

## WHITE-FACED HERON IN GOLDEN BAY DISTRICT, NELSON.

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In December, 1945, Mrs. E. M. Hayter, of Motupipi, reported two greyish herons that frequented some trees near her home. These birds were observed for some weeks but did not nest, although they gave indications of so doing, Mrs. Hayter on one occasion observing one bird flying with a stick in its beak. At this same period Mr. R. Alexander observed this heron at the tidal mouths of the Takaka and Wainui rivers. During October, 1946, he reported five birds on the Takaka River, near its mouth.

In December, 1946, Mr. W. Hadfield, of Wainui, reports that the light-grey heron was observed in the evening flying in groups to the willows that line the Wainui River near its mouth. He considers that they nest in the willows, but no actual nests have been found.

On December 27, 1946, Dr. W. R. B. Oliver and the writer observed a solitary white-faced heron (*Notophyx novaehollandiae*) on the Aore River about half a mile from Collingwood township. During February, 1947, more than twenty birds were seen together at Rangiheta, near Takaka. Mr. R. Alexander, during February, also reports it from Awaroa Inlet.

These records and reports recorded by Dr. R. A. Falla that this species is plentifully distributed in Westland, indicate that this bird, formerly of rare local occurrence, is in the process of becoming well-established. No definite records of its nesting have been recorded; but Mr. Hadfield's inference that it nests in the willows at the mouth of the Wainui, and Mrs. Hayter's observation of the bird flying with the stick in its beak, are quite in accord with its breeding habits in Australia, where it builds a nest of sticks in a tree overhanging water.

Both Mrs. Hayter and Mr. Alexander have been resident in the Takaka district for some years, but it is only during the last three years that the white-faced heron has been observed.

[When I visited the Takaka district in October, 1946, a resident at the mouth of the Takaka River described to me a heron which fitted the description of the white-faced species. He said he had seen several birds in that locality but on October 9, the date on which I visited the Takaka River mouth, none was seen or had been seen for several days.—R. H. D. Stidolph.]

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## REVIEWS.

**Modern Bird Study.**—Ludlow Griscom (Harvard Univ. Press, 1945, 18/9.)

This is a very good book. It deliberately omits discussion of several aspects of ornithology, but a list of the chapters will give an idea of the range covered. Development of Field Ornithology, Capacity and Intelligence of Birds, Adaptability of Birds; Migration, Causes and Origin; Migration, Factors and Routes; four chapters on Distribution; general, South America, Central America, North America; and, finally, Classification and the Species Concept. New Zealand comes in for a surprising degree of mention.

The chapters on Capacity and Adaptability, Migration, and Classification are particularly good. The former are of considerable interest to the psychologist as well as the ornithologist. There is some useful "debunking," particularly of Merriam's concept of transcontinental life-zones, though the much sounder vertical life-zones in tropical and mountainous countries are retained. His definition of a species is one of the