

WARM AIR 17 July 2021

Aviation Sports Club Gliding Newsletter

THIS WEEKEND:

www.ascgliding.org

Bank Acct 38-9014-0625483-000

Saturday	Instructing:	Andrew Fletcher
	Towing:	Ruan Heynike
	Duty Pilot	Rahul Bagchi
Sunday	Instructing:	Lionel Page
	Towing:	Gus Cabre
	Duty Pilot	Tony Prentice

MEMBERS NEWS

*Well last weekend there was some real soaring to be had.
Many thanks to all the reports, photos and other contributions.*

In Warm Air this Week;

- *Weekend Reports*
- *Weekend Images*
- *Our avian compatriots part 3. Native species. Jonathan Pote*
- *Roster*
- *Tower Operations (if you missed from last week)*

Weekend Reports

Saturday – Instructor Steve Wallace reports

The day started with a bit of a palava as we tried to find somebody that had both a valid base ID and whose name was on the list and able to draw the key. Tony Prentice came to the rescue and by around 10am or so we were extracting the tow plane and twin from the hangar.

While the forecast wasn't that flash with the SW wind on the ground 8Kts, at 2,000' 28Kts and showers, the instability did mean there was plenty of good climbs to over 3,000' to be had, so nobody had any trouble staying up. Jonathan who had brought a dead bird for his lunch was first up with a nice 40 minute flight following thermal streets out towards the upwind coastline.



Kazik had 32 minutes while exploring flight at max maneuvering and rough air speeds and also while trying the air brakes at higher speeds. Matt got nearly 40 minutes back seat time to add to his collection and newbies Theo and Shiv also got some nice time on the controls.

Tony P was going well in his PW5 when the tower advised a C-130 was inbound and would he stay clear or return. Apparently being able to 'probably' stay clear is not an acceptable answer so this was clarified to a return and land. Last flight of the day was Alex who was demo'd and then had a go at side-slipping, which the twin does quite nicely.



So, considering the time of year it was actually a very nice day for flying. Well done to all those who partook.

Sunday – Instructor Ray Burns reports

The Wx showed a fairly significant weather system in the North Tasman that looked like it was raining cats and dogs in the far north. But here it was quite pleasant but the wind chill made it feel somewhat "fresh" on the field.

Jonathan, Derry and Thomas were all waiting for me when I arrived.

There was not a lot of eagerness to get any of the single seaters out but we did get out the yellow beast and the twin. Alex did an excellent DI of the twin and then, ably assisted by Issy, cleaned up and replaced the tape on the wings and tailplane.



We trundled down to 08 and Issy took two keen youngsters for a fly and then Alex did a left base 08 approach with his first attempt at a brakeless landing using side slip which was interesting....

I went flying with Jonathan and Rahul and the day finished with Issy taking Shivneet for his second flight. Shivneet is a new member and an Auckland Uni student. I'm sure you will all make him welcome when you meet him.

In between all the activity everyone huddled in the caravan and discussed the freezing weather. Jonathan suggested we should all be issued arctic ratings. I tend to agree.



Thanks to Anne and Al in tower, Derry in the towplane and Tomas manning the books. Another great (if not cool) day in paradise.

Tow pilot Derry reports from the noisy end

Sunday was one of those days that remind you that it IS winter. The chilly breeze was lazy and traveled straight through you instead of going around, and many folk dressed appropriately, but there is always someone in shorts or a thin cotton shirt and wafer-thin wind-breaker to make us feel like real woosies.

For the first time in ages I managed to get the tug refueled and prepped for flight and down to the 08 threshold end of the runway well before a glider arrived! The truth is that I didn't get side-tracked with maintenance issues...

First away into the gloomy-looking sky was Isabel Burr with a young trial flyer and a request to fly over Hobsonville, so the tower cleared us for a right turn out so we could skirt around the Point where he lived, then his sister also took a flight.

Three more flights followed as the conditions became a bit lumpier, then the tower advised that the wind on the ground had reached 25 kts and rain was on the way. We took off for the last flight just as specks of light rain appeared on the windscreen.

This reminded me of Bert's recitation in the Mary Poppins film - "Wind's in the East, Mist coming in, like something is brewing, about to begin"... only in this case, our flying day was about to end.

By the time we reached 1500 ft the climb had halved to 200 fpm due to the light rain on both the airplanes wings as we flew through bands and the last 500 feet took a while.

And so it was, with a flurry of helpers hangering the planes and tractors, we closed shop and beatled off to the clubrooms for a chitchat and wind-down.

