

## Significant Ecological Estuarine Area Assessment Sheet for Wading and Aquatic Birds

Name/Area: Pataua Estuary

### Summary:

The Pataua Estuary is a small estuary that is also situated to the east of Whangarei Harbour. Like the nearby Taiharuru Estuary, it has small areas of tidal flat and the margins are also recovering from adjacent livestock grazing. There are small stands of mangrove, saltmarsh and adjacent indigenous forest, especially on headlands. A residential area is located at the estuarine entrance. As with Taiharuru, low numbers of several threatened species frequent or visit the estuary mainly for feeding, including reef heron, shags and waders (refer Table below). Fernbirds, banded rails and Australasian bitterns frequent the saltmarsh and other wetland habitats. The ecological significance of this estuary is currently Moderate.

Table 'Threatened' and 'At Risk' shorebird species present at Pataua Estuary

<i>Species Scientific Name</i>	<i>Species Common Name</i>	<i>NZ threat classification</i>		<i>Significance for species</i>
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian bittern	Threatened	Nationally endangered	Locally important breeding and feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Pied shag	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important feeding
<i>Egretta sacra sacra</i>	Reef heron	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Rare visitor
<i>Charadrius obscurus aquilonius</i>	Northern NZ dotterel	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important feeding
<i>Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus</i>	Red-billed gull	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Locally important feeding
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian tern	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Local use for feeding
<i>Eudyptula minor</i>	Little blue penguin	At Risk	Declining	Local use for feeding
<i>Haematopus finschi</i>	NZ pied oystercatcher	At Risk	Declining	Local use for feeding
<i>Himantopus himantopus leucocephalus</i>	Pied stilt	At Risk	Declining	Local use for feeding
<i>Sterna striata</i>	White-fronted tern	At Risk	Declining	Local use for feeding
<i>Bowdleria punctata</i>	Fernbird	At Risk	Declining	Locally important saltmarsh sites
<i>Gallirallus philippensis</i>	Banded rail	At Risk	Declining	Locally important
<i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>	Eastern bar-tailed godwit	At Risk	Declining	Local use for feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax</i>	Black shag	At Risk	Naturally	Rare visitor

<i>carbo novaehollandiae</i>			uncommon	
<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos brevirostris</i>	Little shag	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Local use for feeding
<i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i>	Little black shag	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Local use for feeding

Key references:

Robertson, C.J.R., Hyvönen, P., Fraser, M.J., Pickard, C.R. 2007. *Atlas of bird distribution in New Zealand 1999-2004*. OSNZ, Wellington.

### 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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2. Dowding, J.E., Davis, A.M., 2007. New Zealand dotterel (*Charadrius obscurus*) recovery plan, 2004–14. Threatened Species Recovery Plan 58. NZ Department of Conservation.
3. Heather, B.D., Robertson, H.A. 2000. The field guide to the birds of New Zealand. Auckland, Penguin.

4. Ismar, S.M.H. et al 2013. Foraging ecology and choice of feeding habitat in the New Zealand Fairy Tern *Sternula nereis davisae*. *Bird Conservation International* 24: 72 – 87.
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6. OWR 2014. Oiled wildlife response (harbour specific series). Northland Regional Council.
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 Tutukaka 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.
12. Pierce, R.J., Kerr, V.C., 2007. Ecological Restoration of the Taiharuru Catchment. Report prepared for the Taiharuru Catchment Group. Eco Oceania Ltd.
13. Pulham, G., Wilson, D. 2013 [updated 2015]. Fairy tern. *In* Miskelly, C.M. (ed.) *New Zealand Birds Online* [www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz](http://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz)
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.
15. SSBI. Sites of Special Biological Significance. Department of Conservation Series, Northland.