

ANNUAL LOCALITY REPORTS

FIRTH OF THAMES

- BLACK SHAG — 75 on 2/12/62 (summer census); 240+ on 28/4/63; 55 on 14/7/63 (winter census).
- PIED SHAG — None on summer census; 21 north of Whakatiwai on 14/7/63.
- LITTLE BLACK SHAG — Seldom reported. 9 on 2/12/62.
- SPOTTED SHAG — Rare visitor from Hauraki Gulf colonies; 2 at Wharekawa on 25/5/63.
- WHITE-FACED HERON — Numbers appear to be levelling out. 25 on 2/12/62; 22 on 28/4/63; 24 on 14/7/63.
- BLUE REEF HERON — 1 at Kaiaua on 28/4/63 and 14/7/63.
- BITTERN — 1 seen swimming in a loon-like attitude on 12/9/63.
- SHOVELER — Max. 3 on any visit.
- MARSH CRAKE (*P. pusilla*) — One seen closely near Hot Spring marsh by D. M. Walter on 27/10/63 — not previously recorded along the Miranda coast, though the Banded Rail is not uncommon.
- S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — Many, as usual, summered. 131 on 2/12/62. Big influx after Christmas. 1146 on 1/5/63; but only 710 on 14/7/63.
- VARIABLE OYSTERCATCHER — Usually present, 2 black and one smudgy. On 25/8/63 a smudgy and a black behaving as if a pair.
- ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER — 106 at Waitakaruru estuary on 24/11/62; c. 110 on 3/1/63. None seen on 28/4/63.
- BANDED DOTTEREL — Breeding population down to 3 pairs at the most. Nest, c. 3 on 4/11/62; subsequently 2 flying young seen. On 3/1/63 a flock of 12 at Kairito contained only 2 juv. c. 50 on 28/4/63 at White Bridge. 82 on 14/7/63 (winter census).
- RED BREASTED DOTTEREL — Always some. Nesting not very successful. One chick seen on 18/11/62; but nesting areas were abandoned by early December. 10 on winter census, 14/7/63.
- LARGE SAND DOTTEREL — One studied closely several times between 5/11/62 and 3/1/63, when the band on the chest seemed to be developing.
- WRYBILL — Probably c. 50 summered; viz. 40+ on 18/11/62 and 47 on 2/12/62. Usual influx after Christmas. 500+ on 3/1/63. 2000+, mostly at Waitakaruru on 28/4/63. Winter census, 1820 on 14/7/63; but 2100+ still on 25/8/63. 500+ at White Bridge on 14/9/63.
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW — 21 on 24/11/62 and 3/1/63; 6 on 28/4/63; 3 on 14/7/63.
- ASIATIC WHIMBREL — 1 on 28/4/63 at Waitakaruru estuary. It flew in at full tide; scarcely settled and was away almost at once.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT — Summer census, 6765 on 2/12/62; winter census 502 on 14/7/63. There was a considerable influx between 14/9 and 29/9/63.
- MARSH SANDPIPER — 1 at Waitakaruru estuary on 28/4/63 (v. *Notornis* X, 235-236). Presumably the same bird on the lagoon and pools at Miranda the following September-November; photographed by G. J. H. Moon.
- TURNSTONE — 40+ on 18/11/62; 61 on 3/1/63; 8 on 1/5/63; 4 on 14/7/63; 6 on 25/8/63; 11 on 14/9/63.

KNOT — Summer census c. 4500 on 2/12/62; winter census 170 on 14/7/63.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER — 3 on 4/11/62, first return migrants seen; 7 on 17/11/63; 19 on 24/11/62; 15 on 3/1/63.

CURLEW SANDPIPER — 3 having wintered, stayed at or near Miranda most of summer. Up to 5 others with Kairito Wrybills in January.

RED-NECKED STINT — One wintered 1962. Then 4 on 3/11/62 and 3/1/63 over the summer. One wintered 1963, seen with Wrybills on 14/9/63.

PIED STILT — Scattered, but apparently rather unsuccessful breeding. Broods well-grown of 2, 2, 1 at pools on 24/11/62. Summer census 2/12/62, only 131. 2370+ on 24/3/63; 1600+ on 28/4/63. Only 1209 on winter census 14/7/63. On 28/4/63 there were 3 blackish stilts in Hot Spring marsh.

BLACK-BACKED GULL — Kairito shellbank colony on 24/11/62, 1 c/4; 34 c/3; 12 c/2; 4 c/1; 8 c/0 — 51 occupied nests but no eggs yet hatched; 2/12/62, 52 nests and some chicks. Miranda shellbank colony, 25+ adults on 14/9/63; one old nest being refurbished.

BLACK-BILLED GULL — A few may have summered. c. 400 on 28/4/63. 590 on winter census 14/7/63.

RED-BILLED GULL — c. 1000 at Kairito hovering over tall fescue taking insects on 24/3/63.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN — Two sightings probably of the same bird as seen in 1961 and 1962; (a) flying along the coast near Kairito on 1/1/63 (P.D.G.S.). (b) in full breeding dress on 14/7/63 inland at Waitakaruru, flitting over wet paddocks in which many Pied Stilts were feeding.

CASPIAN TERN — 96 on summer census 2/12/62; more than usual but no evidence of local breeding. 120+ on 28/4/63, of which 80+ were looking for a high tide roost near Kairito. Only 58 on winter census 14/7/63.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — 525 on 2/12/62, almost entirely at Kairito, where some nesting was in progress. Few young reared, to judge by subsequent counts viz. 1 among c. 100 adults on 24/3/63; 4 among 84 adults on 28/4/63. Winter census, 131 on 14/7/63. 150+ on 12/9/63 noisy and excited at Wharekawa.

LITTLE TERN — Numbers present this summer far surpassed all previous counts. 32 on 24/11/62; 35 on 2/12/62, the tally being checked and rechecked. The last seen were 6 on 28/4/63, when they were noisy and excitable; but their bills were still dusky (cf. *Notornis* X, 91-92).

— H.R.McK., R.B.S.

MANUKAU NORTH — OTAHUHU, MANGERE, PUKETUTU, IHUMATAO

GANNET — Often to be seen off the end of the airport and Ihumatao.

WHITE-FACED HERON — The biggest concentrations are in autumn and early winter, e.g. c. 70 near airport during latter end of March '63. After June the flocks tend to break up.

BLUE REEF HERON — Max. 4 at Puketutu on 28/6/63.

ROYAL SPOONBILL — Six resting on a reef among Caspian Terns, Pied Stilts and ducks at Spoonbill Pool (No. 4) on 10/5/63. Two throughout winter in vicinity of Puketutu; 4 from at least Sept. 1st to 13th. In rough weather the dammed creekhead beside No. 4 often provided shelter.