(Richard Taylor, M.A. (Cantab.), came to New Zealand in 1839 to serve with the Church Missionary Society. He was a man of many gifts, a competent artist and an energetic traveller with a lively and discerning interest in geology and natural history. The curious root-parasite *Dactylanthus taylori* bears his name.—Ed.)

In February, 1958, a burrow containing a downy young petrel, obviously of one of the larger summer-breeding species, was found near Goat Rock at c. 1500ft. a.s.l. in the Kaitake Ranges, five miles inland and ten miles from New Plymouth. The young petrel was photographed in colour; and when the slide was shown at the Annual General Meeting in the following May, it was identified as a Black Petrel *(Procellaria parkinsoni).*

Subsequent searches have failed to reveal a burrow or burrows; and it may be that owing to faulty information, the precise locality of the burrow in which the young petrel was found has not been rediscovered .

—D. MEDWAY

(This interesting record is not as surprising as at first appears. The breeding range of the Black Petrel was formerly much more extensive than it is to-day. It is now known to breed only at Little Barrier in the north and the Heaphy Range in the south. These are at the ends of a now broken chain, the links of which were suitable inland ridges. It is gratifying to learn that one link in the chain of breeding colonies may still persist in the ranges of Taranaki. Taylor's *titi* (*v. supra*) may well have been *P. parkinsoni.*—Ed.)

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SUCCESSFUL LATE BREEDING OF PIED STILTS NEAR AUCKLAND

From observations made over several years in the Firth of Thames and near Clevedon, it is known that in northern New Zealand Pied Stilts *(H. leucocephalus)* may have an extended breeding season. Most eggs are laid between August and October; but Stokes, McKenzie and others (*Notornis* VIII, 95-99) have described how in the very wet winter of 1956 many nests contained eggs as early as the middle of June and before the end of July. As a general rule few eggs are laid after the end of October.

On the Auckland isthmus the Pied Stilt has rarely been known to breed, although many thousands find the tidal flats and creeks of the isthmus a rich feeding ground in winter. However, in 1959 a perfect breeding habitat was provided by the artificial lakes which have recently been formed at Puketutu. At the normal nesting season at least twelve pairs bred on the northern bays of Puketutu along the edge of Spoonbill Pool (v. map, *Notornis* VIII, 221) and though there was a certain amount of disturbance from boys, Black-backed Gulls, which were continually on the prowl, and the aerial spraying of insecticide, a satisfactory number of young reached the flying stage by the end of November.

Meanwhile on the cool southern side of Puketutu, another suitable habitat for breeding was coming into existence as the waters of Oruarangi formed a lake with wide shallows behind a new sea-wall.

Here in mid-February, 1960, Mr. B. D. Bell reported that he found two broods of Pied Stilts, one of which was only just feathering. On 23/3/60, when Peter Skegg and I visited this quiet corner, we found what must have been an even later brood of three, two of which could just fly, while the third could not and resorted to swimming. It was carried out into deep water and covered about a quarter of a mile before it was re-united with the rest of the family.

Stokes and McKenzie have shown that with normal spring nests the average incubation period from laying of the last egg is 25 days and the fledging period 31-32 days. Under the favourable conditions of summer 1960, hatching and fledging times are unlikely to have been longer than average. If, therefore, the clock is put back 57 days from March 23, the date for the completion of the clutch is January 26, and the first egg was almost certainly laid after January 20.

The only comparable record of late breeding with Pied Stilts, that I know, is of a pair at Kaiaua in the Firth of Thames, which were in attendance on two fresh eggs on a shelly sea-beach on 24/1/48. The birds were evidently forced by the heat to abandon nesting; for on 7/2/48 the deserted eggs were still in the nest, sun-bleached and with their contents fried.

R. B. SIBSON

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HUDSONIAN GODWIT AT THE MANAWATU ESTUARY

The Hudsonian Godwit *(Limosa haemastica)* has been recorded on several occasions at Lake Ellesmere (Oliver, 1955) and it had seemed surprising to me that this species had not been recorded in other suitable localities between this area and the Auckland area, where it is fairly regularly observed. The west coast of the Wellington Province, for instance, with its estuaries frequented in summer by fair numbers of Bar-tailed Godwits *(Limosa lapponica baueri)* would appear to be an ideal place to look for it.

When visiting the Manawatu Estuary on 1/11/59 I flushed a small party of godwits feeding on the ebbing tide and was immediately attracted by the leading godwit, which had a black and white tail, the black part being distal. Unfortunately I did not have binoculars with me, but I confirmed that it was a form of Black-tailed Godwit when I flushed it again. It then flew to the opposite side of the estuary and was not seen again.

The estuary was regularly and frequently visited by myself and I. G. Andrew during the summer, but on no occasion were we able to make a detailed study of all the 280+ godwits present, mainly because the river acted as a barrier. Thus this godwit may have been present throughout the summer, although this cannot be proved.

On 26/3/60 I visited the estuary and was fortunate enough to find the remaining godwits, 120 in all, roosting on the north side at high tide. I approached the flock to about 20-30 yards, and studied them closely through 8 x 30 binoculars. Soon I noticed a trim godwit amongst the Bar-tails. It was about the size of a small male of that species. It had a more even grey-brown upper surface than the Bar-tails, the grey-brown extending right round the neck and on to the upper breast. This godwit was assuming summer plumage, there being mottlings of wine-red on the breast and flanks.