

## WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERNS AT HIMATANGI BEACH AND IN MARLBOROUGH

On 26/1/57 I observed a strange marsh-tern resting on the sand by the outlet of the Kaikokopu Creek at Himatangi Beach. It was identified as a White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) in eclipse or late juvenile plumage. It was almost identical in plumage details with terns of this species which were seen at Waikanae in 1954 (Fleming, *Notornis* 6, 69), but the legs were very dark. It was with a flock of White-fronted Terns (*S. striata*) and Black-billed Gulls (*L. bulleri*) but did not associate closely with them, and flew independently. It has not been seen since. This seems to be the only recorded occurrence so far of this species in the Manawatu.

IAN G. ANDREW

Over the past two years there have been two sight records of the White-winged Black Tern in Marlborough. Both birds were in almost full plumage. The first was seen in October, 1957, by J. R. Eyles at Wairau Bar. The second record was by G. Holdaway from lower Dillons Point, Blenheim, where he observed the bird on the morning of 30/5/59. This bird circled over the paddock he was ploughing for about half an hour. He rang me and described the bird and its behaviour. There was no doubt about its identity.

BRIAN D. BELL



## COLONIAL ROOSTING OF WHITE-FACED HERONS

Large numbers of White-faced Herons (*A. novae-hollandiae*) utilise the pine plantation behind Havelock at the head of Pelorus Sound, Marlborough. The birds feed on the exposed mud-flats at the head of the Sound and along the edges of the Pelorus River at low tide. The herons can be seen plying to and fro across the town and at times are very noisy. On 2/10/59, F. O'Leary and K. Rowe were able to observe at least five herons in this plantation from their hotel room during an overnight stay. Local residents claim that they breed in the plantation but there is no definite evidence of this.

BRIAN D. BELL



## LETTER

Sir,

*Moho-au or moho-wao*

I was interested to read the note by Mr. W. J. Phillips in your April, 1959, issue concerning the traditional Maori name for *Notornis* in the Horowhenua district of the North Island. I had also heard this variant of the generalised ralline name *moho* from Hector McDonald, but believe that it has been wrongly transcribed.

The true name, I am sure, is not "*moho-au*," but "*Moho-wao*," literally "rail of the forest," wao being the old Polynesian name for forest. My interpretation is confirmed by Williams' dictionary, 5th edition, which gives the secondary meaning, "man of the woods or barbarian" to *moho-wao*. I have included the hyphen for clarity.

ROGER DUFF

Canterbury Museum,  
Christchurch.