

PRESENT DISTRIBUTION OF N.Z. ROBINS.

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I have for some time been engaged on a review of the New Zealand Robins (Miro) and Tits (Petroica) and have been collecting information on the present distribution of these species. Detailed knowledge of distribution is of interest to this society, both to enable members to know where they may study a species when visiting other districts, and to give some quantitative basis for discussion of changes in New Zealand's bird life in the last century. In the present instance statements have been made in an accredited publication on New Zealand birds that the North Island Robin was now restricted to Little Barrier, Kapiti and the Karioi forest.

Reviews of the position of New Zealand birds have been made before, by Drummond, in 1907 ("Our Feathered Immigrants"; Bull. Dept. Agr. No. 16*) and Myers (N.Z. Journ. Sci. and Tech., vol. 6, pp. 65-99, 1923) for instance; these, and other surveys allow a certain amount of comparison of the present status of a species with its past status. Nevertheless, more precise dates for the last record of a species in any district are desirable.

In the list below are recorded all localities for robins seen since 1930 from different sources (including many individuals too numerous to mention to whom gratitude is acknowledged). Members are cordially invited to forward additions or other documents, to be published later as a supplementary note, perhaps with a map. Both contemporary records (since 1930) and dated past records would be welcome.

NORTH ISLAND.

North Auckland.—Little Barrier Island; elsewhere gone early in 19th century. (Three Kings and Takakewai Hills, records not accepted pending confirmation). Great Barrier, gone since 1868.

Volcanic Plateau.—Mamaku Bush; Ngongataha; Mangarewa Valley (Oropi R.); Maraeroa (east of Mangapehi); Tihoi, Arataki; Whakapapa Gorge; National Park (Waimarino); Mangawhero Gorge; Ohakune; Rangataua; Karioi Forest; Rangitoto Range.

King Country.—No records; gone from Raglan since 1906 (?).

Raukumara Range, Urewera.—Head of Kopuaponamu (East Cape district); Te Whaitē; Waikaremoana (?); north end Huiarau Range, near Rakauroa.

Inland Hawkes Bay-Taupo.—Kaimanawa Range; Kaweka River (?); between Rangitaike and Ahimanawa River; Mohaka River.

Wellington.—Tatarua Range, west of Otaki River above upper gorges; near Kallihier Creek, Upper Otaki; Upper Waingawa; gone from Levin flats since 1898; Kapiti; Kaitoke Range (i.e., Rimutaka), gone since 1880; Wainuiomata, gone since 1906 (?).

* Unfortunately, it is doubtful if all Mr. Drummond's correspondents used the names "robin" and "tomtit" in their accepted sense.

Taranaki-Wanganui.—One recent record, Tangarakau Gorge, 1933; gone from western Taranaki since 1886; Wanganui River, above Pipiriki Gorge, some 20 years ago.

SOUTH ISLAND.

Marlborough.—D'Urville Island; Chetwode Islands; Pickersgill Island; Little Mt. Stokes (above Manaroa); Pelorus Woods; Lower Awatere (above junction of Taylors Pass Road); Wairau (mile above Rainbow Accommodation House); Waihopai River (below Benopai Station); Ure Valley; Omaka Valley (confl. Dillon Creek); "Kai-koura"; Conway R. (Fernhurst Station).

Nelson.—Dun Mt. and other localities near Nelson; Onekaka-Aorere Valley; Owen Junction; Buller Valley, from Tophouse to Inangahua; Tarakohe to Mt. Arthur; Karamea Saddle; Caplestone; head Lake Rotoroa; Abel Tasman National Park; Rahu Saddle.

Canterbury.—Boyle Hut, Lewis Pass; Banks Peninsula, possibly surviving, but no recent records; otherwise no suggestion of continued presence east of Alps in Canterbury.

Westland.—Taramakau Valley; Matakītaki Valley; vicinity of Ross; believed locally persistent in S. Westland but no precise records received.

Otago-Southland.—Whare Flat (Dunedin); Lillburn Valley; Eglinton (and East branch); Dart Valley; Routeburn (12m. from Kinloch); Sylvan Lake; Diamond Lake; foot Mt. Earnslaw (Arcadia); Hope Arm, Manapouri; Piano Flat (Waikaia); Golden Downs; upper Waiau Basin between Monowai and Manapouri; no exact records for Fiordland in recent years.

STEWART ISLAND.

Main island behind Pegasus; Pukeweka; Solomon Island; Big South Cape Island, Jacques Lees Island; Green Island.

FLYING SHAG LOSES BALANCE.—I have only on one occasion seen a shag blown off its balance while flying. On 7/4/46 I was proceeding in my launch along the south side of Ponui Island with a gale blowing across the island from the north. The shag, a large pied (*Phalacrocorax varius*) approached from the east, flying at about 60 feet above the water. A swirling gust came down a gully, twisted to an east-west direction, and bowled him end over end. He hit the water, still out of control and was hurtled along the surface for about 15 yards. By this time he was able to pull himself together and dive. He stayed under the water for a very long time, perhaps collecting his badly scattered wits, or meditating on the vagaries of the New Zealand climate.—Thomas M. Roberts, Clevedon.