

26 April 2023

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email to Christopher Rendall of 27 March 2023, which we are treating as an Official Information Act (OIA) request to the Department of Conservation (DOC). In your email you asked:

To help us better understand their movement and to inform our monitoring methodologies can you please provide the following:

Bittern, Matuku

- *any observational data of matuku from the Taranaki Bight from Hawera to the Manawatu Estuary, and inland for say 20km, including any data from the "DOC's National Matuku Database" and any studies using automatic recording devices (ARDs).*
- *any tracking data (GSM tag, GPS Argos tags, or equivalent) of matuku from the same area, essentially South Taranaki District, Wanganui District, and the lower Rangitikei and lower Manawatu Districts.*

Migrants

- *All data obtained from GPS tracking data of domestic migrants that has been collected to date countrywide. If birds still have functional transmitters or they have widened the programme it would be good to have access to the data from all migrant species, and secure data for the next two migration events, this winter (June to August inclusive), and next summer (December to February inclusive). I've been told that the department put GPS transmitters on 60 South Island Pied Oystercatchers in later 2021.*

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

Bittern, Matuku

1. *Any observational data of matuku from the Taranaki Bight from Hawera to the Manawatu Estuary, and inland for say 20km, including any data from the "DOC's*



National Matuku Database” and any studies using automatic recording devices (ARDs).

Response

The area you describe encompasses three DOC Operational Districts (New Plymouth, Whanganui and Manawatu). We hold and will release the following files in relation to this request:

Item	Last modified	Document description	Decision
1	19/04/2023	DOC’s National MatukuBittern Database Districts_New Plymouth_Whanganui_Manawatu	Released in full apart from names being withheld
2	21/10/2019	Manawatu District bittern and crane records – DOC-2991536	Released in full apart from names being withheld

Please note, some of the data points provided in item 1 were sourced from the OSNZ Bird Distribution Atlas’, we suggest that you may wish to contact them for additional information in relation to these data.

2. *Any tracking data (GSM tag, GPS Argos tags, or equivalent) of matuku from the same area, essentially South Taranaki District, Wanganui District, and the lower Rangitikei and lower Manawatu Districts.*

Response

I confirm that DOC does not hold any such data in relation to the area described. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not exist.

Migrants

3. *All data obtained from GPS tracking data of domestic migrants that has been collected to date countrywide.*

Response

While I confirm DOC does hold data that would come within this part of your request, this information is held as a result of multiple formal collaborations with various international and New Zealand-based entities/organisations. These data are subject to several Collaborative Agreements with DOC, and are held subject to an obligation of confidence. I have accordingly decided to withhold this information under sections 18(a) and 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA. Releasing the information to you would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, and it is in the public interest that the information should continue to be supplied.

However, I recognise the interest you have in this topic and would like to be as helpful as I can be. If you are able to clarify your request into more specific questions e.g.



regarding bird movements and/or monitoring methods, then we may be able to help further by either:

- a) Providing a summary of what the data shows (after consultations with all relevant collaborators) to help answer your clarified questions;

Or,

- b) Referring you to the collaborator(s) that are most able to help you directly with your query.

4. *It would be good to have access to the data from all migrant species, and secure data for the next two migration events, this winter (June to August inclusive), and next summer (December to February inclusive).*

Response

DOC is not able to provide any information in relation to this part of your request. Potential future data does not exist at this time and is therefore not able to be provided. You are welcome, and we encourage you, to submit requests in the future if you still wish to access this data at a later time.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under the following section of the OIA:

- confidential information, under section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

We look forward to ongoing engagement with you on the Waiinu proposal. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We would also be interested in exploring opportunities to align research methodologies to better enable consistent interpretation of data.

Nāku noa nā [REDACTED]

Hilary Aikman
Director Terrestrial Biodiversity
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai