

# New Zealand Bird Notes

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## WINTER DIVING OF GANNETS.

By W. J. PHILLIPPS, Dominion Museum, Wellington.

In the N.Z. Journal of Science and Technology, vol. 7, p. 191, 1924, I supplied a small article on sardines or pilchards in Wellington Harbour. After recording the species as common at the wharves, I mentioned how on entering the harbour the pilchards (*Sardinops neopilchardus*) seemed to divide up into several shoals as could be determined by the movements of sea birds. Large numbers of gannets (*Morus serrator*) were to be seen diving with their accustomed rapidity and these together with several species of shags were for a few days at the end of July, 1924, very common in the harbour.

Again, in 1929, I had occasion to refer to this winter diving of the gannets to take pilchards (N.Z. Journ. Sci. and Tech., vol. 10, p. 343). In this article I mentioned the men stationed as gannet watchers on certain high points around Queen Charlotte Sound. From about 1860 until the early years of the present century, large numbers of pilchards were taken each winter from this Sound, the fish being locally known as Picton herring. The presence of shags was not a sure indication that pilchards were congregating; but gannets invariably collected and commenced diving when shoals became large. Gannets did not disturb the shoals to the same extent as did large fishes and porpoises. Pilchards were taken in the Sound by a net 14 fathoms deep and 96 fathoms long. These fish have a habit of lying packed in a silvery mass on the bottom and rising to the surface for food. The gannet watchers took up their stations in May and remained as required until August.

Since 1924 I have kept a general look-out for gannets arriving in Wellington Harbour, my observations being made from the Khandallah Hills. Odd birds may be seen diving in May and June; but generally most gannets arrive in July and August. Some years only one or two birds appear and never more than two can be seen at one time. The main diving ground seems to be about half a mile from the shore off the Kaiwarra-Ngahauranga section of the railway line. Water in this area is from 10 to 11 fathoms deep.

The last large flock of gannets noted in Wellington Harbour was in 1944, when numerous birds were diving far out in the harbour. This was in the latter winter months. Some of these birds must have been diving in very deep water—or perhaps the shoals were being kept at the surface by sharks and other predatory fish. More gannets dive early in the morning than later in the day. This diving habit seldom continues to any great extent for more than a few successive days and is quite erratic depending on the migrations of the shoals.

It is curious that the gannets do not seem to dive to take the estuary mullet, *Agonostomus forsteri* (called herring in the North Island). There are large shoals of these mullet constantly on the move close inshore in the relatively shallow water of the harbour. Shags select large specimens only. The pilchard is apparently a fish that is highly esteemed by more creatures than man. For many of the larger fishes, fishermen prefer to have it for bait, and the gannets add their preference.

#### WHIMBREL IN NORTH ISLAND.

(a) 14/9/42. A whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus*) was examined on the deck of an overseas vessel at Auckland. It had come aboard in the Tasman Sea south of Lord Howe Island. It fed readily on scraps of raw meat which were accepted immediately after capture. Exposed portions of the dorsal feathers were markedly frayed and of triangular outline as after migration. (E. G. Turbott.)

(b) A whimbrel has spent some months of the winter in Manukau Harbour. It was first seen on 16/6/46 among godwits, by P. C. Bull. On 28/7/46 P.C.B. and R.B.S. had excellent views of it at a distance of thirty yards in a pack of waders that included godwits, stilts and oyster-catchers. In flight it appeared as rather a darker bird than a godwit in winter plumage, and on the ground its dark spotted chest helped to distinguish it from the godwits. The decurved beak was not always easily discernible, but was particularly well seen once, when as the birds stood on a small rock, its head was silhouetted against smooth water. On 4/8/46 it was again well seen by N. M. Gleeson and R.B.S. It was resting and preening itself on a shell-bank among stilts, and attention was drawn to it at once by its dark chest. For comparison, a party of pale-chested godwits was standing a few yards distant. As the tide dropped, the whimbrel, in company with other waders, moved down to the mud to feed. Eventually it flew off alone, and gave its distinctive call three times, a rippling trill but not at full strength. Like most of the godwits that pass the winter in New Zealand, the bird was almost certainly immature. This seems to be the first time that a whimbrel has been recorded as wintering in New Zealand. It was well seen with a telescope again on 21/8/46 by D. A. Urquhart and the writer. It was noted that the legs were a pale bluish grey. (R. B. Sibson.)

(c) On two successive days, 17 and 18/11/45, I had splendid views of a whimbrel at the mouth of the Ohau River, Manawatu. The bird was first noticed in flight and as it settled near a bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) an excellent opportunity was given to compare its size. It was slightly larger than the godwit, the long down-curved bill did not appear to be quite as long as the godwit's bill; the plumage generally was a mottled brown, with a flecked white rump (v-shaped), blackish tipped wings; a white eyebrow, a dark stripe on top of the head; grey feet and dark bill.

For some five minutes the bird ducked itself in a shallow back-water, splashing its wings and dipping its bill in the water and preening its feathers under its wings. When disturbed it uttered a loud sharp cry of "willy-willy-willy-willy-willy-willy." It was observed at 50 yards distance with eight magnification binoculars.—R. H. D. Stidolph, Masterton.

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## HUDSONIAN GODWIT IN AUCKLAND PROVINCE.

By R. B. SIBSON.

The Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa limosa haemastica*) now rare even in its native America, has been observed twice this year in the province of Auckland.

(a) Mr. H. R. McKenzie writes that on 10/3/46, near Waitakaruru, in the Firth of Thames, one was seen in a close pack of bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa l. lapponica*) on a mudflat and was carefully watched for over half an hour by Mr. P. H. Orum, Capt. A. T. Edgar and himself. It was a small godwit, showing hardly any colour except for a fully black tail. Its identity was considered quite certain.

