

show that the morepork will apparently eat almost any small living creature, perhaps according to availability. The catching of insects on the wing is well known, and perhaps this may explain the smaller number of non-flying vertebrates in the pellets. This may possibly prove, on further investigation, to be a significant difference in the diet, and therefore the ecology, of the bird and the little owl (probably spreading in New Zealand), which Miss Hibbert-Ware and Professor Marples have shown to be mainly a ground feeder.

BIRDS IN THE TARARUA RANGES

By A. G. Bagnall, Eastbourne.

The following observations were made during a four-day trip through the Tararua Range from Otaki Forks to Kaitoke by the Main Range from January 1, 1948. The thorough nature of the trip prevented more detailed notes being made. From the Forks the route taken was the Waitatapia-Saddle Creek Track to the Otaki-Waitewaewae junction, Shoulder Knob and the main range south of Crawford to Maungahuka, the Hector River, Neill, Cone and the Tauherenikau Valley. The weather was fine and windless throughout and bird life seemed a little more plentiful than on other occasions.

Pigeons (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*) were seen in the Waitatapia, Upper Otaki and Tauherenikau valleys (not more than three at one time). Grey warblers (*Pseudogerygone igata*) and shining cuckoos (*Chalcites lucidus*) were heard (former on bush line at 3,000 feet) but not common. Expected, but not seen or heard were the whitehead (*Mohoua o. albicilla*) and long-tailed cuckoo (*Eudynamis taitensis*). Birds especially noted were:—

Kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*).—Two at end of tramway, Waitatapia; two c. 3,000 feet on Cone and one half-way down Tauherenikau Valley.

Parrakeet (*Cyanoramphus* spp.).—Four in bush saddle north of Kahiwiroa, 3,300 feet; four on Cone, c. 3,000 feet.

Rifleman (*Acanthisitta chloris*).—Shoulder Knob, Maungahuka, Neill (six together at 3,600 feet). The most common bird seen or heard on trip.

Pied Tit (*Petroica macrocephala toitoi*).—One on Cone and one in Tauherenikau Valley. Not common by comparison with Wellington East Harbour bush.

Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*).—Several birds put up on open tops, 3,500 feet.

Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*).—Young bird seen on ascent of Neill and pair in Tauherenikau.

Bellbird (*Anthornis melanura*).—Occasional bird heard, one approaching to within 20 yards on Neill scrub line.

BIRDS ON A TWELVE-MILE WALK.—On July 22, 1947, Mrs. P. L. Moore and Miss A. S. Edmond, members of the Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club, walked about twelve miles from Port Chalmers via the western slopes of Mopanui to Waitati, and back to Dunedin by the Leith Valley Road. Most of the way led through or near bush or manuka. The following bird life was recorded:—Grey warbler (*Pseudogerygone igata*), 10; yellow-breasted tit (*Petroica m. macrocephala*), 15; brown creepers (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*), about 20 in little flocks near together about Orakanui Stream, Waitati; fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) 15 pied and five black; bellbird (*Anthornis melanura*), five; pigeon (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*), two, Orakanui Stream, Waitati; harrier (*Circus approximans*), six; pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*), three on road from Port Chalmers to Mopanui; goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), about 100 on the slopes of Mopanui.—(Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club.)