



Activities at Waikuku Beach

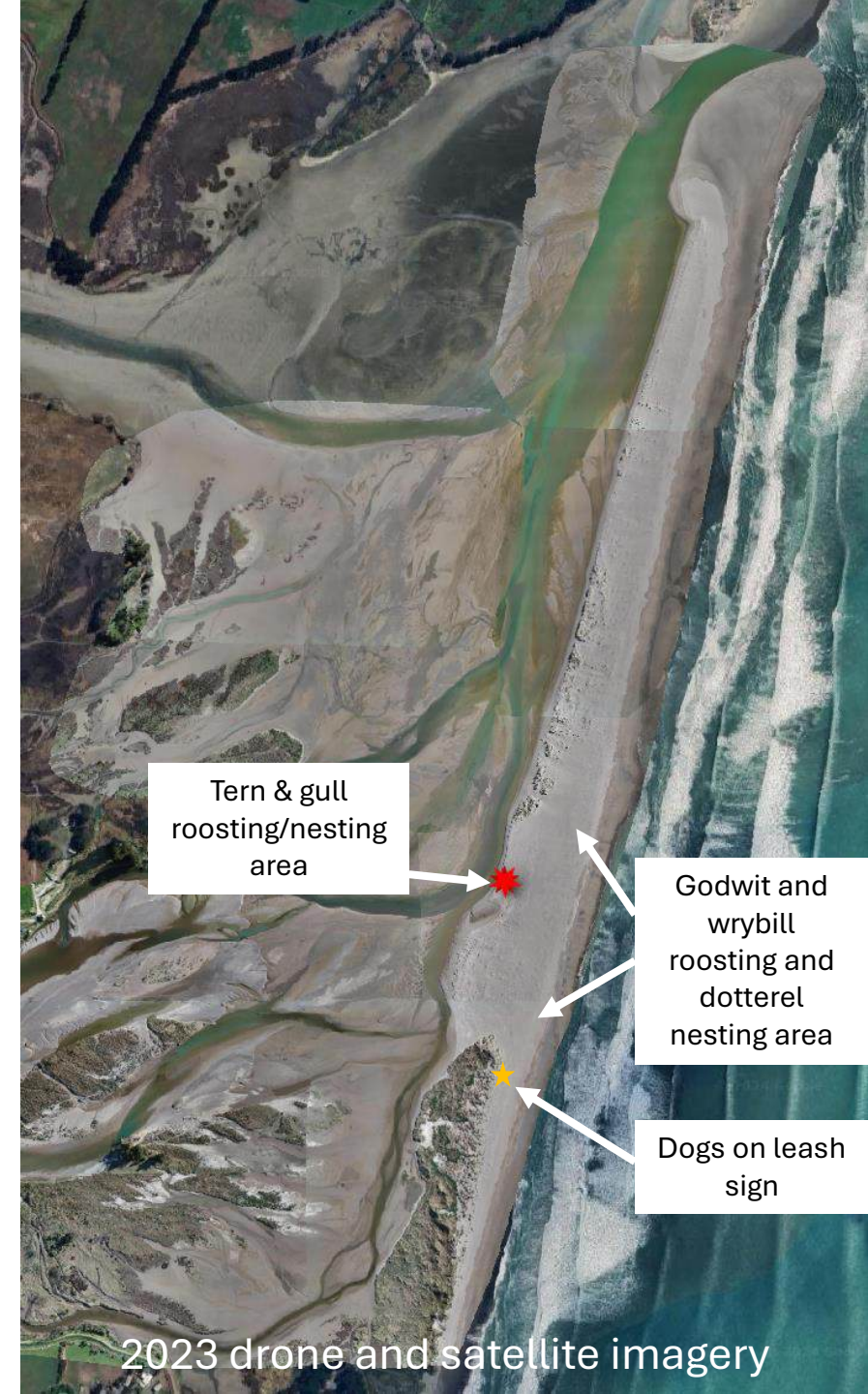
5 – 13 October 2024

Most are prohibited under the Northern
Pegasus Bay Bylaw

The following photos show activities and birds along the western side of the sandspit which borders the estuary. The red star shows a black-billed gull and white-fronted tern roosting and potential nesting area. At times >500 birds have been present. At high tide, birds, mainly godwits (to approx. 100) and wrybills (to >70), roost on the sand spit. There are currently two banded dotterel nests – down from >33 in 1993. None in 2022, one failed nest in 2023. About 7 pairs of variable oystercatchers have nesting territories along the spit.