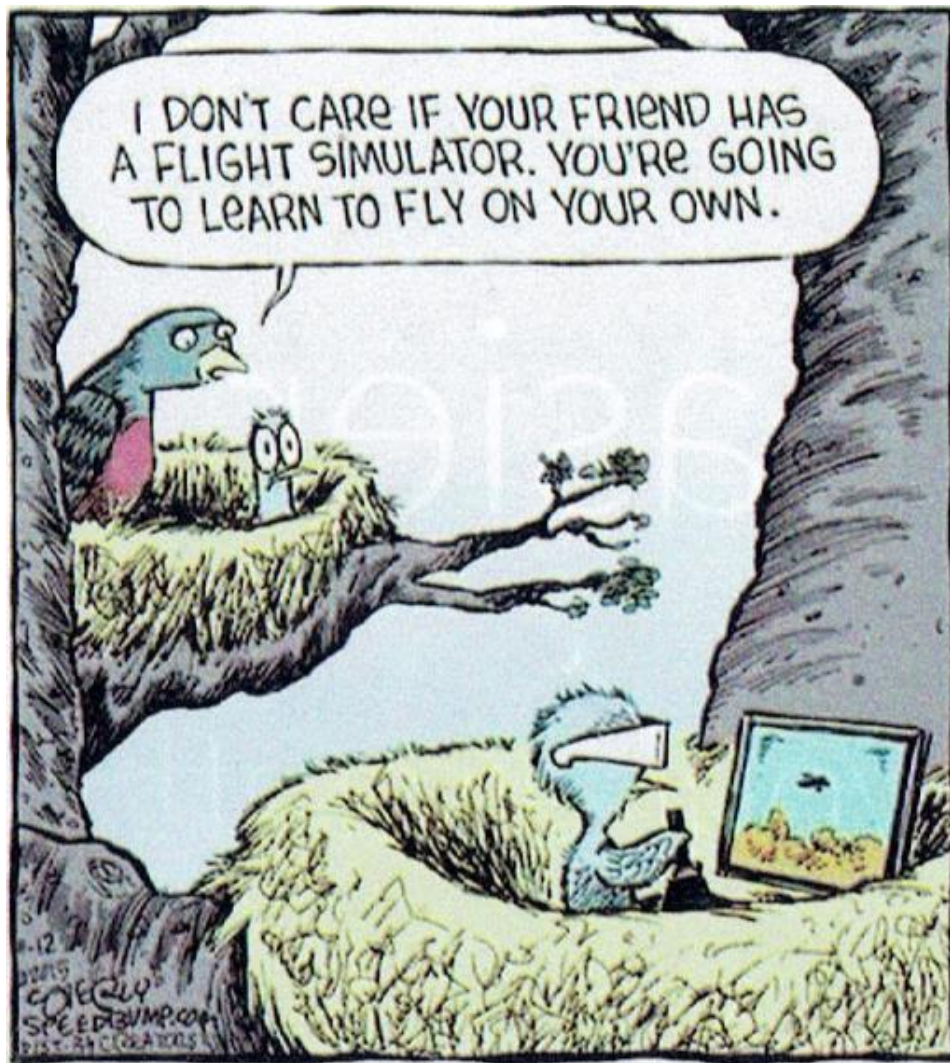
Thanks to one and all for making a cold dismal day a success for the club.



Weekend Images

Some lovely shots from Fletcher McKenzie





Looking at the Weather for the Weekend, I think we will be Flight Simulating !!

Our avian compatriots part 3. Native species. Jonathan Pote

This week I will cover the native species of birds frequenting our airfield (or is it theirs?)

To re-cap, **Endemic species** are defined as inhabiting one specific geographical area and have done so for a long time. Our geographical area is not just New Zealand but *Zealandia*, the eighth continent, which includes Raoul Island (Kermadec islands), the Sub-Antarctic islands plus Lord Howe Island, Norfolk island, Macquarie Island and New Caledonia (the Aussies and French should give them all back).

Native species are here naturally, but also occur naturally outside Zealandia. If you visit Australia or even the Moluccas (the Spice Islands of the Dutch East Indies), you will find Pūkekos there, albeit under a different local name.

Self-introduced species have made their own way here and are now permanent residents on their way to citizenship, although no-one knows the probationary period. We covered these last week, although I left one (Pāpera or Grey Duck) out. I am on a learning curve.

This week it is the turn of the Native species, those resident in New Zealand since pre-historical times, before *Homo sapiens* burst in and messed everything up. Of those, the Kāhu (Australasian Harrier) and the Pukeko are the commonest, the Taranui (Caspian Tern) and Poaka (Pied Stilt) less so. I have included the Pāpera (Grey Duck) as a catch-up. It has only been here in numbers since 1950, so qualifies as self-introduced.

