

2 Important Areas for New Zealand Seabirds

Sites on Land

Rivers, estuaries, coastal
lagoons & harbours



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IMPORTANT AREAS FOR NEW ZEALAND SEABIRDS



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This document has been prepared for Forest & Bird by Chris Gaskin, IBA Project Coordinator (NZ).

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Contributors

The following individuals have contributed to the profiles in this document in a variety of ways, including supply of data and information about seabirds, and reviewing draft material, site profiles, species lists and site maps.

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Front cover: Rachel McLellan (Black-billed Gulls), Craig McKenzie (Black-fronted Tern)

Back cover: Frederic Pelsy (Ahuriri River)

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NZ103	Mararoa River	Southland
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Location	New Zealand, Southland
Central coordinates	45.542367°S, 167.887487°E (The Key bridge)
IBA criteria	A1
Area	2,675 ha
Altitude	180 - 600m
Year of Assessment	2013

Populations of IBA trigger species:

Species	Season	Period	Population estimate (pairs)	IBA criteria	IUCN cat.	NZ Threat Class.
Black-billed Gull	Breeding	1947-2008	403-1,000	A1, A4i	EN	Nationally Critical
Black-fronted Tern	Breeding	2008	91	A1, A4i	EN	Nationally Vulnerable

Ornithological information: Besides the trigger species the following species are confirmed or likely to be breeding: Black Shag, White-faced Heron, Canada Goose, Paradise Shelduck, Mallard, Grey Duck, Australasian Harrier, NZ Falcon, South Island Pied Oystercatcher, Pied Stilt, Banded Dotterel, Spur-winged Plover, Southern Black-backed Gull, Welcome Swallow, NZ Pipit, South Island Fantail, Silvereye, Rock Pigeon, Skylark, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Yellowhammer, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Redpoll, House Sparrow, Starling, Australian Magpie.

Protected area	Designation	Relationship with IBA
Mararoa River	Marginal Strips	Protected area contained within site
Mararoa River, Wilderness	Conservation Area	Protected area contained within site
Wilderness	Scientific Reserve	Protected area contained within site

The IBA borders and includes sections of the Snowden Forest Conservation Area.

IUCN Habitat	Habitat detail	Extent (% of site)
Wetlands (inland)	Permanent Rivers; Extensive River Gravel Beds	Major
Introduced Vegetation	Broom, gorse, pasture grasses & rank weeds, willow margins	Major
Grasslands	Tussock on river flats (upper reaches)	Major
Shrubland	Manuka, matagouri (<i>Discaria toumatou</i>), bracken	Major
Forest	Southern beech on river flats and along margins of the IBA.	Minor

Black-billed Gulls, and to a lesser extent Black-fronted Terns will feed on adjacent pasture, especially during or immediately following ploughing. They will also hawk flying insects over pasture, riverbeds and even forested areas.



Threats to the site (pressure) - IUCN Classifications

Threat Level	Notes	Timing	Scope	Severity
Invasive & other problematic species, genes & diseases	Invasive alien species - mustelids, cats, rats, hedgehogs	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Moderate to rapid deterioration
Human intrusions and disturbance	Recreational activities by river users - includes dogs.	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Slow but significant deterioration
Natural system modifications	Water management/use - abstraction of water (agricultural use)	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Slow but significant deterioration
Natural system modifications	Weed encroachment on nesting sites (rivers)	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Slow but significant deterioration
Climate change and severe weather	Floods	Likely in short term (within 4 years)	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Moderate to rapid deterioration

References:

- McClellan, R. 2008. The Ecology and Management of Southland's Black-billed Gulls. Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Otago, Dunedin. 253 pp.
- O'Donnell, C.F.J., Hoare, J.M. 2011. Meta-analysis of status and trends in breeding populations of black-fronted terns (*Chlidonias albostratus*) 1962-2008. *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* 35: 32-43



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Photo: Frederic Pelsy
Front: Rachel McClellan, Craig McKenzie