

BRaid's Repeat Bird Surveys of the Upper Waimakariri River

Jim Jolly



Walk-through survey -35 km



2016 Counts of Riverbed Birds - 1

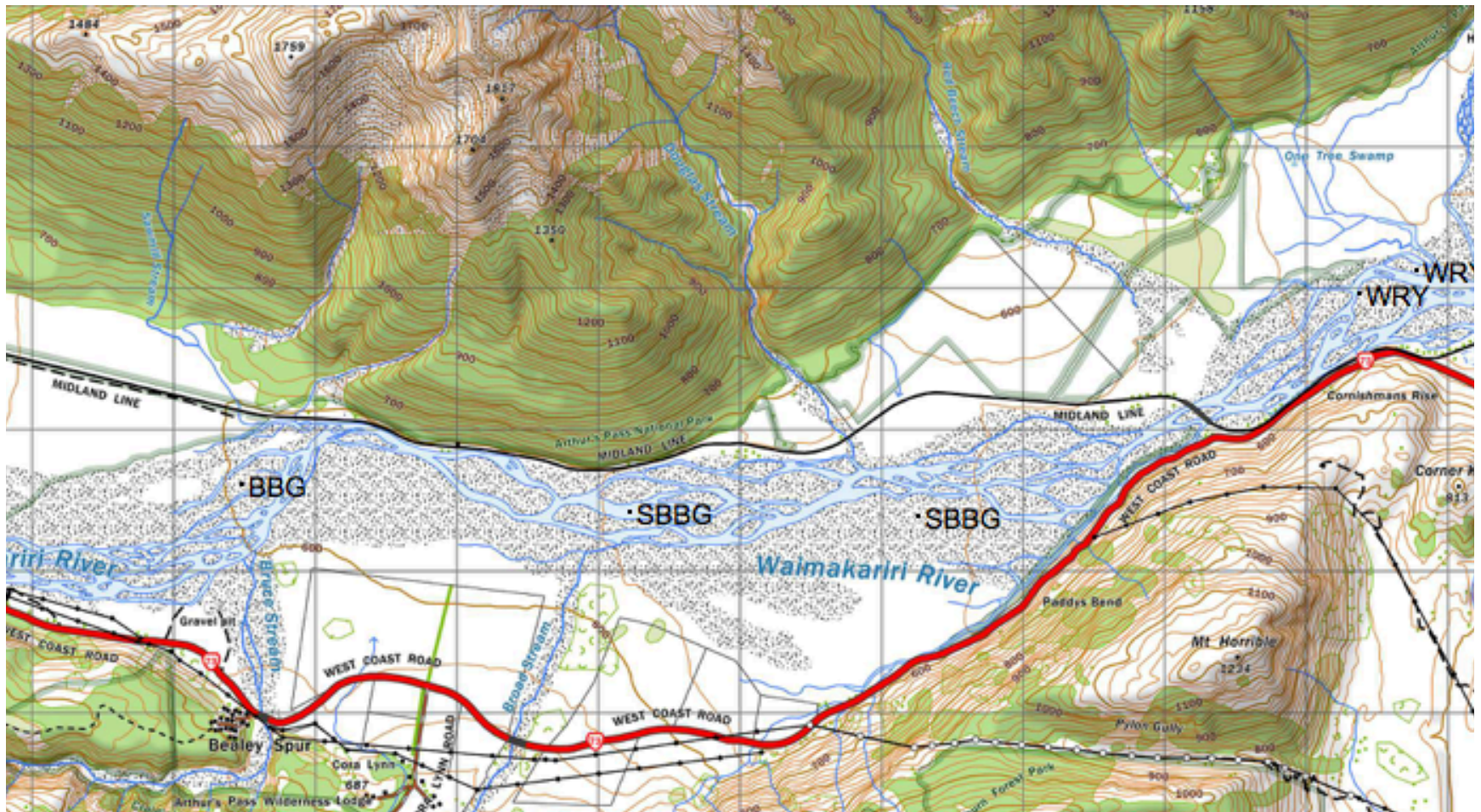
| | Bealey Bridge- Mt. White Bridge | Mt. White Bridge- Esk Confluence | Total |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| | 12 Km | 23 Km | 35 Km |
| | 6/11 observers | 11 observers | |
| Canada goose | 44* | 151* | 195 |
| Paradise shelduck | 36 | 44 | 80 |
| Grey teal | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mallard | 6 | 11 | 17 |
| Grey duck | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Little shag | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black shag | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| White-faced heron | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pukeko | 0 | 0 | 0 |

