

## SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO AT KAIPARA HEADS

On the afternoon of 26/5/59 I saw a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Kakatoe galerita*) near the coast at the South Head of the Kaipara Harbour. It was being blown before a strong westerly wind. The bird was moving from one group of trees to another calling. At the time the strength of the wind was such that it would have been difficult for a bird of this type to do anything but fly downwind. This and the closeness to the coast led me to believe that this cockatoo may have been blown across the Tasman Sea from Australia.

Inquiries from the weather office revealed that over the period May 24th-26th, low level winds between Australia and New Zealand had been consistently strong and mainly from directions between west and south-west. The occurrence of a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo on the west coast under these conditions leads one to wonder if some of the localised colonies of these birds in New Zealand may not have been partly established by genuine wind-assisted immigrants as well as by birds which have escaped from captivity or been released.

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[The biggest local population of these cockatoos in New Zealand is in the limestone country just south of the Waikato estuary. The coast here could well be the landfall for tired birds which had been carried by strong westerly winds across the Tasman Sea.—Ed.]



## SMALL TERN AT WAIRAU RIVER BAR

On 14/1/59 we spent some hours near the mouth of the Wairau River below Blenheim. As the tide fell a mudbank was exposed not far from the now famous site of the Moa-hunters' settlement. As the muddy islet grew bigger, a variety of gulls and terns which had been feeding over the lagoons, dropped down to rest and a few waders appeared and started to feed along the edge of the receding water. For a while we were able to see four species of terns at once, namely, several Caspians (*H. caspia*), a single White-fronted (*S. striata*), six Black-fronted (*C. albobristatus*) and one very small tern which was quite dwarfed even by the Black-fronted Terns near which it was squatting.

The following details were noted:— bill, black or very dark; legs, dark brown, with perhaps a hint of yellow; forehead and fore-top of crown, white; back of crown and nape black; a black streak running forward from nape through eye virtually to the bill; fore-edge and tips of primaries very dark grey or black. This small tern seemed to be identical with terns which have been frequently recorded in recent years in the Firth of Thames. Its unmottled plumage was that of a sub-adult or of an adult in non-breeding winter dress; and we incline to the view that it was a specimen of *S. albifrons* rather than *S. nereis*.

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