

## WANDERING TATTLER AT BLACK REEF, HAWKE'S BAY

During the visit of the R.A.O.U. to Cape Kidnappers on 10/11/62 one of the party, Dr. N. Wettenhall, reported a "Grey-tailed" Tattler, the common tattler of Australia; but after he had described the call we immediately suspected it might be a Wandering Tattler (*Heteroscelus incanus incanus*). Later this identification was confirmed. The bird was seen by most of the party and was observed very closely by B.D.B. half a mile back from Black Reef.

This tattler was so tame that by stalking it among the rocks B.D.B. was able to approach within ten feet and was able to see the nasal groove with the naked eye, this reaching three-quarters of the way down the bill. The bird, probably a recent arrival, was feeding voraciously on the exposed rock-shelf. It was seen to eat a small crab and what appeared to be a marine worm. In between feeding it bobbed its tail up and down rapidly in true tattler fashion.

When flushed the bird would call with a trilling whistle and B.D.B. was able to make it circle around him by imitating the call. It also called while perched on the top of some of the larger rocks. The upper plumage was an even grey. The underside was almost white with grey shading coming onto the breast from the sides. This showed faded wavy transverse lines. The bill was dark greyish green and the legs greenish yellow.

— B. D. BELL

— A. BLACKBURN

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## TERRITORIAL BEHAVIOUR OF NESTING MYNAS

I recently watched a pair of Mynas (*A. tristis*) nesting and have noted their reactions when anyone or anything approached the corner of the house where the nest was situated. No other birds were permitted to approach the roof of the house where the nest was nor were they allowed to land on the roof of the houses on either side. Humans, cats and dogs approaching to within about forty feet of the house were swooped upon by the Mynas. Rowdy children in particular were very much disliked and I have seen a Myna swoop to within one foot of a child who was playing fifty feet from the house.

Although the Mynas did not themselves eat bread put out, they would not allow Starling to feed. After putting to flight any Starlings that attempted to land, the Mynas returned and took to task the Sparrows, but, being in larger numbers and less fearless, the Sparrows' departure from the bread was only temporary.

On one occasion both Mynas were seen chasing three young Starlings away from the bread when two adult Starlings approached and began to chase the Mynas. The two Starlings were joined by four other adult birds and a combat took place. After one Myna had had enough it flew to a high tree and watched its less fortunate mate being attacked by the six Starlings. Eventually the Starlings made off, leaving the Myna, which had lost several feathers, looking very dejected. For three days it was observed with ruffled feathers.

From my observations these Mynas considered that their nesting territory covered about an acre with their nest as the central point, but their behaviour of swooping on prospective predators only began when the chicks hatched.

— D. F. BOOTH