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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Crested grebe: pp 17-18.



AUSTRALASIAN CRESTED GREBE

Family Podicipedidae

Species *Podiceps cristatus*

Common name Crested Grebe,
(sometimes Great Crested Grebe or
Southern Crested Grebe)

Status Native

Abundance Uncommon

Size 500 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Dabchick 280 mm)

Discussion The Crested Grebe is found almost worldwide in temperate zones. In New Zealand it is scarce and shy when compared with its close relatives in Europe and Africa. The New Zealand species closely resembles the Australian species in colour and habitat.

Habitat Inland lakes often in secluded areas.

Range Confined to specific areas in the South Island. Largest populations are in the mid-Canterbury lakes district.

Description

Crown Brown with ornate tufts projecting upwards on the back of head. **Face** White. **Neck** A frill of rufous feathers hangs from under the cheeks when in

breeding plumage. **Foreneck** white. **Upperparts** Brown. **Underparts** Silky white. **Bill** Brown and finely pointed. **Feet** Greenish with flat-lobed toes.

Description – chicks

Upperparts “Zebra-striped” with black and white horizontal markings. **Underparts** White.

Conspicuous features

- Sits low in the water and reveals a long thin neck.
- Head is held at a right angle to the neck.
- Neck is long and white.
- White on forewing and primaries.

Conspicuous characteristics

- A bird which is constantly diving and bobbing to the surface.
- In flight its long neck is held straight and slightly below body line.
- Flies very close to the water.
- Usually seen in pairs.
- In the breeding season it is sometimes seen with its young riding among its folded wings.
- Usually seen feeding near the rush line where it can be hard to detect.

Where to find – South Island

North Canterbury – St Annes Lagoon. P. 347.

Canterbury – Lake Forsyth. P. 351.

Canterbury – Arthurs Pass. P. 349.

Canterbury – Lake Clearwater and Lake Heron. P. 354.

South Canterbury – Lake Alexandrina. P. 354.

Otago Lake Hayes P. 358; Lake Dunstan. P. 358.

Fiordland – Eglinton Valley. P. 370.

Southland – Lake Te Anau P. 369.

Westland – Lake Kaniere P., Lake Ianthe P., Lake Mapourika P., Lake Paringa. P. 373, 374.