

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 creek-mouth 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.

★

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.

- (c) The rough earthworks around the edge of the new airport runway, now extended far across the inter-tidal sands, were much used by waders as a high-tide roost; and one of the two pairs of Red-breasted Dotterels which took up territories may even have bred successfully.

WHITE-FACED HERON — Often now seen at Harania Ck. max. 9 on 11/6/62; and inland at Self's Crater-lake, obviously breeding locally. 12 at Ihumatao on 24/2/62 now quite typical.

BLUE REEF HERON — Odd birds frequent Puketutu, Ihumatao and the outer causeways.

BLACK SWAN — On the four oxidation ponds confined mostly to No. 4 (Spoonbill Pool) e.g. 75 on 13/1/62 and c. 70 on 13/10/62.

GRAY TEAL — All reports are from Spoonbill Pool. c. 20 on 29/12/61; 8 on 13/1/62; 8+ on 4/5/62.

SHOVELER — Usually some on Spoonbill Pool. 7 males on 3/11/62 looks hopeful.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — None reported this year near Mangere Bridge or Tararata Ck. Small numbers visited Spoonbill Pool shallows e.g. 7 on 29/12/61; 35 on 13/10/62. Big flocks commonly in autumn and winter off Ihumatao and at airport, e.g. c. 1200 on 22/7/62; 150 on 31/10/62.

VARIABLE OYSTERCATCHER — 1 all black on airport on 17/9/62.

BANDED DOTTEREL — The only reports are of 167 on 4/5/62 and 6 on 20/6/62 in a corner of Spoonbill Pool, when part of the former Chinky Spit was above water level again.

RED-BREASTED DOTTEREL — All reports are from near the end of the airport, where from 26/7/62, 2 prs. appeared to have taken up territory on rough ground; but by 17/9/62 this had been bulldozed and levelled; and 1 pr. was actually running round on a newly laid and tar-sealed runway. The two pairs and a fifth very pale bird were present on 3/11/62.

WRYBILL — The only Puketutu records are of 1 on 4/5/62 and 1 on 20/6/62 on Chinky Spit. At full tide a big flock sometimes resorted to the new airport, e.g. c. 1300 on 22/7/62 (including perhaps many Karaka birds); c. 550 on 1/8/62 and 18/8/62; c. 300 on 17/9/62; 0 on 3/10/62.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW — One seen in autumn '62 over Middlemore in one of the many flights of godwits which flew across the isthmus (N.J.L.).

ASIATIC WHIMBREL — One at Harania Ck. on 31/10/61.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT — c. 1500 on 17/11/61 at Harania Ck. 2000+ on 1/12/61; 650+ on 13/10/62. As usual none seen above Mangere bridge in winter, where many fed throughout summer. Spoonbill Pool, 2500+ on 29/12/61; 5500+ on 13/1/62; 550 on 4/5/62; c. 4000 on 3/11/62. Airport, c. 900 on 22/7/62; c. 650 on 17/9/62.

TURNSTONE — 5 at Spoonbill Pool on 4/5/62.

KNOT — c. 50 at Tararata Ck. on 16/11/61. 1000+ at Harania Ck. on 1/12/61. c. 100 at Spoonbill Pool on 29/12/61 and c. 750 on 13/1/62. In winter some hundreds visited the airport, e.g. 550+ on 26/7/62; c. 400 on 19/8/62.

PIED STILT — Breeding again took place on Spoonbill Pool at the same Puketutu bays as in 1959 (v. A.L.R. IX, 98). Here 3 prs. were on territory and a nest with 3 fresh-looking eggs was found on

16/11/61. Along the old causeway 3 prs. each had two flying young on 2/12/62. Inland breeding may have been attempted at Self's crater-lake in mid-October. Summer census of upper Manukau, c. 1250 on 10/12/61; winter census on 22/7/62, c. 2300; but by then numbers had declined. Especially attractive over the summer and autumn was Spoonbill Pool, viz. 1000 on 29/12/61 and 13/1/62; c. 3000 on 4/5/62. Numbers at Harania Ck. were generally smaller, max. 500+ on 1/12/62 and in early January '62 — but opposite at Te Papapa and Waikaraka there were c. 2000 on 25/6/62.

RED-BILLED GULL — Winter census in upper Manukau on 22/7/62 was 12,100, of which more than half were at the oxidation ponds.

CASPIAN TERN — Summer census 207 on 10/12/61; winter census 81 on 22/7/62. Many more frequented Harania Ck. than have been recorded there before. e.g. 6 on 31/10/61, 30 on 17/11/61; 26 on 1/12/61 and c. 20 throughout autumn and winter; 5 on 5/11/62. Spoonbill Pool, 50+ on 29/12/61; 120+ on 24/2/62. Ihumatao, 20 on 1/11/61; 20+ on 24/2/62. Airport, 39 on 22/7/62.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — 2 over Middlemore on 11/11/61 (M.J.H.) passing from upper Manukau to Tamaki and 2 high over Harania Ck. on 17/11/61 heading westwards.

— R.B.S., P.D.G.S.

★

MANUKAU SOUTH — KARAKA - PUHUNUI

GANNET — Only 4 on census 22/7/62.

LITTLE BLACK SHAG — 18 at Pollok Spit on 22/7/62.

