

They also were common in the manuka scrub of the Freshwater River plain and in the *Olearia* groves in the sandhills at Mason Bay. They were very noticeable around the hut at the Rakiwha River, indulging in vigorous song, especially on one particular evening before a day of intermittent rain and dull conditions when the quiet of the night was made cacophonous with the continual calling of tuis, robins, kiwis, wekas, moreporks, etc. Tuis were also commonly seen during a few hours spent on Cone Island in Paterson Inlet. They were a common sight in the bush above Halfmoon Bay and must surely be the most ubiquitous birds on Stewart Island.

Bell Bird (*Anthornis melanura*).—As ubiquitous as the tui but seemed slightly less abundant.

Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*).—Two seen in the manuka covered plain near Island Hill, Mason Bay, 22/1/51.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).—Two seen in the bush above Halfmoon Bay, 5/2/51.

Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).—Several in the groves of *Olearia* near Martin's Creek, Mason Bay; others near Ringaringa Beach in macrocarpa trees.

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).—Two seen near Martin's Creek, Mason Bay, 23/1/51.

Thrush (*Turdus ericetorum*).—Several above Ringaringa Beach.

Blackbird (*T. merula*).—Heard in the bush between Halfmoon Bay and Ringaringa.

Hedge Sparrow (*Prunella modularis*).—One was seen at Duck Creek, Mason Bay.

Stewart Island presents an interesting area for the ornithologist, and it is to be hoped that a more comprehensive account of the bird life, based on Dr. W. R. B. Oliver's work of 1926, will be made when details of the effects of such predators as deer and cats on the plant and bird life become available.

DUNEDIN NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB NOTES.

By (Mrs.) I. Tily, recorder.

References to the bird life of Stewart Island when a party of members from the Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club spent a week at Oban, Stewart Island, from January 18-25, 1950, appear below:—

Kiwi.—One paid a brief, unwilling, visit to the hotel garden in a box on its way from Mason Bay to the Ulva Island Scenic Reserve and Bird Sanctuary, where it was to be released.

Little Blue Penguin (*Endiptyula minor*).—We had a calm passage across to the Island and numbers of these birds were seen in Foveaux Strait. The return trip was rough, and only two or three were noted. On launch trips we never failed to see this penguin swimming and diving about the coast and in Paterson Inlet. On a long launch trip from Halfmoon Bay to The Neck and up Paterson Inlet, the numbers seen would be anything from 50 to 80.

Cape Pigeon (*Daption capensis*).—Definitely recorded only once.

Giant Petrel.—Seen in flight while at the Island and during a stormy homeward passage several were recorded.

Mutton Birds.—Present in Foveaux Strait in numbers on January 18th; on the return journey not noted until we entered more sheltered waters in the lee of Bluff Hill. They were also seen on launch trips.

Albatrosses were seen in numbers on launch trips, but not always near enough for identification. The following were identified on coastal launch trips: Buller's mollymawk (*Thalassarche bulleri*) and white-capped mollymawk (*T. cauta*).

Shags were numerous. We identified the following: Black shag (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), pied shag and white-throated shags, Stewart Island and bronze shags, blue shag.

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*).—One on the waterfront at Oban; it was quite tame and allowed us to stroke it.

South Island Weka.—Seen in numbers up to five at a time. It was more frequently seen at Ulva than on the main island. At West End, Ulva, two parent birds and three young fed on the beach.

Black Oystercatchers.—At Bravo, 22 were on the beach. When they took to wing no white was seen about the plumage. Pairs were seen on the following beaches: Ocean Beach, Port Williams, Sawyer's Bay, Lee's Bay and West End Beach, Ulva.

White-fronted Tern.—Plentiful about Stewart Island. On launch trips it was usual to see a flock of about 20 on the rocks at Acker's Point.

Black-backed Gulls.—Seen daily.

Red-billed Gulls.—Much more numerous than the black-backed gulls. When on the last morning a bag of bread carried for the birds was emptied on the foreshore in front of the school, almost at once 100 to 150 gulls appeared.

Pigeon.—Very numerous. It was frequently seen in flight about trees in the township, and on a walk through the bush over 15 were counted. A resident said she had counted as many as 40 from her garden.

Kaka.—Kakas were heard more often than seen. On January 23, on Ulva, five were seen and calls were heard in other localities on the island. One bird was so busy prising the bark off a macrocarpa tree it did not bother about six pairs of curious eyes watching it at work about 10ft. from its scene of action. It used its strong bill like a pair of pliers to force back the bark; then it ran its bill up and down between the bark and the trunk of the tree. Then again it would seize the bark in its bill and prise it further back.

Parakeet.—A flock of about ten was seen near the landing at Ulva. Those that were close enough for identification were red-fronted parakeets. Others were seen or heard on the main island and in other localities on Ulva.

Shining Cuckoo.—Heard only once.

Long-tailed Cuckoo.—Heard daily. A pair seemed to divide their time between the trees about the hotel where we were staying and the trees near the wharf. They would be seen in flight, sometimes one, sometimes two, between these two localities. Calls were commonly heard on daily excursions. On one occasion a tui was seen to attack a long-tailed cuckoo.

Morepork.—Heard calling at night.

Kingfisher.—One seen at the landing, Miller's Bay, North-west Arm. Rifleman.—One seen.

Bush Wren (*Xenicus longipes*).—Three or four noted.

Grey Warbler.—Songs heard daily and an occasional bird seen.

Yellow-breasted Tit.—Often seen and heard.

Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*).—In small numbers only, probably no more than a total of 10 being seen during the week. Of these only one black was noted.

Brown Creeper.—Judging by the calls and songs heard, this is a very common bird, especially on Ulva.

White-eye.—Seen and heard frequently in small numbers.

Tui.—Seen darting about in numbers up to 6 or 7 at a time. On Ulva we saw two very young birds that appeared to have just left the nest.

Bellbird.—A common bird.

Introduced birds heard or seen were the chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) still singing though songs had ceased in Dunedin; redpolls (*Carduelis cabaret*), goldfinches, sparrows, thrushes, blackbirds and hedge sparrows, the last three still in song though daytime songs of these birds had also ceased in Dunedin, occasional morning or evening songs being heard.