Kāhu or Australasian Harrier (*Circus approximans*). These beautiful birds are present every day. They find lift at very low altitudes even on poor days, circling as they hunt for carrion or a suitable live takeaway such as a young chick. If Kāhu have to flap, then the prospects that day for we human imposter aviators are poor; the air is too stable. As a threat to the Spur-wing plover chicks or eggs, they are 'seen off' very aggressively by the plovers. No doubt the Skylarks huddled on their eggs are very grateful for their top-cover. The scientific name for the genus derives from the Greek for 'circling', their method of finding food. Imagine landing out by a tasty meal (I did once land out in a winery, but the shop was closed).

Kāhu are spread over Australia as well as all of Zealandia, from New Caledonia to the sub-Antarctic

Kāhu soaring



Target sighted. Rolling in



Weapons free



Gotcha! One less rabbit



islands. They are thought to have arrived here seven hundred years ago (Māori oral history) when the endemic Eyles Harrier vacated an ecological niche by becoming extinct. They are one of the few birds to benefit from human interference, initially from the clearing of forest and more recently from motor vehicles. There is a Kāhu café very kilometre – possum pancake is the usual menu).

At the mating season (now onwards) they perform aerobatics to impress a suitor (very human!), with true loops and barrel rolls and the odd stall turn. When attacked by SW Plovers, they roll inverted to greet the attacker with their talons. They nest on the ground, but any animal, humans included, approaches the nest at their peril.

The Pūkeko (*Porphyrio melanotus*) is common everywhere, and if you cannot see one, you will probably be able to hear the shriek of one not far off. It has a European name, the Eastern Swamp Hen (carried over from its Australian naming), but that is rarely used. Various indications (Māori oral history and the fossil record – which only goes back four-hundred years for the species in NZ) suggest it arrived less than a thousand years ago (Māori tradition records specimens on two of the original Waka). Other evidence suggests that it arrived from north of Zealandia and actually reached Australia last, crossing the Tasman against the prevailing wind; Ungainly as it seems, it is a long-distance flyer. Its food is mainly vegetarian, and it has the most irritating habit of pulling up ALL the seedlings planted by conservation volunteers the day before.

Māori consider it a 'Chiefly' bird because of its red beak and feet. That may explain why and how Pūkeko arrived here (with the Waka) as "they are rarely eaten except in times of necessity". A cook book is said to advise "Boil for twenty-four hours alongside an old boot. When cool enough, throw the bird carcase away and eat the boot" which suggests that the necessity must be extreme.

Pūkekos warn each other of danger by exhibiting their white rear. Takahē, a rare relative once believed extinct, does not have this ability. Nor do Takahē have a warning cry (there was no need – no predators until recently) and DoC are trying to teach young takahē chicks the Pukeko warning cry. Bilingual birds – what next!)



Pukeko feeding

Pukeko warning white



rear

The Grey Duck or Pārera (*Anas superciliosa*). This is actually self-introduced. I always thought it was native, but I did warn I would make mistakes. A few arrived before 1950, but then there was a mass influx of Pārera from Australia (and Pākehā from Europe) around then and Pārera are now abundant. They interbreed with the introduced Mallard leading to "fifty shades of grey" ducks. Birders tend to call the hybrids "Grallards" to cover all possibilities, and the long-term likelihood is that the (intentionally introduced) Mallard will eventually wipe out the Grey Duck in New Zealand by successful interbreeding. They are common visitors to Lake Whenuapai during the winter and any 'duck' there is likely to be a grallard. The Pārera has a prominent dark eye stripe, whilst the endemic Paradise Shelduck, also a visitor, is much larger and more colourful, thus easily distinguished.

Most Pāpera nests are on the ground, not always near water, and sometimes up in trees. The ducklings are mobile and self-feeding whilst still covered in down, but are so light that they can fall unharmed out of high nests, and of course swim easily. Flying lessons come later. Grallards are terrible parents, and if you observe a known brood, their numbers will reduce from perhaps a dozen to one or two within days. Even so, it is a very successful species and very common.

Whether it deserves its scientific name or not I leave to you. I have at least spelt *Anas* correctly. *Superciliosa* might just refer to the eye stripe, *ciliary* being a word associated with the anatomy of the eye. The name was coined by Gmelin in 1789, so it is too late to ask him.



Pāpera or grey Duck



Pacific Black Duck with Chicks (*Anas superciliosa*)
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Careful now, mother. Only two left.

