

Ecologically Significant Marine Area Assessment Sheet for Wading and Aquatic Birds

Name/Area: Scott Point to Maunganui Bluff

Summary:

This area covers from Ahipara Bay to Tauroa Point, along Ninety Mile Beach, excluding Herekino, Whangape and Hokianga Harbours to south of Hokianga Harbour to Maunganui Bluff. Ahipara Bay and Ninety Mile Beach are long stretches of sandy beaches backed by sand dunes with coastal scrub. There are a few stream mouths and other wetlands.

NZ dotterel, variable oystercatcher, white-fronted tern and pied stilt are common along the whole coastline. Small numbers of banded dotterel, Caspian tern, reef heron and fernbird are present between Whangape and Mitimiti. Blue penguin have been reported breeding along the coast. Pairs of NZ dotterel and variable oystercatcher breed along the coastal strip and there is a larger colony of NZ dotterel along the Waipoua coastal strip. The entire West Coast is important habitat for northern NZ dotterel as this is likely to be a 'subpopulation' separate to other East Coast northern NZ dotterel populations (Dowding, 2001). Dotterel numbers declined rapidly on the West Coast during the early 2000's and continue to decline to the present.

The beaches from Scott Point to Pouto Point are important roost sites for terns and waders; however the birds on these beaches are impacted by disturbance from vehicles, particularly along Ninety Mile beach and areas close to settlements.

Australasian bittern are found in the coastal wetland and mangrove areas. Marsh and spotless crakes are recorded from coastal wetlands, as are fernbird, particularly from around Maunganui Bluff.

A mainland breeding colony of grey-faced petrel occurs on the south headland of the Hokianga Harbour.

Threatened and At Risk bird species – Scott Point to Maunganui Bluff

Species Common Name	Scientific Name - updated 2013	NZ threat classification		Site status / significance NB. Specific to site
Australasian bittern	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Threatened	Nationally endangered	Rare resident
Pied shag	<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Uncommon resident
Reef heron	<i>Egretta sacra sacra</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Rare resident
Banded dotterel	<i>Charadrius bicinctus bicinctus</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Rare NZ migrant
Northern NZ dotterel	<i>Charadrius obscurus aquilonius</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Uncommon resident; probable West Coast subpopulation
Caspian tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Uncommon resident
Red-billed gull	<i>Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus</i>	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Common resident
Little blue penguin	<i>Eudyptula minor</i>	At Risk	Declining	Relatively common resident, breeds
Pied stilt	<i>Himantopus h. leucocephalus</i>	At Risk	Declining	Common resident
White-fronted tern	<i>Sterna striata</i>	At Risk	Declining	Relatively common resident

Fernbird	<i>Bowdleria punctata</i>	At Risk	Declining	Uncommon resident
Variable oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus unicolor</i>	At Risk	Recovering	Relatively common resident, breeds
Marsh crake	<i>Porzana pusilla affinis</i>	At Risk	Relict	Rare resident
Spotless crake	<i>Porzana t. tabuensis</i>	At Risk	Relict	Rare resident
Black shag	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo novaehollandiae</i>	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Rare visitor
Little shag	<i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos brevirostris</i>	At Risk	Naturally uncommon	Rare visitor
Grey-faced petrel	<i>Pterodroma macroptera gouldi</i>	Not threatened	Regionally significant/mainland population	Rare visitor, breeding S Hokianga

Assessment of Ecological Significance for birds – Coast outside Harbours and Estuaries

Bream Tail to Waipu Cove Bird Values: Assessment of Ecological Significance			Bream Tail to Waipu Cove	Bream Bay	Bream Head to Taiharuru Head	Taiharuru Head to Cape Brett	Cape Wiwiki to Berghan Point	Cavalli, Stephenson and other Islands	Doubtless Bay, Rangaunu Bay, Great Exhibition Bay	Ohau Point to Scott Point	Scott Point to Maunganui Bluff	Aranga Beach to Pouto Peninsula
Overall Ranking			Notes									
Representation	supports most taxa expected for habitat type		M	M-H	H	M-H	H	H	H	H	M	M
	large example of its type	1.	M-H	M-H	M	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Rarity and Distinctiveness	supports indigenous species threatened, at risk, or uncommon, nationally or within the relevant ecological scale		H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
	supports species endemic to the Northland-Auckland region or at distributional limits within the Northland region		M	M	M	H	H	H	H	H	H	M
	distinctive of a naturally restricted occurrence		L	L	L	L	L	L-M	L	L	L	L
Diversity and Pattern	high diversity of indigenous ecosystem or habitat types		M	L	M	M	M-H	M	M	M-H	M	L
	high diversity of indigenous taxa		L-M	L-M	M	M-H	M-H	M-H	M	M-H	L-M	L-M
	its composition reflects the existence of diverse natural features or ecological gradients		M	L	M	M	M-H	M-H	M	M-H	M	L
	contains intact ecological sequences		M	M	M	M	M	M-H	M	M	M	M
Ecological Context	provides or contributes to ecological linkages, networks, buffering functions	?N/A	L-M	L	M	M	M	M	M	M-H	L-M	L-M
	supports the natural functioning of freshwater or coastal ecosystems	2. ?N/A										
	supports life stages of indigenous fauna		M-H	M-H	M-H	M-H	H	H	H	H	M-H	M-H

1. Arbitrary as partly based on size of area selected for assessment
2. All could be ranked high as the areas were considered as coastal zones with connections to adjoining estuarine or freshwater wetlands.

Coastal and offshore birds information notes and references

Site	Assessor	Date	Key references (see below)	Data reliability
Bream Tail to Waipu Cove	KH	Oct 2015	10, 14, 19	High
Bream Bay – except Waipu and Ruakaka estuaries	KH	Oct 2015	14	High
Bream Head to Taiharuru Head	KH	Oct 2015	9, 19	High
Taiharuru Head to Cape Brett, excluding estuaries (Taiharuru, Pataua, Horahora, Ngunguru, Matapouri, Whananaki, Whangaruru)	KH	Oct 2015	1	High
Cape Wiwiki to Berghan Point, excluding Whangaroa Harbour and Cavalli and Stephenson Islands	KH	Oct 2015	7, 22	High
Cavalli Island and Stephenson Islands	KH		7	High
Doubtless Bay, Rangaunu Bay, Great Exhibition Bay, excluding Rangaunu, Houhora and Parengarenga Harbours	KH	Oct 2015	4, 5	High
Ohau Point to Scott Point	KH	Oct 2015	2, 13	Moderately High
Scott Point to Maunganui Bluff	KH	Oct 2015	8, 13, 16	Moderately High
Aranga Beach to Pouto Peninsula	KH	Oct 2015	8, 21	High

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