

is taken by the much larger Wandering Tattler (*T. incana*). Neither in Munro's *Birds of Hawaii* (1960) nor in the Audubon Society's *Hawaii's Birds* (1967) is the Spotted Sandpiper listed among the casual and accidental species recorded between 1960 and 1966. On the other hand, Common Sandpipers of Asiatic origin commonly winter in the Solomon Islands; and in south-eastern Australia they may reach Tasmania.

We returned hopefully to Harania Creek on a calm sunny afternoon a few days later, but although we scrutinised every jutting rock or likely eminence as the tide gently flooded the flats, we could not find our Common Sandpiper. Nor was it subsequently reported by any local bird-watcher. Manukau Harbour has many quiet bays and creekmouths where a solitary Common Sandpiper might pass the summer unnoticed. Perhaps it moved on in search of a stony riverbed with fresh tumbling water.

This is the first record of a Common Sandpiper in Manukau Harbour, and apparently the sixth for New Zealand.

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#### NOTES ON THE CHATHAM ISLAND FANTAIL

The authors were members of the 1977/78 Taiko Expedition, led by D. E. Crockett, to the Tuku Valley in the south-west of Chatham Island. This remote region contains the last large remnant of virgin forest on the island. The bush is fairly open, with a canopy primarily of *Dracophyllum arboreum*, *Coprosma chathamica*, *Pseudopanax chathamica* and *Hymenanthera chathamica*. The Chatham Island Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa penitus*) is, with the Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*), the most common native bush bird. It differs from the New Zealand subspecies in possessing noticeably less black on the tail and being more robustly built.

A Chatham Island Fantail nest containing one egg was found, fifty metres from the bush edge near the Tuku Valley, on 19 January 1978. Observations on the pair were subsequently made from a tree hide nearby, and single birds were followed by observers on the ground. The nest was sited in a *Corokia macrocarpa* 5 m above a small clearing. In construction and position it resembled that of the New Zealand subspecies, possessing a distinct "tail." It seems likely that the pair was using the nest for a repeat clutch, the rim of the bowl being of fresh material, which had been added to the original structure.

On the 20th the nest contained two eggs; and hide observation revealed the pair to be already incubating the incomplete clutch. The following evening the bird sat tight when an attempt was made to check the contents of the nest. The next day the nest contained three eggs, the full clutch.

Both sexes incubated. Changeovers occurred at intervals of fifteen to twenty-five minutes, and followed a regular pattern even from an early stage of incubation. The sitting bird left the nest silently and flew a short distance away whereupon it preened vigorously. It then fed silently, high in the canopy, within a seventy-five metre radius of the nest. The feeding bird when returning to the nest began calling twenty metres away, a signal prompting the sitting bird to leave. The relieving Fantail settled quickly on the eggs.

Fantails in the area were noted to associate with other feeding birds, particularly the Chatham Island Warbler (*Gerygone albofrontata*) and the Silveryeye. Fantails were attendant on foraging warblers, feeding on insects they disturbed. On one occasion a Fantail was watched feeding vigorously under two Song Thrushes (*Turdus philomelos*) which were fighting in a *Pseudopanax chathamica*. Also Silveryeye family parties and Fantails were noted moving through the bush canopy, feeding as a group.

A different pair of Fantails with a single flying chick was watched feeding close to the ground. On the approach of an observer the juvenile and one adult moved up into the canopy while the other adult scolded noisily. Unlike the incubating pair this party called constantly as they fed.

Observations ceased on 25 January, so that the full nesting period of the Fantail could not be followed.

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### SWALLOWS AT SEA

During a voyage from the Ile des Pins, New Caledonia, to Whangarei between 2 May and 11 May 1978 on the yacht *Derwent*, several Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) were seen flitting round the boat when we were still some distance from the nearest land (Fig. 1). The birds were noted between Norfolk Island and the Northland coast well to the west of the area where John Jenkins has logged this species at sea.

My observations were as follows:

7 May, 1730 hrs, 31°38'S 168°35'E. Bird seemed to come in from the north-east, flew close to the boat, then flew off to the north-west.

8 May, 1530 hrs, 31°34'S 168°19'E. This bird appeared suddenly, attempted to land on the life lines round the boat, but did not seem to like so unstable a perch. It flew off to the west.

9 May, 1630 hrs, 33°08'S 170°02'E. A swallow appeared suddenly, then vanished.

10 May, 0730 hrs, 34°00'S 171°40'E, and 1035 hrs, three miles off West Island, Three Kings. These two birds also appeared suddenly, and I did not see where they headed when they left us.