

obvious at a glance in the field, and it is worth noting that the black-fronted tern was called *hybrida* as long ago as 1867 in the *Journal für Ornithologie* by Finsch, whose connection with N.Z. ornithology is perpetuated in the name of the South Island riverbed oystercatcher (*H. O. finschi*). *Hybrida* has an extensive range, and is represented in Australia by the subspecies *fluviatilis*. I would, therefore, suggest that the black-fronted tern be recognised as a subspecies of the whiskered tern, and that its full name is *Chlidonias hybrida albigularis* Gray.

SUMMARY.

- 1.—The evidence comes from (a) the works of Sir Walter Buller; (b) six skins in the Auckland Museum; (c) recent observations.
- 2.—Records for the west coast of Auckland and the Bay of Plenty near Whakatane go back into the nineteenth century.
- 3.—The earliest date is March 10 and the latest November 17.
- 4.—The majority of birds are juveniles, some of which may summer north of the breeding grounds.
- 5.—There is evidence that black-fronted terns used to nest in the North Island; and there may still be isolated pairs or small colonies breeding in suitable country.
- 6.—The suggestion is made that the black-fronted tern is a subspecies of the whiskered tern (*C. hybrida*).

BIRD LIFE AT PUERUA, SOUTH OTAGO.

By Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club.

On "Jura Place", Puera, South Otago, about 52 acres of native bush for almost 57 years have been kept as a private bird sanctuary.

Riflemen (*Acanthisitta chloris*), yellow-breasted tits (*Petroica m. macrocephala*) and fantails (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) are present in small numbers and are much less numerous than they were several years ago. Two small flocks of brown creepers (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*) frequented the bush four years ago. A few were seen in 1945, and though not again actually seen, in the New Year, 1947, were heard high up in the trees. Bellbirds (*Anthornis melanura*) are particularly numerous and appear to be increasing. In June, 1945, ten at a time were counted singing and playing near the back door where they are fed. Tufts (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*) are holding their own. In the autumn of 1946 they all disappeared for a time, but after a few weeks they returned and were again plentiful. A few wood pigeons (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*) are always about. In March, 1946, seven were seen in flight together.

A parrakeet (*Cyanoramphus* sp.) was heard and seen in flight the same day. On October 21, 1946, a call, believed to be that of a shining cuckoo (*Chalcites lucidus*) was heard. The call was heard definitely on October 28 and not again during the whole season. Records of first calls for previous years are: 1945, October 16; 1944, Oct. 25; 1943, Oct. 28. Moreporks (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) are heard calling at night; particularly so in October, 1946.

Pukekos (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) are very numerous in the Otanomomo Swamp. The west end is about half a mile from "Jura Place," and the swamp stretches in an easterly direction for miles towards the sea. Over a year ago, after a flood, 46 pukekos were counted in one paddock.

Thrushes (*Turdus ericetorum*), blackbirds (*T. merula*) and starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are numerous and increasing. Starlings seem to have little sense. Every year they litter the woolshed with grass, etc. They apparently try to build a nest on a beam high in the shed; the material falls off, but they continue their efforts until there is a great heap on the floor and, of course, nothing on the beam. Redpolls (*Carduelis cabaret*), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), yellowhammers (*Emberiza citrinella*), greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), and goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) are all noted at times, the redpolls being the most plentiful. On March 27, 1944, a goldfinch was seen with three young ones.