

OCCURRENCE OF 'RED-LEGGED' HERONS IN NEW ZEALAND

In *Notornis* (Vol. 5, No. 4) I gave some details regarding reports of varying intensity of red appearing in the legs or bills of herons, a phase which is believed to be associated with breeding. At that time I asked for reports of any changes in colour of legs or bill of any species of heron to be sent to me, but the only reports received came from Otago, with the exception of one from Waimate, in South Canterbury. Mr Hudson in his article on 'the White-faced Herons breeding in North Auckland' mentions that the birds had pink legs (*Notornis*, Vol. 7, No. 6).

Now that the White-faced Heron (*Notophoxyx novaehollandiae*) is seen in increasing numbers throughout New Zealand, more members are in a position to make observations. Would members seeing variations in the colour of legs or bill in any species of heron, please communicate with the writer, 15 Cornwall Street, Vauxhall, Dunedin, E.1, giving species, date, where seen, degree of redness (pale, dull, bright) of legs, feet or bill.

L. E. WALKER

A RECENT SOUTH ISLAND RECORD OF THE MYNA

On 22 June 1956, when driving on the main road between Nelson and Richmond, I was surprised to see two Mynas (*Acridotheres tristis*) on the roadside just beyond Stoke. In fact, I was so surprised that I had the driver of our car (Mr D. V. Zumbach, the ranger of the Nelson Acclimatisation Society) turn back for another look. The two Mynas were now in a paddock a few yards in from the road edge and were positively identified by both of us. This occurrence of Mynas in the South Island is of considerable interest, for, according to Cunningham (*Notornis*, 3: 57-64 and 4: 66-67), the species has not been recorded there previously this century. The nearest places in the North Island where they do normally or occasionally occur are around Wanganui or in the Wairarapa — both at least 130 miles away. If Mynas are established again in this locality it is surprising that they have not been recorded before, but perhaps other observers feel rather like I felt at the time — that someone else must surely have noticed them and already reported their presence. I have to thank Mr P. C. Bull for finally convincing me that the observation was even now still worth the making; and I wonder how many observations of a similar kind have not appeared for the same reason.

G. R. WILLIAMS

BUSH-HAWK TAKING YOUNG STARLINGS FROM NEST

On 6 December 1956 I saw a Bush-hawk (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) fly to a Starling's nest in a dead tree in the open. It secured a large youngster and flew away with it. At intervals of seven minutes it returned and took two more, using its foot to pull them out of the nest-hole. It appeared that the young Starlings heard the Bush-hawk alight and came forward in the hole expecting a parent with food. The parents did not come near at the time and I did not see them about the nest later.

G. E. SOPP

A NOTE ON THE BREEDING OF WEKAS NEAR GISBORNE

We are situated 11 miles from Gisborne and the house is on the flat with a fairly large rough garden. There are also 200 acres of hill adjoining. As a rule there are between ten and a dozen wekas in the garden and surroundings, and a large number on the hills. They are increasing. One pair mainly was under observation. This pair brought out four chicks on 15 October. On 16 November they were mating again and old chicks were chased out of the garden. One I had to rescue, as it was bleeding about the head, injuries administered mainly by the cock bird. The cock bird carries its tail mostly up, the hen droops hers. The hen started to sit within a week, the cock bird carrying scraps of bread and meat to her. I don't look for nests, as on the occasions when nests here have been found