

three eggs, the birds started sitting. The eggs hatched on 31 January, i.e. after an incubation period of about 19 days which is rather shorter than the 22 or more given by Hadden (Notornis 17: 208), but is close to the figure given by Hindwood (Australian Birds in Colour, p. 22). In a spring nest also built about 4' 6" above water-level in a tangle of raupo and cutty-grass, three eggs hatched on 7 September. I now think that these crakes nest once in August-September and again about January. I have seen chicks crawling and swimming soon after they are hatched.

In all these swamps I now estimate that there are seven or eight pairs of Spotless Crakes.

EWEN FRASER

ORIENTAL CUCKOO ON LITTLE BARRIER ISLAND

All thirteen Auckland members who went to Little Barrier Island for Labour week-end (22-25 October 1971) saw this cuckoo (*Cuculus saturatus horsfieldi*). Many watched it for half an hour or more while it perched low in a puriri tree (*Vitex lucens*), occasionally flying down into the grass to take an insect then immediately returning to the same perch. It was first noticed as a "strange bird" by the Ranger's younger son (Bunny Wisnesky) on 20 October. Fresh to strong north to northwest winds blew from 19 to 22 October. Next day it rained steadily all day.

In description the bird closely follows that of the record from Kaihinu by P. Grant (Notornis 11 (2): 130) except in having no white tip to the tail and not moulting. One member (Alan Macdonald) heard it call quietly and described the call as a very regular 'Tsoo-tsoo-tsoo' repeated about a dozen times at approximately one-second intervals. The bird stayed on the 'flat,' i.e., comparatively open pasture land, and was not seen after 10 November 1971.

The last few days it spent in the Ranger's garden, becoming quite tame.

This is the first record of an Oriental Cuckoo on Little Barrier Island.

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SYLVIA REED

THE COPULATION OF NEW ZEALAND FALCONS

On 22 October my colleague and I arose at dawn to begin our search for the actual nesting site of a pair of New Zealand Falcons (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) which we had been observing from a distance for a period of about six weeks. From our observations, these birds appeared to be preparing to nest somewhere in a clump of partly milled mixed podocarp-beech forest. Our observation point had been from a log loading ramp situated on the eastern side of the Mokomokonui River south of the Urewera National Park. The