

Opawa River and Rose's Overflow. They seemed very contented and appeared to feed ravenously whenever observed. They fed about the edges of the pond but never in the water, and probed among the grass, etc., often taking flight when a harrier flew near. When last observed, the pond was receding very fast with the onset of the dry spell and dried up completely shortly after. My thanks are due to Mr. Holdaway on whose property the ibis occurred. He recorded most of the above counts.—Brian D. Bell, Blenheim.

Wellington.—Fourteen glossy ibis put in an appearance on a property at Opiki, about ten miles from Palmerston North. The birds arrived about the last week in December and are apparently living on tadpoles and what insect life they can find. They vary in size and I would say that five are immature. They appear to be little more than half the size of the larger birds. It is noticeable that the larger birds will occasionally completely enfold a smaller bird with a wing as though protecting it from the hot sun. They are rather shy and will take wing if approached closer than about eighty yards. They are all strong fliers and attain considerable height when disturbed. I took Major Wilson to Opiki to verify the identity of the species. About ten years ago we had one glossy ibis living about the Manawatu but it eventually disappeared.—Tom Andrews, Palmerston North, 20/1/54.

Mr. T. Andrews, Acclimatisation Society ranger, took me down to Mr Gosling's property, near Opiki, on January 8, 1954, where, on a piece of shallow water behind his home, quite close to the road, were 14 glossy ibises. We walked to within a hundred yards and examined them through field glasses. Some of them were much smaller than others, and one of the smaller ones sheltered itself under the wing of a larger one as if it was a young bird of this season. We then approached to within 50 yards when they rose in the air, wheeled round, and went off to the south. They showed great powers of flight and swooped down, making a noise like the shoveler duck when descending swiftly. The water they were in is not permanent, but only occurs in the wet season. Mr. Gosling states that there were large numbers of tadpoles in the water, which was probably what the ibises were feeding on. The whole flock of 14 were there nearly continuously for about a month but since then they have only returned occasionally. On February 5, Mr. Gosling reported four had been there in the morning. Previously the numbers had varied from four to nine. They apparently have found better feeding grounds elsewhere as the water on Mr. Gosling's place has nearly dried up.—Robert A. Wilson, Bulls, 6/2/54.

ALBATROSS STRANDED AT PAEROA.—On 5/6/53 a large sea bird was found in a field by Mrs. A. Rogers, successfully defending itself against the attacks of a dog. The bird was rescued with some difficulty. I identified it as a light-mantled sooty albatross (*Phoebastria palpebrata*). In response to a telephone call, Mr. and Mrs. R. H. McKenzie, of Clevedon, and Miss N. Macdonald, of Howick, came by car on 7/6/53, and it was decided that the best way to try to ensure the recovery of the bird was to take it to the Auckland Zoo, where the director, Mr. R. W. Roach, specialises in the care and curing of sick creatures. During the journey, Miss Macdonald suffered many pecks while holding the bird to keep it safe. At Clevedon it was placed, swimming, in a bath where it drank some fresh water. It appeared hungry but no suitable food was available, so Miss Macdonald took it on to the Zoo. Regardless of the late hour, Mr. Roach fed it immediately. For some days it took food and seemed to be doing quite well but died after ten days. It was found on examination that the food had not been assimilated. It was a young female. The light-mantled sooty albatross breeds at the Auckland, Campbell, Antipodes and Macquarie Islands, and frequents New Zealand seas to some extent, but has only been found ashore when storm-wrecked or exhausted.—H. L. Morgan, Paeroa.



Photo.: Noelle Macdonald.
LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY ALBATROSS; Miranda, June 7, 1953.

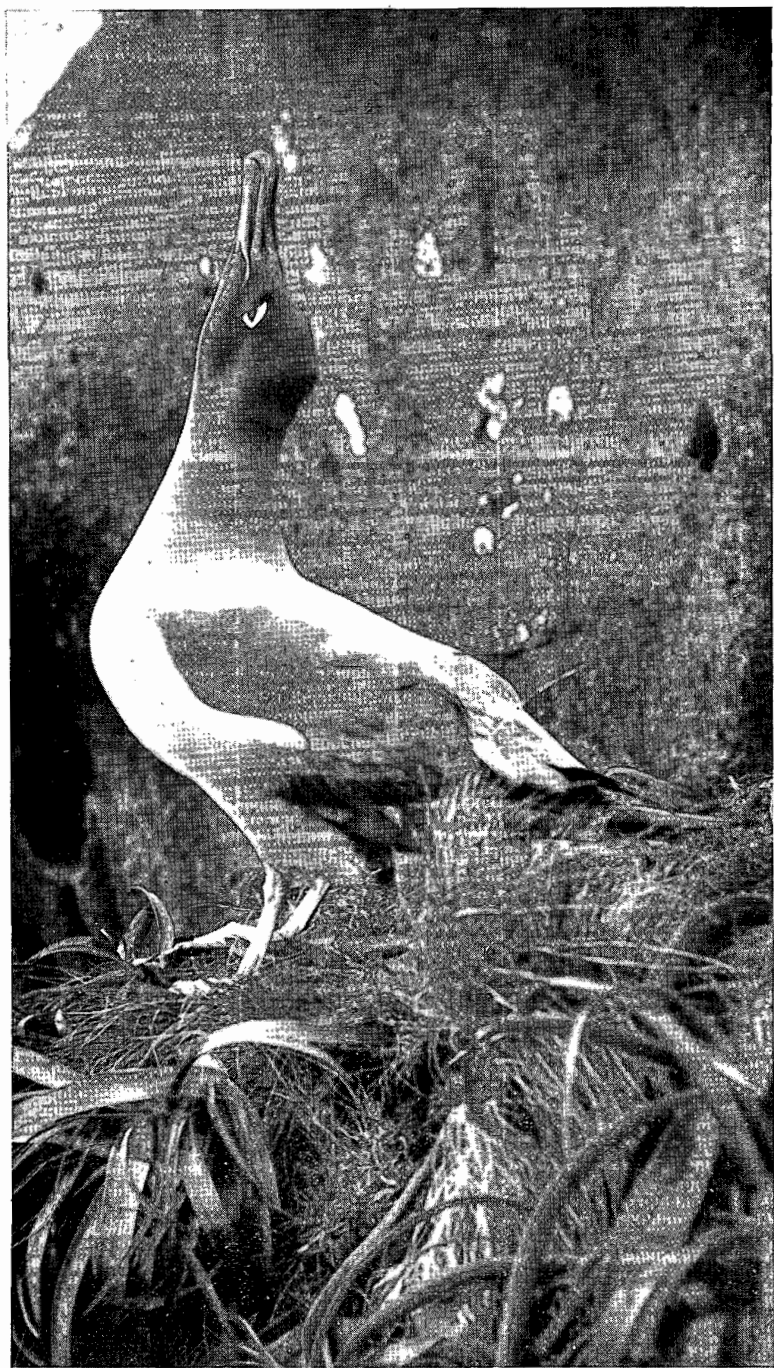


Photo.: J. M. Moreland.

LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY ALBATROSS (Unemployed Bird)
Campbell Island, January 4, 1952.