(b) On 28/7/46, Mr. P. C. Bull and the writer had close views of one and noted all the diagnostic field characters, on Puketutu Flats, in Manukau Harbour. It was first noticed flying with three bar-tailed godwits, and some sort of chase was in progress with much zig-zagging and exciting calling, but whether in play or in anger was not certain. Fortunately it settled eventually among other waders on a shell-bank, to which there was easy access by way of a lava reef and under the cover of typical salt-marsh vegetation. On the ground its smooth-looking grey breast, clear-cut eyestripe and small size marked the Hudsonian as different from the scores of bar-tailed godwits around it, and when it rose the sharply-defined pattern of white rump and black tail was most conspicuous. Finally, as it flew past at the head of a party of bar-tails, its whitish alar bar showed distinctly. It was a neat godwit about the size of a small male bar-tail.

This record is particularly interesting as it is the first reported winter occurrence of the Hudsonian godwit in New Zealand. The bird was presumably immature, and, like the majority of immature bar-tails, was content to stay here growing up, before attempting the long journey back to its Arctic breeding grounds. It should be in New Zealand at least till March, 1947.

The Hudsonian godwit has now been observed four times in the province of Auckland, these being the only records for the North Island. The two earlier occurrences were reported in "The Emu," 1943, Vol. xliii, p. 136. The first bird was found by W. Ridland and the writer near

the mouth of the Waikato River on the south bank. It was resting at high tide in a paddock with a party of non-breeding stilts. The date was 2/11/40. The second bird was seen three weeks later, on 24/11/40, by C. A. Fleming and the writer, at Mangawai, some ninety miles to the north. It was flying with a large mixed flock of waders, consisting mainly of godwits and knots (*Calidris canutus*). Careful watching of godwit packs may show that the Hudsonian godwit visits New Zealand more often than is generally suspected.

## WILD PEAFOWL IN WANGANUI DISTRICT.

By C. A. FLEMING, Wellington.

In the summer of 1945-46 I was engaged on geological survey work in the Wanganui district. For some weeks I was puzzled by strange shrill cries unlike those of any bird on the New Zealand list that I knew of, but similar to that of the peacock. Eventually, in the hills north of Longacre, I topped a ridge, and looking down into the gully on the other side, saw a fine peacock gliding across a patch of native scrub, its tail trailing gloriously behind—a most incongruous sight in an otherwise typical New Zealand scene. I recorded peafowl in a number of places between Tokomaru East Road, on the west of Wanganui River, and the vicinity of Longacre, east of the river. The birds were in all cases wild, not associated with homesteads, and have apparently become well established, at least in a limited area.

The peacock (*Pavo cristatus*) is a native of India and Ceylon, but has been distributed widely as an ornamental bird. In New Zealand I had not previously heard of peafowl in a feral state, but have since been told of others in the Gisborne area. In Biblical times, we read, the peacock was introduced into Palestine by Solomon. Perhaps other members can tell us who performed this service for New Zealand, and can provide more information on the dates and places of establishment of a handsome addition to the list of the introduced birds of New Zealand.

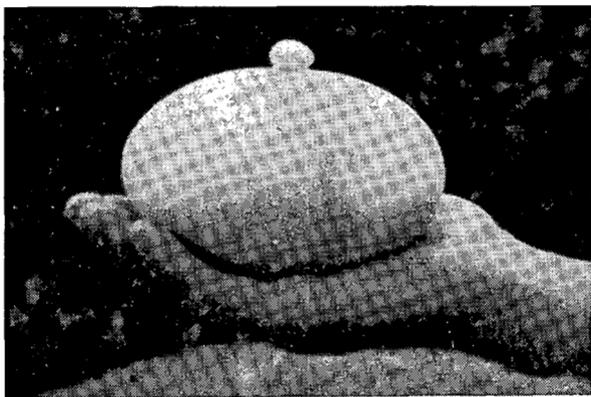


Photo. B. Iorns, Masterton.

A contrast in size of N.Z. birds' eggs: North Island Kiwi and Grey Warbler. These are among the largest and smallest eggs laid by native birds.

# CLASSIFIED SUMMARISED NOTES.

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Included in notes supplied by the Dunedin Naturalists' Field Club are contributions from Mrs. McCraw, Miss Miller, Mrs. J. A. Moore, Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Moore, Mrs. E. Sutherland, Miss F. Roberts, Mr. Williams and Miss Woodhouse.

Items of interest in this year's classified notes include the discovery of a new breeding race of the black petrel in Westland, notable occurrences of waders, a small flock of spur-winged plover in Westland, and a white-winged black tern recorded in Southland.

**BROWN KIWI** (*Apteryx australis*).—Puhi Puhi, 25 miles north of Whangarei; reported by Mr. G. Wood; ranges between Kaiwaka and Waipu, reported by Mrs. G. K. McKenzie. (H.R.McK.) S.W. side of Ruapehu, just below bush-line, 2/12/45, one heard; inland from Patea reported plentiful. (W.P.M.) Bravo Is. (Stewart Is.), 3/8/46, one reported by Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

**LARGE SPOTTED KIWI** (*Apteryx Haastii*).—Large male found dead, struck by train east of Arthur's Pass, 6/8/46. Numerous reports of calls heard and footprints seen in Canterbury hills east of Divide. (R.A.F.)

**DROOPING CRESTED PENGUIN** (*Eudyptes pachrhynechus*).—Unconfirmed report nesting Akaroa Harbour, December, 1945. (R.A.F.)

