

But now they were in freshly moulted breeding dress with glossy black caps and a bright yellow bill with a dark tip. We noted particularly that the recess of white below the crown tapered to a fine point above the eye and was not rounded as in *neréis*, and also that the dark line along the lores reached forward virtually to the bill. The only reasonable conclusion we could draw was that we were examining two adults of *albifrons* in breeding dress and soon about to leave for breeding grounds in the northern hemisphere. We have no doubt that the Little Tern can be safely added to the New Zealand list. In fact the evidence from the Firth of Thames is that it is a regular migrant to New Zealand and that small numbers including first-winter juveniles, arrive about November and that they leave about April, though sometimes yearlings may remain over the winter.

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LARGE FLOCKS OF TURNSTONES AT PARENGARENGA

On 25/1/62, with Messrs, A. T. Edgar and N. Messenger, I visited Te Pua peninsula, which lies between the well-known wader-grounds of Raumanawa and Kaiata in Parengarenga Harbour. The peninsula is now being broken in for farmland. The scratchy gumland scrub well known to earlier ornithologists who visited the area has gone; and as the result of a second discing, its place had been taken by a sandy-peaty-clayey expanse, bare of vegetation.

Here on the rough broken ground we found near full tide an impressive flock of Turnstones (*A. interpres*) estimated at not less than 1000 and with them were about sixty Golden Plover (*P. dominicus fulvus*). Mixed flocks of these two species have been noted on roughly ploughed land near the sea frequently in Manukau and the Firth of Thames; but never in recent years have the Turnstones been in such numbers. However, Buller in his account of the Turnstones (2nd edition 1888) says that Mr. Cheeseman — the famous botanist — had informed him that in Manukau Harbour in March 1880 he "met with a flock which must have contained upwards of a thousand birds, besides several smaller ones." When in late January, 1961, a study was made of the birds of Farewell Spit, the 800+ Turnstones recorded were not in one single flock, but were scattered over many miles.

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(Parengarenga is known to be a 'good Turnstone harbour.' One point worth noting is that this very big flock in the far north at this date cannot be the result of the gathering-up of Turnstones from other parts of New Zealand just prior to migration; but must represent the local summering population temporarily attracted by a new man-made habitat. In January there are sizable flocks of Turnstones, the biggest usually containing 200-300 birds, in a number of favoured haunts south to the Invercargill lagoons. From two well-watched areas, the Karaka shore of Manukau and the Miranda coast of the Firth of Thames, there is some evidence that the number of Turnstones annually reaching New Zealand has been increasing. This may be the result of a succession of favourable breeding seasons on the arctic tundra; and may indicate a recovery towards such numbers as Cheeseman reported in 1880. — Ed.)