

of the Taylor Valley show that penguins do live on the western side of the Sound, although it is open water for only a few weeks of the year.

McCraw (1967) reported that "not more than a dozen patches of moss, . . . were seen" in the Taylor Dry Valley. Between 40 and 50 mats of mosses were observed in the Lower Taylor Valley. They were found along meltwater streams draining towards the coast, and under stones at altitudes greater than about 270 m. Most were located in the extremely wet environment alongside the principal flow of waters and in sites of snow patches. The distribution of the mosses is directly controlled by available water. McCraw (1967) also noted "skua gulls . . . bathing in ponds in the valley, but no nests were found." During our stay from 18/12/69 to 31/12/69 about 10 pairs of skua were observed, nesting along the northern and western sides of New Harbour, at the mouth of Taylor Valley. Most pairs were guarding 2 eggs per nest, and the egg shell colours ranged from grey to olive green, with irregular brown spots. Whilst passing one bird guarding a nest on 22/12/69, a chick was heard chirping and later was seen emerging from one of the eggs. This was the only chick noted at this skuary during our stay.

We thank Dr. R. W. Balham for informative comments whilst preparing this paper.

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SHORT NOTE

WELCOME SWALLOWS AT CHATHAM ISLANDS

While waiting at the Te Hapupu Airstrip, Chatham Islands, on 11/6/70, my attention was drawn by a local farmer to what he described as strange birds that had arrived in the vicinity. The birds were Welcome Swallows and several counts revealed that there were ten birds in the flock.

In discussion with Mr. D. Reid, Resident Commissioner, Chatham Islands, I was informed that the birds had arrived at the Airstrip some three weeks previously and had been identified locally as "Bull Finches." Mr. Reid had written to the Wildlife Service endeavouring to describe the birds for identification. The Wildlife Service provided the following information.

"On May 12, a group of half a dozen strange birds were seen at Hapupu by several people, including D. Reid and L. Smylie. A description was sent to B. D. Bell who identified the birds as Welcome Swallows. A letter received subsequent to F. Hollay's visit reported that a good dozen had been seen at times and that they were observed feeding on midges.

More recently a report from fishermen at Pitt Island records that a Swallow was seen on that Island in December 1970."

— F. G. HOLLAY