

During the following two nights we were absent from this camp so observations ceased. However, on the night of 2nd November, both banded Sooty Shearwaters were again present in this burrow, but they did not remain during the following day. Unfortunately no follow-up observations could be arranged, so that the outcome is not known. It would seem that the summer breeding shearwaters intended using this burrow although it had not yet been vacated by winter breeding petrels.

It appears inevitable that if such sharing of burrows by these or related species does take place regularly at this time of year some considerable overlap of tenancy must occur. Most young Grey-faced Petrels leave their breeding grounds in December or early January, while Sooty Shearwaters lay in late November or early December.

— D. V. MERTON

[The burrow in which these Sooty Shearwaters were found in 1965 appears to be the same as held a breeding pair in December, 1958, where they were banded. It is likely that the rather soft bands in use at that time would have worn thin and fallen off, though a Pycroft's Petrel banded on Hen Island in 1954 was still carrying its ring, albeit worn paper thin, exactly seven years later.—Ed.]



BROAD-BILLED ROLLER IN SOUTHLAND

On 29/3/67 Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Lobb, of the Gorge Road Aviaries, had a report of a strange bird from the Ruddenklau family, who farm near Fortrose, about 25 miles east of Invercargill. Mr. and Mrs. Lobb went out that evening and found the bird in the same locality. They took detailed notes, and on their return home provisionally identified the bird as a Broad-billed Roller (*Eurystomus pacificus*).

On the following day Mrs. Lobb, Messrs. R. R. Sutton, R. M. Royds and the writer had prolonged views of the bird in varying light. It was stocky, about the size of a Little Owl (*Athene noctua*), its large head flattened at the crown. The flight also was owl-like, with silent, steady wing-beats as the bird flew to catch insects on the wing. It appeared to work a regular beat, returning after each sortie to its perch. At different times it used posts, a wire fence, telegraph wires, a tin fence about 20 yards from the house, and dry branches of a fallen tree as its vantage point. The iridescent silvery-green patch extending back from the leading edge of the wing, from which the common name "Dollar-bird" originates, was very apparent in flight, and could also be seen on the primaries of the folded wing. The shining sea-green underparts, the bright blue uneven horizontal line at the throat, the silver "dollars," and the large bright yellow gape as the bird snapped at insects were brilliant in the sunshine.

The dark bill and pinkish-brown legs indicated that this was a juvenile, as did the blotchy brownish patches on breast, hind-neck and back.

This bird looked altogether improbable on the New Zealand scene, and one can well understand why the Ruddenklau's first thought was that it had escaped from an aviary.

The Broad-billed Roller was last recorded in New Zealand in 1956, and the previous most southerly record was from Ross on the West Coast.

As this species migrates north from Australia to Indonesia in April, it seems logical to suppose that the Southland bird had gone astray in the course of migration.

— MAIDA BARLOW



SANDERLINGS AT LAKE WAITUNA (SOUTHLAND)

Lake Waituna, 15 miles S.E. of Invercargill is a shallow lagoon seven miles long, fed by small peaty streams and separated from the open sea by a narrow shingle-bank. Most of the time there is a single outlet through this shingle; but sometimes as the result of freak tides and weather, the outlet blocks, and the lagoon has been in this closed state from September 1966 to the time of writing.

The west end of the lake, known as Walkers Bay, has extensive areas of suitable habitat for waders. North of this is Swan Bay, which accommodates large numbers of waterfowl. There is usually an interesting assortment of shore-birds at Walkers Bay in the summer months. It has in the past produced Black-tailed Godwit, Royal Spoonbill, Whimbrel, Pectoral, Sharp-tailed and Curlew Sandpipers, numerous Red-necked Stints (largest count 40 plus). Long-billed Curlew are also usually found here.

On 18/12/66 the lake produced an addition to this already impressive list when a group of five Sanderlings (*Calidris alba*) was seen by Mrs. M. L. Barlow, Mr. S. L. Lobb and the writer.

While searching the shingle bar from our boat, a small and unusual wader was noted resting on the shingle among a small group of Turnstones (*A. interpres*). We went ashore and examined the bird from fairly close quarters with a 20x telescope and made the following notes. Bill and legs: black. Crown, hind neck and back: grey. Upper wing coverts grey with pale edge. Throat, breast and underparts: white. Eye: dark and bold. Pale stripe above eye extending back from white front. Grey hind neck feathers extending forward to form the beginning of a bar. Grey crown extending forward to form a point above bill. Forward angle of wing leading edge very dark. Definite wing bar when in flight. In flight tail had a dark centre with white on outer edges.

When put to flight our bird was lost from sight, but was located again about an hour later with four more of its kind feeding along the edges of shallow pools on an adjacent mud flat. There were Curlew Sandpiper (*C. ferruginea*) and Banded Dotterel (*C. bichenotus*) feeding nearby; the Sanderlings were plump and stockier than the Curlew Sandpiper, and shorter in the leg.

The things which impressed us most were the extreme whiteness of the underparts, the prominent dark eye and the constant running along the water's edge when feeding, although this running was probably due to the fact that there was a lack of ebb and flow of tide.

This is the second sighting of Sanderlings in Southland, the previous one being of a single bird seen by B. D. Heather on the Invercargill estuary.

— R. R. SUTTON

[The Sanderling is usually found in New Zealand as a lonely straggler. The only other record of a 'flock' is of five in Parengarenga Harbour during February, 1950. Notornis IV, 127.—Ed.]