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## SHORT NOTE

## ALTITUDINAL RANGE OF THE ROCK WREN

Until recent years I had always thought the habitat of the Rock Wren *Xenicus gilviventris* to range from about 3000ft. to 6000ft. in suitable rocky places above the bushline. The lowest I knew was at the western portal of Homer Tunnel (Milford Sound) at ca. 2600ft.

However, on several occasions since 1960 I have seen Rock Wrens above 6000ft., and on 21/2/65 found a pair right on the bouldery summit of Black Peak (7566ft.) in the lower Matukituki Valley, Wanaka. This height was surpassed on 17/1/70 when a pair was observed on the rocky summit of Mt. Aeolus, Wilkin Valley, at 7706ft. Just a month prior to this, on 23/12/69, my family and I had watched a pair in a bouldery stream below the snout of the Fox Glacier at an altitude of only 800ft. a.s.l.

It seems that suitable terrain, together with its characteristic plant associations, food resources and nesting sites, is a more important limiting factor than altitude in the distribution of the Rock Wren.

— PETER CHILD