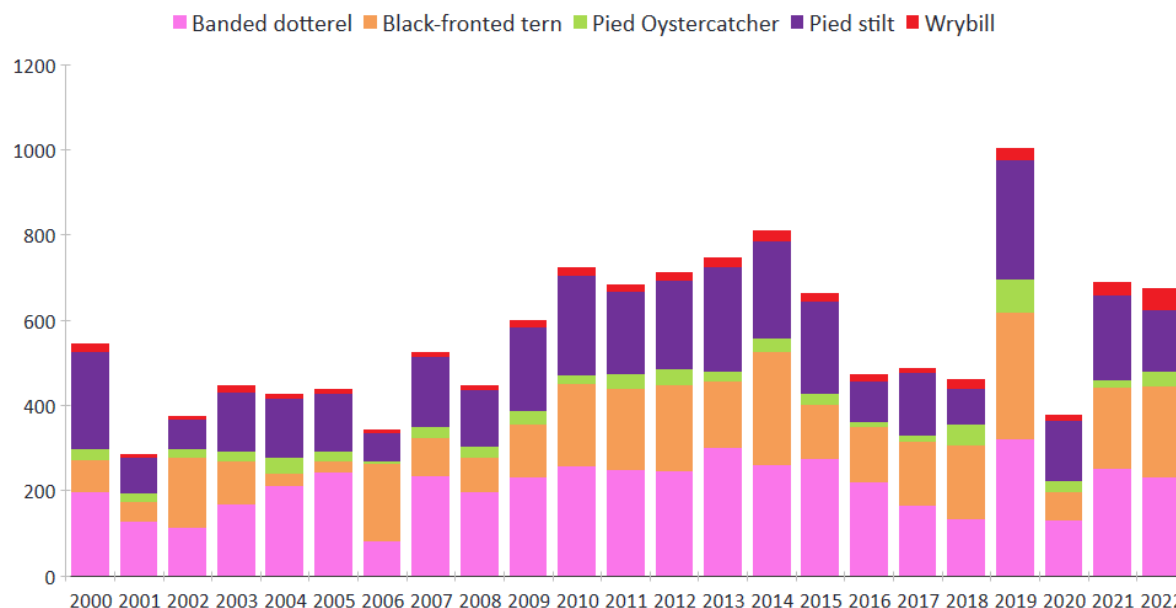


## Ashley Annual Bird Survey, 2022 Report

Overall braided river bird numbers this year were very similar to those from last year. The below graph shows data from the Okuku junction to SH1:



Some factors influencing the bird count this year:

- Very little weed on the river - plenty of space to nest.
- Little human disturbance.
- Good numbers of surveyors on each section.
- Good weather – not too hot or windy.
- Later date – 3 weeks later than usual. This meant that more wrybill and BD chicks than normal would have fledged and thus counted. I don't think the later date would have led to birds moving away from the river – based on weekly counts between Cones Road and SH1 in 2020.
- The flood of 19 November. This washed away almost all the BFT nests, at least 1 wrybill nest and probably several BD nests. It seems that the great majority of wrybill chicks survived, this is probably also true of BD chicks. Since then, BFT have re-nested.
- Repeated floods on the Waimakariri displaced birds to the Ashley. In the last few weeks we were told that all BBG were flooded out of the Waimakariri and asked if they had come to the Ashley. We did have an influx of BBG and several new pairs of wrybill were seen. However, observations weren't sufficient to detect extra birds of other species.

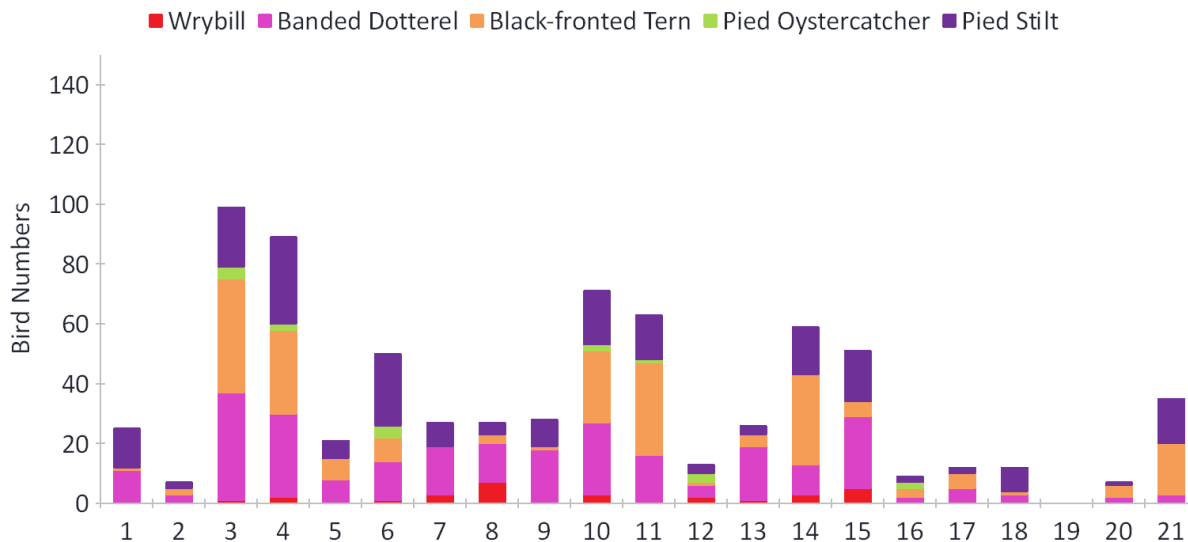
The following graphs and maps show bird distribution, and the table shows numbers of most species since 2000. Some points:

