

SIGHTINGS OF WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERNS (*C. leucopterus*)  
IN THE SOUTH ISLAND

(a) On 16/11/63 I had just finished banding at a colony of Black-billed Gulls (*L. bulleri*) on the Wairau River near Blenheim, when a distinctive looking bird appeared following a river channel. The light was just starting to fade about 7.00 p.m. but the contrast between the white wings and the black body was very noticeable. The flight was that of a tern but the bird seemed faster and more active and it soon disappeared up the river. Five days later, again after banding on the same site at 7.15 p.m., I saw what was probably the same bird and felt sure of its identity from a description given by Mr. Brian Bell.

(b) When visiting an unsuccessful colony of Black-billed Gulls on the Wairau River I saw a White-winged Black Tern at 2.00 p.m. on 27/11/65. It was a sunny day with a strong wind and in the vicinity were a few representatives of all the usual river-bed birds. The newcomer flew rather fast and high — 60-80 feet above the river — but had the distinctive tern flight and looked slightly plumper than a Black-fronted Tern (*C. albostratus*). The head and body were black with a white rump and tail. Upper wing surface was light grey similar to that of the Black-billed Gull, while the underside was white with a darker band along the leading edge. I was unable to distinguish the colour of the bill so it may have been dark. The bird circled once and flew on upstream.

— J. A. COWIE

(c) Ki-Wainono is a shallow lagoon four miles east of Waimate, South Canterbury. On 27/8/67 this lagoon was visited and two White-winged Black Terns (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) were observed in breeding plumage.

The birds appeared to be hawkling insects along a stretch of marshy ground near the lake edge. Through binoculars, at a distance of fifty yards, they appeared to be similar in size to the Black-fronted Tern (*C. albostratus*). They had a most conspicuous white tail and rump, and a black body; the upper surface of the wings was a uniform silver-grey, whereas the underwing was patchy black and dark grey. The bill, legs and feet were dark.

The birds, whose plumage gave a beautiful contrast of black and white, were observed for an hour, during which time they were not seen to land. They were also observed by Mr. M. Keillor of Studholme on 28/8/67 but were not seen when he visited the lagoon on 25/9/67.

— B. R. KEELEY  
P. M. SAGAR



## WELCOME SWALLOWS IN THE FAR NORTH

While bone-collecting at Tom Bowling Bay and Waikuku Beach, Northland, from 14 to 17 February 1968, Mr. Jack Grant-Mackie and I enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. Carl Nilsson, of the Mokoikoi Block, Waikuku Beach. His house is about a mile in a direct line from North Cape. Mr. Nilsson, who is a friend of birds and animals, pointed out a nest of Welcome Swallows on his back wall, under the eaves, and several of these delightful birds were seen flying nearby. This is probably the most northerly nesting record of the Welcome Swallow in New Zealand.

— R. J. SCARLETT