

BIRD POPULATION OF EXOTIC FORESTS, 1940-1948.

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The following brief notes and inventory of the birds populating our exotic forests have been compiled from observations during the past eight years of tree assessment and general forest operations in the Whakarewarewa and Kaingaroa forests, approximately 300,000 acres in extent.

It is gratifying to note that there has been a marked increase in practically all species, both native and introduced, which gives reason to assume that the former are becoming acclimatised to their change of environment in our dense pine forests. In the case of the insectivorous species, the increase is of particular interest to the Forest Service where the check to, or complete eradication of injurious insect pests, is of paramount importance. As these exotic forests are bird sanctuaries, it may also be possible to build up colonies of berry and nectar feeders, and so in turn render inestimable service to our indigenous forests by increasing the pollination and seed distribution which so many native tree species are dependent upon for perpetuation.

Grey Warbler (*Pseudogerygone igata*).—Very common and increasing. Found throughout all types of tree stands but especially in the vicinity of manuka or other native shrubs. Nests preferably in manuka thickets but a number found in larch up to 20 feet.

Whitehead (*Mohoua ochrocephala albicilla*).—Very common and increasing. Found throughout all types of tree stands. Flocks 6 to 30 seen almost every day. Nests in manuka thickets or dense shrubs.

Fernbird (*Bowdleria punctata*).—Not common, but appears to be on the increase as a greater number were observed in 1946 and more widespread. A nest was found containing 3 eggs in a clump of cutty grass on the bank of a small swampy creek at an elevation of 1650 feet.

Kingfisher (*Halcyon sanctus*).—Not common. Seen from time to time frequenting roads and clearings, especially round camps. Observed feeding on lizards and mice.

Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*).—Not common, only one or two observed in internal swamps, but fairly common in swamps adjacent to Kaingaroa.

Pukeko (*Porphyrio poliocephalus*).—Common in swamp areas adjoining the forests but none observed in internal swamps.

Busk Hawk or Falcon (*Falco novaeseelandiae*).—Not common, but appears to be on the increase. Frequenting forest clearings or precipitous open valleys although a number have been seen in dense tree stands.

Harrier (*Circus approximans*).—Very common throughout. Frequenting all open areas.

Morepork (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*).—Fairly common. Frequenting the denser stands.

White-eye (*Zosterops lateralis*).—Very common throughout, congregating in large flocks around camps and gardens during winter months.

Banded Dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*).—Four pairs observed this year at the southern end of Kaingaroa.

Robin (*Miro australis*).—Not common, but showing a marked increase in 1946. Two or three pairs were observed in widely separated compartments in Kaingaroa Forest. Generally frequenting areas approaching that of their natural habitat, i.e., older tree stands of lighter stocking with a few scattered native shrubs, but a number were seen in dense pine stands devoid of shrubs.

Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*).—Very common and increasing, especially in Kaingaroa Forest. Frequenting all forest roads, firebreaks and clearings.

Pied Tit (*Petroica macrocephala toitoti*).—Very common and increasing throughout all types of stands. Nests found in holes in banks and in pig-rootings. Young on wing, November 15.

Pied Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*).—Very common and increasing in all types of stands, especially where stocking of trees is lighter, with scattered undergrowth of native shrubs or manuka thickets. Nests found mainly in manuka. A few black fantails were seen in Whakarewarewa Forest in 1941 but none in Kaingaroa.

Bellbird (*Anthornis melanura*).—Fairly common and increasing but mainly in proximity of native shrubs, especially in margins of forest clearings.

Tui (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*).—Not common but appears to be on the increase in Kaingaroa. Until 1946 only isolated birds were seen from time to time, but since that date there has been a marked increase in the number observed, even in well-stocked compartments of *pinus radiata*. The attraction was obviously due to the isolated fuchsia and wineberry shrubs in flower.

Shining Cuckoo (*Chalcites lucidus*).—Fairly common and numbers constant. Found throughout. Earliest arrival noted on September 26, departing end of February to beginning of October.

Long-tailed Cuckoo (*Eudynamis taitensis*).—Fairly common throughout and appears to be increasing slightly.

Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*).—Very common throughout. Frequenting all types of stands. Flocks of up to 500 observed in the autumn. This is the predominant species.

Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*).—Fairly common and increasing. Flocks up to 20 observed in winter.

Redpoll (*Carduelis cabaret*).—Very common throughout and increasing. Observed mainly in vicinity of forest clearings and margins. Flocks up to 50 seen in autumn.

Goldfinch (*C. carduelis*).—Common on forest margins and clearings especially where there is a heavy weed growth. Flocks 20-30 observed.

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).—Fairly common and increasing. Frequenting firebreaks and forest clearings. Flocks 10-20 observed.

Hedgesparrow (*Prunella modularis*).—Common throughout and increasing.

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*).—Common throughout and increasing.

Thrush (*T. ericetorum*).—Common throughout, especially in vicinity of clearings and settlements.

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*).—Fairly common and appear to be increasing. Frequenting firebreaks and clearings.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—Common and increasing. Frequenting settlements and forest margins.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).—Common and increasing in settlements.

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*).—Fairly common and increasing.

Californian Quail (*Lophortyx californicus*).—Common throughout and increasing.

Brown Quail (*Synoisys ypsilophorus*).—Fairly common in extreme north of Kaingaroa in 1946—only a few observed prior to that date.

Grey Duck (*Anas poicilorhyncha*).—A few observed on internal swamps, lagoons and river.

Mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*).—Three pairs observed on small creek in northern portion of Kaingaroa.

Pied Shag (*Phalacrocorax varius*).—Five or six seen regularly on Rangitaiki River running through forest.

Black Shag (*P. carbo*).—One to four seen regularly on Waitahanui River.