

In spite of published statements to the effect that the Black-billed Gull is frequently seen in Wellington Harbour, I am unable to confirm these reports. On June 5, 1938, I carefully examined through binoculars well over a thousand small gulls in Wellington Harbour, and out of this assemblage could find only one Black-billed bird.

In the Marlborough district (South Island) I have records as follows:—January 7, 1939, Picton: About twenty-four and no sign of any Red-billed. November 24, 1939: Red-billed Gulls at the entrance to Tory Channel; no small gulls of either species at Picton. November 26, 1939: Two Red-bills at White Rocks. November 29, 1939, Wairau River mouth: Between 300-400 Red-billed Gulls breeding and six Black-bills frequenting the river bank near the colony. On November 13, 1940, several Black-bills were seen at the mouth of the Tereimakau River, Westland, but no Red-bills.

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NOTES ON THE BUILDING OF A WARBLER'S NEST.

The building of the Warbler's nest found on September 1st was carefully observed.

Female did all the work, both carrying material and placing it in position. The male followed her about, giving frequent songs, but carried nothing. (In another nest I had under observation the male frequently brought material to the nest, but was never allowed to place it in position.)

Observation over timed periods indicated that the female made an average of fifty trips per hour, covering about fifty yards (there and back) each time. For two or three minutes in every fifteen or so she would take time off for feeding. The collecting was done very systematically, each trip being made a few yards to the left or right of the previous one, so that all the region was covered. Nesting material varied from the veins of old poplar leaves to spider web obtained by hovering under an electric light insulator.

The process of nest construction was as follows:—A firm patch of material was woven round the suspension point. From this the sides were built down all round until it resembled a cylinder open at the bottom, and with a hole for the entrance on one side. The sides were then tapered inwards and finally joined. The nest was a somewhat loose, unformed structure with a very narrow central cavity. The female then entered with lining material, and her weight greatly increased the cavity in the interior. As lining proceeded the cavity was actually increased in size as the female wriggled and twisted. This process stretched the outer layers so that they became taut and neat in the finished article. Once the outer framework had been completed most of the construction was done from the inside, although occasionally she would cling to the outside to make some minor adjustment. From start to finish the building of this nest took only seven days.

—P. C. Bull.