

KIWI COURTSHIP

In March, 1942, Mrs. George Brady, now resident in Christchurch, saw, about 3 a.m., in the moonlight, six or seven miles up the Ten-mile River, on the Greymouth-Westport Road, two large kiwis (whether *haasti* or *australis* is uncertain) caressing with their beaks. The action was a gentle rubbing of the beaks together. Mrs. Brady was sitting on a log on the river bank. She heard the harsher call of the female first, then the shriller call of the male, and the two came together, in the bright moonlight, on the river bank, while Mrs. Brady sat still and watched. Later, another female called, and a second male answered. The first pair paused, looked around, and then resumed their beak caress, but soon afterwards stopped, and began feeding in the grass. Mrs. Brady, sitting on the log, watched the display from a distance of eight or nine yards, for at least a quarter of an hour.

R. J. SCARLETT



PIED SHAGS NESTING IN LOW SHRUBS

Amongst a number of breeding colonies of Pied Shags (*P. varius*) accessible by boat from French Pass, there is one calling for special mention. This is situated at the foot of a steep rocky slope running down to the inland margin of the lake at Te Puna Beach, on D'Urville Island, and is remarkable for the fact that the nests are situated practically at ground level. At the date of visit, 27/7/62, there were 22 nests in evidence, from 20 of which the young were already fledged. Of the remaining two, one contained a newly-hatched young bird and a chipping egg, and the other two young about two weeks old. The highest nest in the colony was situated about seven feet above ground level in a dead *Olearia paniculata*, others in small tauhinu and mapou bushes, and the majority on low clumps of *Muhlenbeckia complexa*.

A. BLACKBURN

(A colony of Pied Shags which were breeding in low ngaio trees (*Myoporum laetum*) at the Middle Chicken is briefly described in *Notornis* VI, 154. In the Hauraki Gulf some Pied Shags are nesting at all seasons (VIII, 20-25). The same may be true of Pied Shags in the Cook Strait region. — Ed.)



POMARINE SKUA AT THE TURAKINA RIVERMOUTH

On 22/2/62, I visited the Turakina rivermouth with J. P. Fahey, of Wanganui. While examining a large flock of White-fronted Terns and a smaller number of Caspian Terns a largish dark brown bird appeared. It chased a White-fronted Tern which was about to join the flock; an aerial dogfight followed, the skua taking the offensive. A masterly display of aerial manoeuvres took place before the skua flew out to sea. I followed its progress through my 25x telescope. It made a wide circle of a half a mile or so and somewhere along the line was joined by another of its kind this time of the light phase. The two flew rapidly towards us, swooped not ten feet above our heads

then dived amidst the White-fronted Terns, Caspian Terns, Pied Stilts, oystercatchers and godwits assembled at the high tide roost. All took to the air and the skuas made off with a few Caspian Terns helping them on their way. They flew out to sea and did not return while we were there.

As the skuas swept low over us we were able to see by the diagnostic spoon-shaped tail plumes that they were Pomarines (*S. pomarinus*). My companion, who had no prior knowledge of the shape of the Pomarine, was able to draw for me the distinctive character which matched exactly the illustration in Pough's *Aubudon Waterbird Guide* which we had on the spot.

During the next two days reports of skuas at the Wanganui estuary were made by B. Tucker, who was unable to identify them specifically. Possibly two of these could have been the Pomarines seen 12 miles south at the Turakina rivermouth.

DAVID E. CROCKETT

[There are now several records of Pomarine Skuas in the Cook Strait region. Dell and Fleming (*Notornis VII*, 62) stated that when a dark Pomarine Skua chased a Caspian Tern at Waikanae, the white wing-flashes were inconspicuous. — Ed.]



PERSONALIA

Congratulations to (1) Dr. C. A. Fleming on his election as President of the Royal Society of New Zealand; and also on his election as Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists Union.

(2) To Mr. A. T. Edgar, O.B.E., E.D., on receiving, as recognition of his work in Malaya, the award of J.M.N. (Johan Mangku Negara).

Dr. R. A. Falla, C.M.G., represented the Society at the Thirteenth International Ornithological Congress which was held in America in June, 1962. He then travelled on to Britain, where he was hoping, *inter alia*, to work on petrels at the British Museum.

During a trip to Europe, Mr. F. C. Kinsky visited several banding stations and also the island of Skomer.

The President, Mr. A. Blackburn, is on a six-weeks bird-trip to Australia, on which he plans to cross central Australia from Melbourne to Darwin, via Alice Springs. He will be accompanied by Mr. D. V. Merton.

Thanks (1) to Miss C. Bernrieder for the long hours she has devoted to cataloguing the Deignan collection of papers on ornithology, now in the library.

(2) To Mr. D. G. Fenwick for the efficient compiling of the Index to Volume IX.