2016 Counts of Riverbed Birds - 2

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| South Island pied oystercatcher | 34 | 19 | 53 |
| Pied stilt | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| Banded dotterel | 151* | 253* | 404 |
| Wrybill | 6* | 38* | 44 |
| Black-fronted dotterel | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Spur-winged plover | 12 | 6 | 18 |
| Southern black-backed gull | 341* | 166* | 507 |
| Black-billed gull | 120* | 16 | 136 |
| Caspian tern | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Black-fronted tern | 105 | 339* | 444 |
| White-fronted tern | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Total number of birds | | | 1918 |

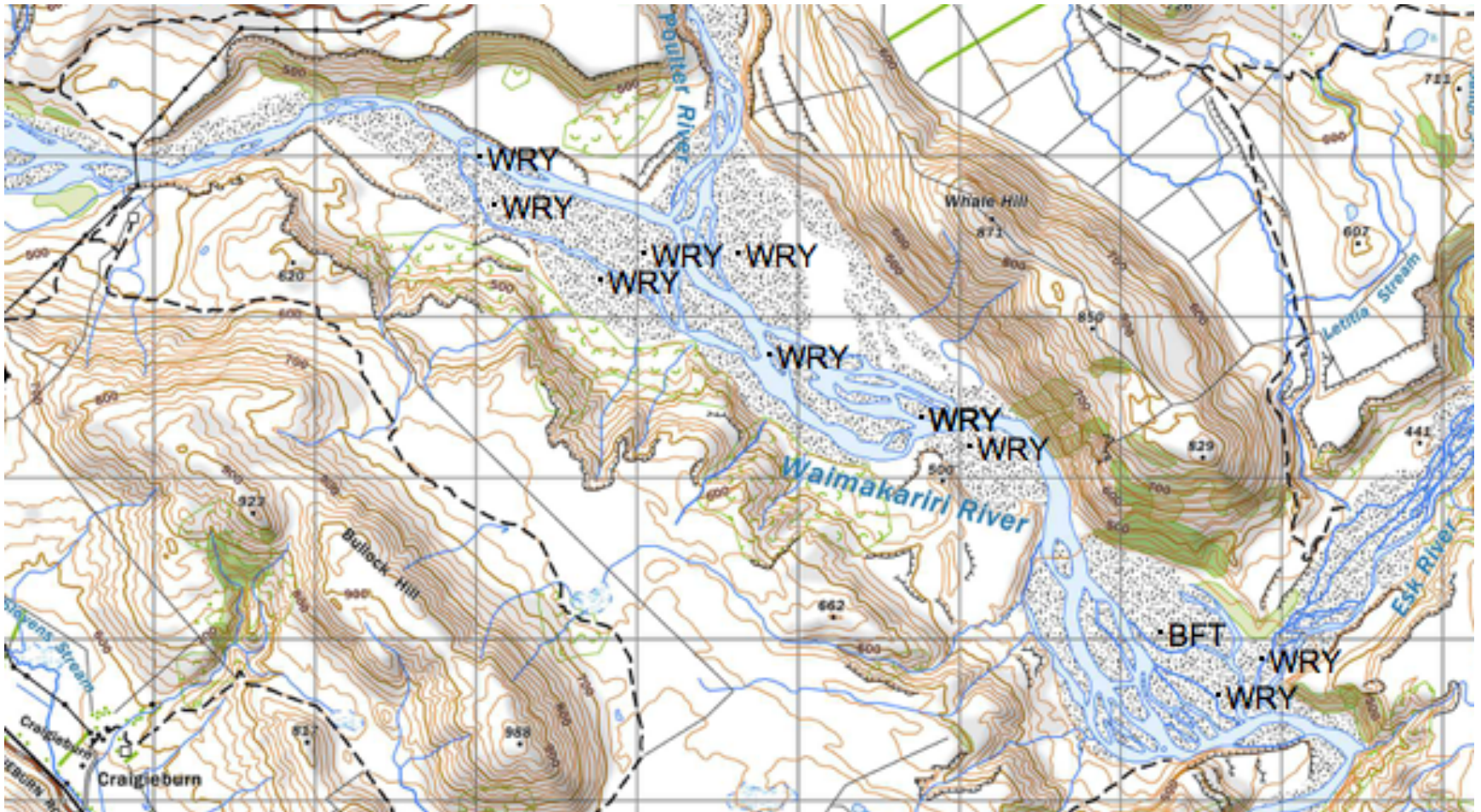