**LITTLE BLUE PENGUIN** (*Eudyptula minor*).—Opua, Bay of Islands, 12/10/45, nest in boat shed, two eggs; 25/10/45, two chicks just hatched, adult bird very tame did not mind being lifted up with a stick; 8/12/45, chicks large, sitting outside the nest at night awaiting parent and supper; an adult arrived every night at about 9 p.m.; 23/12/45,

chicks fully fledged and left the nest. (M.A.E.D.) Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf, 1945-46, frequently seen, up to 27 in one trip; 21/10/45, two birds on one nest in rocks. (T.M.R.) Heavy mortality on East Coromandel beaches late Aug. early Sept., 1946 (R.B.S.) Nesting on Bush Island, Coromandel, 9/9/46. (C.A.F.) Queen Charlotte Sound, July, several (R.A.F.)

WHITE-FLIPPED PENGUIN (*E. albosignata*).—Normal breeding season reported from Banks Peninsula, 1945-46. (R.A.F.)

DABCHICK (*Polyocephalus rufopectus*).—September, 1946, Hamurana, one pair; Rerewhakaitu, 3 pairs; Lake Okaro, 2 pairs; Waimangu, 3 (plus) pairs. (C.A.F.) One on flood water, edge of Mangatawhiri Swamp 6/10/46. (R.B.S. and D.A.U.) Wairarapa Lake, 21/4/46, two reported. (R.H.D.S.) Coastal lagoons near Levin, 3 or 4 pairs, one with 2 chicks, also reported on lagoon where none seen for years. (G.C.F.) Lake near Foxton, breeding season, four reported. (A.S.W.)

DIVING PETREL (*Pelecanoides urinatrix*).—Numbers seen at sea off Mercury Islands, 20/9/46. (C.A.F.)

WHITEFACED STORM PETREL (*Pelagodroma marina*).—Off Mercury Islands, many, 20/9/46. (C.A.F.) In summer usually found in Hauraki Gulf about two miles south of Tiri; 1 dead, Opito Bay, Coromandel, 4/9/46. (R.B.S.) Between Ponui Island and Coromandel, 20, 31/12/45. (T.M.R.)

CAPE PIGEON (*Daption capensis*).—Muriwai, 1 newly dead, 3/11/45. (H.R.McK.) Opito Bay, Coromandel, 1 dead, 4/9/46 (R.B.S.) Compact flock of about 2,000 working off Whaling Station, Tory Channel, July-August, 1946; moulting female found dead, Leithfield Beach, 18/11/45. (R.A.F.)

GIANT PETREL (*Macronectes giganteus*).—Seen in Rangitoto waters, 5/12/45; 1 on 18/1/46; 1 on 10/5/46 (R.B.S.) About 2 dozen off the Whaling Station, Tory Channel, July-August; one or two noticed, Lyttelton Harbour, 29/8/46. (R.A.F.)

BROAD-BILLED PRION (*Fachyptila vittata*).—A few immature birds driven ashore near Christchurch, December; one adult blown ashore alive, Westport, 25/8/46. (R.A.F.)

SLENDER-BILLED PRION (*P. belcheri*).—One dried skin picked up at Puhinui, Manukau, by D.A.U., 20/3/46. (R.B.S.)

FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER (*Puffius carneipes*).—Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf, 7/10/45 to 16/6/46, 23 trips made; up to 13/1/46, 0 to 118; from 20/1/46, x100 up to 21/4/46; none on to 16/6/46. (T.M.R.) Some scores, Rangitoto to Tiri, 17/5/46. (R.B.S.)

BULLER'S SHEARWATER (*P. bulleri*).—Ponui Island area, Hauraki Island; 10/3/46, 1; 17/3/46, 1; 31/3/46, 1; 21/4/46, 3 (T.M.R.) Rangitoto-Tiri: 3 on 5/12/45; c. 150 on 18/1/46; some dozens, 10/5/46; c. 40, 17/5/46; seen offshore at Muriwai, 28/4/46. (R.B.S.) A few north of Waiheke on 2/10/46. (C.A.F.)

MUTTON BIRD (*P. griseus*).—Muriwai Beach, North Auckland; 4/11/45. 29 newly dead; 10/2/46, nine dead; a loosely formed flock feeding offshore for over six miles; almost certainly this species. (H.R.McK.) Purakanui, Otago, 18-20/1/46, calls heard nearly every evening. (I.T.)

Karatane, Otago, 16/2/46, Mrs. J. A. Moore reported mutton-bird trying to rob tern of fish (D.N.F.C.)

SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER (*P. tenuirostris*).—One dead Muriwai, 27/1/46. (R.B.S.)

FLUTTERING SHEARWATER (*P. gavia*).—Ponui Island area. Hauraki Gulf; 7/10/45 to 16/6/46, 23 trips made; up to 26/1/46, small lots of up to 30 or none at all; from 31/3/46 to 16/6/46, x1,000 most trips; on 26/5/46 estimated at 30,000 or many more, feeding on tiny fish. (T.M.R., P.H.O., H.R.McK.) Offshore at Muriwai in strong easterly, 28/4/46; reported off St. Heliers and Howick in winter; several parties between Brown's Island and Pakihi and some hundreds between Ponui and Waiheke on 29/9/46. (R.B.S.) June, July, 1946, Howick, Maraetai, Clevedon, Orere and Kaiarau, many thousands reported by many different people; an unusual influx for this area. (H.R.McK.) Many off Mercury Islands, 20/9/46; on Bush Island, Coromandel, eggshell found, 9/9/46, approximates that of this species in size though more ovoid like that of Mottled Petrel. (C.A.F.) One found dead, New Brighton; large flocks working within a few feet of main wharves at Picton, July-August, 46. (R.A.F.)

