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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

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Marsh crake: pp 139-140.



MARSH CRAKE

Family Rallidae

Species *Porzana pusilla*

Common names Marsh Crake, Baillons (Bayons) Crake

Status Native

Size 180 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Spotless Crake 200 mm)

Abundance In selected areas but secretive

Habitat A bird of swamps and wetlands and the raupo margins of lakes. It shares a similar habitat to that of the Spotless Crake.

Worldwide range Widely spread through the southern Mediterranean, Asia, Indonesia, The Philippines, New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand. In New Zealand this species is becoming better known and nests have been studied.

New Zealand range Evenly spread in both North and South Island In wetland areas.

Description

Face, throat and breast Dark grey. **Crown and upperparts** Brown. **Wings** Brown, with black and white mottling on secondary feathers. **Back** Black, with some white mottling. **Abdomen** Horizontally streaked with black and white. **Bill, legs and feet** Greenish.

Conspicuous features

- Slightly smaller than the Spotless Crake.
- Undertail brown barring and white flecking on back and wings.
- Paler colouring which differentiates it from the Spotless Crake.

Call A harsh “krek krek krek” more often heard at night. This is the most common sound made by this bird but a harsh trill might also be heard.

Nest A platform of grass and twigs in a wet area, often with water under it, attached to a rush bush. Up to 5 olive-brown eggs are laid.

Where to find – North Island

North Waikato – Whangamarino swamp on the Meremere causeway. P. 308.

South Waikato – Lake Ngaroto from the board walk. P. 311.

Tongariro – Motuoapa to Turangi on Highway 1 in swampy road verges. P. 326.

Bay of Plenty – Omokoroa at Cooney Reserve at the end of Margaret Place near the Omokoroa camping ground. Search the lagoon verges. P. 318.

Bay of Plenty – Matata Lagoons along the gravel road to the Tarawera River-mouth. P. 320.

Bay of Plenty – Ohiwa Harbour along harbour in accessible areas near the road to Opotiki. P. 322.

Where to find – South Island

Marlborough – Nelson District on harbour verges of Waimea Inlet. P. 343.

Marlborough – Marahau causeway. P. 344.

Southland – Lake Manapouri and swampy areas on Blackmount Road. P. 369.

Southland – Redcliff Wildlife Reserve on Blackmount Road. P. 369.

Southland – Awarua Estuary around verges. P. 365.

Southland – Lake Murihiku west of Invercargill City. P. 366.

Westland – Lake Kaniere around lake verges. P. 374.