

apparent absence of kiore *Rattus exulans*, for it has been found that where island communities of kiore are large, the tuatara is scarce, and *vice versa*. Neither Edgar (1962) nor Skegg (1963) found evidence of breeding of the White-faced Storm Petrel on any of the islands visited, so the breeding population recorded by Falla is apparently confined to Little Ohena; although B. D. Bell (*pers. comm.*) found the remains of the species in Harrier 'middens' on Double Island.

REFERENCES

- EDGAR, A. T., 1962: A Visit to the Mercury Islands. *Notornis* X, 1-15.
FALLA, R. A., 1934: The Distribution and Breeding Habits of Petrels in Northern N.Z. *Rec. Auck. Inst. Mus.* 1, 245-259.
FALLA *et al*, 1966: A Field Guide to the Birds of N.Z. Collins. 41.
SKEGG, P. D. G., 1963: Birds of the Mercury Islands Group. *Notornis* X, 153-168.



SHORT NOTE

ANOTHER OCCURRENCE OF GREAT KNOTS
IN NEW ZEALAND

A Rotorua party of the O.S.N.Z. visited Miranda, Firth of Thames, for the week-end 7th, 8th and 9th February, 1970, taking advantage of the very high tides of that period. They were joined by Miss Susan Fogarty and the H. R. McKenzies of South Auckland. The weather was fine, visibility good and birds were plentiful, both as to numbers and species.

On the 7th, with a rising tide, an inner flat of wet soft mud was being scanned for the counting of large and small waders, the latter among Pied Stilts, Bar-tailed Godwits, Lesser Knots and a few gulls, when I noted among the knots a bird with black markings on the upper surface and the whole of the breast. I directed the others of the party to it, and Ross McKenzie promptly identified it as a Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*. Its larger size was evident when compared with a Lesser Knot *Calidris canutus* which stood a few inches from its side, both facing us. The crown was definitely but not strikingly striped. The black dots all over the breast were large and clearly defined on a white or light ground. The bill was dark or black and was longer and heavier than those of the surrounding Lesser Knots. The rump was not visible. A second, slightly less coloured bird, was soon found a few yards away, also among knots. Both were equally well seen again on the next day.

These birds so closely matched the description by Ian G. Andrew (*Notornis* 15, 207-209) and the accounts and pictures in the literature that there could be no doubt as to identity.

Rare waders are most often found during regular watching activities. The northern breeders often pose problems for most of their stay here because so many are dressed in drab grey and brown. Near the time of their return north, however, they assume part of their breeding colours so that identification is easier. This makes it well worth-while to keep a special watch in February, March and early April. The more uncommon birds seen by this party were Sharp-tailed, Curlew, Terek and Broad-billed Sandpipers, Red-necked Pint, Large Sand Dotterel, Great Knot, Long-billed Curlew and Sanderling.

— MARGARET BROWN