BLACK PETREL (*Procellaria parkinsoni*).—A new race breeding in Westland hills, with winter breeding habits. Discovered December, 1945, when young had practically all departed. Eggs laid in mid May, 1946. (R.A.F.)

WHITE-HEADED PETREL (*Pterodroma lessoni*).—One dead, Muriwai, 28/4/46. (H.R.McK.)

MOTTLED PETREL (*P. inexpectata*).—One near Tiri, 18/1/46. (R.B.S.)

COOK'S PETREL (*P. cookii*).—Muriwai Beach, 10/2/46, one dead; Wayby, Rodney County, North Auckland, 23/2/46, one dead on farm about mid-way between the two coasts; a fully developed young bird of the season. (H.R.McK.)

WANDERING ALBATROSS (*Diomedea exulans*).—Three juveniles stranded alive in Canterbury; Burnham, Kaiapoi, 11/3/46, and Rangiora, 22/2/46. Also one found at Southbridge, 30/1/46. (R.A.F.)

ROYAL ALBATROSS (*D. epomophora*).—Muriwai Beach, 4/11/45, two newly dead found by Don. McKenzie; a skin of one is now in Auckland Museum. (H.R.McK.)

WHITE-CAPPED MOLLYMAWK (*Thalassarche cauta*).—Muriwai, one newly dead, 4/11/45. (H.R.McK.)

GREY-HEADED MOLLYMAWK (*T. chrysostoma*).—Muriwai, one, 28/4/46. (P.C.B.)

BLACK SHAG (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).—Wainakarua River mouth, 26/12/44, flock of six and three solitary ones in flight (S.I.A.) About six standing on gravel of Dart River delta, Otago, 22/2/46. (W.A.W.)

PIED SHAG (*P. varius*).—Clevedon River and Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf; plentiful as usual; 18/11/45, nesting colony found with many full-sized young, some smaller and some eggs; x100 birds. White-throated nesting in same colony. 9/12/45, visited by P.H.O. and H.R.McK.; estimated 150-200 nests; c65% large pied and c35% white-

throated; many young flying and swimming and quite a few standing on or near nests; some eggs and small chicks found. 7/4/46, T.M.R. found a number of birds at the colony and one nest of 3 small young.—(T.M.R.) Odd birds and groups frequent off both coasts Coromandel Peninsula; large breeding colony Great Mercury Island. (C.A.F.) Rotoroa, Hauraki Gulf, colony of about 18 nests with some well-grown young on 29/4/46. (G.A.B., R.B.S., C.A.F.) Common in Queen Charlotte Sound, August, 1946. (R.A.F.)

**WHITE-THROATED SHAG** (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucus*).—July, 1946, five, comprising three white-throated and two white-bellied, flew over Parnell. During 1942 a white-bellied individual fished for several days in pond in Auckland Domain, perching in willows. (E.G.T.) Little Pied form uncommon at Matapihi, Tauranga. (M.H.) Clevedon River and Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf; more plentiful this year; nesting with large pied; (See account of pied shag); one apparently little pied juvenile standing by a nest, and one still with some down but pure white from the throat to the upper breast, seen by P.H.O. and H.R.McK. (T.M.R.) Common in Queen Charlotte Sound, August, 1946; proportion of Little Pied about 20%. (R.A.F.)

**LITTLE BLACK SHAG** (*P. sulcirostris*).—A small party frequented Orakei Basin in winter, 1946. (M.E.J., R.B.S.)

**SPOTTED SHAG** (*Stictocarbo punctatus punctatus*)—About 20/4/46 colony reported at south head of Kaawa Creek, near Port Waikato; estimated 80-90 birds nesting on inaccessible basalt stack about twenty yards offshore; readily visible from mainland; naked chicks in nests; reported by Mr. E. S. Richardson, identification confirmed from museum specimens. (E.G.T.) Colony between Thumb and Kauri Points, Waibeke, visited 29/9/46; about 40 birds and 17-20 nests; few adults still crested; of 11 nests, three new and empty, one with three eggs, rest with young up to 9 inches high; three birds seen well south of Cowes. (G.A.B., R.B.S. and C.A.F.) Plentiful on nesting sites, Banks Peninsula, 15th June, 1946; numerous Queen Charlotte Sounds, July, 1946. (R.A.F.) Te Miko Point, between Greymouth and Westport; some 250 birds at ledges in cliff, state of breeding not seen, August, 1946. (C.A.F.)

**BLUE SHAG** (*S. p. steady*).—Shag Cliff, Purakanui, Otago, 16/1/46, about 300. Little Papanui, Otago Pen., 23/3/46, two or three. (I.T.)

**GANNET** (*Morus serrator*).—Gannet Rock, off Waiheke Island, 28/12/45, nesting colony, fresh eggs to full-grown young. Clevedon River, 1/12/45, one up river at limit of brackish water. (T.M.R.) On 2/7/46, four gannets near Wanganui River mole, first fine day following very bad weather, not seen again. (W.P.M.) Waikanae Estuary, Manawatu, 25/4/46, juvenile seen fishing whole day. (K.A.W.) Few off Banks Peninsula, 15/6/46; several Queen Charlotte Sound, July, 1946. (R.A.F.) c50 south of Waikouaiti, Otago, 17/1/46. (J.M.C. and E.O.W.)

