

BIRD SITES - AUCKLAND TO KERIKERI

STRAKAS LAKES, WAIWERA

Come off the northern motorway at Orewa & follow the main route & coast through to Waiwera. Take right turn into Waiwera itself, come to a T junction & turn right taking you under the main road (you do a loop); after one kilometre & just after a high sandy bank on your left, pull over & park on the right in front of a gate overlooking a concrete-banked lake. Walk along the road to a 2nd lake behind it. A little further on there is a lake with natural banks, just visible from a short drive to a gate. Birds here: NZ Dabchick, Grey Teal, Australian Shoveler, Pied Stilt, other common waterbirds. Allow an hour. There are often NZ Dotterels on Waiwera Beach.

TAWHARANUI REGIONAL PARK

This is at the end of a peninsula east of Warkworth (signposted from there & about 25 minutes drive). It has Bellbirds, Whiteheads, Brown Teal, NZ Robins and Kakas (difficult) & a variety of commoner species. Saddlebacks were introduced here in March 2012. The gate in the predator-proof fence opens automatically; check the lake on the right for Australian Shoveler & the beach beyond it for NZ Dotterel. Continue to car park at Anchor Beach, then walk the Fishermans Trail for the forest birds & Brown Teal in the dyke to the left. Allow 2.5 hours (but you could spend a day here).

FAIRY TERNS at WAIPU

From State Highway 1 north of Brynderwyn (south of Whangarei) turn right at the sign to Waipu. In the town follow signs to Waipu Cove. After a few kms but before you get to Waipu Cove turn left into Johnson Point Road, a short road ending at the estuary. Park at the end & scan the estuary. Opposite is a high sand bank forming the northern end of a narrow peninsular, at low tide you can wade across. At low tide Fairy Terns could be feeding anywhere but if not visible (& in any event at high tide), walk left. Terns breed on the lower part of the sand bank at the far left end. Walking left, scan or cross to the sand bank or look at the part of the estuary the other side of the rocky bank on the near side of the water. NZ Dotterels here too. Allow at least an hour.

GREBES AT WARO LAKE

A few kms north of Whangarei take the **second** of the 2 turnings right to Hikurangi & Tutukaka Coast, this is **King Street**, not George Street. After 400m or so, turn left at sign to Waro Lake Scenic Reserve. Pass recycling centre on right and come to edge of lake. Check reedy fringes for NZ Scaup, NZ Dabchick & Australian Little Grebe. Allow 30 minutes.

BROWN TEAL at TEAL BAY

About 20 kms north of Whangarei, just past a BP petrol station (about 5 kms north of Hikurangi), turn right off State Highway 1 at the sign saying 'Oakura 28' (Old Russell Road). Follow signs to Helena Bay (c.20 kms) until you are almost there; after a little one way bridge turn right to Helena Bay. Ignore the last left turn to the Bay and continue up a windy road (Webb Road) round the headland & down to Teal Bay. Pass a left turning to a small residential area & go straight on towards Mimiwhangata, passing a sign with a duck on it marked 'Pateke' (Maori for Brown Teal!). Stop where the road goes over a stream & look both sides for the birds. There are usually 30 or more here. Half hour each way, c.10 minutes for the birds.