

BIRDS IN WESTERN SOUTHLAND.

(The following note has been prepared by C. A. Fleming from information given by Mr. A. C. Beck, N.Z. Geological Survey, who, for three months in the summer of 1948-49, led a field party into the little-known forested area lying west of Te Waewae Bay, between Lakes Hauroko, Pateretere and Hakapoua and the coast.)

No kiwis were head or seen. Odd crested-penguins (*Eudyptes p. pachyrhynchus*) were found from Te Waewae Bay to Big River, and breeding birds in a sea cave, half way between Aan and Big rivers, had fresh eggs on November 28, 1948. The identity of the penguin and condition of the eggs seem quite certain; the late date recalls Sutherland's report of a second laying in December, in a colony that began to nest in July. (Emu, vol. 20, pp. 74-81, 1920.) Blue penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) were also present, but no yellow-eyed penguins (*Megadyptes*). Great-crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), several pairs with young, at Lake Pateretere, in mid-November. Black shags (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) were seen on the lakes, and little pied shags (*P. melanoleucos*) have colonies on the Wairaurahiri and Waitutu rivers (the latter a large one). Mr. Beck thinks all were of the white-bellied phase. No herons, bitterns, or pukekos seen. Ducks included mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), grey (*A. poicilorhyncha*), "teal" and paradise (*Tadorna variegata*), the latter with young, on the coast, in early November. Blue duck (*Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus*) are restricted to mountain streams, and were seen on those flowing from the Princess and Cameron mountains. Black swan (*Cygnus atratus*) are on all the lakes. Bush hawks (*Falco novaeseelandiae*), not plentiful, are limited to high country. Only two wekas (*Gallirallus australis*) were seen, one at Lake Innes, the other on the west side of Wairaurahiri River, which seems to mark their eastern limit at present. Pied oystercatchers (*Haematopus finschi*) frequent Te Waewae Bay, and the black species (*H. unicolor*) are plentiful along the rocky south coast. Black-backed gulls (*Larus dominicanus*) were breeding; red-billed gulls (*L. novaehollandiae*) and terns (*Sterna striata*) were present, but no skuas were seen. The number of pigeons (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*) increased when shrubs came into berry; kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*) are generally distributed and abundant; keas (*N. notabilis*) were on the Lake Hakapoua tops at 2,000 feet; no parrakeets (*Cyanoramphus*) were recognised. Moreporks (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) plentiful; little owl (*Athene noctua*), certainly identified at Port Craig; bellbirds (*Anthornis melanura*), tuis (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*), fantails (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*), tits (*Petroica macrocephala*), rifleman (*Acanthisitta chloris*), yellowhead (*Mohoua ochrocephala*), and robins (*Miro australis*) are plentiful; creepers (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*) present. Thrush and blackbird (*Turdus ericitorum* and *T. philomela*) seen at the Waitutu; sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) at Port Craig only (deserted buildings); chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) and goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) in the second-growth of milled bush.

Other vertebrates seen were: Three sea leopards (Port Craig and Aan River), fur seals (Sandhill Point), and occasional sea lions; opossums (at Helmet Hill only); bush frogs (? species) in coastal swamps at the Rowallan and Port Craig; and bush rat skulls in middens at Sandhill Point. Stoats are present, at least towards the east of the area.

OCCURRENCE OF GREY NODDY IN N.Z. WATERS.—The grey noddy *Procelsterna cerulea albivitta*, given specific status (*P. albivitta*) by Murphy and Oliver, breeds in the Kermadecs, Lord Howe and Norfolk islands, and Oliver records two records from northern New Zealand. While returning from Sydney to Auckland I observed two birds at close quarters at 4.30 p.m. on October 16, 1949. This was about 20 hours before the ship rounded Three Kings. The birds flew backwards and forwards beside the ship, at times very close, for nearly two minutes.—J. M. Cunningham, Masterton.