

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Eastern curlew: pp 173-174.



EASTERN CURLEW.

Family Scolopacidae

Species *Numenius madagascariensis*

Common names Eastern Curlew, Long-billed Curlew

Status Migrant

Abundance Rare

Size 630 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Bar-tailed Godwit 390 mm)

Habitat Found in estuaries and harbours.

Worldwide range An Arctic nesting bird that breeds in north-east Siberia and spends the northern winter in countries of the western Pacific rim with large numbers arriving in Australia. Small numbers straggle on to New Zealand.

New Zealand range Can be expected in any harbour or estuary. Birds favour the harbours of Northland, Auckland and Farewell Spit. Records come from places

such as Maketu Estuary, Manawatu Estuary, Awarua Bay and Waituna Lagoon.

Description

Upperparts Dark brown mottled with buff. **Underparts** Buff longitudinally striped with dark brown. **Eyebrow** Whitish. **Bill** Dark brown, noticeably curved and darker on the tip. **Legs** Bluish-grey.

Conspicuous features

- Long down-curved bill.
- Large size.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Generally remains apart from other birds on high-tide roosts, usually staying on the edges of the flock.
- Easily spotted.

Call The song of the curlew, a long “kroo-lee kroo-lee”, is especially noticeable when the bird takes off.

Where to find – North Island

South Auckland – Miranda and Kaiaua have had up to 11 birds in winter roosting both at Kaiaua just south of the beach houses and on the shellbanks near the “Stilt Ponds”. These tend to congregate with Pied Oystercatchers on the beach at the high tide. P. 302.

Manawatu – Sometimes at the Manawatu Estuary. P. 336.

Where to find – South Island

Southland – Waituna Lagoon and Awarua Harbour. P. 364.