

LESSER FRIGATE BIRD OVER WAIHEKE

My wife and I were staying on Waiheke Island and we were near Little Oneroa on 30/8/67 when we saw flying over us what I am sure was a Lesser Frigate Bird (*Fregata ariel*). The red gular pouch was quite clear, as were the white patches near the wing-bases. The flight was leisurely and easy, as the bird passed over us heading north-east towards the sea. I have seen Lesser Frigate Birds in Fiji, where they are not uncommon; but I understand they are rare in New Zealand. In the latter part of August there had been a period of strong northerly winds; and August temperatures in northern New Zealand had been generally well above average.

— R. H. LOCKSTONE



HUDSONIAN GODWIT IN KAIPARA

The findings of the Field Study Course held in January 1965 (Notornis 12, 70-79) made it possible to produce a working list of the shore birds of Kaipara Harbour. Among the several assembly points commonly used by waders at full tide is the farm of Mr. Graham Jordan, situated on a peninsula just north of Oyster Point in the southern arm and between Ngapuke and Kakanui Creeks. In olden days this area was much favoured by godwit-shooters. Now it is being considered as a likely site for the construction of an atomic power station. Its value as a habitat for waders was rediscovered in May 1963 (Notornis 10, 250-251) and since then, through the courtesy of the owner, has been proved by many visiting bird-watchers.

In January 1965, a godwit showing black in the tail was seen here, but its identity, *melanuroides* or *haemastica*, could not be ascertained. On 29/4/67 when we visited this farm just before full tide, there were thousands of waders in the short grassy paddocks near the tip of the peninsula, South Island Pied Oystercatchers (*H. o. finschi*) being by far the most numerous of the eight species present. It was on the outskirts of a very large flock of these that the Hudsonian Godwit was first noticed. It took wing and headed for Ngapuke Creek, showing its black and white tail quite clearly before it dropped out of sight behind the stopbank. Because it was flying away from us and rather low, the pattern of the diagnostic underwing was not discernible. On the creek it was easily found, resting near some Bartailed Godwits (*L. lapponica*). It was a trim looking bird, primarily darkish gray and white, without nuptial colouring. In preening it raised its wings, just as we wanted, to show the dusky underwing and axillaries; then as it flew leisurely along the tideline, a thin white alar bar was revealed.

Also along the creek not far away was a Long-billed Curlew (*N. madagascariensis*); and rather too far off for subspecific identification we heard and saw a Whimbrel (*N. phaeopus*). Thus the day's tally of waders was ten, five indigenous and five arctic. Most arctic waders which are still in New Zealand as late as the end of April, are likely to be immature non-breeders intending to remain over the winter.

— N. M. GLEESON
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