

Black-backed Gull. About eight scattered around the island and these appeared to be taking up territories.

Harrier. Two seen.

Kingfisher. Three single birds seen at different times about the same area, possibly the same bird.

Skylark. Four seen (two together).

Blackbird. One seen by N.B.E. and another heard.

Pipit. Two seen.

White-eye. A small flock seen on two occasions.

Chaffinch. One seen and another heard.

Goldfinch. Two single birds seen on different occasions.

Yellowhammer. Four seen (two together).

Starling. A flock of about ten birds seen in the landing bay on the morning of our departure.

Conclusion.—At first sight this island looked very uninteresting and it was a pleasant surprise to find three species of petrel (and in particular the Allied Shearwater) persisting on an island which has been so modified for years by clearing and grazing. The island has not before been recorded as a breeding area for either Allied Shearwater or Diving Petrel. This illustrates the importance of even some of our unconsidered and less attractive offshore islands.



MYNA ROOSTS IN CLEVEDON-ARDMORE AREA, 1952 - 1956

By H. R. McKENZIE

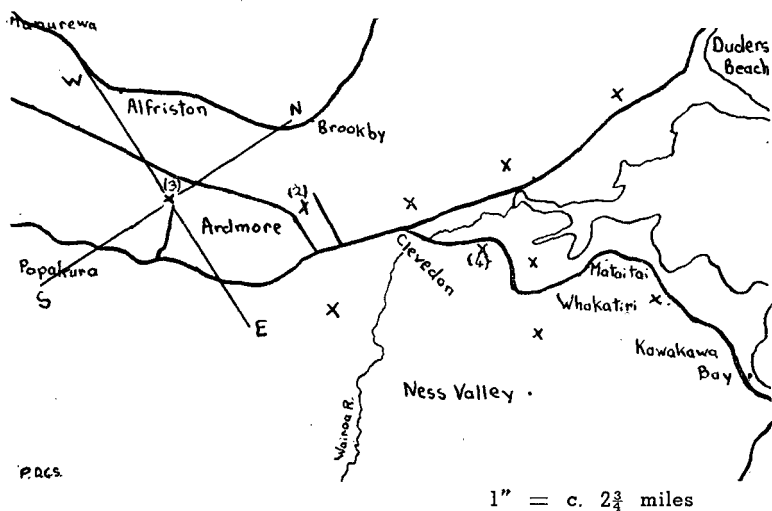
The Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) came to Clevedon in odd pairs about November, 1943, and built up in numbers from small lots in 1944 to larger and more numerous flocks in 1949. Breeding began when only a few pairs were present, but, in my opinion, could have accounted for only a small part of the build-up. Apparently a northward wave moved up from the Waikato district. The further move northwards from South Auckland seems to have been slower and in lesser numbers. It has now, in 1959, reached and passed Whangarei.

The first roost noted in the Clevedon area was reported in the winter of 1952 by member P. H. Orum. Over 200 birds used a row of *Cupressus macrocarpa* on his farm (*Notornis* V, 104). In 1953, a similar number roosted there again (*Notornis* V, 238). In 1954 the number grew to c. 400, but in that year they all left early in August (*Notornis* VI, 108), obviously having moved to another roost.

In the winter of 1955, from my home at Clevedon, I noticed evening flights going south-west. I telephoned several farmers in that direction who had what I thought were suitable plantations or rows of trees but I failed to locate the destination. Later, in the summer, I learned from Mr. G. F. Lane that a large number had roosted in his *Cupressus lawsoniana* hedges, nearly two miles south-west of Clevedon.

I had not inquired of him, thinking that his hedges were not high enough. Mr. Lane informed me of their return in the winter of 1956. I was unable to make a visit until 29th July, when I found that they had left two days earlier. From my position at the deserted roost, I watched flights going south-west from 17.03 to 17.35 hours. Only nine birds stayed to roost. I can advance no evidence as to why roosts are changed.

On 8/8/56, by following the birds in my car — quite a difficult matter owing to the flight line's crossing several block roads — I found the new roost. It was in three sections, a small one in "Lawsons" along a road, a large one in "Lawsons" on a farm road at right angles to the public road and another large one in an overgrown *Elaeagnus* hedge, also at right angles to the road and across a small field from the second section. This roost was on the north side of the road which runs across the northern end of Ardmore aerodrome. I visited the farmer, Mr. Fiddes, who readily permitted the carrying out of a census. The three roosts of the five years are shown on the map by figures in brackets.



The first count was made on 18th August. A ring of watchers was placed around the roost and the birds were checked in, the flights beginning at 1700 hrs. and ending at 1758. Although most of the birds came from the north-east, they were easily counted in their well separated flocks of up to 50, though mostly in small lots of 6 to 12. The total was 949. A further count was made in the same manner on September 16th, yielding a total of 936. This time they started to come in at 1747 hrs. The numbers from the various directions were as follows:—

	18/8/56	16/9/56
N.E., from Clevedon area and to coast	788	790
E. and N.E. by E., Ardmore east and Clevedon South	42	78
S.E., Ardmore south	3	28
S.W. by S., Ardmore aerodrome	0	3
S.W., Ardmore-Takanini	26	7
W., Ardmore-Takanini	16	2
N.W., Ardmore-Alfriston	16	0
N.N.W., Ardmore-Brookby	34	3
N., Ardmore-Clevedon west	24	25
	<hr/> 949	<hr/> 936

A good check of the birds from the north-east was obtained by watchers, members and other helpers, who observed the early parts of the line of flight. These watchers are located on the map by crosses. No such check was made of the other flight lines but they would be contained by the hills on the east and west of the area, except perhaps that birds from N.N.W. could have crossed over from the Brookby Valley. There is flat country to the south and south-west but obviously the draw from there was not from any distance. It would appear that this roost, Roost (3), $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west of Roost (1), had pushed into the previous territory of a roost in or near Papakura. The watcher to the east of Roost (3) saw, on each census, 38 and 34 birds respectively fly past from the direction of central Ardmore towards Papakura, evidently a remnant which had not been absorbed by the intruders and was still roosting at or near Papakura. It can be assumed that the draw to Roost (3) from the east, south and west would not be of more than one or two miles. The checked birds from Clevedon, Duder's Beach, Mataitai, Whakatiri and Ness Valley would travel up to ten miles in a straight line. Kawa-Kawa Bay would be twelve miles but it was not checked.

The flight habit differs from that of the Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). The Starling flies high and straight to roost, while the Myna, with its seemingly laboured action, mostly "hedge-hops," keeping low over the fields and lifting to clear hedges and other obstacles. Progress is not always in a straight line. A flock so engaged will occasionally settle and feed for a time. Arrived at the roost they usually fly right into the hedge or trees, a few settling first on the ground. Quite a number will then fly down and chatter and feed on the ground, the feeding not being very serious. In flight, odd short yelpings and chortles are made, but the vocal effort at the roost, chattering and squawking at crescendo is quite a din. On 16/9/56 this lasted from 1820 to 1830 hrs.

Sincere thanks are tendered to Miss A. B. Murray, F. Murray, and the several friends who helped to tally at Roost (3), to the farmers who were so co-operative and to members and friends who assisted in checking the flight lines.