

## SHORT NOTES

### OBSERVATION OF A KOKAKO NEST

On the top of a ridge in the Hunua Ranges at about 1,800 feet, my brother, J. W. St. Paul, and I, on 1/1/62, observed an adult Kokako (*Callaeas cinerea wilsoni*) feed in a tree what we took to be a fully developed young bird. It could perhaps have been the male feeding the female, but we were both satisfied that the one fed was smaller than the female which afterwards proceeded to nest. If this was a smaller and a young bird it was not seen again. The adult bird, immediately after feeding the supposed young one, gathered a bunch of moss and small sticks for nest building. This was continued by two birds. The nest was being built about twenty-five feet from the ground in a mass of rata vine on a Raukawa (*Pseudopanax edgerleyi*). Unfortunately it was not practicable to tin the tree or isolate it to stop vermin reaching it. For this reason and because the place was so remote few but lengthy visits were made.

8 Jan., observed from 0090 hrs. until 1540. Weather fine, wind cold. 0090, female on nest. The male sang strongly for five minutes a hundred yards down the slope, then stopped altogether. All that day the female sat for one hour at a time, leaving for five to ten minutes each period to feed on leaves or drink from a stream a hundred and fifty yards away.

10 Jan., 1330 hrs. to 1540, fine, sunny. Female sitting as on Jan. 8. The male joined her each time she left the nest.

17 Jan., 0830 hrs. to 1500, morning fine, cool, afternoon hot. 0830, female on nest, where she was fed by male at 0845. 0855, female left nest, joined male close by and went for long flight down to water. 0905, returned to nest and sat for half-hour spells with breaks of five to eight minutes. The male made calls only, no loud song.

24 Jan., 0955 hrs. to 1400, fine sunny windy morning. 0955, female on nest, male one chain away. 1025 left nest and went to creek for wash. 1035 back to nest quite wet and shook feathers before sitting on nest. 1105 left nest for five minutes to feed on tawa leaves. 1140, again left nest for five minutes to feed on tawa leaves. 1215, left nest for another wash and returned with feathers wet, being fifteen minutes away instead of usual five to ten minutes. The male often joined her one or two chains from nest when she came off to feed or drink. Only one faint bit of song from male at 1205.

31 Jan., 0800 hrs. to 1300, weather fine. 0800, female calling quietly as she approached nest; stayed about half a minute, then flew across bush and was not seen again. Eggshells on the ground near the tree proved that at least two eggs had been hatched. Vermin had apparently taken the young very soon after the hatching.

This record gives only an approximate time from laying to hatching. The nest was partly built on Jan. 1 and the bird was incubating on Jan. 8, so that the clutch of two, or perhaps the usual three eggs, would be complete on say Jan. 6. If hatching took place on Jan. 30, the period would be approximately twenty-five days.

The male assisted with the building of the nest but was not seen at any time to sit on it.

—R. St. PAUL