Records of Colonies and wrybill 2016

Bealey Bridge to Mt. White Bridge

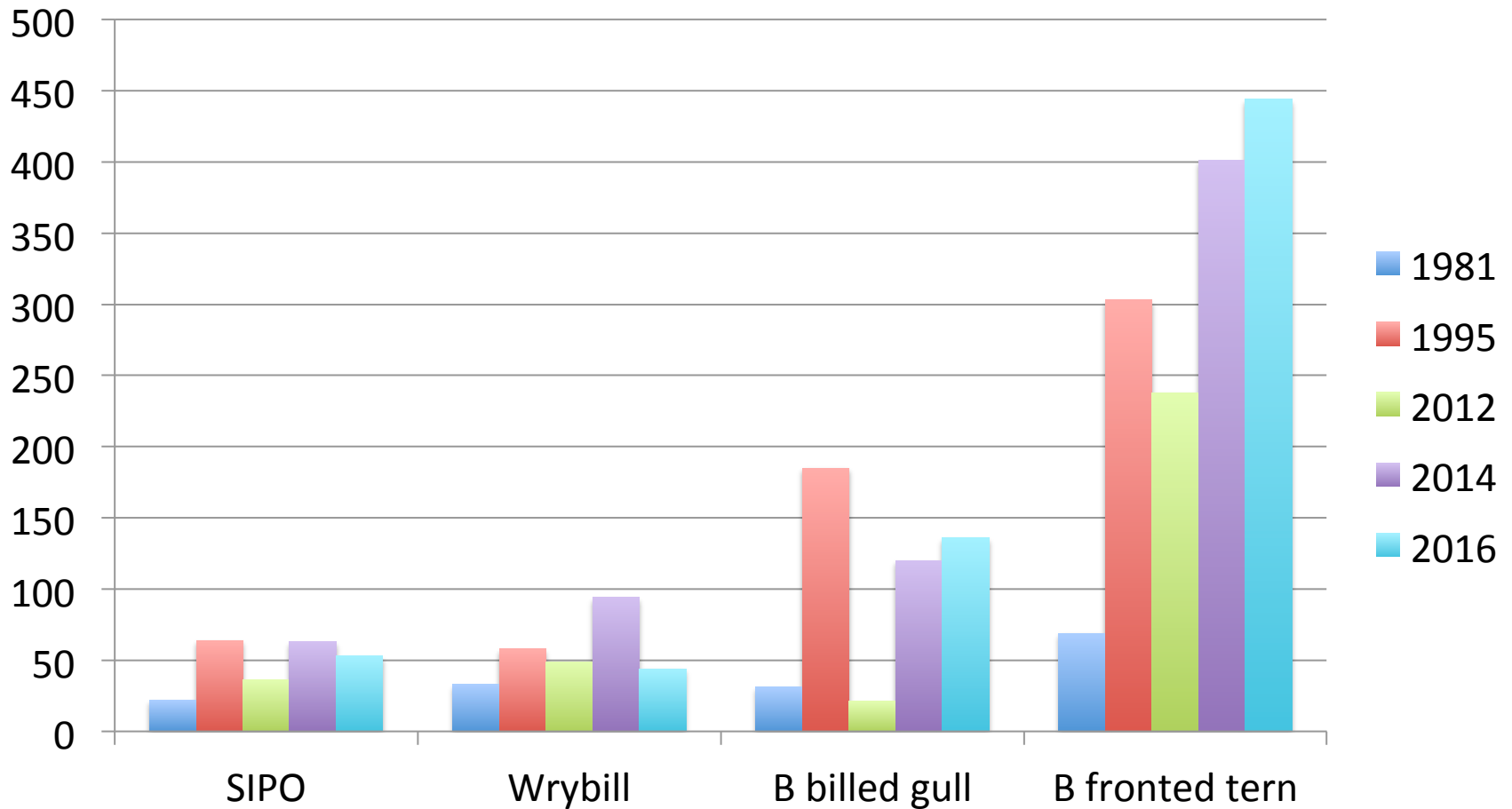


Records of Colonies and Wrybill 2016

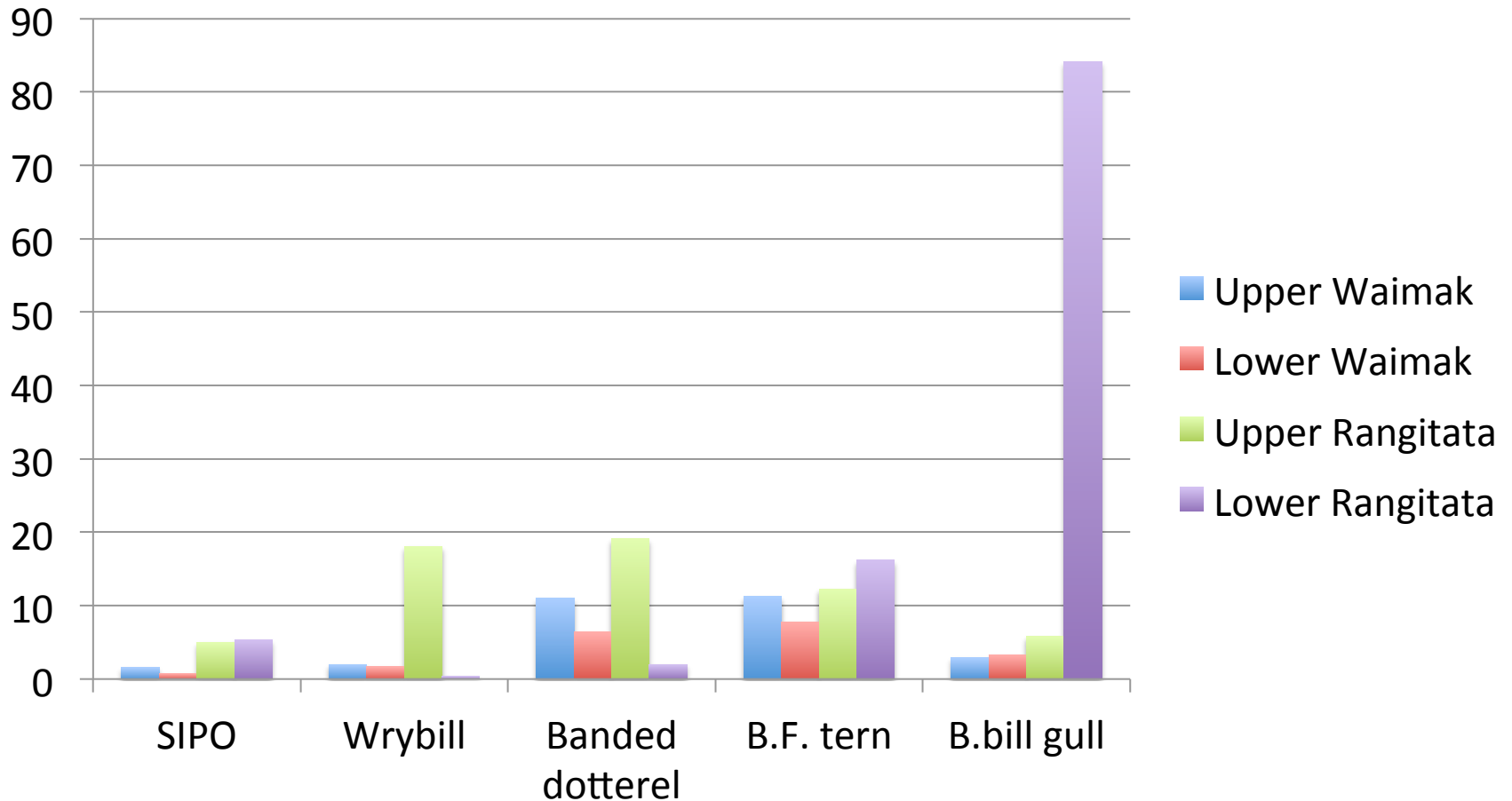
Gooseberry Stream to Esk River



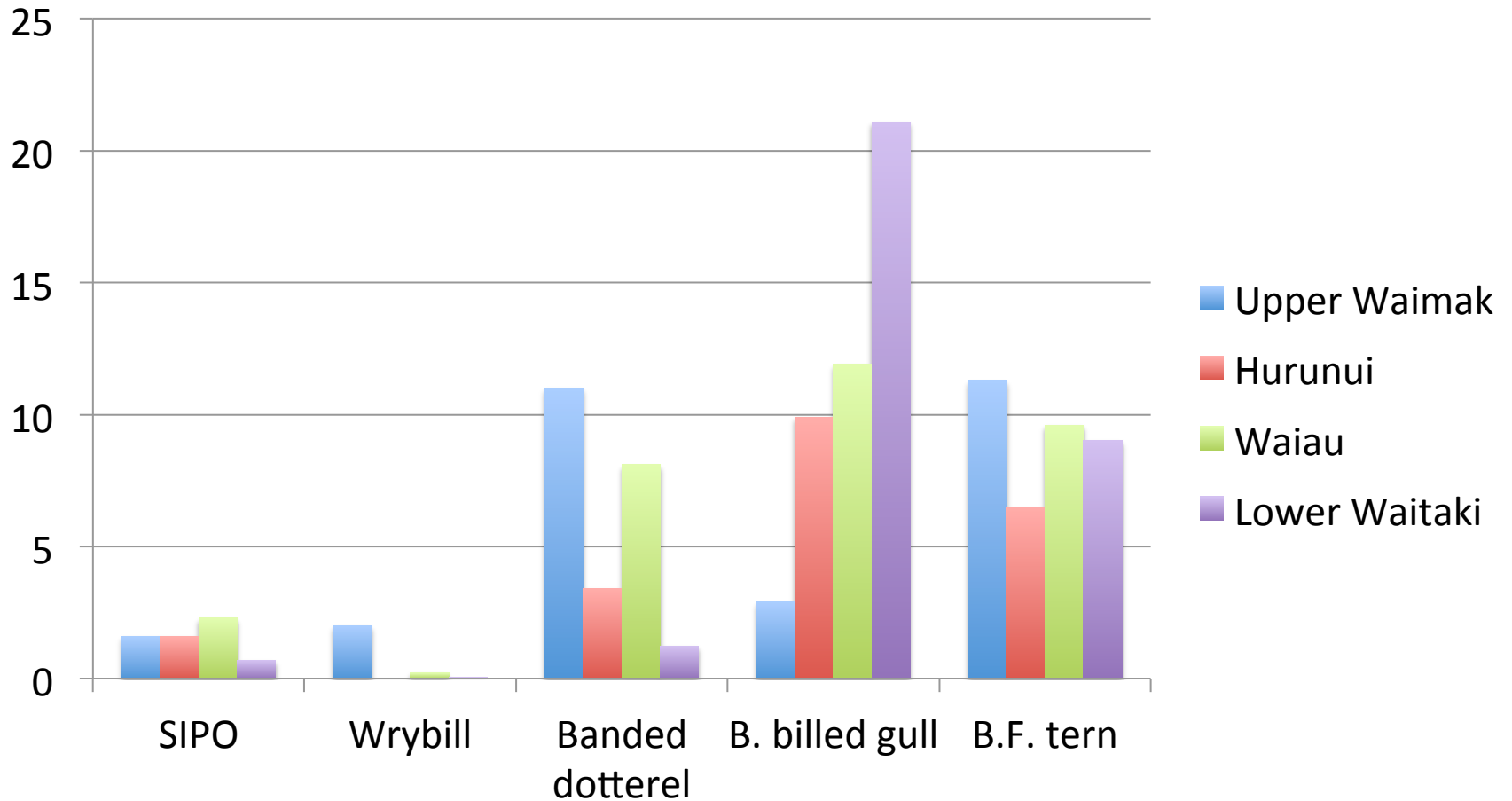
Comparison of Counts of Threatened Species Upper Waimakariri 1981 - 2016



Counts per Km Upper and Lower Waimakariri and Rangitata Rivers



Comparison of Counts per Km Between Some Major Canterbury Rivers



Conclusions

- Upper Waimakariri has wide diversity of species and significant numbers of threatened species
- The river probably meets the requirements of the status of an Outstanding habitat in terms of numbers of threatened species, endemism of those species and diversity of guilds
