

were in a less advanced breeding condition, or alternatively, most of the birds cast ashore were sexually immature.

I wish to record the kind assistance of the Meteorological Office, Wellington, and especially Dr. C. J. Seelye, for providing and discussing the meteorological data, and of Miss Nancy Cooper, B.Sc., for compiling the statistical part, and last, but not least, my thanks are due to all who have contributed to this paper by providing valuable information and material.

#### REFERENCES.

- Falla, R. A., "The Genus *Pachyptila* Illiger," "Emu," October, 1940.  
Fleming, C. A., "The Phylogeny of the Prions," "Emu," October, 1941.  
Richdale, L. E., "The Parara or Broad-billed Prion, *Pachyptila vittata* (Gmelin)," "Emu," January, 1944.  
Turbot, E. G. and Sibson, R. B., "Petrels Cast Ashore by August Gales, 1946, with Special Reference to *P. Vittata*," N.Z. Bird Notes, Vol. 2, No. 2, October, 1946.

---

### NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF MOKOHINAU.

By Major G. A. Buddle, Auckland.

The following birds were observed during a visit to the Mokohinau group, extending from November 23 to 28, 1945. Burgess Island, on which the lighthouse stands, is the largest; to the west of Burgess Island lie two other smaller ones and a number of rocky islets. Fanal Island, which lies about three miles to the south, was not visited. All these islands are covered with a very stunted vegetation consisting chiefly of pohutukawa, ngaio, veronica, flax, tussock, etc.

Red-fronted parakeet (*Cyanorhamphus novaeseelandiae*).—Not plentiful; seen mostly along the cliff faces.

Tui (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*).—Three were seen on West Island, probably temporary visitors from Little Barrier or Hen Island; they were seen only on one occasion, and the resident caretaker said he had not seen tuis there before.

Pipit (*Anthus novaezealandiae*).—Fairly well distributed on all the islands.

Harrier (*Circus approximans*).—Two pairs frequented a red-billed gull colony and kept a perpetual state of alarm among the gulls as they passed to and fro.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—In fair numbers.

Blue penguin (*Eudyptula minor*).—A nest with two chicks in dark brown down was placed behind an oil drum in a shed on the beach; several burrows were seen on the western islands.

White-fronted tern (*Sterna striata*).—About six pairs were nesting on the cliffs below one of the red-billed gull groups.

Red-billed gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*).—A large colony estimated at 18-20,000 (including unemployed birds). This figure is considerably larger than Fleming's preliminary census of 1944. (See separate article

in this issue.) No young were seen on November 23, but two were seen on November 24, and many hatched out on succeeding days.

Black-backed gull (*Larus dominicanus*).—Several were seen, but did not appear to be nesting on the islands.

Pied shag (*Phalacrocorax varius*).—No nesting colony was seen, but odd birds were occasionally seen.

Gannet (*Morus serrator*).—Frequently seen fishing round the coast and off shore, probably members of the Great Barrier colony (or from an unconfirmed gannetry reported to have been formed recently on Groper Rock about three miles to the west).

White-faced storm petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*).—A fairly large colony estimated at about 500 pairs on Lizard Island, a small islet near the landing on Burgess Island. Most burrows were occupied by birds sitting on well incubated eggs. The islet is covered with a vegetation of mesembryanthemum, sedge, rushes and a few stunted ngaio. The burrows were mostly in the mesembryanthemum area.

Fluttering shearwater (*Puffinus gavia*).—A few larger burrows among the storm petrel burrows were those of either *P. gavia* or *P. assimilis*: one belated young of *P. gavia* was still in one of the burrows; these larger burrows were chiefly among the roots of the ngaio or under the sedge. A few similar burrows were found on the cliff edge of the Western Island, unoccupied, but, by the appearance of old feathers, probably *P. assimilis*. On August 6, 1946, *P. assimilis* were occupying most of these burrows, sitting on well incubated eggs.

Grey-faced petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*).—This is the chief petrel inhabitant of the group, being well distributed over all the islands, particularly West Island and the two small islets between Burgess and West Islands. The young were still in down, but with feathers showing. This species is the local "mutton bird," and the caretaker of the island wrote to me to say that a party of about a dozen Maoris from Callione Bay on the Great Barrier, arrived at the beginning of December and in ten days had taken 3500 mutton birds (including those taken from Fanal Island, the largest of the group).

Stray Visitors.—The caretaker in the course of conversation mentioned a number of passing visitors, passerines and waders, but details were too vague for record purposes, except that one was most probably a curlew or whimbrel. However, one bird he described as a large black crow, something like a rook, which he saw on two consecutive days (Oct. 3 and 4). I happened to be on the Little Barrier (about 13 miles to the south) at this time. What was almost certainly the same bird appeared there on October 5 and stayed two days, being last seen heading for the mainland in the direction of Leigh. It was definitely not a rook; its call being very like that of a raven; so presume it likely to have been one of the Australian crows.

---

DESTRUCTION OF ROOKS (*Corvus frugilegus*).—During an organised campaign of destruction of Canterbury rooks, about 5000 birds, representing half the breeding population, were killed by shooting and poisoning in the 12-month period up to 31/8/46.—Dr. R. A. Falla, Chch.