

GREENSHANK — During big tides at the end of January, one, which must have been feeding in Pahurehure Inlet, came into paddocks with Pied Stilts near Whangamaire (D.A.U.).

TURNSTONE — c.190 on 8/11/59; up to c. 250 during summer; c. 50 on 20/3/60. Only c. 20 during winter; census 10/7/60.

KNOT — 298 on winter census 21/6/59; only 40-50 Oct.-Nov. and 29 on 8/11/59. c. 800 on 3/1/60; c. 1500 on 17/2/60, a remarkably big mid-winter tally of c. 3590 on 10/7/60.

RED-NECKED STINT — 1 on 9/10/59 was probably the one that over-wintered. Gradually a small flock built up over the summer; 5 on 1/11/59; 8 on 3/1/60; 10 on 21/2/60; 11 on 20/3/60, 2 being richly reddened and some virtually unchanged, almost certainly first year birds. Only 1 on 10/7/60.

PIED STILT — A few pairs breed on a pool beside Oakland's Road, Karaka, e.g., c. 12 adults and at least 4 chicks on 19/9/59; c. 12 adults, 1 on nest on 31/7/60 and c. 8 prs. of adults, 1 juv. almost flying and others half-grown seen on 2/10/60.

Scarce along the Karaka coast in spring till after midsummer, viz. 5 on 1/11/59. 200+ on 17/2/60 at Urquhart's Pt. Winter census, c. 1370 on 10/7/60. 100+ on 31/7/60, Puhinui beach only.

CASPIAN TERN — c. 40 on 1/11/59. Only 12 on census 8/11/59; 18 on 3/1/60; 50+ on 20/3/60; 188, winter census, 10/7/60.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — Greatest numbers as usual at end of breeding season, when these terns move in presumably from the west coast colonies. 20 on 21/1/60; c. 100 on 17/2/60 at Karaka shellbank or on the old jetty; 2 on 2/10/60 up Pahurehure Inlet.

TERN (Sp.?) — Once again some very small terns were present throughout the summer. It is strongly to be presumed that they are migrant *albifrons* and not *neréis*. 1 on 9/10/59; 2 on 3/1/60; 2 on 17/2/60 at Urquhart's Pt.; dark bill, tan legs, one with dark primaries and a dark shoulder patch, one without; both had white over the top towards the back of the crown; no dark from eye to bill; a third small tern looking 'old and thin' was also seen on the shellbank. 2 again on 21/2/60; 2/3/60 and 19/3/60, when one had bill partly changing colour; white 'jag' or point back to over centre of eye (as opposed to rounded white of *neréis*).

FERNBIRD — At least 6 seen or heard in the saltmarsh scrub in Kidd's Bay on 3/1/60. There seems to be a thriving colony here now; and they are not difficult to find.

— H.R.McK., R.B.S.

#### MANAWATU — (a) RANGITIKEI ESTUARY

PRION — 2 incomplete corpses on nearby coast on 6/12/59.

BULLER'S SHEARWATER — 1 corpse on nearby coast on 6/12/59.

SOOTY SHEARWATER — 8 corpses along two miles of coast to north on 6/12/59.

GANNET — Sometimes seen fishing around rivermouth and out to sea; 2 on 22/11/59; 6 on 20/5/60.

BLACK SHAG — Several usually present, number variable, up to 46 as on 20/3/60.

LITTLE SHAG — Usually several present upriver from estuary, sometimes moving into estuary.

WHITE-FACED HERON — Usually a few are present on the mudflat and by creeks; occasionally present in small flocks: c. 18 on 1/1/60, 11 on 20/5/60.

GREY DUCK & MALLARD — A large influx of ducks in April-May, all very wary; c. 200 on 5/4/60; on 20/5/60 there were 20 Grey Ducks and 105 Mallards. Usually over 20 Mallards are present in summer.

SHOVELER — 1 on 22/11/59; 2 on 20/5/60.

BUSH HAWK — On 20/5/60 at Okanagan settlement, near Rangitikei rivermouth, 1 was chased out of a group of pines by 3 White-backed Magpies and continued flying in a southwesterly direction until lost to sight over the sand dunes.

PUKEKO — Occasionally seen by creeks on the mudflats: e.g. 1 on 3/1/60.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — A few often present: 1 on 9/1/60 and 26/2/60, 4 on 5/4/60 and 20/5/60.

