

year. During six autumns I have never known Golden Plover to desert the shore and go with them. I was, therefore, very interested when D. A. Urquhart, a member of the King's College Bird Club, told me that at Karaka on the south side of Manukau and about eight miles as the crow flies from Puketutu, he had been seeing larger birds among the Banded Dotterels which are in the habit of visiting the closely-cropped paddocks. In company with him I visited the locality on 10/2/46. When we arrived the tide was dead-low and the Banded Dotterels were busily feeding on the soft muddy flats of Pahurehure Creek, but within sight of the homestead, and well up on open rolling country three-quarters of a mile from the shore was a party of 12 Golden Plover, conspicuous dark blobs in a pale parched pasture. It was my first experience of *Pluvialis dominica* in such a habitat. I had come to think of our Golden Plovers, at least in Manukau, as almost exclusively birds of the tidal flats. But these birds in the Karaka pastures were on just the type of country where, in Britain, the slightly larger *Pluvialis apricaria* would be found. My informant had noted them several times between January 18th and February 5th, 35 being the greatest number seen. When we put up the twelve birds, they made for the shore, where later we found a typical mixed flock of 33 Turnstones and 25 Golden Plover, none of which showed signs of moulting into nuptial plumage.

P.S.—Since the above account was written (and sent for publication) the statement that in Manukau in autumn “the two species seem almost inseparable” has been corroborated in a rather surprising way. D. A. Urquhart assured me that he had sometimes seen with the Golden Plover in the Karaka paddocks over half a mile from the shore, birds that were smaller and rather black, and he believed they were Turnstones. On 3/3/46, at his invitation, I again visited the locality. When we arrived, the tide was full. A mixed flock of 15 Golden Plover, 40 plus Turnstones and 2 Banded Dotterels was quickly found near the homestead. (The main body of Banded Dotterels was later found in another paddock.) One Golden Plover was in almost complete breeding dress, and some were unevenly marked with black about the lower breast. (cf. supra. 2/3/44.) But what was perhaps most interesting was that several of the Turnstones were not content with merely resting there. They were seen to move away from the main flock and start feeding, flicking over the sheep-droppings just as if they were foraging among the tide-wrack on the seashore.

BLUE DUCK (*Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus*) in Bay of Plenty.—
I saw three on 23/2/46 in Takaputahi River (flows into Motu River), 20 miles north of Toatoa, which is 20 miles east of Opotiki. The river here is almost inaccessible and is a swift stream cut in the rock in a continuous gorge, at an elevation of about 800 feet. The ducks were comparatively tame. They swam about in an inquisitive way and preened themselves on the boulders. Their plumage looked fresh and attractive. A local settler said the Blue Duck population on a three-mile length of the Takaputahi River in his neighbourhood was 20 to 30 and in spite of new clutches each year the number remained stable, for what reason he could not say.—Norman Potts.