That just leaves the Pied Stilt or Poaka and Caspian Tern or Taranui (literally “the big tern”). They both overfly the airfield occasionally, and the Caspian Tern is the only bird I have seen both in the UK and New Zealand. It has a very wide range indeed. I may cover these later, or just point them out.



Poaka or Pied Stilt



Taranui or Caspian Tern

Next week I will tackle the *endemic* species, those treasures of Zealandia that live nowhere else.

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Classifieds

GLASFLUGEL LIBELLE 201B SHARE FOR SALE

Ill health forces me to sell my share in Libelle 201B ZK GIV. This glider is based at Whenuapai in partnership of two. Easy to fly, the Libelle has a good performance that in the right hands puts more modern machines to shame. Email Graham Lake gclake@pl.net



Duty Roster For Jul, Aug, Sept

Month	Date	Duty Pilot	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Jul	3	G LEYLAND	I WOODFIELD	P THORPE
	4	I O'KEEFE	A FLETCHER	R CARSWELL
	10	M MORAN	S WALLACE	F MCKENZIE
	11	T O'ROURKE	R BURNS	D BELCHER
	17	R BAGCHI	A FLETCHER	R HEYNIKE
	18	T PRENTICE	L PAGE	G CABRE
	24	C BEST	P THORPE	R CARSWELL
	25	E LEAL SCHWENKE	I WOODFIELD	D BELCHER
	31	R MCMILLAN	S WALLACE	P THORPE
Aug	1	A MICHAEL	R BURNS	P EICHLER
	7	R WHITBY	A FLETCHER	R HEYNIKE
	8	C DICKSON	P THORPE	G CABRE
	14	K JASICA	L PAGE	F MCKENZIE
	15	J DICKSON	I WOODFIELD	R CARSWELL

	21	S HAY	S WALLACE	D BELCHER
	22	K BHASHYAM	R BURNS	P EICHLER
	28	K PILLAI	A FLETCHER	R HEYNIKE
	29	G LEYLAND	P THORPE	G CABRE
Sep	4	I O'KEEFE	L PAGE	P THORPE
	5	M MORAN	I WOODFIELD	F MCKENZIE
	11	T O'ROURKE	S WALLACE	R CARSWELL
	12	R BAGCHI	R BURNS	D BELCHER
	18	T PRENTICE	A FLETCHER	P EICHLER
	19	C BEST	P THORPE	R HEYNIKE
	25	E LEAL SCHWENKE	L PAGE	G CABRE
	26	R MCMILLAN	S WALLACE	F MCKENZIE

Tower Operations

1. No Surprises

The main thing we are trying to avoid is to give the controllers surprises. Much in the same way we have a good idea what is going and what a glider is likely to do, they too, are keeping a mental picture of what aircraft (a/c) are about, where they are, what they are likely to do.

If you have an a/c in sight, tell them. It saves them telling you.

2. Traffic Information

It is a requirement of ATC that they provide traffic information to VFR traffic in the zone. The controllers will provide this information to the tow plane as it gets airborne. ATC will require acknowledgement of that information from the towplane, glider and all airborne gliders in the control zone. All that is required is "GBU copy all traffic". Nothing further is required.

Feel free to request traffic information from the tower. They cannot tell which of us is which because we all use 1300 on the transponder. So don't ask for the location of a specific aircraft registration. All they can give you is the location of "a" glider. (Something I also discovered in my travels: a/c that go round and round and circles drop off the radar. Possibly something to do with the computer thinking we have no ground speed. It also affects helicopters that go round in circles - like the police!). If you are going to ask for this start your call with your current location. E.g., "Glider Bravo Uniform overhead the prison 2000, whereabouts are the other two gliders?"

3. Re-entering the zone.

If you charge off to the north and are gone for some time, please do not forget to make a call re-entering the zone. As above, the controller needs to add you back into their mix of a/c that they are legally obliged to "control".

4. Clearances

4.1 Blanket clearances

You will have noticed that RDW gets a 'blanket start clearance' at the beginning of each day: This is a clearance to start and taxi. Once issued for the day there is no longer any further need to request these clearances each launch.

Legally, gliders are required to get a clearance to operate in the zone as well. Each a/c will now be issued a blanket clearance to operate in the zone at the start of each day. This will be given at line up and it will require read-back e.g., "Blanket Clearance to operate 2500' and below. Glider Bravo Uniform".