N.I. (VARIABLE) OYSTERCATCHER — A few nearly always seen: e.g. 6 on 6/12/59, 8 on 20/5/60.

PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER — 8 present by 22/11/59, 13 from 3/1/60 to 20/3/60, 8 on 5/4/60, none remaining on 20/5/60.

BANDED DOTTEREL — Few present in the breeding season, numbers higher from January: 80 on 24/1/60, 102 on 20/5/60, c. 35 on 3/9/60.

WRYBILL — 1 on 6/12/59, up to 12 present from January to March, 1960, c. 24 present in April-May and probably throughout winter, 23 on 3/9/60.

ASIATIC WHIMBREL — 1 seen by I.G.A., M.J.I. and E. Dear from 22/11/59 to 5/4/60. The pale blaze up the lower back, very distinct in flight, indicated the subspecies. It was very wary. It was several times located, either alone or with godwits, by its distinctive call. This is the first whimbrel recorded from this estuary.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT — Summer population up to c. 75 (1/1/60); c. 35 on 5/4/60; only 3 remaining on 20/5/60; 11+ on 3/9/60.

TURNSTONE — 2 on 6/12/59, 2 on 9/1/60, 1 on 26/2/60.

KNOT — 20 on 22/11/59. As at Manawatu estuary, only a few remained for the rest of the summer: 4 on 1/1/60, 2 on 14/2/60, 1 on 20/3/60, none seen later.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER — 3 to 4 present from 22/11/59 to 9/1/60, 1 on 14/2/60.

RED-NECKED STINT — 7 first seen on 6/12/59; maximum of 11 in January, 1960; little change in numbers to 5/4/60, when 10 were present, of which 3 were showing some rufous on their necks; 4 on 20/5/60. One had a very red neck and rich plumage throughout January, fading by late February. Possibly at least one stayed right through the winter, as one in eclipse or juvenile plumage was present on 3/9/60.

PIED STILT — Population fairly constant at c. 50 from 22/11/59 to 20/5/60. Little change on 3/9/60.

**BLACK-BACKED GULL** — A small colony breeding 1 to 2 miles north of the estuary. On 26/2/60, 6 fresh corpses (all but one of which were immature) were found on the nearby coast.

**RED-BILLED GULL & BLACK-BILLED GULL** — Several of each species are usually present; maximum observed were c. 30 on 20/3/60, of which the majority were Black-billed Gulls.

**BLACK-FRONTED TERN** — 1 juv. on 20/3/60. This appears to be the first recorded occurrence of this species from this estuary, although large numbers have been seen at Manawatu estuary.

**CASPIAN TERN** — Several usually present, number variable; maximum count of 28 on 5/4/60.

**WHITE-FRONTED TERN** — Small flocks occasionally enter the estuary.

— I.G.A., M.J.I.

#### MANAWATU — (b) MANAWATU ESTUARY

**BLACK SHAG** — Up to 60 present at the estuary in the non-breeding season, but numbers fluctuate due to local movements.

**LITTLE SHAG** — 1 to 3 often present.

**WHITE HERON** — Single birds have sometimes been seen in winter, e.g. on 8/7/58, 13/7/58, 6/5/60, 19/5/60. Others are not infrequently seen near Foxton, e.g. 3 on 11/1/58.

**WHITE-FACED HERON** — Small numbers present at the estuary throughout the year; up to 5 have been seen at once. A small breeding colony exists in a stand of *Pinus* about 4 miles from the estuary.

**BITTERN** — One seen near the mudflats on 2/4/60 and 4/7/60.

**ROYAL SPOONBILL** — 3 in Nov., '59; one remained throughout the summer '59-'60, others arriving for the winter during April and May to reach a maximum of 23 in July. By 27/8/60, the number was reduced to 16, some in full breeding plumage; 9 were still present on 1/10/60 and 5 on 21/10/60.

**BLACK SWAN** — A few occasionally present.

**GREY DUCK & MALLARD** — Fairly large numbers, mostly Mallards, sometimes congregate in the upper estuary in winter, e.g. c. 200 on 13/7/58, 100+ on 6/5/60.

**S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER** — Summer population c. 10 in late 1959; increasing to 30 during the northward migration from January to March, with a final winter population of c. 25, April to July. By 13/8/60 the number was reduced to 9, and to 6 on 24/9/60.