**WHITE HERON** (*Casmerodius albus*).—Whareroto, Wairarapa Lake, 10/3/45, one; 14/4/45, two; 17/4/45 and 27/5/45, three; 26/7/45, 11/8/45, 7/9/45, 22/9/45, and 30/9/45, two. (I.E.B.) Ten nests were occupied in the Sanctuary on the Waitangi-roto Creek, Westland, and 17 young birds were reared in 1945-46 season. (R.A.F.) Merton Swamp, near Waikouaiti, Otago, 4/6/45, two reported. (I.T.); do., 8/9/45, one reported by Mrs. J. A. Moore. (D.N.F.C.)

WHITE-FACED HERON (*Notophox novaehollandiae*).—Plentifully distributed in Westland and undoubtedly increasing; groups of up to seven reported. (R.A.F.) Lagoon at Tinwald, Canterbury, 16/1/46, one watched from car (on main road) for some time. (E.O.W. and J.M.C.)

REEF HERON (*Demigretta sacra*).—Tauranga, parties of up to eight on the shore of the inner harbour, January, February and early March; apparently flying out at night to Karewa Island. (M.H.) Castle Rock, Castlepoint, 18/11/45, nests, 2 chicks (2 and 4 days), 2 chicks (half-grown), 2 chicks (2 days) and 1 egg, 2 eggs, 3 chicks (3 days); total, 5 nests with 9 adults present. Eggs measured 4.85x3.58mm., 4.80x4.05, 4.75x3.80. (J.M.C.) Te Awaite, East Coast, Wairarapa, 23/12/45, two. (R.A.D.) At least one pair Heathcote Estuary, Christchurch, throughout the year. (R.A.F.) Waikouaiti River mouth, 22/10/45, two; Purakanui Inlet, Otago, 12-20/1/46, up to 3; Big Papanui, Otago Pen., 23/3/46, one. (I.T.) Jackson's Bay, Westland, 1/1/46, one reported by Mrs. F. L. Moore. (D.N.F.C.)

BITTERN (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*). — Lake Rotorua, Rotorua, 11/11/45, five in lagoon; very amusing competitive courtship, two males and one female out in field; the males showed light shoulder patches which I have not noted before; probably a breeding feature. (H.R.McK.) Ohau River estuary, Manawatu, 18/11/45, two. (R.H.D.S.) Still found in all parts of Canterbury. (R.A.F.)

ROYAL SPOONBILL (*Platalea regia*).—At first four, then three, on Lake Ellesmere, May-June, 1946. (R.A.F.)

PARADISE DUCK (*Tadorna variegata*).—Rerewhākaitu, 2 pairs; Waimangu, 1 pair and 2 immature in male-like plumage, September, 1946. (C.A.F.) Pair near Utiki, 3/7/46. Schoolmaster at Moawhango School (north of Taihape) reports often seen there; previously I have seen them breeding on Moawhango River, opposite Desert Road, Waiouru; apparently distributed all down the Moawhango River, and into the Rangitikei Valley. (W.P.M.) In extensive work in area between Waitotara and Wanganui rivers within few miles of coast, only two pairs encountered, December, 1945-March, 1946, but reports of small parties wintering lower reaches Wanganui River, Wangaehu Valley, below Baker's Crossing railway station, over 70 together with females predominating strongly, on 27/3/46, and other occurrences suggest that the species is much commoner in this watershed than further west. (C.A.F.) Salt Lake, Sutton, Otago, 21/11/45, pair with 10 y. Middlemarch district, Otago, 21-28/11/45, seen daily about river and ponds; one pair with 10y in juvenile plumage. (I.T.) Many seen in several places in Rees Valley between Glenorchy and the Shelter Rock Hut, Otago, and pairs and flocks seen, viz., 6 on 22/2/46, 6 and 8 on 23/2/46, 10 on 28/2/46; 2 seen in Upper Dart Valley, about 2 miles below the glacier, 25-26/2/46. (W.A.W.)

GREY DUCK (*Anas superciliosa*).—Herbert, Otago, 10/9/44, five on pond, one on bank; one came off water, chased the one on bank a few yards until within 2-3 feet when the latter lifted its wings and rose in the air. Pursuer stopped immediately and returned to water, followed at same speed by the other which again took up position on bank. After a few minutes the whole manoeuvre was repeated. This happened three times in 25 minutes. (S.I.A.) Middlemarch, Otago, 21-28/11/45,

50-60; Taieri River, 7 miles of Middlemarch, 27-28/11/45, about 70 sunning on shingle. (I.T.) Queenstown Bay, Otago, 20/2/46—1/3/46, 20-30, very tame. (W.A.W.)

GREY TEAL (*Anas gibberifrons*).—Waimangu, Rotorua, pair, 13/9/46. (C.A.F.) Lake Rerewhakaitu, Rotorua, 16/11/45, pair seen at c30 feet from boat. (P.H.O., R.H.McK.) Lake Onoke, Wairarapa, six seen 28/2/46. (J.M.C.)

BROWN DUCK (*Anas chlorotis*).—Waipu, North Auckland, Feb., 1946; several small parties seen; unfortunately they are being shot. (H.R.McK.)

SHOVELLER (*A. rhynchotis*).—Clevedon, 1942; one fresh egg found on grass in swampy field; identified by Mr. E. G. Turbott and Major G. A. Buddle. (H.R.McK.) Hamurana, Rotorua, Sept., 1946, 8 plus pairs. (C.A.F.)

