

while unclaimed expenses and much free labour have, I can say with certainty, kept the Society from losing balance financially. The work has become so great that it is now necessary to have assistants for the Secretary and Treasurer. Those who help in this way, while not having the voting status of Council members, are rendering a most unselfish service. Cost in time, effort and money is incurred also by those who run special schemes and by others who undertake specific tasks. My term of office having now expired, I wish to state that, although it has been one of considerable difficulty, it has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve beside our Council members and their assistants. I would ask for no better comrades-in-arms.

Our future has to be taken very seriously by Council, Regional Organisers and members. I feel that, having attained a large membership, we should now aim at consolidation, while not making any special limit to numbers. Members with only superficial interest are dropping out, but are being replaced by many new ones of great promise. We cannot at present deal with a further large number enlisted merely for the sake of numbers, but we hope that we will always be able to welcome to our ranks anyone who wishes to share in this worthy and absorbing pursuit. Officers and members, by seeking out such useful persons, having them admitted to our ranks, and then keeping in touch with and helping them, will attain future success for the Society.

H. R. McKENZIE

LETTER

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERNS IN BORNEO

In Borneo, unlike New Zealand, the White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) has not yet been seen in the Northern summer (cf. R. B. Sibson, *Notornis* VI, 5, 1955: 139), but only in winter (R.B.S., *Notornis* VI, 2, 1954: 43, and C. A. Fleming, *Notornis* VI, 3, 1955: 69).

There are few old records of this bird, but many recent, which suggest that, like the Black-headed Gull (*L. ridibundus*), it may be increasing its total world range. In Borneo it is found in almost every possible habitat, unlike any other tern — and no other species penetrates so far inland. At Bario, in the furthest interior, the highest village in Borneo (3700 feet), it is a regular visitor from October to December. Its local name (Kelabit language) is 'Ut bario', the Wind Bird; it is believed that to see it settle is a bad omen — for in fact it does not settle in its short, diurnal, passage flight.

I have also seen the White-winged Black Tern far up the rocky Trusan River, at 1500 feet; as well as 200 miles up the Baram River. Nearer the coast, it has been seen over Kuching wharf (tidal) and racecourse (rain pools), the delta of the Sarawak River, and over the sea lagoon at Brunei (all winter records — Northern winter). Out at sea, it is regularly found off the small Turtle Islands of the South Sarawak coast, where there was a large party of 20 or so ranging over the sea from 24 to 26 September 1956. All birds have been winter visitors in the pale winter plumage. Both mature birds are found, and juveniles, which have the feathers of back and mantle brown, with dark shaft stripes and buffy fringes.

C. A. Fleming's account of the fish-eating display of the W.W.B.T. (*op. cit.*) is of interest, for all records in Borneo suggest that here its diet is basically arthropods.

The Turtle Island birds skim over the sea, picking off surface animals, which on dissection have proved to be *Gerridae* (Water Striders). In the Sarawak River, birds have been seen on floating logs, feeding on beetles and other insects. One specimen collected from the shore at Bako (7/10/56) was sitting on the sand flats with six Little Terns (*Sterna albifrons*), but whereas the latter had crops full of small fish, the W.W.B.T. had eaten one small red crab. An inland specimen, from Bario, had fed on dragonflies.

In a small way this bird is everywhere, and it is probably its insectivorous diet that allows it to cover such an extraordinary range, where other equatorial passage migrants of the *Laridae* depend principally on fish for food.

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Sarawak Museum,

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