

winter, but that practically all of them left again in the spring. During very cold spells the wintering birds would leave the lake, apparently driven further towards the coast. Stead (1932) remarked that during the autumn and winter, Kingfishers "are more widely distributed than for the rest of the year, odd birds turning up in unexpected places," but obviously he was not considering their national dispersal but referring only to local distribution at low altitudes.

The factors determining the overall seasonal shift in Kingfisher distribution will remain obscure until much more is known of the bird's ecology. However, this distribution almost certainly reflects the availability of food rather than being directly effected by temperature. Foods such as tadpoles, lizards, cicadas, grasshoppers and other insects are abundant in the higher country during spring and summer but disappear or become less available during winter. On the other hand, fish, crabs and other small marine animals, remain relatively active throughout the year in coastal areas.

REFERENCES

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 STEAD, E. F., 1932: *The Life Histories of New Zealand Birds*. Search Publishing Co., London.



SHORT NOTE

REPORTED SIGHTING OF SOUTH ISLAND KOKAKO

Late in January 1961 and early in the morning I entered the bush on the Nelson slope of the Mangatapu Saddle on the old road from the Maitai Valley to Pelorus Bridge. Shortly I was attracted by the loud calling of a bird which I located on the trunk of a large beech tree about 18 feet from the ground. The bird did not seem to notice me at all, so that I was able to watch it for some minutes before pouring rain drove me on. There was movement in an adjoining tree, and I was aware of what I think was a young bird; but it was the adult which interested me. It invariably moved upwards in short springing hops; and tapped its beak on the branch, left and right. I think it was urging the young bird to join it. It called loudly all the time I was within hearing distance.

It looked about the size of a Tui. I never saw its breast or under its wings. A yellowish colour was noticeable about its face; and its back which it kept in view even when it sprang on to a branch and proceeded up it, was, I think, brownish green. It was most active all the time I was watching it. I have tried to identify it on various occasions since, but it was only when I overheard a fellow-camper at a Forest and Bird Camp at Waikaremoana mention the characteristic upward springing climb of the Kokako that I had a clue to its identity. There is no doubt in my mind that the bird I watched below the Maungatapu Saddle was a South Island Kokako (*Callaeas c. cinerea*).

— H. E. READ

[Mrs. Read has discussed this incident with me. There seems to be no reason to doubt the accuracy of her identification; especially as the South Island Kokako has since been reported near Picton. — Ed.]