NEW ZEALAND SCAUP or BLACK TEAL (*Aythya novaeseelandiae*).—September, 1946, Hamurana, 88; Rotomahana, 42 plus; Okaro, 2; Ward Baths, Rotorua, 35 plus; the foregoing in flocks. (C.A.F.) Rotorua area, 11th to 17/11/45; Hamurana, c60 up in creek, some paired, two mating in water; Lake Roto-iti, north c30, south c30, mostly in flocks, a few paired; Lake Rotorua, one pair; Sulphur Pt., Lake Rotorua, one pair; back of Baths, party of 8; Lake Rerewhakaitu, two pairs, one pair suspected of having a nest. (P.H.O., H.R.McK.) Common round Queenstown Bay, Otago, with grey ducks, and very tame; two seen near Kinloch, 22/2/46. (W.A.W.)

BLUE DUCK (*Hymenolaimus malacorrhynchus*).—Two seen at Aratiki, 16/9/45. (R.St.P.)

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*).—Clevedon, 1945, up to 23 at river mouth in winter; did not stay for breeding season. (H.R.McK.) A huge flock 1500-2000 winters in Manukau Harbour off Ihumatao. (R.B.S.) Korarau, Wairarapa, 13/10/46, 3 young c 3-4 weeks. (J.M.C.) Nest as usual at Lake Ellesmere in September and again in April. (R.A.F.) Information was received just prior to the commencement of the open season for game that a considerable number of nesting colonies existed among the black swan population in the vicinity of Lake Ellesmere. Investigations were made to determine if appropriate action could be taken, but as the majority of the eggs were in an advanced state of incubation, protective measures were regarded as impracticable, so late in the season. (N.C.A.Soc.) Port Chalmers, 1/5/46, flocks in flight at dusk, heading north, passing over. (W.M.) All Day Bay Lagoon, near Kakanui, Otago, 11/11/45, 35-40 flew out into bay, 50-60 remained on lagoon. (S.I.A.) Mouth of Kaikorai Stream and Green Island Swamp, Otago, 23/9/45 and 6/10/45, at least 200; Shag River estuary, 30/9/45, c. 24; tidal flats, Merton, 22/10/45, c. 20. (I.T.)

BUSH HAWK (*Falco novaeseelandiae*).—Kawaha Pt., Lake Rotorua, 15/11/45, one chasing blackbird. (P.H.O.) One adult, one immature at bush edge s.e. of Tauakira Peak at east end of Pitangi Track, Wanganui district, 5/2/46; near Okiwa Trig, Rangitatau West Road, 5 seen in air; Puaio Track, Waitotara, several seen, March, 1946; reported near Wanganui in winter. (C.A.F.) Masterton, 27/4/46, two reported in town at-

tacking domestic pigeons. (R.H.D.S.) Still reported in small numbers from Canterbury foothills. (R.A.F.)

**HARRIER** (*Circus approximans*).—Two juvenals eating eel near Atene, Wanganui, 5/2/46. (C.A.F.) Plentiful in Canterbury; 1 adult male killed by magpies, Amberley, 2/8/46. (R.A.F.) Merton Swamp, Otago, Jan., 1945, Mrs. J. A. Moore saw a Harrier carrying away a young bird from a stilt's nest, pursued by a stilt. On another occasion a harrier was seen carrying off a young tern from Bird Rock, Karatane, followed by the adult colony. (D.N.F.C.) 30 Stonelaw Terrace, Dunedin, 1/6/45 to 31/5/46, recorded 8 times; in country areas near Dunedin up to 12 seen in one day; one chased, 31/3/46, by flock of pigeons inhabiting brewery at n. end of Dunedin. (I.T.) One at Walter Peak Station and one near the Rees Bridge, 22/2/46; one near Glenorchy, 1/3/46. (W.A.W.)

**BROWN QUAIL** (*Synoicus ypsilophorus*).—Hunua, Papakura, 1/11/46, is becoming more numerous than Californian quail; 15 years ago totally unknown. It will take up abode under an occupied house or in garden and although district is infested with stoats, it is increasing while Californian quail, formerly plentiful, has distinct tendency to disappear. (D.N.L.)

**CALIFORNIAN QUAIL** (*Lophortyx californicus*).—See note under brown quail, above. Reported plentiful on Clarence Tops, Marlborough, May-June. (R.A.F.)

**CHUKOR** (*Alectoris chukor*).—Reported to be now abundant on Marlborough-Canterbury boundary country. (R.A.F.)

**SOUTH IS. WEKA** (*Gallirallus australis*).—Bravo Is., (Stewart Is.) calling night and day, Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

**BANDED RAIL** (*Hypotaenidia philippensis*).—"Woodlands," Clevedon River, 1/12/45, one feeding on mud below mangroves, two feeding a tiny chick on a little muddy beach; 6/12/45, two adults and two young on other side of river; 6/1/46, six or more calling; 14/4/46, three seen and one heard; evidently a good colony. Ruakaka, North Auckland, 14/2/46, five adults and four large chicks; 21/4/46, six or seven adults. All of these were in a very small area of extensive tidal rush flats, denoting a large population. (H.R.McK.) Karaka, 10/2/46, 2 black downy young under nest; 17/2/46, new nest with two eggs. (D.A.U.) Heard in evening, Coromandel, 8/9/46. (C.A.F.)