- It is quite unusual to have so many birds, other than BBG, in short (single km) sections of the river. This was mainly because BFT have neatly nested within 1km sections. Those near Cones Road (km 11) were probably those predated and flooded out (19 November) from the earlier colony near G2. Those at Railway – Golf Links (km 13) were probably mainly birds that nested again in this area after the flood. However, numbers seem to have increased – perhaps birds from the Waimakariri. BFT numbers were the third highest on record. However what counts is nesting success, not the number of adults. And from predation and flooding to date, this year we will be lucky to improve on the past poor record of success. The colonies near Cones Road are very concerning due to the rat problems there last year and the strong possibility of disturbance.
- There seemed to be few BFT hawking along the river outside kms 11 and 13 – maybe more are getting food from paddocks at this time of year.
- The 49 wrybill is easily a record – and many more than expected given that the number of nests found this year was very similar to last year. More chicks would have fledged given the count is about 3 weeks later

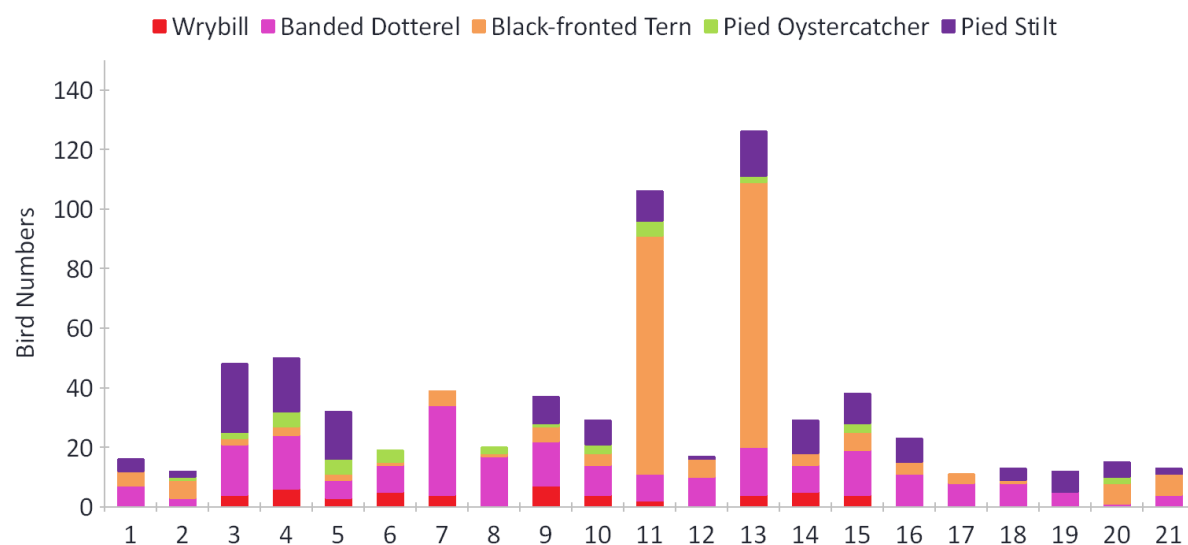
than usual, and in the last few weeks we had seen new arrivals to the river. However, it is possible that some BD fledglings were mistaken for wrybill.

- Numbers of most other species were within the normal range. There is a small colony of BBG in km 13 and a much larger one (>400 nests) at the estuary. Spur winged plover numbers were a record – with large flocks in the upper part of the river. Some double counting might have happened. The distribution of these birds is quite erratic, large flocks visit the river from time to time. Duck numbers were very low.

