

A NEW POLICY

The non-appearance of Classified Summarised Notes will be noted with regret by some readers and contributors. The Council's decision to dispense with these notes in the form in which they have appeared since 1940 is based on several considerations.

(a) In some ways they were a sign of immaturity. Often they were repetitive and the spread was uneven and did little to increase our knowledge of the distribution of certain lesser-known species.

(b) The bulk of the valuable migration records appear in Annual Locality Reports, which are retained and which it is hoped will be extended to cover other districts where migration is a worthwhile study. In this issue we welcome the first A.L.R. for the Waimakariri estuary.

(c) The records of storm-wrecked seabirds now go into Beach Patrol Reports.

(d) With the great increase of material awaiting publication, the space can be better used.

(e) Accounts of rare birds or observations, e.g. on behaviour or change of status, deserve mention in Short Notes, which appear quarterly.

(f) Although C.S.N. will no longer be published as such, there still exists the need for continuous and active collection of field notes. A recording scheme is being inaugurated under which all items of information which are received but not published as Short Notes, will be listed and filed by species, and so preserved for future reference and use by those who are working on studies of individual species.



ANNUAL LOCALITY REPORTS

FIRTH OF THAMES

BLACK SHAG — Always some. 48 on winter census on 24/6/62.

WHITE-FACED HERON — Now likely to be seen anywhere from Kaiaua to Waitakaruru. 24 on 11/1/62. 24 inland on farm (A.T.) on 24/6/62.

BLUE REEF HERON — 1 on 10/1/62; 2 at Kaiaua on 2/46/62.

ROYAL SPOONBILL — 1 seen many times at Miranda between 24/6/62 and 22/9/62.

PARADISE DUCK — 1 male at Miranda pools on 22/9/62.

SHOVELER — 8 on 31/12/61; 13 on 9/5/62; 30 on 24/6/62.

GRAY TEAL — 2 at Miranda pools on 31/3/62, first record for this district.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — 134 on 11/1/62; c. 1200 on 11/3/61; 900+ on 31/3/62; 800+ on 24/6/62; 400+ on 19/8/62; c. 250 on 22/9/62.

VARIABLE OYSTERCATCHER — 1, smudgy, on 22/9/62. 1 black, frequently.

ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER — c. 90 on 26/11/61 on ploughland at Waitakaruru, one being exceptionally black for the time of the year. c. 60 at Kairito on 31/12/61; 78 on 31/3/62, 20 being in full black and 14 in partial black.

- BANDED DOTTEREL** — Only 4 breeding pairs located. On 14/10/61, 2 nests had 3 eggs each and 1 pr. two small chicks. 8 on pools, 31/12/62 and 90+ at Kairito; 30 at Kaiaua and 20+ at Kairito on 11/1/62; 62 on 24/6/62; 17 in flock on 19/8/62.
- RED-BREASTED DOTTEREL** — Nest 3 eggs at Kaiaua on 14/10/61. 1 pr. + 1 young on 11/1/62 and still together on 11/3/62. 11 in close-cropped "mushroom" paddock on 31/3/62, the biggest flock yet recorded on this coast. At least 3 pairs on different territories on 22/9/62.
- LARGE SAND DOTTEREL** — 1 with Wrybills in Kairito marsh on 26/11/61 (A.T.) and at Kairito creekmouth on 6/12/61, 31/12/61 and 10/1/62.
- WRYBILL** — Many summered. 60 on 27/10/61; c. 90 at Kairito on 26/11/61 and c. 120 on 6/12/61. Big increase by end of year c.550 on 31/12/61; 2800+ on 10/1/62; 3000+ on 31/3/62; 1900+ on 24/6/62; c. 2000 on 19/8/62; c. 500 on 22/9/62.
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW** — 8 on 27/10/61 at Waitakaruru; 26 on 26/11/61 at Kairito; 20+ on 24/1/62; 10 on 31/3/62 evidently stayed to winter, viz. 10 on 24/6/62 and 19/8/62. 16, fast asleep and looking lean and weary on the beach at Kaiaua on 9/9/62, were probably newly-arrived migrants. 19+ on 22/9/62 on their favourite mudflat among the Miranda mangroves.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT** — 6000+ at Waitakaruru on 26/11/61. 2700+ inland at Waitakaruru during a very high tide on 11/3/62. Only 243 on coast on winter census, 24/6/62; but a few hundred may have been inland; c. 650 on 19/8/62, rather too early for new arrivals.
- ASIATIC BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** — 2 at Miranda reddening on 21/3/61. 1 pale on 31/8/61; 2 throughout summer; feeding in swamp among Stilts on 26/11/61; flying high at Kaiaua on 11/3/62; 1 at Kairito on 31/3/62; 1 at Miranda on 22/9/62.
- TEREK SANDPIPER** — Waitakaruru-Kairito, 2 on 26/11/61; 1 on 6/12/62; 2 on 10/1/62; 1 on 31/3/62; 1 on 9/5/62.
- TURNSTONE** — c. 50 at Kairito on 25/10/61; c. 55 at Miranda creekmouth on 6/12/61; 65+ on 31/12/61; 47 on 11/1/62; 4 on 9/5/62; 3 on 24/6/62.
- KNOT** — c. 4000 at Waitakaruru creekmouth on 26/11/61 and 3100+ inland on 11/3/62, with Godwits and Stilts. 78 on winter census 24/6/62.
- SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** — 31/8/61, 1 on Miranda pools, seemed tired, still largely in breeding plumage; 4 on 14/10/61; 3 at Kairito on 25/10/61; some at Waitakaruru on 26/11/61; 6+ at Kairito creekmouth on 6/12/61; 4 on 11/1/62; 1 at Kairito and 9 on Miranda pools on 31/3/62, one being very richly marked.
- CURLEW SANDPIPER** — 1 near Waitakaruru on 27/10/61; 4+ on 26/11/61 and 6/12/61. 8 on 8/1/62 (1 red) on 31/3/62; 1 in virtually full breeding dress on 9/5/62 — an interesting date. Evidently 3 wintered, being seen on 19/8/62 and 9/9/62 at White Bridge and Miranda pools. These sandpipers were often, but not invariably,, associating with Wrybills.
- RED-NECKED STINT** — A poor year. 3 at Kairito on 6/12/61; 2 on 11/1/62; 1 on 31/3/62, 9/5/62, 24/6/62 and 22/9/62, always with Wrybills.

