

GREENSHANK IN NEW ZEALAND.

By R. H. D. Stidolph, Masterton.

When scanning a scattered feeding flock of bar-tailed godwits and stilts on Awapuni Lagoon, a tidal area near Gisborne, on November 17, 1952, a smaller bird than the godwits was spotted feeding somewhat apart from the others in the middle of the mudflat. It was later identified as a greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*), the first reported in New Zealand since Hutton recorded one from Otago in 1874.

The smaller size of this bird at once attracted my attention. It was a neat, trim-looking bird—stream-lined—a fact which made it appear smaller than it actually was; a feature was the rather uniform dark colouring of the upper parts and the whiteness of the underparts, combined with a fairly long but distinctly noticeable, slightly upturned bill. The bird had a grey crown, white face and the white appeared to almost encircle the hind neck. The primaries were darker than the remainder of the upperparts. The legs seemed to be greenish-yellow and the bill a dark shade, but not black.

I watched the bird for about ten minutes through binoculars X8 while it was feeding in the mud, in a manner resembling the stilt. In the meantime, many of the godwits, besides five knots, had flocked and settled a chain or two away for a rest. Looking over these again, I saw a whimbrel on the edge of the assembly and a few seconds later it took flight, uttering its characteristic cry.

I clapped my hands to put up the godwits and the stranger. Immediately the latter took wing it showed, very distinctly, a white rump and back, the white extending right up the back almost to the shoulders in a sharp inverted V. At the same time, a clear cry rang out, which I wrote down on the spot as "teu-teu-teu." This cry was repeated two or three times, at intervals. On the wing, the bird had very sharp pointed wings and a clear-cut appearance. It headed the flight of godwits and passed right overhead, calling, and gave excellent chances of observation.

The description of the bird and its call can fit no other bird than the greenshank and it is interesting to again record this species in New Zealand after a lapse of 78 years.

VIRGINIAN QUAIL IN WAIROA, H.B. DISTRICT.

By H. R. McKenzie, Clevedon.

The Virginian quail, or "Bob-White" (*Ortyx virginianus*), is apparently holding its own in the hilly country towards Lake Waikaremoana. Oliver ("New Zealand Birds") states: "In 1898 the Wellington Acclimatisation Society imported about four hundred birds and the following year over seven hundred and fifty and distributed them throughout the country from Auckland to Southland. During the next ten years they gradually disappeared and none were reported for many years after this. In 1923, however, a number were caught to the south of Auckland, proving that in one locality at least the species had become established." No mention of the species has been made in the publications of the Ornithological Society, 1940-1952.

Mr. G. E. Sopp, Aniwanuiwa, Lake Waikaremoana, says: "When shooting in a large area to the north of the Wairoa-Lake Waikaremoana Road, up to 1949, I found flocks of Virginian quail with ten to twenty birds in each. It is shot as a game-bird and is apparently holding its own. Californian and brown quail are present in the same area."

Mr. A. W. Gray, now resident at Clevedon, lived until recently in the Waikaremoana Valley, where he knew this bird well. It may be that this is the only area in which the Virginian quail has succeeded.