

and Kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*), with Kiekie (*Freycinetia banksii*) forming a shrub layer. 8/1/64.

Table 2 is of a count made up the ridge upon which the Lewis hut is situated. The weather was overcast with steady rain, but warm. The three counts were all conducted between 1000 and 1050 hrs. The bush was rain forest with Quintinia (*Quintinia acutifolia*) and Kamahi as dominants and emergent Rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*), with less Kiekie as a shrub layer. 10/1/64.

Table 3 is of a count made along the Heaphy track in the patch of bush immediately west of the Downs hut. Count 8 was made on 13/1/64 and 9 on 12/1/64: on both days the weather was cool with few showers. Between them the counts cover the period 1350 - 1715 hrs. The bush was mountain beech (*Nothofagus solandri cliffortioides*), surrounded by divaricating scrub which would be in hearing about half the time.

Table 4 is of a count made along the Heaphy track immediately through the patch of bush of table 3. Count 10 was made on 12/1/64 and 11 on 13/1/64, with the same weather as for 8 and 9. Both counts fall within the period 1415 - 1630 hrs. The vegetation was Red Tussock (*Chionochloa rigida*) with subdominant divaricating shrubs.

For each bird species at each counting area the average number recorded at each stop has been calculated: this is the best index of population density for comparison with other areas. It is hoped the counts will provide a basis for comparison in future years and also give a more quantitative idea of numbers than is usual.

However, it must be remembered that weather, time of day, and (most important) time of year produce significant differences in the index for the same population. A general result is that the three bush areas had essentially similar bird indices: 8, 10.3, and 7.7 birds per stop respectively, while the tussock area had the smaller index of 3.3 when its birds are on the whole more conspicuous.

— ★ — SHORT NOTE

SPUR-WINGED PLOVER BREEDING IN CANTERBURY

On 17th November, 1963, Mr. R. Novis, ranger to the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society, reported to Canterbury Museum the presence of a pair of strange birds which were evidently nesting on the tussock flats of Lake Station at the head (N.W. end) of Lake Taylor (Hawarden district, North Canterbury). Mr. Novis noted that the birds were performing distraction display but the nest could not be found. They were readily identified from his description as Spur-winged Plovers. In early December E.K.S.R. examined the area without finding the nest, but it was found shortly after this by a lad, Ken Allingham, on a visit to the area. Ken Allingham reported his find to E.K.S.R. and had noted that the nest contained a newly-hatched chick and one egg.

On about 20th April, 1964, three adults were seen flying together in the same locality by Mr. D. Maindonald (N. Canterbury Acclimatisation Society ranger), presumably the parents and grown chick.

A further record was sent in to the Museum by Mr. W. J. Harris who, on 7th November, 1963, saw a pair on the Clarence River bed to the north of Jack's Pass (N. of Hanmer): it was not known whether these were breeding.

— E. K. S. ROWE & E. G. TURBOTT