

BLACK SHAG FORCED DOWN BY AUSTRALIAN MAGPIES

As I was coming down from the Waimata Valley near Gisborne, I observed a large bird in a dive. I stopped my vehicle to get a better view, and then found that it was a Large Black Shag (*P. carbo*) which was being hotly pursued by two Australian Magpies (*G. hypoleuca*). The Shag in flight apparently had no defence whatsoever against the attackers, and they eventually forced it down on to the roadway.

I have previously seen Australian Magpies attack a large variety of birds, and attacks on Harrier Hawks in some parts of the country are almost hourly occurrences, but I had never before witnessed an attack on a Black Shag. The Shag sat on the roadway, but was disturbed at my approach and flew off, apparently unharmed.

It seems apparent from this incident that the Black Shag prefers to fight, if necessary, with his feet on dry land.

A. G. HALL



WHITE-FACED HERONS FEEDING AWAY FROM WATER

On 26/7/60 between Oamaru and Kurow I watched for some time four White-faced Herons (*A. novaehollandiae*) which were feeding in a farm-paddock that was being worked up. They were walking quite fast over the ground, picking up worms and grubs without stopping. In this district I have often noticed these herons feeding in lagoons, streams and water-races and nearly always solitary; but I have never before seen them feeding over freshly ploughed land.

A. NUTTALL



LITTLE EGRETS MOLESTED BY GULLS

On 25/7/61 a Little Egret (*E. garzetta*) flew low over the m.v. Kaitangata as she lay in Greymouth Harbour. The egret was being closely pursued by an adult Black-backed Gull (*L. dominicanus*). To avoid the pursuit, the egret dived between the ship and the wharf and settled on a beam under the wharf at water-level. By the simple process of walking along the wharf, we were able to stand right over the egret at a distance of about eight feet and watch it for some time. It eventually escaped by flying along beneath the wharf.

— J. G. F. JENKINS

On 16/4/61 we found a Little Egret at Port Albert in Kaipara. It was attempting to feed as the tide fell in the shallows of a muddy creek but it was persistently molested by several Red-billed Gulls (*L. scopulinus*) which formed a watchful semi-circle on the landward side wherever it settled. The egret kept on taking short flights of a chain or so, trying to shake off its persecutors and find a quiet fishing ground. While we watched, the egret must have moved some hundreds of yards upstream by short stages; but all to no purpose, for when we left the expectant gulls were still dogging its steps.

— R. B. SIBSON
H. R. MCKENZIE
D. A. URQUHART