GREAT WHITE HERON — 1 at Weymouth on 12/10/62.

LITTLE EGRET — 1 at Weymouth first week of July and 11/10/62.

WHITE-FACED HERON — 81 on 10/12/61; 26 in Higham's marsh on 8/7/62.

BLUE REEF HERON — 3 at Waipipi on 10/12/61.

SHOVELER — 15 at Higham's on 22/7/62.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — 600+ 8/10/61; 480 on 27/11/61; 2700 on 10/3/62; 1745 on 22/7/62, when census of all Manukau was 3025; 800 on 20/8/62; 500+ on 6/11/62.

VARIABLE OYSTERCATCHER — 1 smudgy on 23/10/61; 1 black on 23/9/61 and throughout summer and winter at least till 8/7/62.

ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER — Some present all summer. 24 on 10/12/61; 40 on 28/3/62; mostly in fine nuptial plumage.

BANDED DOTTEREL — c. 40 on 30/8/61; 8 non-banded juveniles (late young of last season?) on Kidd's marsh on 8/10/61; 2 nests each with 3 eggs on shellbanks on 23/10/61; c. 10 and 2 well-grown chicks on 27/11/61; 13 on 10/12/61; c. 20 on 7/1/62; 80+ on 6/4/62; 62+ at Higham's and Kidds', 190+ at Seagrove on 8/7/62; 42 on 20/8/62 divided between Kidd's and Higham's.

RED-BREASTED DOTTEREL — 2 prs. with nests, each with 2 eggs on 23/10/61; some eggs hatched and young appear to have been reared. 8 on 11/3/62; 6 of which were feeding among Banded Dotterels on short grass in Kidd's marsh; c. 12 on 5/4/62. 9 at Seagrove on 8/7/62. 12 between Kidd's and Higham's on 22/7/62. 8 on 20/8/62, 3 being well-coloured. 2 prs. on territory, 1 nest with 2 eggs, on 7/10/62.

WRYBILL — Still plentiful in September, e.g. 600 on 10/9/61, and 350 on 30/9/61; 130+ on 8/10/61; 50 on 23/10/61; but only few are known to have summered. 12+ at Puhinui on 15/11/61 and 18 at Kidd's on 27/11/61; 24 on 10/12/61. After Christmas numbers soared. 213 on 29/12/61; c. 460 on 7/1/62; c. 900 on 10/3/62 and 28/3/62; c. 500 on 6/4/62; 600 on 8/7/62; c. 360 on 22/7/62, when census of all Manukau was 1660. 220 on 20/8/62.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW — 2 on 10/12/61, 1 on 11/2/62; 1 on 22/7/62.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT — 9000+ on 23/10/61. 3400 at Puhinui on 15/11/61. Summer census for all Manukau, 12,430 on 10/12/61 of which 7380 were along southern shore. 4100 on 10/3/62; c. 300 on 6/4/62; 340 on 22/7/62 when census for all Manukau was c. 1380. 270+ on 20/8/62.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT — 1 at shellbank on 6/4/62; 1 at Seagrove on 8/7/62.

TURNSTONE — 126 on 30/8/61; c. 230 on 23/10/61; in good numbers, c. 300 all summer; c. 250 on 6/4/62, mostly in fine colour; only 2 on winter census on 22/7/62; 12 on 11/8/62.

KNOT — c. 60 on 23/10/61; c. 1500 on 7/12/61; 800 on 10/12/61, c. 2600 on 10/3/62; 100+ on 6/4/62; 1 only on 8/7/62.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER — 1 in Kidd's marsh on 29/10/62 and on following days.

AMERICAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER — 1 in Kidd's marsh on 29/10/62 and on following days. These two sandpipers, when first seen, were feeding rapidly only a few feet apart. (H.R.McK., A.T.E.).

RED-NECKED STINT — 10 on 27/11/62; 12 on 5 & 12/12/61; 9+ on 7/1/62; 10 on 10/3/62; 7 on 28/3/62; (1 red, 5 reddening, 1 pale); 1 wintered, seen on 8/7/62 and 20/8/62; 2 on 7/10/62, one in worn breeding dress.

PIED STILT — Oakland's Rd. pool. c. 90 on 8/10/61; 4 small downy young seen. Scattered pairs now breed about the south Manukau countryside. Winter census, 1265, when total for all Manukau was c. 3600, on 22/7/62.

ARCTIC SKUA — 2 on 22/12/61, chasing White-fronted Terns, just off the shellbank; 1 on 6/4/62.

CASPIAN TERN — 70+ on 8/10/61; 62 on 22/12/61; c. 170 on 22/7/62, when winter census of Manukau was c. 250; 120+ on 11/8/62.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — A few at shellbank in Kidd's Bay on 23/10/61. Egg-laying began about 25/11/61, 3 eggs; c. 80 birds and 7 eggs on 27/11/61; c. 150 birds and 32 eggs on 7/12/61; 62 nests and 65 eggs on 10/12/61; 300+ birds and many nests on 22/12/61; 14 chicks and 108 eggs on 29/12/61; but the colony failed again, contributing factors being big tides and robber gulls. None on winter census 22/7/62; 2 on 20/8/62.

PUKEKO — Breeding freely along drains and ditches.

— H.R.McK., R.B.S.