

egg in an unguarded nest. Presumably the eggs of the White-capped Noddy may also be included as part of the crake's diet and if this is so then it may in part explain not only the frequency with which crakes were seen in trees but also the otherwise inexplicable high disappearance rate of noddy eggs.

*Measurements (in millimetres) of Adult Crakes collected on South Meyer Islet:* (Measurements are those used by the Ornithological Society of New Zealand's Beach Patrol Scheme and described by Heather (1966).)

Dominion Museum Number	Date Collected	Sex	BILL			Mid-toe and Claw	Tarsus	Wing	Tail
			Length	Width	Depth				
12400	27/12/66	M	22	7.2	7.7	39.5	30	85	45.7
12401	26/12/66	F	18.7	5.7	7	37.3	29	81	46

#### REFERENCE

HEATHER, B. D., 1966: A Biology of Birds. Teach and Test Publications Ltd., Lower Hutt.



## SHORT NOTE

### A NOTE ON THE LOCAL DISTRIBUTION OF BULLERS SHEARWATERS

Over the past ten years there seems to have been a noticeable increase in the numbers of Bullers Shearwaters (*Puffinus bulleri*) about coastal waters south of Auckland.

Notes kept on East Coast passages up to five years ago show that Bullers could be expected in decreasing numbers across the Bay of Plenty, with an increase in numbers about the East Cape. They were then seen in smaller numbers off the East Coast; and always noted, but again in small numbers, about the Wairarapa Coast. Only rarely were they noted south of Cook Strait.

On the West, the shipping to Westport from Cape Reinga passes well off the coast, and it was unusual to see these Shearwaters more than sixty miles south of Reinga. From Beach Patrol records it is obvious that some move south of this but closer into the coast.

Last year (1968) on the East Coast large numbers were seen about East Cape, rafts of up to two hundred birds being not uncommon. In summer there were invariably Bullers Shearwaters in view south to Lyttelton and they were regularly seen between Lyttelton and Dunedin, an area where years ago they were very rarely recorded.

On the West Coast of the South Island in mid May 1969 20+ Bullers were seen off Westport and 30+ just north of Greymouth; and a few between Cook Strait and Greymouth. A fortnight later on 2/6/69 as I sailed south in daylight from Cape Brett only 4 were seen near the Poor Knights. It was obvious that most of the population had moved away and only a few laggards remained. Then on 2/9/69 when our position was three miles north of North Cape lighthouse (1300 hrs; wind S. 05 knots; air temp. 64°; sea temp. 60°F.) I spent about 40 minutes studying a gathering of well over 5000 petrels, shearwaters and gulls. To me the most interesting were three Buller's Shearwaters, my first for the new season.

— JOHN JENKINS