- It is a particularly important river for the “endangered” black-fronted tern and the nationally vulnerable wrybill

Recommendations

- Black-backed gulls are present in numbers that are a threat to nesting of other birds but in numbers where control is achievable.
- Shrub weeds, especially Russel lupin, are widespread in the Bealey to Mt. White section of the river. Control targeted at the tributary fans is recommended.
- The river's location has considerable potential for improving awareness of the values of braided rivers as educational facilities are nearby and it is bordered by both State Highway and railway leading to an important recreational and tourist attraction at Arthurs Pass.
- There is a need to put together the results of all the recent river surveys in order to re-assess populations of the threatened species and their trends.

Acknowledgements

- **The survey team** 2016: Bruce Allan, Eleanor Bissell, Marion Boyd (who also provided accommodation at her bach and a friend's bach on Bealey Spur), Stephen Crozier, Jane Demeter, Bob Gumbrell, Peter Howden (who also provided transport), Jean Jack, Jim Jolly, Nick Ledgard, Karen Miles, Mark Parker, Frances Schmechel, Lew Shaw, Edith Smith, Greg Stanley, Dan Symonds.
- Alpine Jet, Paul and Linda Vernel
- Neil Wood, Station Manager Cora Lynn and Richard Smith, Station Manager Mt. White
- Ecan for part funding and staff participation
- Ecan and Doc for access to data
- Nick Ledgard for support throughout and photos