

The flock was flushed and I was immediately able to identify the godwit subspecifically as a Hudsonian Godwit. As it flew up the black and white tail was seen, and an irregular, narrow buff-white wing bar. The flock flew round in a half-circle and settled a short distance away. As it did so the black axillaries and underwing of this godwit were outstanding. I referred to the article by Sibson on the subspecies of the Black-tailed Godwit which occur in New Zealand (*Notornis* VIII, 161-2) on the spot and confirmed the identification. In addition to the points mentioned in that article I noted that this godwit had a blackish-brown culmen and a dark brown stripe through the eye from the bill, bordered by a buff-white stripe above and below.

When the estuary was next visited on 2/4/60, I. G. Andrew and I discovered that only about 70 godwits remained, and a thorough search revealed no Hudsonian Godwit. However, as I again saw a Hudsonian Godwit at the estuary on 4/7/60, it is evidently wintering in the vicinity. This appears to be the first record of a Hudsonian Godwit for the province of Wellington.

M. J. IMBER



THE KINGFISHER AS A PREDATOR

A Kingfisher (*Halycon sanctus*) which visits our garden in Levin often perches on a post watching the Blackbirds (*T. merula*) and Songthrushes (*T. ericetorum*) digging up worms on the lawn. When a large worm is caught, the Kingfisher may dart down and steal it. Recently I received a Kingfisher with a damaged wing. When the wing was stronger, the bird was released but could not fly normally. At least six of the local Blackbirds and Thrushes, evidently recognising a Kingfisher as a predator and an enemy, eagerly seized the opportunity to get some of their own back and darted down, scolding angrily and flying in low circles over the weakened Kingfisher as it half-flew, half-ran across the lawn. Perhaps out of respect for its beak, they did not actually assault it. The Blackbirds were the prime movers in the demonstration of hostility.

AVIS ACRES

Whilst working in my garden I noticed some Silvereyes (*Zosterops lateralis*) feeding in the hedge. A few minutes later I heard one give a cry of distress, and thinking the cat had caught it, I went to investigate. As I approached the hedge, a Kingfisher flew out with a Silvereye in its bill. It settled in a peach-tree and started to batter its victim on a bough, as I had previously seen a Kingfisher treat a mouse. The battering apparently had little effect at first for the Silvereye was still fluttering and screaming when the Kingfisher flew off with it.

A. G. FLOREY

(Oliver (1955 p. 530) discusses the fearless ferocity of the Kingfisher and remarks that "every kind of small animal is attacked, killed and eaten." To the varied diet which he lists may be added the ducklings of the New Zealand Scaup (*A. novaeseelandiae*). The taking of these by Kingfishers has been observed near the jetty at L. Okataina, Rotorua. — Ed.)