Rafael Matias reported an immature bird at New Island on 7th February. Three birds were seen at Carcass Island, on 3rd March. It is thought that one had been resident there since at least November 2007, (Alan Henry). Rob McGill confirmed that one bird was still there on 24th November.

**Tufted Tit-tyrant** *Anairetes parulus*

Arina Berntsen sighted a single bird at Pebble Island settlement on 4th June. This bird was also seen by Allan White, and is only the second record in the Falklands.

**Fire-eyed Diucon** *Xolmis pyrope*

Allan White reported a single bird at Pebble Island on 22nd May. This bird remained in the area of the Lodge gardens until early August.

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher** *Tyrannus savana*

Jeremy Poncet saw a single bird at Pebble Island at the end of February.

**Chilean Swallow** *Tachycineta meyeni*

A single bird was seen at Cape Dolphin by Alan Henry on 22nd February. On 28th March Alan Henry saw a single bird up at Moody Valley Farm flying around and sometimes roosting on the big *Cupressus macrocarpa* tree. Rob McGill reported a bird at Carcass Island on 23rd November, Mike Morrison saw and photographed an adult bird the next day on Carcass which was probably the same bird. Carol Peck saw a single bird on Steeple Jason Island on 4th December.

**Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

A single bird was seen at Cape Pembroke Lighthouse before flying over to Top and Bottom Islands, on 24th October by Alan & Trish Henry.

**White-banded Mockingbird** *Mimus triurus*

Rob McGill found a freshly dead bird in a small hut at Carcass Island Airstrip, and sent it into Alan Henry for identification. This species has only been reported once before when two birds arrived on the cruise ship *Usbuaia* in October 2007.

**Double-collared Seedeater** *Sporophila caerulecens*

On 7th February Rafael Matias saw a single male bird at New Island. This is the first record of this species in the Falkland Islands.



Chilean Swallow, Moody Brook. Alan Henry.



Rufous-collared Sparrow. Mike Morrison.



Grassland Yellow finch, Cape Pembroke. Alan Henry.

**Rufous-collared Sparrow** *Zonotrichia capensis*

Nic Huin saw a male bird near the Cape Pembroke Lighthouse on 16th August; this bird remained in the area until 23rd August. Another male was seen and photographed by Mandy and John McLeod at Elephant Beach settlement on 14th September.

**Grassland Yellowfinch** *Sicalis luteola*

On 1st March Alan & Trish Henry found a juvenile bird on the north side of Cape Pembroke, seen again on 2nd & 3rd March in the same location. On 3rd March another bird was found near the jetty on Carcass Island by Alan & Trish Henry and Lorraine McGill. These are the first and second records of this species in the Falkland Islands.