**SPOTLESS CRAKE** (*Porzana tabuensis*).—Clevedon, one killed by cat, winter 1946; skin in Auckland Museum. (H.R.McK.)

**MARSH CRAKE** (*P. pusilla*).—Reliably reported Ashburton, July, 1946. (R.A.F.)

**PUKEKO** (*Porphyrio poliocephalus*).—Many about Wanganui district, even in swamp inside city area. (W.P.M.) Still plentiful in Canterbury; a partial albino with pure white wings shot, Ashburton, 6/5/46. (R.A.F.) Purakanui resident, Otago, reports pukeko have inhabited swamp at Long Beach since 1870. (I.T.) Miss F. Roberts reported 11/3/46, one seen in Fraser's Gully, Dunedin suburb, first recorded in recent years. (D.N.F.C.) Stirling, South Otago, Rotoiti Pond Sanctuary, first seen in 50 years in 1944; 12/1/46, two parents and two chicks;

20/5/46, four grown birds. (R.V.McL.) Haast, Westland, Mrs. P. L. Moore reports pukeko numerous (D.N.F.C.)

**SOUTH ISLAND PIED OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus finschi*).—Ruakaka, North Auckland, 13/2/46, three with three black and two North Is. Pied; all young birds with pale legs and dark tips to beaks. (H.R.McK.) Some hundreds wintered in Manukau, at Karaka, Puhinui, Puketutu. (R.B.S., D.A.U.) Miranda, F. of Thames, c 40 on 28/10/45; nine on 25/11/45; 88 plus on 7/4/46; 31 on 15/9/46. (R.B.S. & H.R.McK.) Winter flocks of two or three thousand along coasts of North Canterbury Bight. (R.A.F.) Taieri River, Otago, near Middlemarch, 28/11/45 (I.T.) Spit, Otago Harbour, 1/12/45, 3 flocks of c 3 dozen each reported by Mrs J. A. Moore. Rock pools, Karatane, Mrs. Moore reported flocks of c one dozen feeding low tide; several birds lame, one with one leg, another minus a foot. (D.N.F.C.)

**NORTH ISLAND PIED OYSTERCATCHER** (*H. reischeki*).—Ruakaka, North Auckland, 13/2/46, two with party of three black and three South Is. pied; two others with a nest of two eggs; both typical broken coloured North Is. pied. (H.R.McK.) As usual odd ones appeared with wintering flocks of South Is. pied in Manukau. East coast of Coromandel, all phases from very pied to black are present. Some paired in territory early Sept., while others, probably juvenile, still in small flock. (R.B.S.) Mercury Bay, 7 (including 2 black) at Buffalo Beach; 1 pair at Front Beach, Whitianga; Tairua, eastern Bay of Plenty, 9 birds, all black, one "smudgy"; Whakatane, 1 black pair on spit, September, 1946. (C.A.F.) Manawatu River mouth, 14/11/45, four, one clearly defined breast, broad white wing stripe, extensive white rump; second, breast not so clearly defined, narrow wing stripe, less extensive white rump; third, broken white breast almost black, same wing and rump markings as second bird; fourth not noted; bills orange. (R.H.D.S.)

**BLACK OYSTERCATCHER** (*H. unicolor*).—Ruakaka, North Auckland, 13/2/46, three with party of two Reischeki and three Finschi. May have been black form of Reischeki. (H.R.McK.) Puketutu, Manukau, 3 with *H. finschi* in winter (R.B.S.) Ohau river mouth, 17/11/45, two jet black birds, red bills, had young (R.H.D.S.) Purakanui Inlet, Otago, 13/1/46, two. (I.T.) Karatane, Otago, Mrs. J. A. Moore reported one with Finschi. Haast, Westland, few noted by Mrs. P. L. Moore. (D.N.F.C.)

**TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*).—Puketutu Flats, Manukau, biggest autumn count 64 on 14/4/46; a very early return migrant, an adult in good plumage, was seen on 12/9/46. (R.B.S.) Karaka, S. Manukau, noted between 18/1/46 and 10/3/46, greatest number being 50 on 17/2/46. On 31/8/46 and 15/9/46, 16 were seen, almost certainly early migrants, as none could be found on this coast during the winter. (D.A.U.) Miranda, F. Thames, 2 on 20/10/46, 1 adult, 1 juvenile. (R.B.S., H.R.McK.) Ohau river mouth, Manawatu, 18/11/45, three flying south landed for 15 minutes and fed with banded dottrels, then continued journey southwards. (R.H.D.S.) Wairau Bar, Marlborough, 19/10/46, one. (K.A.W.) Few seen Lake Ellesmere, 19/2/46. (R.A.F.)

**LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER** (*Pluvialis dominica*).—Waitakaruru, Firth of Thames, 10/3/46, ten on mudflat, five with black bellies and

heads partly coloured. (H.R.McK.) Puketutu Flats, Manukau, present between 16/1/46 and 14/4/46, the greatest number being 14; of 11 on 14/4/46, six had black on the underparts. (R.B.S. and P.C.B.) Karaka, south Manukau, present between 18/1/46 and 10/3/46, the greatest number seen being 35. (For behaviour: v. Vol. II., No. 1.) (D.A.U.) Few seen Lake Ellesmere, 19/2/46. (R.A.F.)