During the whitebait season, approved vehicles are allowed, through a locked gate, to drive along the beach (tide line) to the Ashley mouth to fish. They are not allowed elsewhere on the spit.

Dogs are allowed only on the beach, not on the rest of the spit. The newly amended bylaw requires them to be on leashes.





5 October, 3.28pm. 4WD and dog on estuary side of sand spit.



5 October, 3.29pm. 4WD on estuary side of sand spit.



5 October, 4.21pm. 4WDs and dog on estuary side of sand spit.



6 October, 10.12am. Black-billed gulls (BBG) and white-fronted terns (WFT), pre-nesting.



8 October, 3.07pm. BBG deliberately scared off by whitebaiter, estuary side of spit.



9 October, 9.34am. BBG mating prior to nesting.



9 October, 9.36am. BBG and BFT.



9 October. 4WD tracks in prohibited area.



9 October, 9.47am. Wrybill roosting on spit, >70 present.



9 October, 10.14am. Banded dotterel nest on spit, one of two.



9 October, 10.29am. Dog off leash past sign, heading towards dotterel nests.



9 October, 10.35am. Dog swimming in estuary where it is prohibited.



11 October, 8.59am. Quadbike on sandspit edge of estuary.



11 October, 8.59am. 4WD on sandspit edge of estuary.



11 October, 8.59am. 4WD on sandspit edge of estuary.



11 October, 9.34am. 4WD on sandspit edge of estuary, close to BBG and WFT.



11 October, 9.57am. Quadbike on edge of estuary by sand dunes.



11 October, 12.18pm. BBG and WFT.



11 October, 12.20pm. BBG and WFT.



11 October, 12.22pm. Godwits on ground near gulls and terns.



11 October, 12.24pm. 4WD tracks through BD nesting, wrybill and godwit roosting area.



11 October, 1.02pm. Pedestrian within centimetres of banded dotterel nest. She could not have known of the nests.



12 October, 8.31am. Quadbike and 4WD on estuary edge.



12 October, 8.53am. 4WD on estuary edge.



12 October, 9.11am. Whitebaiter moves toward pied shags.



12 October, 9.11am. Whitebaiter scares pied shags.



12 October, 9.13am. BBG and WFT.



12 October, 9.19am. Whitebaiter moves toward BBG and WFT.



12 October, 9.31am. Fishermen approach BBG and BFT.



12 October, 9.32am. Fishermen scare BBG and BFT.



12 October, 9.32am. Fishermen scare BBG.



12 October, 9.36am. Another 4wd approaches, making new tracks in nesting and roosting area.



12 October, 9.37am. Rapid deployment of whitebait nets, approx. 10m from BBG and WFT. Dog present.



12 October, 9.38am. Deploying nets, through BBG and WFT.



12 October, 9.39am. Further bird scaring, dog goes to help.



12 October, 9.39am. Further bird scaring, dog goes to help.



12 October, 9.39am. Completing set up of nets.



12 October, 9.39am. Trail camera shows birds scared by whitebaiter.



12 October, 9.39am. Trail camera shows birds scared by whitebaiter.



12 October, 9.42am. Dog walks sedately through birds, not all dogs behave like this.



12 October, 9.51am. Another 4wd drives through BBG and WFT area.



12 October, 10.03am. New whitebaiter starts to set up nets.



12 October, 10.09am. More godwits arrive to roost at higher tide.



12 October, 10.14am. Wrybill walking through 4wd track.



12 October, 10.20am. Banded dotterel on nest.



12 October, 10.23am. Small flock of godwits near BBG and WFT.



