

the mouth of the Waikato River on the south bank. It was resting at high tide in a paddock with a party of non-breeding stilts. The date was 2/11/40. The second bird was seen three weeks later, on 24/11/40, by C. A. Fleming and the writer, at Mangawai, some ninety miles to the north. It was flying with a large mixed flock of waders, consisting mainly of godwits and knots (*Calidris canutus*). Careful watching of godwit packs may show that the Hudsonian godwit visits New Zealand more often than is generally suspected.

WILD PEAFAWL IN WANGANUI DISTRICT.

By C. A. FLEMING, Wellington.

In the summer of 1945-46 I was engaged on geological survey work in the Wanganui district. For some weeks I was puzzled by strange shrill cries unlike those of any bird on the New Zealand list that I knew of, but similar to that of the peacock. Eventually, in the hills north of Longacre, I topped a ridge, and looking down into the gully on the other side, saw a fine peacock gliding across a patch of native scrub, its tail trailing gloriously behind—a most incongruous sight in an otherwise typical New Zealand scene. I recorded peafowl in a number of places between Tokomaru East Road, on the west of Wanganui River, and the vicinity of Longacre, east of the river. The birds were in all cases wild, not associated with homesteads, and have apparently become well established, at least in a limited area.

The peacock (*Pavo cristatus*) is a native of India and Ceylon, but has been distributed widely as an ornamental bird. In New Zealand I had not previously heard of peafowl in a feral state, but have since been told of others in the Gisborne area. In Biblical times, we read, the peacock was introduced into Palestine by Solomon. Perhaps other members can tell us who performed this service for New Zealand, and can provide more information on the dates and places of establishment of a handsome addition to the list of the introduced birds of New Zealand.

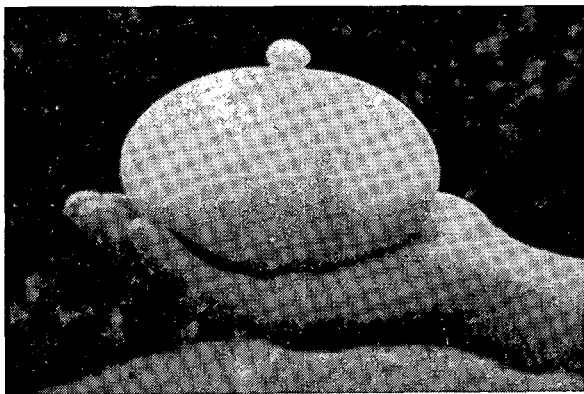


Photo. B. Iorns, Masterton.

A contrast in size of N.Z. birds' eggs: North Island Kiwi and Grey Warbler. These are among the largest and smallest eggs laid by native birds.