

KAIPARA HARBOUR: 16/9/73. Jordan's Farm. Hundreds of S.I.P.O. and Bar-tailed Godwits probing busily — one might almost say 'feeding ravenously' — in waterlogged pastures among cattle. Many Pied Stilts present, but not apparently so hungry.

In wet winters in northern New Zealand, *finschi* oystercatchers pass many hours in well grassed coastal paddocks, not just loafing but often seeking food on ground where the water is fresh rather than saline.

REFERENCES

1. 1958 SIBSON, R. B. S.I.P.O. away from shore in N.I. *Notornis* 7, 206-207.
2. 1963 SOPER, M. F. N.Z. Bird Portraits. 59-61.
3. 1966 SIBSON, R.B. Increasing numbers of S.I.P.O. in northern N.Z. *Notornis* 13, 94-97.
4. 1969 CHILD, P. S.I.P.O. nesting high in Central Otago. *Notornis* 16, 186.
5. 1974 BAKER, A. J. Prey-specific Feeding Methods of N.Z. Oystercatchers. *Notornis* 21, 219-233.

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THE CENTRAL OTAGO WOOD-SWALLOWS

Further to my previous note (Child 1974), I have now to report that, unfortunately, the two species of Australian Wood-swallows which lived at Naseby Forest for several months during the 1971-72 and 1972-73 summers did not return during the 1973-74 season. Of the original 4 male White-browed and the pair of Masked with their two offspring, the last sightings were as follows:

- 29 April 1972: Last sighting of one of the male White-browed. Three remained.
- 6 May 1972: A male White-browed picked up dead under trees near the house; now a museum specimen in the Otago Museum.
- 1 June 1973: Last sighting of the two juvenile Masked. Weather pleasant with very light frosts (1-2°C.). Both birds had the appearance of females; still faintly spotted on the dorsal wing surfaces.
- 15 June 1973: Last sighting of one of the two remaining White-browed. (Hard frosts.)
- 30 July 1973: Last sighting of the other male White-browed and the male Masked. First of a series of hard frosts (to -10°C.).
- 4 August 1973: Last sighting of the female Masked. Next day snow fell to a depth of 20 cm. Over the previous week she was moulting and looked very bedraggled and became quite dark in colour.

(In 1972 it was 27 July that the parent Masked birds were last seen, until they returned with their offspring on 9 March 1973.)

From 23 April 1973 the birds were given a dish of honey-water as well as the usual bread and kitchen scraps; the honey-water was an immediate success with all six wood-swallows, and they consumed a

cupful per day. Immelmann (1966) mentioned wood-swallows searching eucalypt flowers but added 'we do not know whether, in addition to the insects in the flowers, they also took nectar.' It would now seem likely that they do include nectar in the diet.

Although there were plenty of examples of close-contact roosting, both on branches and wires, especially during colder spells, we did not witness any of the mutual preening (allopreening) sessions which are characteristic of the genus, and which I have seen in the White-breasted Wood-swallow (*Artamus leucorhynchus*) in Fiji.

Incidentally, because of their flight patterns and general mode of life, Immelmann has suggested that a more appropriate name for the group is given by their German name, which means 'swallow-starlings.'

REFERENCES

- CHILD, P. 1974. First breeding of Wood-swallows in New Zealand. *Notornis* 21 (1): 85-87, figs 1-2.
 IMMELMANN, K. 1966. Beobachtungen an Schwalbenstaren. *Journal für Ornithologie* 107 (1): 37-69, figs.

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BANDING OF WELCOME SWALLOWS IN TASMANIA

Mrs Priscilla Park, writer of the Letter to the Editor in the June 1974 issue of *Notornis* informing members of the OSNZ of the Welcome Swallow Banding Group now set up in Tasmania, has sent me information on banding of Welcome Swallows there. The record of birds banded is as follows:—

1953-70	198
1970-71	88
1971-72	242
1972-73	285
1973-74	478

From 813 bandings in 1953-73 not one has so far been recovered in mainland Australia.

Mrs Park's banding project, started in 1971, is gaining momentum and will continue, with the aim of finding out where swallows go when they leave their Tasmanian breeding grounds in winter. The purpose of this note is to support Mrs Park's letter and especially to alert OSNZ members, particularly in Southland and Otago, to the possibility that swallows banded in Tasmania may turn up in winter flocks in New Zealand.

REFERENCE

- PARK, P. 1974. Welcome Swallow Banding Group. [Letter to Editor]. *Notornis* 21 (2): 190.

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