

## SHORT NOTES

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### ANOTHER NEW ZEALAND RECORD OF THE GLOSSY IBIS

On 7/5/66, the opening day of the duck-shooting season, Miss J. McKay, of Halkett, Canterbury, picked up on the flats at Lake Ellesmere, Canterbury, a Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), which had been shot in the breast, and brought it to Canterbury Museum. The bird is an adult in winter plumage.

Unfortunately, through the blood dispersal caused by the shot, and the small size of the gonads in winter, the sex could not be determined, but a few measurements may be of interest. Bill, 12.6; Tarso-metatarsus, 10.2; Mid-toe, 8.2 c.m. These feet measurements are slightly longer than those given by Oliver (New Zealand Birds, 1955, 400). The wing spread is 101.5 c.m., the total length 37.5 c.m.

— R. J. SCARLETT



### CATTLE EGRETS AT LAKE NGAROTO

From a report in the Weekly News it was learned that two "white herons" had been seen feeding among cattle on Mr. I. S. Macky's farm, at Lake Ngारoto.

This lake near Te Awamutu is typical of several others in the district, which has been visited by several White Herons and a White Ibis over the years. No white herons had been seen during the two previous years and when a party which included Mr. and Mrs. H. R. McKenzie, Mr. and H. R. Templer, Mr. G. Turbott and the writer, visited the Lake on 22/7/64 these two birds were identified by Mr. Turbott as Cattle Egrets (*Ardeola ibis*). Mr. Turbott was already familiar with this species as he had first identified Cattle Egrets in the South Island.

The two birds habitually fed among the cows as winter feed of chow mollier was fed to them and appeared to eat the pitch (H.R.McK.). When this supplementary fodder for the cattle was stopped, the birds moved to Mr. McFall's farm beside the Lake.

On 11/10/64 the two birds were beginning to assume breeding plumage and the colour of the head of one had changed to ginger with short pluming or ruffling on top of the head and upper hind neck. There was also ginger down the middle of the chest with dorsal ginger plumes down to tail. Legs were dark; bill a little less yellow; legs dark (H.R.McK.).

The two were still present on 23/10/64 and seemed about the same colour as when last seen; but could not be studied owing to disturbance by aerial topdressing.

During subsequent trips in November-December 1964 no further trace of these birds was seen, but it is interesting to note that five birds were observed near Levin on 28/10/64 also in varying degrees of breeding plumage.

— J. L. KENDRICK