**N.I. (VARIABLE) OYSTERCATCHER** — Usually a few present in the estuary, numbers increasing after the breeding season, but counts vary due to movements along the coast. Maximum count this year was 12 on 24/4/60. In previous winters 25 to 30 have been present.

**PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER** — Summer population up to 24 on 14/2/60; a few in breeding plumage by 5/3/60; most still present on 2/4/60, but none remaining on 24/4/60. 3 return migrants on 1/10/60 showing much broken black on their under surfaces.

**BANDED DOTTEREL** — Greatest numbers up to 200+ in February to May, then dispersing gradually for the breeding season. 19 remaining on 28/8/60.

**WRYBILL** — A high count of 29 on 3/10/60 may have represented late southward migrants. Up to 24 present from January to early April, 1960; fewer after this, with a mid-winter population of c. 13 on 4/7/60; further decrease to 5 on 28/8/60; 14 on 1/10/60.

**WHIMBREL** — One was seen on 10/1/60 by I.G.A. and M.J.I., but remained on a mudflat on the opposite side of the river from the observers, and could not be approached or put to flight. The subspecies could therefore not be determined. Its size, general plumage, behaviour, and attitude at rest were similar to those of the Asiatic Whimbrel seen by us at Rangitikei Estuary from 22/11/59 to 5/4/60. Its call was not heard. This is the first record of a whimbrel at Manawatu Estuary. It has not been seen since, and it is not absolutely certain that it was a different individual from that seen at Rangitikei Estuary since the two localities were not visited on the same date.

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** — 19 on 31/8/59, c. 70 on 3/10/59, 200+ on 21/11/59; usually 150+ were counted in December '59 to January '60, numbers varying due to local movements along the coast and upriver; 250+ 6/2/60, some reddening, and a maximum for the summer of c. 280 on 5/3/60, when several were very red; c. 120 on 26/3/60; c. 70 on 2/4/60, numbers remaining almost constant to mid-June; 40+ on 4/7/60; c. 18 throughout August and up to 24/9/60; c. 140 on 1/10/60, c. 170 on 21/10/60.

**HUDSONIAN GODWIT** — 1 seen by M.J.I. and I.G.A. on 1/11/59, 14/11/59, and again on 26/3/60 and 4/7/60; not seen, but probably overlooked, on intervening dates; absent (at least from usual wader areas) in August '60; 1 on 21/10/60.

**KNOT** — c. 15 on 3/10/59, 6 on 14/11/59, 4 on 29/11/59, 2 on 12/12/59 and on 10/1/60. None positively identified later, but possibly 1 on 5/3/60. Small numbers arriving again in spring; 4 on 1/10/60, 23 on 21/10/60.

**SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** — Seen only in February and March, but may have been present for a longer period: 2 on 6/2/60, 7 on 14/2/60, 5 on 13/3/60, when 3 were in well-developed breeding plumage.

**PIED STILT** — Large numbers often congregate in the estuary in the non-breeding season, but numbers vary as the birds range up and down the lower part of the river throughout the year. Maximum count at the estuary c. 160 on 10/5/60.

**BLACK-BILLED GULL & RED-BILLED GULL** — Number of both species at estuary is variable, probably partly due to local movements along the coast. Usually a few of each species are present in the breeding season, with numbers increasing subsequently. Highest counts so far are: on 10/7/59, 75 Black-billed and 125 Red-billed; and on 4/7/60, c. 60 and 55+ respectively.

**BLACK-FRONTED TERN** — Occasionally seen in autumn months: 3 on 5/3/60 and 26/3/60; 1 on 24/4/60.

**CASPIAN TERN** — Several present during all months of the year, with largest numbers in the non-breeding season. 17 on 23/1/60, 27 on 5/3/60, c. 15 on 19/5/60, 22+ on 28/8/60, c. 12 on 1/10/60.

**WHITE-FRONTED TERN** — Mostly move up and down the coast, often in flocks of many hundreds in late summer and autumn, but some enter the estuary, e.g. c. 60 on 6/2/60.

**KINGFISHER** — Feeding on crabs on mudflats chiefly in winter months; maximum observed c. 12 on 19/5/60. — I.G.A., M.J.I.