

field-worker. An excellent chart (p. 80) for the identification of storm-killed prions owes much to New Zealand research. The drawings (p. 185) done to show the plumage patterns of the Spur-winged Plover and allied species might one day be useful in New Zealand. The sketches (p. 188) of the heads of the three difficult migratory dotterels from Asia are helpful but not entirely convincing. But so wisely and thoroughly have the authors fulfilled their task that the voice of carping criticism is hushed. The book is a 'must' for the serious student of Australian ornithology; and the enthusiastic amateur could easily spend his money far less wisely than on acquiring a copy for his shelves.

— R.B.S.

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## PERSONALIA

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Congratulations to Mr. Roy H. Traill, a foundation member of the Society, on being awarded an M.B.E. in the New Year Honours.

Several well-known ornithologists and writers on natural history have recently visited New Zealand and been entertained in one locality or another by several of our members.

Among the visitors have been: John Warham, R. M. Lockley, Gerald Durrell, Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards, Lt. A. Y. Norris, R.N., from Britain; Jan Strijbos, from Holland, and Jean Delacour, from France and U.S.A.

21 Australian and one N.Z. members of the R.A.O.U., with the President and Brian Bell as guides, toured New Zealand during October-November, 1962. The tour was most successful. The visitors logged 114 species. In a number of centres members of the O.S.N.Z. were able to meet fellow bird-watchers from across the Tasman.

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## OBITUARY — A. S. WILKINSON

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Alexander Stanley Wilkinson, whose death occurred at Levin on December 28th, will be remembered in New Zealand ornithological circles as the cutodian of Kapiti Bird Sanctuary whose untiring work on that sanctuary ensured its reclamation from the ravages of browsing animals.

When he took up his duties on the island in 1924, it was overrun with wild goats and sheep and it was during the eighteen years of his stay on the island that it was freed from these animals, which had eaten out the undergrowth from much of its area.

With the help of a trapper and others, at least 300 goats and 1500 sheep were destroyed. This campaign, with those accounted for before he took over in 1924, removed a very serious threat to the future of the island as an effective sanctuary.

Mr. Wilkinson had a deep interest in the native birds and plants and throughout his residence on the island he took notes of the habits and occurrence of the birds of the island and its waters. In collaboration with his wife, he published, in 1952, in book form, under the title of "Kapiti Bird Sanctuary," a summary of his observations. This book was illustrated with many fine photographs taken by himself.

and by his even more skilful wife. Their photographic achievements included a picture of a Whitehead feeding a young Long-tailed Cuckoo in a Whitehead's nest.

Mr. Wilkinson was a member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union for more than forty years, for much of that period as a member of the council representing New Zealand; and was a foundation member of both the Forest and Bird Protection Society and the Ornithological Society of New Zealand. He was a member, too, of the Royal Society of New Zealand for a great many years. He was awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal in 1935 for his work on the island. He is survived by a son and two daughters.

The present flourishing state of the Kapiti bush and sanctuary stands as a memorial of his work and it is fitting that his ashes and those of his wife are to find a last resting-place on the island that they both loved so well.

— R.H.D.S.



## RECORDING SCHEME

A note in *Notornis* X, 128, announced that Classified Summarised Notes would no longer be published as such, explained the considerations which led Council to make this decision, and mentioned the inauguration of a Recording Scheme. The following is a short explanation of how it is proposed to work the Scheme, and what service it can be expected to provide.

The intention is that the Recording Scheme shall function as a Central Registry of unpublished ornithological information. The scheme as conceived has a dual purpose, firstly to ensure that all available information is recorded and nothing lost, and secondly to encourage co-operative field study of New Zealand birds and to co-ordinate the results of field work in different parts of the country. Instead of piecemeal publication of minor items, these will be recorded within the framework of the scheme, on species files which will be kept in triplicate. As soon as sufficient material has been gathered on any given species, steps will be taken to have it summarised for publication. As time goes on the gaps in our recorded knowledge of distribution and behaviour of certain species will become increasingly obvious, and positive steps can then be taken to close the gaps. When special enquiries are undertaken by the Society the scheme will be in a position to act as clearing house for the collection of information. Members working on specific subjects will of course have access to all relevant material collected under the scheme.

It is hoped eventually to extend the scheme to include locality lists, lists of museum accessions, whereabouts of study skins and mounted specimens of rare birds, etc. If the scheme works as planned it should be of considerable value to the Society. Its success will depend on the support of members who provide the material, and on the extent to which members use the scheme to obtain information which they require.

The present system whereby R.O's. collect, classify and send notes to the Editor once a year, is well established and should continue.