4.2 QNH and Altitude clearances

You will have heard the tower call something like “QNH now 1024”. These require readback. Please ensure you respond: “QNH 1024 Glider Bravo Uniform”

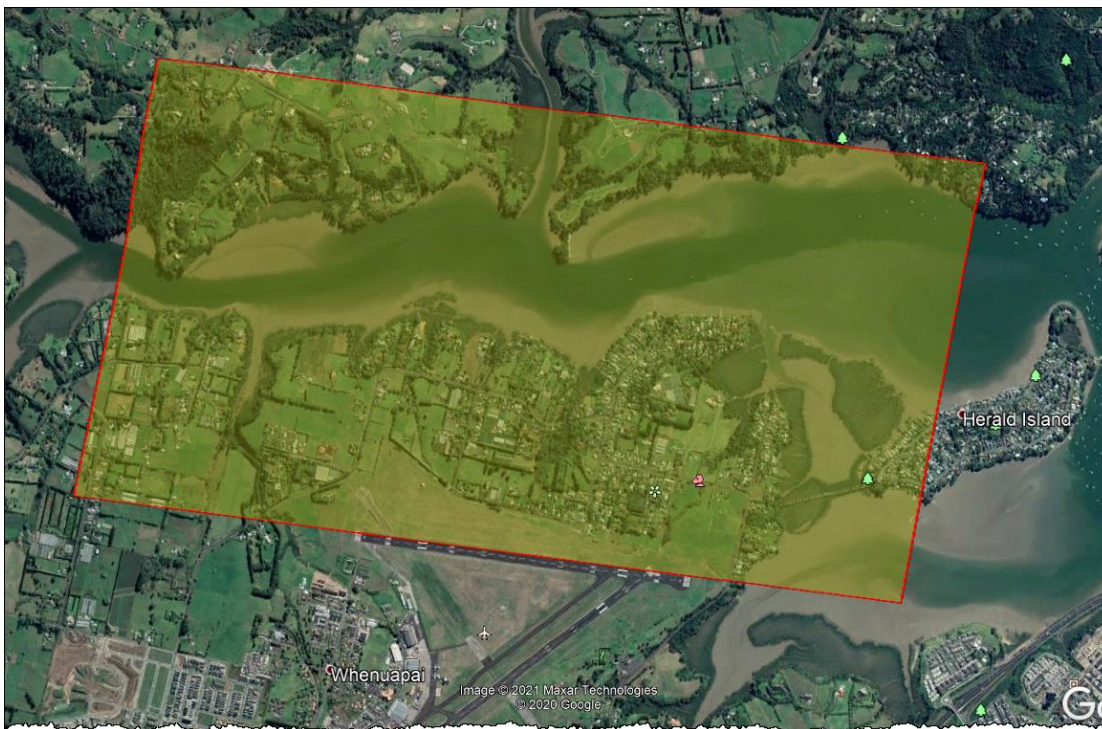
5. Circuits

5.1 Five Minute Call

This is probably the most important thing. Try to make it accurate. The controllers understand that we are gliders, and it can be difficult to estimate but try your best. If you clearly know it is going to be less than 5 minutes say so.

5.2 Where is it?

The circuit is the area bounded by the extended 08/26 centreline, then a line perpendicular to Herald Island to the East and Harkin point to the West. The norther boundary is the NTH Coast of the estuary. The circuit extends to 1500 AGL.



5.3 Altitude

No passing through the circuit below 1600 indicated (1500 agl). This includes the power circuit so care to be taken when operating West and South of Riverhead.

It is expected that a glider may orbit close to the circuit area to DESCEND prior to joining
AS PER CLUB RULES, no thermalling in the circuit below 1500 AGL.

5.4 26 Circuits

There is no change to 26 Circuits. It should be business as usual for everyone.

5.5 **08 Circuits (An Operational Change)**

08 Circuits provide the most concern for the controller. When we are using **08**, we are typically operating to the north and west of the airfield. As the **08** circuit STARTS in the Herald Island vicinity, we often find ourselves tracking east along the estuary to join. This can cause conflict with traffic in the circuit.

Therefore: we are going **to make a slight change to our normal procedures**. Only **GNF will make downwind joins on 08**. **All other gliders will join left base**. When you call "**LEFT BASE**" the controller is **EXPECTING** to find you somewhere close to Harkin Point (i.e. the "Russia house"). If you want to establish yourself earlier (Say 1 Nm to the nth call "EARLY left base"). Do **NOT** forget the 5 minute call. With now a shorter period when you are in the circuit the minute call is critical.

If you are unsure of this process make sure you fly a training circuit or two with an instructor before you dive into it on your own. We will have a few weeks to bed this in before the tower make these clearances as standard. This is to ensure we all get time to do any training required. Please make use of the opportunity.

As always, if you have any questions, please raise them with myself (021 2770115) or any of the instructor team.