12 October, 10.23am. Roosting wrybill, very hard to see, in BBG and WFT area.



12 October, 10.34am. Dog surveys the busy scenery.



12 October, 10.51am. Quadbike whitebaiter.



12 October, 11.07am. ECan ranger arrives.



12 October, 11.01am. ECan ranger (extremely professional and efficient) speaks to the fishermen, all pack up and leave.



MOULTRIE



86°F

CAMERA 3

12 OCT 2024 11:06 am

12 October, 11.06am. Pedestrian steps over banded dotterel nest, they are almost impossible to see.



MOULTRIE

66 °F

CAMERA 4

12 OCT 2024 11:08AM

12 October, 11.08am. Going past almost deserted BBG and WFT area.



12 October, 11.10am. Ejected vehicle scares godwits into the air.



MOULTRIE



86°F

CAMERA 3

12 OCT 2024 11:15 am

12 October, approx. 11.10am. Ejected vehicle going past banded dotterel on nest.



12 October, 11.18am. Dogs past on leash sign, some leashes put on when ranger approached.



12 October, 11.19am. Ejected vehicle almost runs over resting wrybills.



12 October, 11.20am. Another vehicle arrives.



12 October, 11.24am. Ranger speaks to drivers of 2 vehicles.



MOULTRIE



87°F

CAMERA 3

12 OCT 2024 11:27 am

12 October, approx. 11.27am. Banded dotterel and startled godwits.



MOULTRIE

75 °F

CAMERA 4

12 OCT 2024 11:49AM

12 October, 11.49am. Fisherman passes through BBG and WFT roosting/nesting area.



12 October, 11.53am. Person passes through BBG and WFT roosting/nesting area.



12 October, 12.19pm. Ultralight approaches, much lower than allowed. Circles lower over birds.



12 October, 12.22pm. Ultralight scares nearly 100 roosting godwits into the air.



12 October, 12.21pm. Ultralight scares BBG and WFT into the air.



12 October, 12.29pm. A carefree flying day at the beach.



MOULTRIE



91°F

CAMERA 2

12 OCT 2024 12:59 pm

12 October, 12.59pm. 4WD passes banded dotterel on nest.



MOULTRIE 89 °F CAMERA 4 12 OCT 2024 12:47PM



MOULTRIE 93 °F CAMERA 4 12 OCT 2024 02:02PM



MOULTRIE 82 °F CAMERA 4 12 OCT 2024 04:29PM

12 October, 2.02 & 4.29pm. More fishermen in BBG-WFT area.



MOULTRIE 51 °F CAMERA 4 13 OCT 2024 09:54AM



MOULTRIE 62 °F CAMERA 4 13 OCT 2024 01:31PM



MOULTRIE 60 °F CAMERA 4 13 OCT 2024 02:54PM

13 October, 9.54am. More fishermen.

13 October 1.31 & 2.54 pm WFT, BBG and red-billed gull
– some of which nest with BBG.



MOULTRIE



59°F

CAMERA 3

13 OCT 2024 02:15 pm

13 October, 2.15pm. Fishermen almost step on banded dotterel nest.



13 October, 3pm. Wrybill and dotterel on spit, godwits roosting on island at high tide.



13 October, 3pm. Fewer BBG, more WFT (400??). Incredibly resilient birds.

Recommendations

- All authorities (WDC, ECan & DOC) and especially the local people need to do more to protect the birds in this extremely valuable place. More and better signs need installed, enforcement needs increased, education is essential.
- A local “estuary care” group should be formed – the authorities can only do so much.
- It looks probable that a white-fronted tern colony will develop – signs and a fence should be installed around the nests. Temporary signs should be placed along the top of the beach to warn of nesting and roosting birds.
- There are other equally important threats, not addressed in this presentation, to the birds in the estuary.