

Dunedin, second in number only to Greenfinch in winter flocks of mixed finches (W.T.P.).

YELLOW HAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*) — Little Barrier, Sept. '59, several about bush fringe and flat (R.H.B.). Middelmore, 19/8/60, one starting to sing (R.B.S.). Tauranga, still singing freely, 23/2/60; Moerangi, in cut-over bush, mid-May '59, a continuous loose flock for miles (F.P.H.). Minginui, odd ones only, but flock of 50 in March; none Nov.-Dec., so apparently does not breed locally (R.St.P.). Dunedin, about 10% of mixed flocks of finches on seeds in winter (W.T.P.).

STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) — Minginui, up to 100; but very few in Feb. No large flocks this year (R.St.P.). Tauranga, in summer up to 2000 roost at Waimapu Inlet (M.H.). Wellington Peninsula, 1938-1956, first young invariably fledged third week of November. Fledging up to 14 days earlier at Upper Hutt, 20 miles away, 1956-1960 (H.L.S.).

MYNA (*Acridotheres tristis*) — The invasion of the Coromandel Peninsula appears to be complete; 200+ on Thames rubbish tip on 30/8/60; 40 round a chicken run at Whitianga on 31/8/60; present at all settlements (R.B.S.). Minginui, increasing; up to 14 in one flock (R.St.P.). Levin, 1 on 5/4/60 (R.H.B.). Naenae, Lower Hutt, 4 reported seen on 29/5/60 (I.G.A.). Bay of Plenty, still increasing; flocks of up to 100 seen; often feeds on beaches. (R.V.McL., W.T.P., M.H.).

BLACK-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) — Otane, 1 on 25/3/60; Levin, 1 on 7/9/60 (D.M.).

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*) — Maungaturoto, 4 in township; Brynderwyn, 10 on farm, 5/3/60; Tauranga, so far not known here (R.V.McL.). Whakatiri, Clevedon, 11/7/59, party of 8 reported by Mr. F. Luke (H.R.McK.). Kaimanawas, head of Waiotaka R., 3 in tussock country at 4000ft. on 3/3/60 (F.P.H.). Orongorongo Valley, 3 at Bain's Hut, 6/2/60, Greenlaw Hut, 2500ft., up Waimakariri R., 1 on 23/12/57 (D.M.).

KOKAKO (*Callaeas cinerea wilsoni*) — Moumoukai, Clevedon, '59-'60, numbers maintained but song has decreased in last few years (J.W.St.P.). Tauranga, Oropi Bush, reliably reported present (R.V.McL.). Motu R., Gisborne, Feb. '60, party of 12 reported on three occasions by J. H. McKay (A.B.).



ANNUAL LOCALITY REPORTS

FIRTH OF THAMES

LITTLE BLACK SHAG — 10 on old wharf at Thames on 13/8/59.

SPOTTED SHAG — These continue to visit the Wharekawa coast. 48 at Tarata Pt. on 12/9/59 (A.J.G.); 3 on 15/7/60.

WHITE-FACED HERON — Frequently seen among the mangroves at Kaiaua and Miranda. Evidently nesting inland.

BLUE HERON — A rare bird on the west side of the Firth. 1 at Kaiaua on 16/4/60 and 12/6/60.

ROYAL SPOONBILL — 1 seen several times near Miranda between April and 21/8/60, once even on the pools. Later 3 reported (J.P.).

SHOVELER — 3 on Miranda pools on 30/1/60, 4 at Miranda on 15/7/60, 3 being drakes in finest plumage.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — 111+ on 13/11/59 at Kaiaua; 123 on 6/12/59. As usual numbers built up during January. 500+ on 1/2/60; c. 600 on 20/2/60; c. 700 on 20/3/60; c. 650 on 16/4/60; c. 500 at Kaiaua, which is their favourite beach, on 12/6/60; 100+ on 21/8/60. 7 at Thames on 29/8/60.

VARIABLE OYSTERCATCHER — 1 *reischeki* type between 22/8/59 and 6/12/59; one or two black oystercatchers e.g. 2 on 20/1/60; 1 on 21/8/60, were usually to be found. Since observations began along the Kaiaua-Miranda coast twenty years ago, there has been no hint of breeding.

ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER — c. 105 on 6/12/59 at Waitakaruru (68 at Piako may have been part of this flock) and 100+ 31/12/59; 32+ on 30/1/60. The 'difficult' southern shore of the firth is favoured by these plovers. None could be found on 16/4/60.

