

wildfowl which were sheltering on L. Forsythe, but the cutting wind did not help observation from a stony railway embankment. Shoveler were plentiful and a single Grey Teal showed up in flight. An early afternoon tea was taken at Hilltop, after we had passed through a wet snow storm to get there. One car-load decided to push on to Akaroa, as a result of which the organiser of ringing saw his first Brown Creeper. It was feeding in a silver birch with Silvereyes and Redpolls. On the Akaroa side of the pass a common percher on jetties and rafts was the Spotted Shag. Every inlet had its quota of White-faced Herons so that the day's tally for this progressive species was over ninety. In fact they outnumbered the Pied Stilts of which only one flock of about fifty birds was seen.

As we motored back past L. Forsythe in the gathering dusk, it was estimated that 1600 Canada Geese were now grazing over the marshy turf. It had been a rewarding week-end for those who were prepared to face sub-antarctic conditions, in search of the birds of shore, lake and estuary.

—R.B.S.

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## SHORT NOTES

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### KINGFISHERS EATING BLOWFLIES

One or two pairs of Kingfishers (*H. sanctus*) may usually be found about Ball's Clearing, Puketitiri. They have been seen eating tadpoles, worms, skinks and blowflies. On 15/6/57 one was found dead under a clothesline. The stomach contained at least seven crushed blowflies. Not long after another was found drowned in a drum of sour milk over which it had been seen regularly catching blowflies.

PAM M. LEWIS

[Oliver (1955) in a lengthy note on the varied diet of the Kingfisher in New Zealand calls the bird omnivorous, but does not mention blowflies among the prey taken. However, in his book 'Focus on N.Z. Birds', Moon has a photograph (p. 65) of a Kingfisher bringing a blowfly to the nest. Ed.]

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### EXHAUSTED NELLY FED BY HAND

On 3/12/58 a Giant Petrel (*M. giganteus*) came in on the tide at Orua Bay, South Manukau Heads. It was very weak but eagerly took some piper and sprats from fishermen who were drawing a net. After that it became very tame, so that when it was called, it came up to our bach for scraps and fish. Often it just waited around for a feed.

On December 6th it flew again for the first time, using the head-wind to take off. It did not go very far and was quickly exhausted. As it walked up the beach, it sat down for a rest every few yards. It became so tame that it would take fish from our hands and made no attempt to peck.

On December 7th it was flying about much more, but it came in for a feed of fish from the net and took all it was offered. Later some children joined the Nelly, which was just sitting, not interested.

S. C. RUTHERFURD