



Over 200 bird species call NZ home, with the majority found nowhere else in the world. Unfortunately, 74% are classified as threatened with or at risk of extinction due to human activity, mammalian pests and invasive plants that have caused habitat loss and population decline.

Some of our native birds seasonally migrate to inland Otago for breeding and have been documented along Lake Dunstan.

Invasive plant and pest control, seasonal restrictions on vehicles and dogs access and public support are some of the ways we can promote population recovery.

Please find a list of some of the most vulnerable birds found breeding along Lake Dunstan and how to help protect them during the breeding season (September to January).

## HELP PROTECT OUR NATIVE BIRDS

### When visiting parks, beaches, rivers & lakes

- Leave nesting birds alone
- Don't drive on riverbeds, or keep to formed tracks if you have to
- Park and launch from designated areas
- Walk and drive on designated paths
- Report sightings of pests
- Follow the **water care code** and local navigation bylaws

### When out with your dog

- Only take dogs to areas that allow them, and keep them under control
- If you come across wildlife put your dog on a lead and lead it away
- Warn other dog owners at the location
- Notify DOC if you see wildlife being harassed by people or dogs

### Other ways to help

- Get your dog trained in avian awareness
- Volunteer to control predators and restore bird habitats
- Set predator traps on your property
- Keep your cat in at night

Call **0800 DOC HOT** (0800 362 468)  
immediately if you see anyone catching,  
harming or killing native wildlife

Modified from Department of Conservation Website, [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

LAKE DUNSTAN  
— CHARITABLE TRUST —



## PROTECTING OUR VULNERABLE BIRDS



Learn about the incredible native birds breeding along Lake Dunstan and how you can help protect them.

[www.lakedunstan.org](http://www.lakedunstan.org)

Make sure you record bird sightings on:

**eBird**

*Join the world's largest birding community.  
Every sighting matters. Contribute yours.*

# Australasian Crested Grebe

*Podiceps cristatus* - Nationally Vulnerable



## Appearance

Medium sized with a slender, long neck, narrow black bill and head with a distinctive black crest and chestnut-black cheek frills. Body dark chestnut-brown and silver-white underneath. Feet lobed and set far back on the body.

## Distribution

South Island; common in Canterbury and Otago. Now rare in Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast and Fiordland. Nest on lakes with shoreline rushes, sedges, reeds or willows.

## Breeding

Nesting September to March. Build floating nests from sticks and aquatic weeds and anchor to willow branches or reeds. Lay 5-7 eggs and both parents incubate and care for the chicks who often sit on the parents back.

## Threats

Mammalian predators, habitat loss, hydro electric power schemes and disturbance by recreational activities (e.g. power boats).

O'Donnell, C.F.J. 2013 [updated 2017]. Australasian crested grebe. In Miskelly, C.M. (ed.) *New Zealand Birds Online*. [www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz](http://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz)

# Black-billed Gulls

*Larus bulleri* - Nationally Critical



## Appearance

More slender than red-billed gulls; with a longer bill. Breeding adults are mostly white with pale silver-grey wings and back. Outer primaries have white-tipped black margins. Black beak and legs. Eye is white with red eye-ring.

## Distribution

Most nest in South Island. Breed on sparsely-vegetated gravels of inland riverbeds; occasionally on adjacent farmland if been major flooding. After breeding, they migrate to the coast but this is poorly monitored.

## Breeding

Colonies established in October until January; earlier if there is flooding, predation or disturbance. 2-4 eggs and incubate 20-24 days; chicks fledged at 26± days.

## Threats

Mammalian and avian predators, weed encroachment, agriculture, flooding, vehicle activity on nesting sites, climate change.

Black-billed gull, Queenstown. Queenstown, Jan 2015. Image © Janko Luin <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jluin/>. McClellan, R.K.; Habraken, A. 2013 [updated 2019]. Black-billed gull. In Miskelly, C.M. *New Zealand Birds Online*. [www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz](http://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz)

# Banded Dotterel

*Charadrius bicinctus* - Nationally Vulnerable



## Appearance

Brown and white with long dark legs, short black bill and large round dark eyes. Breeding males: Breasts bands - narrow black and broad chestnut; black band between eyes. Females: paler more chestnut coloured breast to male's.

## Distribution

Widespread on mainland NZ during breeding season. Breed on braided rivers, occasionally on gravelly lakeshore. Can be found migrating to Tasmania and S.E Australia for winter.

## Breeding

Arrive in July; eggs laid August to November. Usually 3 eggs which are grey to pale green and speckled; resemble stones. Nests are shallow scrapes in gravel or soil and lined with small stones. Pairs are solitary and territorial. Both parents incubate for 4 weeks then care for a further 5-6 weeks once fledged.

## Threats

Mammalian predators, habitat loss, dogs and distribution by human activity (e.g. vehicles).

Pierce, R.J. 2013. Banded dotterel. In Miskelly, C.M. (ed.) *New Zealand Birds Online*. [www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz](http://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz)