

and tearing with its bill at the gull's head and neck, also making very good attempts to lift it ashore. The other gull now entered the fray, working from the landward side to force the fight into deeper water. It grasped the harrier's head and pushed it under the water so that it had to release its grip on the first gull. Both gulls now concentrated on holding the harrier under the surface until it was drowned. Although the injured gull bled profusely and was very sick for a few days it eventually recovered.—H. R. McKenzie, Clevedon.

MAGPIES AT MARAKOPA.—In a letter from Marakopa, dated 23 May, 1954, my daughter Miss B. G. Fordham, informed me of the appearance at our farm at Marakopa, of a pair of magpies, which she first observed on the above date. Marakopa is thirty miles south of Kawhia, and I believe that this occurrence must be the first record of this species from that region. My daughter knows the magpie well, having observed it further south. During my 30 years' residence at Marakopa I did not see one nor hear of its presence in that district.—R. E. W. Fordham, Ngongotaha, 15 September, 1954.

REVIEWS.

Bird Migrants.—Eric Simms. Cleaver-Hume Press, Ltd.

All who have attempted to study the migration of birds will enjoy this well-written book, in which the author successfully presents in a popular way, the essential facts, insofar as they are known, and the problems of this branch of ornithology. Although the book is primarily concerned with British birds, it is none the less thought-provoking for New Zealand naturalists, because "the phenomena of bird migration cannot be regarded in a purely insular way."

In a valuable introduction, the author points out that the ordinary observer can collect accurate and much-needed information. A chapter on the forms of migration has some bearing on our problems in New Zealand, where migration is far from being a simple up-and-down, north-and-south affair. When the author discusses migration on broad and narrow fronts it is brought home to us how little is known about bird routes and movements in these islands. For example, would a patient watcher on Farewell Spit in the autumn be able to note a northward movement not only of waders but also perhaps of introduced passerines? Observations in recent years give grounds for believing that some harriers and many goldfinches and yellowhammers move in a northerly direction in autumn along the isthmus between Tamaki and Manukau. In spring flocks of skylarks and goldfinches in the fields, when local birds are paired and males and singing on territory, pose a problem which has yet to be solved.

This book can be read with benefit by all birdwatchers in New Zealand. The author ends with an appeal for keen and critical attitudes and skilled teamwork in dealing with observations.—R.B.S.

Bird Study.—The Journal of the British Trust for Ornithology. Vol. I., No. 1, March, 1954; Vol. I., No. 2, June, 1954.

This journal replaces the former bulletin, which ended its existence with No. 52. The new publication intends giving first place to the results of the Trust's inquiries but space will be available to the results of studies assisted by the Trust, to articles on general topics relating to research on birds and to reports of various organisations. The first number includes a paper on the breeding biology of the greenfinch by J. F. Monk, which will be of interest to New Zealanders, while David Lack writes on "Two Robin Populations." In No. 2, the loss of rings by marked herring gulls, by R. H. Pouliding should be read by New Zealand bird banders. There is much of general interest in both numbers.—R.H.D.S.