

near west branch forks. Yellow-breasted tits were common, as were pipits in manuka scrub near Monowai Settlement. Robins were common. Four pied fantails were seen investigating spider webs, etc., in exposed tree roots where a high river bank had been undermined by flood waters. On May 16, on the Lake Monowai-Mt. Cuthbert Track, parakeets (*sp.*) were heard in numbers. Three wood pigeons were seen and yellow-breasted tits were common on bush margins. In the same locality on the following day, no pigeons were seen: In a patch of undergrowth about six feet high, the following were seen: Yellowheads 4, silvereyes 2, and yellow-breasted tits, male and female. Parakeets were common in the treetops but not close enough for identification. Bellbirds were common in the bush at all levels to the bush line.—B. W. Campbell, D.N.F. Club.

GANNET WITH EEL.—With Mr. Bernard Sladden, I was rowing on 5/9/49 on Ohiwa Harbour, Bay of Plenty. A gannet dived about 20 yards from our boat and came up with an eel about 18 to 24 inches long. The eel coiled tightly round the gannet's bill, preventing the gannet from getting at its head to kill it or to swallow it alive. After a struggle lasting for some minutes the gannet put its head under water and either lost or released its catch. It spent some time washing its bill before it flew away.—P. H. Basley, Ohiwa.

ROOKS IN FEILDING DISTRICT.—Periodically numbers of rooks appear in the Feilding district. Twenty-five years ago a colony was destroyed at Mt. Biggs, to the west of Feilding. Two years ago, Mr. Mason, nurseryman, of Sandon Road, Feilding, was compelled to destroy four which had been playing havoc in his nursery. The nearest known colony is in Hawke's Bay. This bird evidently crosses the Ruahine Ranges periodically, perhaps when Hawke's Bay is engulfed in a drought, to the greener pastures of Pohangina and northern Manawatu. It would be no surprise of a well-established colony was discovered at any time in this area.—E. Dear, Kopane.

GREY WARBLER AND EPEIRID SPIDER.—A grey warbler (*Pseudogerygone igata*) was recently (about mid-January) observed in the act of capturing a small epeirid spider (*sp. inconn*) from the centre of its vertical orb-web on the edge of a track through low scrub. To effect the capture, the warbler was hovering in front of the centre of the spider's snare with its wings vibrating so rapidly as to appear as quite undefined blurs: the poise and action of the bird were very strongly reminiscent of a hummingbird taking nectar from a flower, and, although not actually timed, the pose was held for approximately half a minute (by counting). The spider's snare was more than 18 inches in diameter, so the method of catching the spider adopted by the warbler was about the only one practicable. The observation was made from a distance of about three yards and every movement was distinctly visible.—H. C. Abraham, Mangonui.

SONG THRUSH EATING GREEN BUG.—A young song thrush (*Turdus ericetorum*) was observed on January 30, 1951, from a range of about six feet, to capture a green bug (*Nezara viridula*) from a clump of verberna, take it on to the adjoining path and there devour it. In spite of the (to humans) extremely disagreeable odour emitted by these bugs when disturbed or squashed, the thrush displayed no sign of discomfort and hopped off gaily in search of more food, and has since been seen frequently apparently in the best of health. If it should be that the song thrushes are adopting *Nezara* as a new item of food it will be a blessing to all horticulturalists in North Auckland—and the thrushes should wax very fat!—H. C. Abraham, Mangonui.

MEMBERS HOLD PICNIC.—A pleasant picnic afternoon to which all local members of the society were invited, was spent at Kourarau Dam, Wairarapa, on February 11, 1951. Five car loads enabled many members to see an abundant selection of wild fowl, including a pair of dabchicks and young, which have not before been known from the district.