BANDED DOTTEREL — Now reduced to the status of scarce breeding bird, perhaps 3 prs., between Kaiaua and Miranda. 1 nest with 3 eggs on 21/9/59; 18 on 6/12/59, summer census, showed post-nuptial influx was starting; but one breeding pair on 30/12/59, probably had small young hidden; 200+ on ploughland at Waitakaruru and Kairito on 1/1/60 and c. 250 (90% adults) on 10/1/60 in a turnip field; one doing a subdued screaming like an animal in pain and a crouching run, a distraction display as if it had young hidden there; 19/1/60, 50+ at old limeworks and 170+ at Kairito; c. 200 on 2/2/60; c. 180 on 20/2/60 including a male in full plumage; none seen Kaiaua-Kairito on 16/4/60 and 12/6/60; c. 8 on Miranda pools on 27/8/60.

RED-BREASTED DOTTEREL — Occurs casually from Kaiaua-Kairito, three being the biggest number seen together. A pair had 3 eggs at Kaiaua on 13/11/59, but the nest came to grief. Nesting on this coast is rarely successful.

LARGE SAND DOTTEREL — After a gap of nearly five years one was found in a cultivated paddock at Kairito on 1/1/60 (v. *Notornis* VIII, 232 and 251-252) where it was studied by several observers up to 20/2/60 and photographed by D.A.U. and J.P. It seemed definitely to prefer the company of Wrybills to that of Banded Dotterels.

WRYBILL — Small numbers of non-breeders throughout the spring near White Bridge viz: 19 on 5/11/59; 13 on 6/12/59; 23 on 27/12/59. After Christmas numbers increased rapidly. c. 430 on 31/12/59; c. 880 on 5/1/60; c. 1500 on 2/2/60; c. 2500 on 2/3/60; an immense flock of c. 3000 in the air over Kairito and up and down Wrybill reach for about two hours around full tide, a brilliant exhibition of sustained and controlled flying *en masse*, on 12/6/60. c. 250 on 15/7/60, 124 on 27/8/60; c. 300 on 25/9/60 at White Bridge, which seems to be attracting more Wrybills each year.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW — 14 (? 17) on 6/12/59; 14 on 5/1/60; 15 on 24/1/60; 6 on 30/1/60; 4 on 1/2/60.

WHIMBREL — 2 at Piako on 6/12/59; 1 at Kairito on 12/6/60.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT — c. 870 on 21/9/59, mostly having wintered, perhaps a few newly-arrived migrants. On 6/10/59, c. 3000 seen to come down out of a heavy overcast sky in mobs of 300-400 into a marshy paddock; just arriving? (A.T.). Summer census, 9215, on 6/12/59. Some thousands throughout autumn, but only c. 300 on 16/4/60, probably more between Waitakaruru and Piako, but none at Kairito. 460+ on 12/6/60, some at each roost, Kaiaua to Kairito. Wet paddocks west of Miranda pools were often visited during the winter.

ASIATIC BLACK-TAILED GODWIT — 3 (?5) on 10/10/59; 6 on Miranda Pools on 24/10/59 (v. *Notornis* VIII, 225), 8/11/59 and 6/12/59 (census). One disappeared. 5 on 30/12/59 and up till 2/3/60, when 2 were reddening. 1 at Kaiaua on 19/2/60. 3 on 16/4/60 richly rufous, at Coxhead's Creek. 1 among Pied Stilts at Miranda Pools on 3/9/60, with some rufous on chest. All seen were critically examined. No Hudsonian Godwit could be found.

TURNSTONE — 16 on 24/10/59; c. 56 at Kairito on 31/12/59, the biggest flock so far recorded on this coast; 41 at Kaiaua on 5/1/60; 30 on 30/1/60 at Kairito; 17 on 16/4/60; 12 on 12/6/60.

KNOT — c. 200 on 21/9/59 had probably wintered in N.Z. c. 6600 on 6/12/59, summer census, but curiously few in late summer, unless they were on the Piako-Waitakaruru stretch. 200+ on 20/2/60, at Kaiaua; none at Miranda. 16/4/60, none Kaiaua-Kairito; nor on 12/6/60.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER — 10 on Miranda pools on 10/10/59; c. 20 on 24/10/59 and throughout summer, 23 on 31/12/59; 25 on 24/1/60; 21 on 2/2/60; 16+ on 20/2/60; none on 16/4/60. As a change from Miranda pools, several often resorted to the Kairito turnip-field, which had its damp patches.

