

# 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



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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NZ097	Mataura River	Southland
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Location	New Zealand, Southland
Central coordinates	45.880688°S, 168.799610°E (Mataura Waikaia confluence)
IBA criteria	A1, A4ii
Area	9,029 ha (total area NZ097)
Altitude	5 - 500m
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	1947-2006	6,063-30,887	A1, A4i	EN	Nationally Critical
Black-fronted Tern	Breeding	1983-2001	40-43	A1, A4i	EN	Nationally Vulnerable
Australasian Bittern	Resident		Present	A1	EN	Nationally Endangered

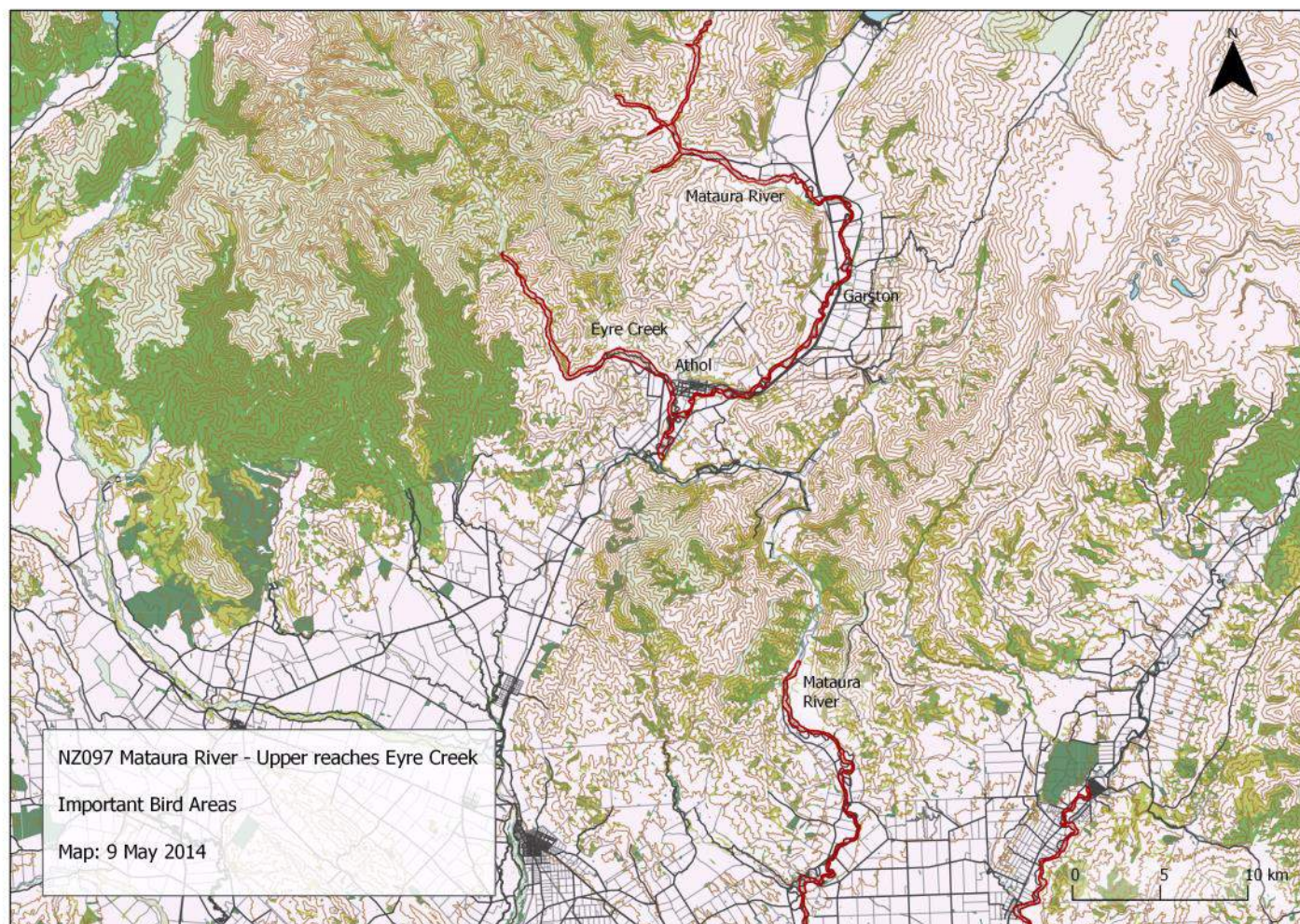
**Ornithological information:** Besides the trigger species the following species are confirmed or likely to be breeding: Black Shag, Little Shag, White-faced Heron, Canada Goose, Paradise Shelduck, Grey Teal, Mallard, Grey Duck, Australasian Harrier, South Island Pied Oystercatcher, Pied Stilt, Banded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

Protected area	Designation	Relationship with IBA
Toetoes Harbour Spit	Conservation Area	Protected area contained within site
Waituna Wetland	Scientific Reserve	Protected area contained within site
Not named	Marginal Strip	Protected area contained within site
Mataura River (Various sites)	Conservation Area	Protected area contained within site
Waikaia River	Conservation Area	Protected area contained within site









IUCN Habitat	Habitat detail	Extent (% of site)
Marine Neritic (Submergent Nearshore)	Subtidal Sandy-Mud; Estuary	Minor
Marine Intertidal	Sandy Shoreline, Beach and Spit; Rocky Shoreline; Salt Marshes	Minor
Marine Coastal/Supratidal	Coastal Sand Dunes	Minor
Wetlands (inland)	Shrub Dominated Wetlands	Major
Wetlands (inland)	Permanent Rivers; Extensive River Gravel Beds	Major
Introduced Vegetation	Broom, gorse, pasture grasses & rank weeds, willow margins	Major
Shrubland	Manuka, matagouri ( <i>Discaria toumatou</i> ), bracken	Major

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.



Southland is the stronghold for Black-billed Gulls. Photo shows massed fledglings, Otama North colony, Matura River. Photo: Rachell McClellan.

## 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 surface & ground water (agricultural use)	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Slow but significant deterioration
Pollution	Agricultural & forestry effluents - nutrient loads (rivers)	Happening now	Some of area/ population (10-49%)	Slow but significant deterioration
Pollution	Domestic & urban waste water - run-off	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:

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Photo: Frederic Pelsy  
Front: Rachel McClellan, Craig McKenzie