

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCE

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Dr Abdul Moeed,
Ecology Division,
DSIR,
P.O. Box 30-466,
Lower Hutt



SHORT NOTES

DISPLAY OF THE EYELINE BY THE CHATHAM ISLAND

WARBLER, *Gerygone albofrontata*

On 3 February 1973 I observed a brief chase between two Chatham Island Warblers (*Gerygone albofrontata*) in open, low forest on Little Mangere Island. The two birds landed on the side of a vertical trunk about 2.5 m off the ground. The attacking bird landed above and almost touching the pursued warbler. The former was hanging facing the lower bird and displaying its prominently expanded white line above the eye. The degree to which this normally thin white area was expanded was impressive. The lower bird was facing down and away from the upper bird, and held its wings approximately half opened, in the plane of its body. Its eyeline was not displayed. These positions were held for less than a minute before the birds flew away.

I have made numerous visits to this and other islands where this species is common, but I have not observed another instance of eyeline display. However, this species is often obscured in canopy foliage where it feeds and nests. On Little Mangere Island warblers are abundant in the scrub and low forest, and appear to rear two broods with good success, and in the absence of the Shining Cuckoo (*Chalcites lucidus*). By January and February large numbers of independent juveniles are seen amongst moulting adults. The age of the birds involved in the display was not known, but moulting was not noticeable on either bird.

This observation is recorded for interest in comparing it with displays of the white eyebrow line of *Rhipidura* (Hough, *Emu* 68: 282; Ives, *Emu* 75: 40-42) and the white frontal spot of *Petroica* species (Flack, *Notornis* 23 (2) in press). In addition, it is of interest that the eyeline and associated display are absent in the reputedly closely related Grey Warbler (*G. igata*).

J. A. DOUGLAS FLACK

New Zealand Wildlife Service,
14 Kotuku Road,
Kaikoura