PIED STILT — Small breeding colonies tend to become more widespread. c. 335 birds on 31/8/61 from Kaiaua to Kairito included 200+ non-breeders; c. 990 on 11/1/62; 1600+ on 11/3/62 and inland at Waitakaruru with Godwits and Knots c. 5000. Only c. 1200 on 24/6/62 near the tide-line. 6 nests with eggs seen on 19/8/62. 1 "near-black" on 10/1/62.

BLACK-BACKED GULL — Increasing ominously. Limeworks, 16 nests under construction, no eggs, on 25/10/61; 10 with 3 eggs, 6 with 2 and 4 with 1 on 26/11/61. Kairito, nesting earlier; 66 nests on 25/10/61, including 8 x c/3, 6 x c/2, 7 x c/1. On 13/11/61 some nests had very young chicks. c. 120 adults over Kairito nesting-bank on 19/8/62.

BLACK-BILLED GULL — c. 320 on 31/8/61; 16 on 14/10/61; c. 100 on 11/3/62; c. 120 on 31/3/62; c. 230 on 24/6/62; 180+ on 19/8/62; c. 100 on 22/9/62.

CASPIAN TERN — A few non-breeders over the summer. Kaiaua to Kairito, 16 on 11/1/62; 60 on 11/3/62. Winter census, including Thames, 78.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — 6 on 31/8/61; 15 on 14/10/61; 500+ at White Bridge with 100+ eggs on 31/12/61. Only 42 on 11/3/62, of which 3 were mottled juv. c. 50 at White Bridge and 60 at Kaiaua (2 juv.) on 31/3/62. 12 (1 juv.) on 9/5/62 at Kairito and 40+ at White Bridge; c. 20 only on winter census 24/6/62. c. 500 at White Bridge on 19/8/62. 0 on 22/9/62.

LITTLE TERN (*S. albigrons*) — 7 with waders at Waitakaruru creekmouth on 26/11/61; 2 hovering over shallows at Kairito on 6/12/61; 5 on 31/12/61; 6 on 10/1/62. 2 in typical breeding dress among Wrybills on 31/3/62 (v. *Notornis* X, 91-92).

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN — 1 in fine feather, elegantly coasting, at Waitakaruru creekmouth on 26/11/61; inland with 10000+ waders on 11/3/62; and still in breeding dress over green sodden paddocks near Kairito on 24/6/62.

KINGFISHER — 50 counted, mostly on wires between old limeworks and hot springs on 9/5/62.

FERNBIRD — Survives in salt marsh scrub along ditches between Miranda and Hot Springs (P.D.G.S.).

H.R.McK., R.B.S.

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MANUKAU NORTH — OTAHUHU, MANGERE, PUKETUTU, IHUMATAO

Important ecological factors affecting the numbers and movements of birds in northern Manukau were:—

- (a) Now that little industrial waste is going into the harbour above the bridge, the water is cleaner. Caspian Terns and Little Shags have returned in strength, but the mudflats may actually be a less nutritious feeding ground for Pied Stilts and gulls.
- (b) The Puketutu oxidation ponds for the most part are a barren expanse of deep unsavoury water; but a lowering of the level at No. 4 enabled a few Pied Stilts to breed and many waders to return to a former favourite roost and feeding ground. No. 4 seems to be the only pond attractive to ducks.