

Because *U. uncinata* is able to hold on so firmly, preening and grooming must be important mechanisms for dissassociation of this species from its carrier.

In the case of the Silvereyes, it was still early in the growing season and the seed heads were still green and not yet mature. I am not familiar enough with *U. uncinata* to say, but I suspect seed separation from the parent plant is easier at maturity. This period of ripening accurs about the same time as the annual autumn migration in the southern hemisphere at which time small passerines coming in contact with seeds of *U. uncinata* and related species would experience less difficulty in getting away, thus enabling possible dispersal of the sedge over great distances.

— WILLIAM MERILEES



IMMATURE ROOK AT KAIKOURA

Early in December while observing a flock of White-backed Magpies feeding in a sheep pasture on the Kaikoura peninsula, I noticed amongst them a bird of similar size but with no white markings.

On close examination it became evident that this 'stranger' was an immature Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*). Its call, 'kaah,' is very distinctive.

It is now over four months since I first noticed its presence here and it still accompanies the same flock of Magpies; both while feeding and while roosting in a small pine plantation.

On 8/12/68, three Red-billed Gulls chased the Rook while it was in flight near the pine plantation. The Rook hurriedly disappeared into the plantation. The gulls immediately broke off the attack.

During late November 1968, Kaikoura experienced strong N.W. winds over a period of several days. Could this perhaps be the reason for its presence here?

— MICHAEL J. CRIGLINGTON



REVIEWS

Poisoning Gulls with Alpha-chloralose near a New Zealand Airfield. T. A. Caithness 1968. Jnl. Wildlife Management 32, 2: 279-286.

The airfield at Napier was close to a rubbish dump which attracted Black-backed Gulls and adjacent to a nesting colony of some 1250 pairs; airstrikes being numerous. Extermination was decided on and careful study and preparation was necessary. 422,000 squares of bread were airdropped as pre-baits at the peak of incubation (November 18-24, 1965) and 19,000 poisoned baits were used on the 5th and 7th days (no bait-shyness having developed). When the baits were taken, narcosis showed within ten minutes and apart from some body-twitching the evidence suggested little discomfort to the birds, many dying on their nests in a natural sleeping position. Some birds flew strongly even when narcotized and may have died at sea, but 2,131 were known to have been killed, virtually exterminating the colony. Few other species were poisoned accidentally.

— J.M.C.