

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Banded rail: pp 134-135.



#### **BANDED RAIL.**

**Family** Rallidae

**Species** *Rallus philippensis*

**Common names** Banded Rail, Buff-banded Rail (Australia)

**Status** Native

**Size** 300 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm)

**Habitat** A bird of wet gullies, swamps and lake verges. Coastal populations live in mangrove estuaries and among other types of estuary vegetation which provide sufficient cover. Evidence of its inland presence is sometimes proved by the cats of farmers catching birds.

**Worldwide range** A bird of several races which is distributed through south-east Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands east to Tahiti where it is now probably extinct on the main islands. The New Zealand race *assimilis* is found only in swampy areas and tidal estuaries, whereas the Pacific and Australian species appear to be widespread through dry land areas, even feeding along roads.

**New Zealand range** Found in the North Island in areas north of Aotea Harbour

on the west coast and Ohiwa Harbour in the Bay of Plenty on the east. In the South Island, found in the north-west corner. Found on Stewart Island.

### **Description**

**Crown** Chestnut. **Face and throat** Prominent white stripe above eye. Chestnut stripe through eye with grey chin and throat. **Upperparts** Olive-brown, marked with black and white. **Breast** Horizontally striped with black and white with a buff band across the middle. **Underparts** Horizontally barred with black and white. **Undertail** Buff with horizontal black bars widely spaced. **Bill** Brown.

### **Conspicuous features**

- White eye-stripe above the eye which extends a short way down the side of the neck.
- Buff-coloured breast band.
- Black and white barring on the abdomen.

### **Conspicuous characteristics**

- Feeds actively with head down.
- Often seen chasing each other when feeding.
- If disturbed quickly runs for cover with head down.
- Often walks with a measured gait.

**Call** A high pitched “brurururu” sound. Also “tick tick tick” calls. When heard at dawn or dusk a harsh “craak” is sometimes heard which sounds like a fence wire being stretched through rusty post staples.

**Nest** A well hidden cup-shaped bowl in grasses or rushes. Up to 5 pinkish, brown-blotched eggs are laid.

### **Where to find – North Island**

**Northland** – Bay of Islands at Rangitane and Aroha Island. P. 282.

**Northland** – Paihia at Waitangi Estuary. P. 283.

**North Auckland** – Wenderholm Park. P. 291.

**South Auckland** – Kaiaua at the Huarahi river-mouth by the bridge. P. 302.

**South Auckland** – Miranda at the Miranda Naturalists’ Trust Centre or at the gateway into “The Limeworks” area. P. 302.

**Coromandel** – Opoutere at the first bridge before the cottages start. P. 307.

**Bay of Plenty** – Matata Lagoons around verges. P. 320.

**Bay of Plenty** – Ohiwa Harbour shoreline birds from the road. P. 322.

### **Where to find – South Island**

**Marlborough** – Collingwood area around coastal fringes. P. 344.

**Marlborough** – Marahau Causeway just after Kaiteiteri Beach. P. 344.

### **Where to find – Stewart Island**

**Oban** – At Horseshoe Bay near Oban and search the estuary verges. P. 367.

**Kaipipi Bay** – Ryans Creek and Kaipipi Bay from Fern Gully Road. P. 367.