

On the blowy and rather wet afternoon of 20/4/68, Professor J. E. Morton and John Jenkins accompanied me to Jordan's farm. About four o'clock after the ebb set in hundreds of waders — nine species were identified — were scattered over the comparatively sheltered shallows of Ngapuke Creek. Many were already busily feeding; others were breaking away from their roosting flocks. A Longbilled Curlew (*N. madagascariensis*) was conspicuous near a group of S.I. Oystercatchers (*H. o. finschi*). The Terek Sandpiper was found rather apart, darting this way and that in an eager search for food, its nearest neighbours being two Red-breasted Dotterels.

Some 200 miles to the south, Dr. Ian Andrew has supplied details of two Terek Sandpipers which frequented the Manawatu estuary during the summer. One was first seen on 12/11/67; and was still on its own on 23/12/67; but by 18/2/68 it had been joined by another and the two were still present on 16-17/3/68.

— R. B. SIBSON



#### SIGHTING OF SOUTH ISLAND BUSH WREN

When ascending the west side of Moss Pass, a 6000 ft. pass connecting the Sabine and D'Urville Valleys in the Nelson Lakes National Park, on 17/1/68, I was surprised to see two wren-like birds alight on a rock some ten yards ahead. This was at an altitude of approximately 5500 ft., at a spot where the low beech forest gives way to scrub and tussock, with boulders and large slabs of rock, marked by a large direction arrow of stones laid on the rock. At once I saw that they were not Rock Wrens (*Xenicus gilviventris*) with which I am familiar, on account of their slightly heavier build, longer legs and toes, and more sedate movements, not the restless zig-zag hopping of the Rock Wren. A companion having joined me, and the two birds remaining on the rock for about two minutes, we made careful notes of the plumage and soft parts, which are given below in some detail, as there appear to be some important variations from descriptions of the Bush Wren (*X. longipes*) given in the literature. Crown, brownish grey, merging into green on the back; a pale buff streak above the eye, and under the eye, and also above, a broad rich brown patch; at the carpal flexure, a yellow streak bordering a deep brown patch which merged into olive-brown wing quills; darker secondaries without spots; back green; tail darker green, short; breast plain brownish grey; bill black, straight; eye dark; legs and toes long, slaty-black. Conditions at the time were light rain and mist, and generally gloomy; but we both agreed on all the above details, and in particular on the pale buff eye-stripe, given as white in the literature, and on the slaty-black legs and feet, whereas Oliver (N.Z. Birds 1955) describes the toes as pale brown, and Buller (A History of N.Z. Birds 1888) gives the legs and feet as pale brown. Both birds were identical in plumage, being apparently two males; and on flying away gave a call which I would describe as a rapid succession of merging 'cheeps,' rather like the whirring call of the Rock Wren.

— R. A. CRESWELL

[Since his return, R.A.C. has examined skins in the Dominion Museum and discussed his observations with Mr. F. C. Kinsky. The accuracy of his identification of a very rare bird does not appear to be in doubt. — Ed.]