

PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF BIRDS IN N.Z.—III.

GOLDFINCH.

The goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) introduced into New Zealand over 80 years ago, is generally distributed throughout the country in districts suitable to its habits. It is a bird known to almost everyone and the illustration herewith is a fine study of an adult standing on the side of its nest in an apple tree.

Any members who have not seen the goldfinch in their district should report its absence but it is so widely spread that there can be few, if any, districts where it does not occur. Information on its feeding habits are of interest and observations in this regard should be of value in assessing its economic position. It is generally regarded as being a beneficial species.

It is of interest to recall that the goldfinch has found its own way to several of the outlying islands belonging to New Zealand, such as the Chathams, Auckland and Campbell islands. To reach them entailed a flight of several hundreds of miles over the ocean.

CIRL BUNTING.

Among the rarer of the introduced birds of New Zealand is the cirle bunting (*Emberiza cirilis*) which was turned out in this country in small numbers about seventy years ago. At present, as far as is known, it has a restricted distribution, the limits of which are ill-defined and members seeing this bird should report its presence, numbers and any other relevant information.

A study of the photograph of a cirle bunting and its nest, in this issue, clearly shows the main distinguishing mark of the male of this species when compared with the male of the yellowhammer (*E. citrinella*) its nearest relative and the only bird with which it is likely to be confused—the black throat and mark through the eye. In the yellowhammer the throat is yellow. Another difference in plumage is the colour of the rump, which is olive-brown in the cirle bunting and chestnut in the yellowhammer. The females of each species are very much alike but the colour of the rump is a reliable guide.

The mapping of the present distribution of the cirle bunting in New Zealand is a task in which all members can contribute by reporting its presence or absence. The cirle bunting has been reported from the Taranaki, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago districts but recent information on its distribution is lacking.—R.H.D.S.

BIRD NOTES, KARITANE DISTRICT, MAY 13 to 20, 1949.—Unusual numbers of kingfishers (*Halcyon sanctus*) were noted along the river and tidal creek, perched on posts and overhead wires. Crabs' legs, etc., were littered over the decking and handrail of a small traffic bridge between the wharf and the Merton store. A pellet containing crabs' claws was found beside the other crab rejects. One small blue penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) stood on the Spit in a hunched attitude. A reef heron (*Demigretta sacra*) was watched fishing at low tide opposite the Spit in company with ten pied oystercatchers (*Haematopus finschi*) and a couple of kingfishers. Its long bill quested in all crannies in the rock-wall and speared quarry in the pools. On Puketeraki Beach many shags (? sp.) were observed on outlying rocky islets. The gull population, both the black-backed (*Larus dominicanus*) and the red-billed (*L. novaehollandiae*) was smaller than in summer. During a trip to Nenthorn, a paradise duck and drake (*Tadorna variegata*) were seen on a lagoon near Macrae's. Pipits (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*) were also seen on this trip.—Mrs. J. A. Moore, D.N.F.C.



Photo copyright: K. V. Bigwood.
GOLDFINCH AT NEST, CHRISTCHURCH.



Photo copyright: K. V. Bigwood.
GIRL BUNTING AT NEST, CHRISTCHURCH.