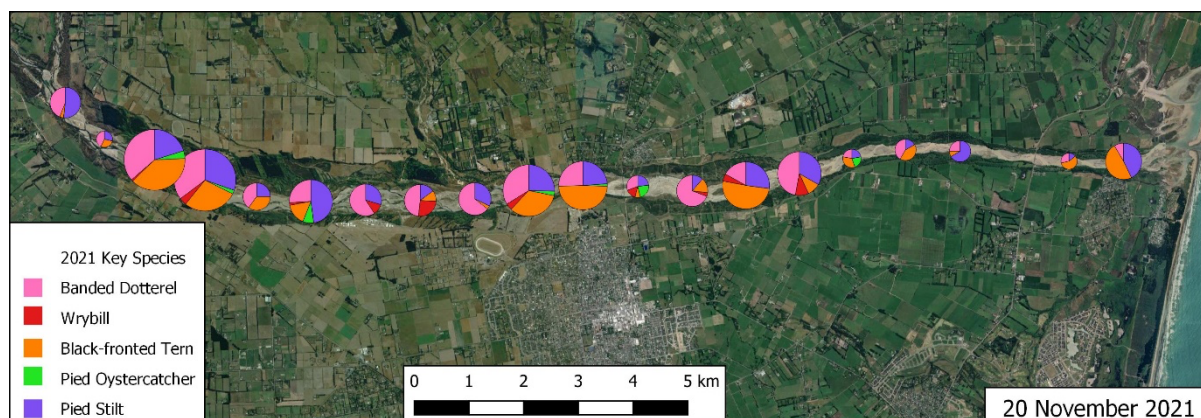
2021 bird count by kilometre – includes to the estuary:



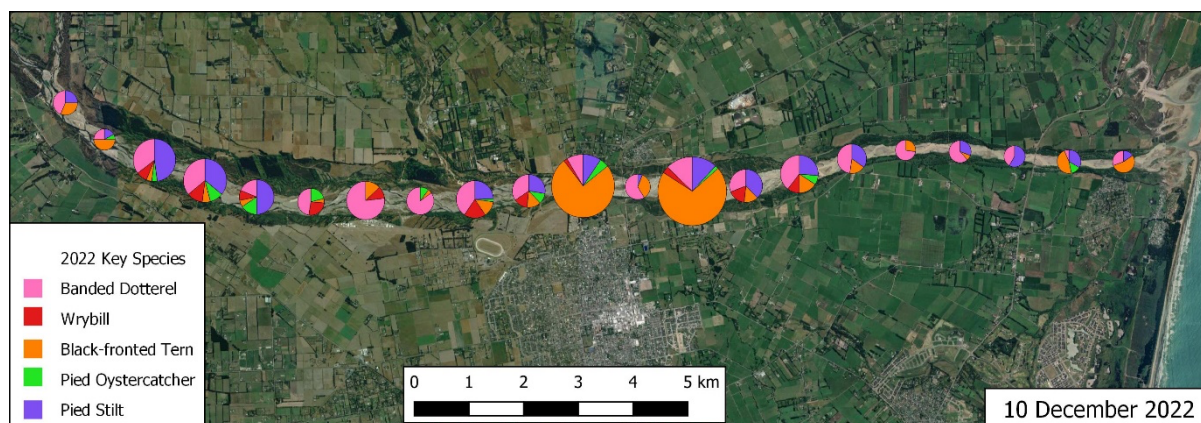
2022 bird count by kilometre:



2021 count:



2022 count:



Selected species – Okuku to SH1:

Year	BD	Wry	BFT	SIPO	PS	BBG	SBBG	BFD	SWP	Duck	PD	WFH	Shag Total
2000	199	17	74	25	229	314	26		18				21
2001	130	7	44	22	82	3	0		0				9
2002	115	6	165	19	70	5	11		16				0
2003	169	16	102	22	138	0	10		13				12
2004	213	9	28	37	140	10	27		27				14
2005	245	7	26	22	137	1	3		149				8
2006	84	5	180	5	68	213	5		37				4
2007	237	9	89	26	164	13	12		116				14
2008	198	8	81	27	131	16	10		11				9
2009	233	13	124	32	196	2	19		39				23
2010	260	18	192	20	233	41	19		15				8
2011	250	15	190	35	194	425	2		89				18
2012	248	17	200	38	209	202	11		55				17
2013	301	19	156	23	247	364	17		65				22
2014	263	21	263	32	230	23	7		37				9
2015	276	19	128	24	217	13	13		9				7
2016	222	13	128	14	95	9	4		6				13
2017	167	9	150	14	148	361	1		32				5
2018	136	20	172	50	83	16	15		17	17	52	5	13
2019	323	27	296	77	281	4097	11	1	98	31	54	8	25
2020	133	10	65	27	141	1826	14	7	21	29	34	5	14
2021	252	28	192	18	199	7	11	5	12	61	173	5	14
2022	233	49	214	33	146	179	13	4	204	3	48	13	16