the more sheltered willow-fringed bays on the windward side. Because of the size of the lake, our count was certainly short of the full number.

We left Waikare about 3.30 p.m. and made for Lakes Hakanoa and Kimihia, five miles further south near Huntly. Hakanoa produced no Caspian Terns. Kimihia has been drained and is now an open-cast coalmine. But here at 4.30 p.m. on part of the former lake-bed, now a watery flat, 22 Caspian Terns had already come into roost. An examination of their heads showed that most of them were immature, but a few had the black crowns of adults. The marshy remnant of L. Kimihia would certainly not provide a feeding ground for these birds and we considered that this flock was probably composed of birds which had been fishing the Huntly-Taupiri stretch of the river. Evidently some Caspian Terns which feed by day over these lakes return to the coast at dusk, for later that evening we saw two high over Glen Murray heading apparently for the estuary on a roosting flight. The next day we found two Caspian Terns fishing Lake Wahi, but none was seen on three visits to Lake Whangape, where a plunging Caspian Tern would have to be careful to miss the shags and Black Swans.

Unless there is an unlocated breeding colony on one of these lakes, most of the Caspian Terns seen inland at this season in the lower Waikato must be immature non-breeders. According to David Walter, there is a breeding colony of about 25 pairs on the sandy island which now almost blocks the mouth of the Waikato river. On 23/6/63 when I visited the sands at Port Waikato, not far from the nesting island, I counted 45 sitting together and nearly all had the full glossy black caps of adults, even though mid-winter was only just past. It does not seem likely that adults which had recently returned to the vicinity of a breeding ground at the start of a new nesting season would be foraging 30 - 50 miles inland when they had a large estuary providing an abundant food supply right beside them.

Another question which suggests itself is, "Do Caspian Terns use the Waikato as a migration route?" Banding has already shown that within a few months of leaving the nest Caspian Terns reared on Palliser Spit may reach Manukau Harbour, a few miles north of the Waikato estuary. Do they follow the coast or do they travel overland at least for part of the way? Any observations of Caspian Terns along the Waikato above Hamilton, over hydro-electric dams such as Karapiro, Arapuni and Whakamaru and at Taupo may eventually contribute to the solution of this problem. At the southern end of the North Island how far do Caspian Terns penetrate the rivers which flow from the central highlands?

— R. B. SIBSON

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ANALYSIS OF A BLACKBIRD'S NEST

In September 1960 the nest of a Blackbird *(T. merula)*, completed but not yet used, was blown down in a high wind. The outside dimensions were 6 inches broad by 5 inches deep; the egg chamber inside measured 4 inches one way and 3½ inches the other, and was 2¾ inches deep; the nest consisted of an outer layer, a middle layer compacted with mud and wet leaf mould, and an egg chamber separable without much difficulty from the compacted middle layer. The nest was taken to pieces as carefully as possible to avoid breaking any of its component parts,[1] which were as follows:—

	Base and outer layer	Mid layer and rim	Egg chamber	Total
Strips of bark	25	5		30
Smaller bark fragments		117	6	123
Fern stalks and fibrous material	13	49		62
Pieces of dry fern	7	26		33
Green fern tips	2	3		5
Small twig			1	1
Dry leaves	17	23	7	47
Skeleton leaves	9	16	57	82
Green beech leaves	2			2
Grass and fine material		1602	2003	3605
	—	1841	2074	3990

Having counted the components as above, I was left with about a quarter of a tea cup full of short pieces of dry grass or fibre under one inch long; some of this residue may have been broken during dismantling, but much of it had I think been nipped by the bird during building.

The strips of bark were $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide and from 4 to 7 inches long; in the mid layer three longer strips were used, 9, $9\frac{1}{2}$ and $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Most of the fine material used in the mid layer and egg chamber varied from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 6 inches in length, one piece of grass 18 inches long. In the mud layer there was some partly disintegrated material (fragments of skeleton leaves, etc.) which were not included in the count.

— A. T. EDGAR

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A LOCAL NAME FOR THE TOM-TIT

Mr. D. G. Medway informs me that near Whangamomona in eastern Taranaki the settlers know the Tom-tit *(P. toitoi)* as the Butcher Bird, the name being derived from the fact that the white breast of the male resembles the white apron worn by butchers. In the Old World the shrikes are sometimes known as butcher birds and the name is bestowed for a very different reason.

There may be other local names for birds which are worth recording as part of New Zealand folklore and linguistic usage.

— R. B. SIBSON

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REVIEW

Birds of the Atlantic Islands, Vol. I, by D. A. Bannerman. Oliver & Boyd, 84/-.

This handsome volume is concerned with the history of the birds of the Canary Islands and the Salvages. These islands have long attracted European naturalists and the list of visitors includes many names famous in British ornithology. Since his first visit which took place more than half a century ago, the author has made the ornithology of the Atlantic Islands one of his special studies. In the course of his travels among these islands he has shared in many original discoveries. The insular race of the Cream-coloured Courser bears his name. As might be expected, he writes with authority, understanding and sensitivity.