

SUB-FOSSIL BONES OF THE AUSTRALIAN PELICAN FROM THE SOUTH ISLAND

As there is no mention in Oliver's *New Zealand Birds*, second edition, of sub-fossil bones of the Australian Pelican (*P. conspicillatus*) from the South Island, the following records are of some interest:

AV. 12,664. Marfell Beach, L. Grassmere. 1947. R. humerus, with proximal end defective. Coll. J. R. Eyles.

AV. 13,095. Same locality. 1953. Proximal end R. humerus (possibly of the Eyles humerus). Coll. J. & R. Britton.

AV. 12,482. Same locality. March 1953. L. femur. Coll. J. & R. Britton.

AV. 13,014. Same locality. July 1952. A very probable L. coracoid. Coll. R. J. Scarlett.

These specimens are all in the collection of the Canterbury Museum.

—R. J. SCARLETT

BUSH-EDGE POPULATIONS AT TAPANUI

The area under observation during Easter 1956 covered about 100 acres. It included a block of bush (about 30 acres), and about one-third of a mile of bush edge. The shape of the area was roughly an elongated rectangle, with the bush edge forming three sides. Farm buildings, and exotic trees round the site of an old homestead, occupied the centre of the area. About ten acres between the homestead and the bush block had been bulldozed a few months previously and contained large clumps of manuka, briar and weeds. The rest of the area was grassed for sheep.

The following bird populations were observed in the area. Observation was limited to four days, and was not constant even over this period. Hence the rather wide variation in numbers.

HARRIER: Three were observed within the area at once.

NATIVE PIGEON: 15 to 25 in an area of about seven acres containing many dispersed large introduced trees. Observed eating small leaves from outer twigs of willow, and perhaps of plane.

FANTAIL: Pied, 4 to 7; Black, 1.

YELLOW BREASTED TIT: Seemingly two pairs, 400 to 500 yards apart, separated by farm buildings; in bush edge and manuka clumps.

GREY WARBLER: 6 to 8 observed feeding in outer twigs along very broken bush frontage, apparently confined (for the periods of observation at least) to about 200 yards of frontage.

THRUSH: 12 to 30, possibly 15 to 20 as a closer estimate. Feed further from cover than Blackbird, and more especially on rotation pasture.

BLACKBIRD: More numerous than Thrush. Probably 20 to 30, but about 25 might be close. Feed more on permanent pasture, and close to bush, often on ground between trees and bushes along edge.

DUNNOCK: Large population for this species, though an estimate of actual numbers is very difficult to make. Large area recently bulldozed, in close proximity to bush edge, plentiful small shrubs and pasture, probably account for high density of population — 15 to 30 a very rough estimate.

BELLBIRD: 8 to 12 along bush frontage. Observed hunting insects in bark of trunks and larger branches.

TUI: 1 seen. Reported to have been common up to about ten years ago.

STARLING: 25 to 40. Based on and roosting in (still nesting?) tall old trees which poked out above the level of second-growth bush.

Other birds seen, but no notes taken: House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Black-backed Gull.

—D. STENHOUSE