

SHORT NOTE**RECORD STINT COUNT, AND AMERICAN PECTORAL SANDPIPERS IN SOUTHLAND**

The estuaries and lagoons along Foveaux Strait continue to attract a variety of migrants, including a fine representation of Sandpipers and related species.

Lake Waituna is particularly attractive to the smaller shorebirds, and almost any summer visit will disclose an impressive line-up of Red-necked Stints (*Calidris ruficollis*), Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (*C. acuminata*) and Curlew Sandpipers (*C. ferruginea*). To the dedicated naturalist, the possibility of Pectoral Sandpipers (*C. melanotos*), Sanderlings (*C. alba*) and other rarities adds piquancy to this already rich fare.

Stints are found in consistently large numbers for New Zealand, the Waituna summer counts for the past four seasons being 23+ (1964/65); 29 (1965/66); 39 (1966/67); and 57 (1967/68). To the last figure, recorded on 2/12/67, can probably be added a further 23, found at Woodend in the Invercargill Estuary on the following day. Maximum counts at Woodend in other years are 22 (1962/63); and 26 on 31/3/64 and again on 7/4/64, but only 6 were found on 11/4/64, indicating a probable early-April departure date. Of the 26 birds seen on 31/3/64 and 7/4/64 only one was showing red neck colour. At Waituna on 4/4/68 of 51+ stints seen, at least 7 were showing breeding plumage changes.

On 21/3/68 at Waituna, the writer with Roger Sutton and Lionel Lobb had a leisurely and very satisfactory encounter, in a good light and at close quarters, with three Pectoral Sandpipers. One was generally darker than the other two, especially at the leading edge of the wing, the back and the crown. All three demonstrated very clearly the dark gorget with the sharp line of demarcation at the breast, and pale unmarked underparts and flanks. Three Sharp-tailed Sandpipers nearby provided a good exercise in differential diagnosis, with their faint breast-wash, spotted flanks, generally tawny back and wing with dark longitudinal streaks. S.L.L.'s comment in the field note-book is "Have streaked appearance compared with Pectoral." Differences in leg-colour were looked for but not seen, nor were any distinctive calls heard.

Pectoral Sandpipers (*C. melanotos*) have been seen before at Waituna — 1 on 2/1/66, 2 on 18/12/66, and 1 on 6/1/68 and 11/2/68.

— MAIDA BARLOW

**NOTICE**
Beach Patrol Scheme

The last report to appear in *Notornis* was that for 1963 but the 1964 report has been completed and will appear soon. The cards for 1965 are now being analysed and, in the near future, those for 1966 and 1967 will be processed. The organiser already has received a considerable number of cards for patrols in these years