

and, with much gulping, swallowed. The undigested frogs are then picked up and reswallowed by the parent.

22/12/57, four chicks. The biggest are beginning to grasp the parent's beak to induce regurgitation. They make a junior edition of the bubbling noise and when hungry their beaks vibrate with an incessant rapid tremor.

25/12/57. Eldest chick growing rapidly. One reason for the staggered hatchings is now plain. The largest chick is now very demanding, cross-billing with the parent as soon as she appears at the edge of the nest and swallowing the first and undigested frog without difficulty. The next biggest gets the next frog and so on down the line to the putty-like lump for junior. The bigger chicks are now grasping the parent at the gape and following the frog down her bill to catch it at the point.

29/12/57. Parent feeding much more seldom now. Youngest chick weak and looks likely to succumb. Parent bruised and bleeding round the gape and obviously tender as she pulls back when the chicks cross-bill. She is attempting to feed the smallest but the others are too demanding, too strong, and are getting all the food.

1/1/58. Three chicks only. Smallest has died. This was the last visit I was able to make for some time. When I next visited the nest about two weeks later, all three chicks were dead; two lying on the nest, the third on the wooden platform inside the hide. They appeared to have been killed. I am sure the person responsible for this wanton destruction considered the throwing of one inside the hide his master stroke.



SHORT NOTES

PARADISE DRAKE WITH A WHITE HEAD

A male Paradise Duck (*Tadorna variegata*) with a white head has been recorded at intervals since the winter of 1954 in the vicinity of Ball's Clearing Bush Reserve, Puketitiri, Hawkes Bay. This bird has as much white on its head as an ordinary female of the species. From some angles the head appears to be an off-white shade merging to gray at the base of the neck. In other characteristics the plumage is normal, and it is obvious from its behaviour that the bird is a male.

When first seen during the first week of July, 1954, it was accompanied by a normal female; and presumably the same pair were present again on 26/9/56. Then on 16/1/57, the pair with the white-headed drake, appeared with five youngsters estimated to be two or three months old. On 19/7/57 and nearly a year later on 8/7/58, it was seen flying about alone. Finally on 14/8/58, it landed in a paddock near a mated pair of Paradise Ducks, the male of which flew up and chased the white-headed intruder. Later it was sitting on a tree stump, near the pair which continued to show signs of agitation till it flew away alone.

PAM. M. LEWIS