

Significant Ecological Estuarine Area Assessment Sheet for Wading and Aquatic Birds

Name/Area: Parengarenga Harbour

Summary:

Parengarenga Harbour is a large harbour flanked by a mix of mangrove, saltmarsh, shrubland, farmland and plantation forestry and one large duneland (Kokota Sandspit) the latter of which dominates the landscape. There is one main residential area (Te Hapua). There are very extensive tidal flats much of it covered in seagrass and some limited oyster farming occurs here. Kokota Sandspit is the main roost site for harbour birds at high tide, but some also visit Ohao Point and various farmland sites. The harbour supports tens of thousands of waders – these include local breeding residents (northern NZ dotterel, variable oystercatcher) and migratory waders from within New Zealand (important concentrations of wrybill, pied stilt and banded dotterel, the latter reaching peak NZ numbers here) and northern hemisphere migrants (particularly bar-tailed godwit, lesser knot, ruddy turnstone, Pacific golden plover and various small sandpipers, whimbrels and far-eastern curlews). Other local breeders include reef heron, pied shag and little blue penguin (breeding not confirmed), while many species also feed in the harbour, notably tern species, with Caspian terns and red-billed gulls sometimes breeding on Kokota Sandspit. There are important populations of Australasian bittern, banded rail, spotless crane and fernbird in the local saltmarsh and other wetlands. The ecological significance of Parengarenga is High given the national and international importance of the harbour to so many species populations, plus the scale and diversity of habitats and habitat sequences.

Table 'Threatened' and 'At Risk' shorebird species present at Parengarenga Harbour

<i>Species Scientific Name</i>	<i>Species Common Name</i>	<i>NZ threat classification</i>		<i>Significance for species</i>
<i>Anas superciliosa</i>	Grey duck	Threatened	Nationally critical	Present possibly hybridised
<i>Ardea modesta</i>	White heron	Threatened	Nationally critical	Nationally important feeding area
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian bittern	Threatened	Nationally endangered	Nationally important breeding and feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Pied shag	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important breeding and feeding
<i>Egretta sacra sacra</i>	Reef heron	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important breeding and feeding
<i>Anarhynchus frontalis</i>	Wrybill	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Nationally important feeding
<i>Charadrius obscurus aquilonius</i>	Northern NZ dotterel	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Nationally important breeding and feeding
<i>Charadrius bicinctus bicinctus</i>	Banded dotterel	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Nationally important feeding
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Lesser knot	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Nationally important feeding

<i>Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus</i>	Red-billed gull	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important feeding and sometimes breeding
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian tern	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Nationally important feeding and breeding
<i>Eudyptula minor</i>	Little blue penguin	At Risk	Declining	Local feeding
<i>Haematopus finschi</i>	NZ pied oystercatcher	At Risk	Declining	Local feeding
<i>Himantopus himantopus leucocephalus</i>	Pied stilt	At Risk	Declining	Nationally important feeding
<i>Sterna striata</i>	White-fronted tern	At Risk	Declining	Locally important feeding
<i>Bowdleria punctata</i>	Fernbird	At Risk	Declining	Nationally important breeding and feeding
<i>Gallirallus philippensis</i>	Banded rail	At Risk	Declining	Nationally important breeding and feeding
<i>Limosa lapponica bauera</i>	Eastern bar-tailed godwit	At Risk	Declining	Nationally important feeding
<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>	Variable oystercatcher	At Risk	Recovering	Nationally important breeding and feeding
<i>Porzana tabuensis tabuensis</i>	Spotless crake	At Risk	Relict	Local breeding and feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax carbo novaehollandiae</i>	Black shag	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Locally important feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos brevirostris</i>	Little shag	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Locally important breeding and feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>	Little black shag	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Locally important feeding
<i>Platalea regia</i>	Royal spoonbill	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Nationally important breeding and feeding

Key references:

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Estuaries Reliability Notes and Key References

Site	Assessor	Date	Key references (see below)	Data reliability
North Kaipara	RP	Oct 2015	3, 4, 6, 14, 15	High

Mangawhai	RP	Oct 2015	1, 2, 4, 6, 13, 14	High
Waipu	RP	Oct 2015	1, 2, 6, 13,14	High
Ruakaka	RP	Oct 2015	6, 13	High
Whangarei	RP	Oct 2015	3, 6, 9, 14, 15	High
Taiharuru	RP	Oct 2015	10, 14	High
Pataua	RP	Oct 2015	10, 14	Moderate – High
Horahora	RP	Oct 2015	14, 15	Moderate – High
Ngunguru	RP	Oct 2015	6, 10, 14	High
Matapouri	RP	Oct 2015	10, 15	High
Whananaki	RP	Oct 2015	5, 14, 15	High
Whangaruru	RP	Oct 2015	5, 6, 14, 15	High
Bay of Islands	RP	Oct 2015	5, 6, 14, 15	High
Whangaroa	RP	Oct 2015	14, 15	Moderate – High
Mangonui-Taipa	RP	Oct 2015	14, 15	Moderate –High
Rangaunu	RP	Oct 2015	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 14, 15	High
Houhora	RP	Oct 2015	3, 6, 11, 14	High
Parengarenga	RP	Oct 2015	1, 3, 6, 7, 14, 15	High
Whangape-Herekino	RP	Oct 2015	14, 15	Moderate – High
Hokianga	RP	Oct 2015	6, 8, 15	High

Key references:

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7. Pierce R.J. 1999. Regional patterns of migration in the banded dotterel *Charadrius bicinctus*. *Notornis* 46: 101-122.
8. Pierce R.J. 2002. Assessment of ecological effects of proposed bridges and associated roadworks at Hokianga Harbour, Northland. Wildland Consultants Contract Report No. 575.
9. Pierce R.J. 2005. General patterns of bird use of Whangarei Harbour. Wildland Consultants Report No. 1047 for Northland regional Council.
10. Pierce R.J. 2007. Options for ecological restoration of the Tutakaka Landcare Coalition (TLC) area and neighbouring areas. *Eco Oceania Ltd* report for Tutakaka Landcare Coalition.
11. Pierce, R.J., Kerr, V.C. 2004. Effects of oyster farms on estuarine avifauna at Houhora Harbour, Northland. Contract Report No. 899, Report prepared for: Department of Conservation Private Bag 841 Whangarei.
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14. Robertson, C.J.R., Hyvönen, P., Fraser, M.J., Pickard, C.R. 2007. *Atlas of bird distribution in New Zealand 1999-2004*. OSNZ, Wellington.

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