

The back and wing coverts were dark ashy grey and the primaries appeared darker. The secondaries were dark grey edged with white. The neck and undersurface were white. After taking down notes of the above features we checked them with a telescope (x 25) and found the bird was banded with an aluminium band on the right leg.

The flock rose when we approached closer and it was then noted that the tail was pale grey and deeply forked. The secondaries had a white trailing edge and there was a small whitish spot near the carpal flexure. The bird swung out over the sea and flew with its bill pointed down. It was seen to swoop down to the surface and pick something up. At no time did it call.

I consulted Oliver (1955) on return and found that the bird was a Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*). One feature we had not noted in our field notes was the elongated crown-feathers mentioned in the literature. Actually, however, we had noted this feature, rather like the raised feathers of an irate Caspian tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) but had not written it down as we had thought the strong wind was causing it. The Crested Tern has only twice been recorded in New Zealand, one being shot at the Kermadecs in 1910 and another, a corpse, being picked up at Spirits Bay in 1951.

B. D. BELL

(This constitutes the first living record in New Zealand proper of this common Australian tern.—Ed.)



#### SUCCESSFUL BREEDING OF WELCOME SWALLOWS IN NORTHLAND

Welcome Swallows (*H. neoxena*) seem to be establishing themselves in the Kawakawa district. In one area there are six birds, and in mid-January, 1960, one pair were re-nesting after already bringing out a brood. The six, therefore, may be a family party. The nest is high up under a concrete bridge and not easy to study.

About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles further north I have seen eight swallows sitting on the roof of a barn. No nests have been found, but they could be inside the barn, which has a gap of six inches between the wall and the roof. As the barn is full of hay and very high, it is impossible to look inside. The farmer states that he has seen twelve birds here. In this locality the swallows are quite fearless and will fly within a few feet when the yard is being swept. By their actions I think that some of these birds are preparing to nest again.

H. A. FINDLAY

On the afternoon of 20/1/60 when we were at Tokerau on the east coast of the peninsula between Doubtless Bay and Rangaunu Bay, we noticed a Welcome Swallow dart out from beneath a small wooden bridge which crossed a slow-flowing stream. As we walked towards the bridge an adult swallow circled round in some agitation, all the time twittering. Under the bridge we found three nests. In one, which was

thickly lined with feathers, there were two almost completely fledged chicks which flew after we had spent some minutes investigating. Of the other two nests, one was in good condition and one was only half there. They did not look recent enough to have been used this season.

T. G. LEDGARD

N. J. LEDGARD

(In the 1958-59 summer, Welcome Swallows probably nested successfully not far from here on the Aurere flat and perhaps, unnoticed, at Tokerau, v. *Notornis* VIII, 157.—Ed.)

On 17/1/60 while travelling near Herekino I saw two Welcome Swallows flying close to the road, and when I returned in the evening six were seen close to the place of the original observation. On 20/1/60 I visited the area again and though I saw only one swallow I was compensated by finding two nests with eggs and a third nest partly constructed under a small concrete bridge, with deep water flowing through it.

DIGBY GRAHAM

(What was evidently the same "colony" with two nests and "some wet mud on the wall which could have been the beginning of a third nest" was found independently on 22/1/60 and reported by T. G. Ledgard.—Ed.)



#### WESTLAND PETREL ASHORE AT MURIWAI

On 19/12/59 two schoolboys, Peter Skegg and Michael Hogg, walked four miles at the south end of Muriwai beach, and among tubenoses which they found, including about forty Sooty Shearwaters (*P. griseus*), they recovered the remains of a large black petrel which they tentatively identified as *Procellaria westlandica*. The body had been picked clean; tail and legs were missing, but fortunately wings and skull were intact and the bill had not lost its plates. The following measurements were obtained: Wing 382 m.m.; Culmen, length 49 m.m., width 22.5 m.m. These are too large for the Black Petrel (*Pr. parkinsoni*) and agree substantially with those given for the Westland Petrel by Dr. R. A. Falla (1) who was shown the skull on 20/1/60 and at a glance confirmed the identification. The colouring of the bill with its dark nasal tubes, culminicorn and dertrum, served to separate this specimen from the White-chinned Petrel (*Pr. aequinoctialis*) of which there was available a Muriwai specimen of similar size; while another came ashore at Karekare where it was found by Tim Ledgard about the same time as the Westland Petrel was wrecked at Muriwai. The differences in colouring are well brought out in these sketches drawn to scale by Michael Hogg.