RED-NECKED STINT — Only one throughout the spring; 2 on 31/12/59; 5 on 24/1/60; 4 on 2/3/60; 1 on 30/9/60; 3 on 25/10/60.

CURLEW SANDPIPER — 2+ on 6/12/59 and 6+ on 31/12/59 at Waitakaruru. Varying numbers frequented the Kairito turnip-field, max. 9, on 24/1/60 and 30/1/60. One on 5/1/60 was curiously red for the season. 3 on 20/2/60.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER — The first to be recorded in New Zealand was studied by several observers in the vicinity of Kairito Creek between 5/1/60 and 1/3/60. It was photographed by D.A.U. and J.P. (v. *Notornis* VIII, 233-235 and 252-254).

PIED STILT — Kaiaua to Miranda 262+ on 22/8/59, including a non-breeding flock of c. 230. 4 nests examined contained 4, 4, 4, 3 eggs. Summer census, 397 on 6/12/59. Winter count Kaiaua to Kairito, 2238 on 12/6/60. 5 on nests at pools on 21/8/60, also c. 210 non-breeders. 6 on nests at Kairito on 3/9/60. An almost black stilt, but with some white on face and speckled underparts, was noted on 20/2/60, 2/3/60 and 16/4/60.

ARCTIC SKUA — Usually present throughout summer. 3 on 16/4/60; 1 off Kairito shellbank on 12/6/60.

BLACK-BILLED GULL — c. 220 on 22/8/59; c. 50 on 26/9/59; 20+ on 24/10/59; 7+ on 6/12/59 and perhaps 50 at Parawai; 4 on 19/1/60. A few immature non-breeders may be expected now in summer. c. 250 on 16/4/60; 50+ at Kaiaua and c. 500 at old works on 12/6/60; c. 750 on 15/7/60.

CASPIAN TERN — 25 on 22/8/59; 36, census, on 6/12/59; 37+ only, Kaiaua - Kairito on 12/6/60.

WHITE-FRONTED TERN — As usual the colony on the big shellbank near the road-corner had its ups and downs. On 5/11/59, 3500+ terns were present, spread over c. 200 yds. and 10 eggs were found. On 13/11/59 only c. 500 birds were present; there were a few scattered eggs and many had been eaten by gulls. On 6/12/59, numbers had again increased to 1050 and another 1000 were resting on a shellbank. There were c. 1200 eggs, but big tides at the end of the month washed many of these out. On 5/1/60 there were hundreds of chicks; 1 flying from an early laying, and many new eggs. Terns could be seen fishing all over the firth. On 19/1/60 1000+ chicks and a few nests still with eggs. On 24/1/60 450+ fledglings and 91 dead, abandoned. On 1/2/60 only c. 315 adults. The fishing was hard and some were seen heading for the colony carrying fish from ten miles up the coast. 16/4/60, Kaiaua-Kairito, 100+; 12/6/60 c. 50. Some hundreds back and noisy on breeding ground on 29/8/60.

TERN (Sp.?) — Tiny *albifrons*-like terns are now expected as part of the summer scene between Kairito and Waitakaruru. 8 on 6/12/59, at least one appearing to have the markings of a youngster only a few months old. 5 on 19/1/60. Behaviour as described before (v. *Notornis VII*, 174-182).

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN — One, first found on the Miranda pools in Feb., 1959, was still visiting them in Sept. '60. A second in quite different plumage, was sitting among White-fronted Terns at Kaiaua on 16/4/60. It was not found again (v. *Notornis IX*, 63-64).

YELLOWHAMMER — This coast is a favourite winter haunt of the introduced European passerines. On 12/6/60, Yellowhammers were in such numbers, probably 1000+; that perhaps they deserve special mention.

— H.R.McK., R.B.S.

MANUKAU — (a) UPPER MANUKAU

Despite industrial pollution and continued reclamation around the fringes, especially near Westfield and Otahuhu, the creeks and tidal reaches above the Onehunga-Mangere bridge remain a fruitful feeding-ground for great numbers of gulls and waders.

S.I. PIED OYSTERCATCHER — 35 on 10/12/59 at Tararata Creek, which now seems to be a regular summering-ground for non-breeders; c. 112 on 19/12/59; 5 on rocks at Waikaraka on 10/7/60.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT — 2000+ throughout spring '59; 3000+ at Harania Ck. on 7/1/60; plentiful throughout autumn; very few during winter; 2000+ in air at full tide in gusty weather on 4/10/60; and many more flying across the isthmus to Hauraki Gulf beaches.