

SOUTHERN BLACK-BACKED GULL AT CAPE BIRD,
ANTARCTICA

A Southern Black-backed Gull (*Larus dominicanus*) was observed at Cape Bird (77°13'S, 166°27'E) on 27 November 1975 by Dr D. S. Horning and me. When first sighted, the bird was over the sea flying from the west towards the beach. It circled us three times, flying within 20 m of us and the orange spot on the gull's lower mandible was clearly visible through 8 x 30 binoculars. Also, the bird's flight feathers were conspicuously tattered. The bird then flew north along the beach, followed by three Antarctic Skuas (*Stercorarius skua maccormicki*), until out of sight. During this time two other skuas chased the gull as it flew over their territory.

Three days later, on 30 November, a Southern Black-backed Gull was sighted again. This may have been the same gull that was seen earlier as its flight feathers were also tattered. The bird flew north along the beach and, as it flew over an Adelie Penguin (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) colony, a skua rose to chase the gull. No encounter between the gull and skua took place.

One record of a Southern Black-backed Gull sighted further south than Cape Bird has been published. A lone gull was recorded at Cape Royds (77°33'S) in 1965 by Spellerberg (1971, *Emu* 71: 161-171). It was chased, attacked and eventually driven away by Antarctic Skuas. Watson (1975, *Birds of the Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic*, Washington, D.C., American Geophysical Union: 218) recorded several recent sightings of *L. dominicanus* on mainland Antarctica and thought these may indicate a future expansion of its breeding range. However, increased sightings are probably a result of increased human activity in Antarctica and awareness of birds rather than an increase in the breeding range of Southern Black-backed Gulls. Interactions between Antarctic Skuas and Southern Black-backed Gulls are of interest as these may indicate whether the breeding ranges of these two species could overlap.

We made these observations while stationed at Cape Bird as members of the Antarctic Research Unit, Department of Zoology, University of Canterbury.

P. M. SAGAR, *Department of Zoology, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.*



NEW ZEALAND FALCONS AT ROUND BUSH, FOXTON

The coastal Manawatu (100 km north of Wellington) is intensively farmed and the New Zealand Falcon (*Falco novaesealandiae*) is a rare visitor (Falla 1957, *Proc. N.Z. Ecol. Soc* 5: 24-5). However, between Foxton and Himatangi on 15 and 18 August 1975, I saw a solitary falcon from a car. At each instance the bird was flying low over farmland, the first time about 4 km north of Round Bush Scenic Reserve, but subsequently within 400 m of it.