BANDED DOTTREL (*Charadrius bicinctus*).—Rotorua, 14/11/45; c 14 pairs from back of Blue Baths to south of Whaka Creek; several nests but no eggs; every sign of being about to breed at this late date, though three nests of three eggs each were found at Miranda, Firth of Thames, on 26/8/45. Lake Rerewhakaitu, 16/11/45, over 40; much courtship but only one pair seen on breeding territory. (H.R.McK.) Karaka, annual visitor in some numbers between January and August. (D.A.U.) Tauranga: Numerous along sea and harbour shores during December, January, February, deserting this area later and occurring only in flocks on the mudflats of the Matapihi arm; early in April they disappeared altogether. (M.H.) Rerewhakaitu, 13/9/46, six in good feather not yet on territory; none seen at Waimangu same day; Post-master Baths flats, 3 or so pairs on territory during day, but between 5 and 6 p.m. they and others totalling 12 plus flocked to pools for night. (16/9/46.) Buffalo Beach, Mercury Bay, over three pairs on territory, 19/9/46. Tairua, Bay of Plenty, mob of 18 birds not on territory, 10/9/46. Wanganui Aerodrome, 10/4/46, about 30 including many immature and in eclipse plumage. (C.A.F.) Numbers in Canterbury much reduced. (R.A.F.) Shannon River, Otago, 21/11/45, pair with young; Mt. Stoker, Middlemarch, pair, reported numbers breed here. (I.T.) Cromwell, Otago, left Piza and Cromwell flats about second week in January, 1946, reappeared on Cromwell flats in September, 1946 (J.M.) Rees River, e. of Mt. Alfred, Otago, 22-24/2/46, flock of 60 to 70. (G.F.Y.)

N.Z. DOTTREL (*Pluviorhynchus obscurus*).—Te Henga Beach: A pair comes to breed each year, appearing in early spring and departing January-February. Miranda, F. of Thames, 1 bird noted throughout 1946. East coast of Coromandel, present on several beaches, September, 1946. (R.B.S.) Mercury Bay, odd bird at Buffalo, and pair Davis Beach, 19/9/46; Tairua, Bay of Plenty, 10/9/46, one pair on territory; the last is apparently the southernmost record on the east coast of the North Island in late years. (C.A.F.)

WRYBILL PLOVER (*Anarhynchus frontalis*).—A new wintering locality found at Karaka, Manukau; present from 20/1/46 to 13/9/46; maximum 69 on 21/7/46. (D.A.U.) Puketutu flats, Manukau, present from 16/1/46 to 25/8/46; maximum 142 on 7/7/46; a considerable increase over recent years' totals. Miranda, F. of Thames, interesting counts were 9 on 25/11/45, c 250 on 6/1/46, c 1050 on 7/4/46; c. 1500 on 21/7/46, c. 200 on 15/9/46. (R.B.S., H.R.McK.) Clevedon, 7/3/46, 2 near river mouth. (T.M.R.) Tauranga: In late February one near town, in March 2 on Matapihi mudflats. (M.H.) Ohau river mouth, Manawatu, 18/11/45, three, one aggressive towards others, two with distinct bands, other band much fainter. (R.H.D.S.)

SPUR-WINGED PLOVER (*Lobibyx novaehollandiae*).—Flock of 5-6 reported Greyouth, October, 1945. (R.A.F.)

**KNOT** (*Calidris canutus*).—Single bird on tidal flats, Carlton Avenue, Wanganui, 3/2/46. (C.A.F.) Ohau River mouth, Manawatu, 11/11/45, two feeding water's edge, one had two or three chestnut feathers on abdomen; Manawatu River mouth, 14/11/45, four feeding with godwits. (R.H.D.S.) Lake Ellesmere, one, 24/1/46 (E.O.W. and J.M.C.)

**SIBERIAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER** (*Calidris acuminata*).—Few seen Lake Ellesmere, 19/2/46. (R.A.F.)

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*Erolia testacea*).—Miranda, F. of Thames, 1 on 6/10/46, the second record for this area and incidentally for North Is. (R.B.S. and D.A.U.) Few Lake Ellesmere, 19/2/46. (R.A.F.)

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa lapponica*).—Mataitai, Clevedon, 1945-46; local population was 20-25% more this year than last. (H.R.McK.) Manawatu River mouth 14/11/45, 38 feeding on mud flats. (R.H.D.S.) Few Lake Ellesmere, 19/2/46. (R.A.F.) Puketeraki Beach, Otago, 6/2/46, flock of 16 reported by Mrs. J. A. Moore (D.N.F.C.)

**CURLEW** (*Numenius madagascariensis*).—Fine, bird brought in to Wanganui Museum, 4/2/46, found dead on beach at Castlecliff. (C.A.F.)

**WHITE-HEADED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*).—Parenga, N. Auckland, Jan., 1946, one black, no pied with it. (A.C.O'C.) Clevedon, 1945-46, c30 birds stayed for breeding season; c8 pairs nested near mouth of river, two pairs at Kawa Kawa Bay and one pair at Ardmore; 2/12/45, five pairs in river with three chicks each and one bird with one, all at flying stage. The two pairs at Kawa Kawa Bay reared two and four, and the Ardmore pair four; 17/3/46, the local population had increased by c50 from south. (H.R.McK.) Two almost black stilts again wintered at Miranda. (R.B.S.) Though mainly in pairs on territory during the day, up to 32 flocked together in evening at Postmaster Baths, Rotorua, 16/9/46; a dozen still in flock on estuary at Tairua, 10/9/46. Heard flying over Wanganui at night 2/2/46; pure white stilt reported at Wanganui but I was unable to see it. (C.A.F.) Canterbury, reported from inland and coastal localities during winter. (R.A.F.) Oamaru, several pairs of black stilts nesting, Oct., 1945. (E.F.S.) Taieri River, near Middlemarch, 28/11/45, breeding six pairs in two acres. Purakanui, Otago, 11-20/1/46, calls heard in evening after dark. 10 seen on 10/1/46; Purakanui Inlet, 20/4/46, 32 on mudflats; Otago Harbour and vicinity, 23/3/46, over 30. (I.T.) Miss Miller reported calls of returned stilts heard from Outram lagoons for first time 1945-46 nesting season on 12/9/45. Mrs J. A. Moore reported that at Merton Swamps a harrier was seen robbing a stilt's nest. It carried away one nestling. One parent tried to fight the harrier in the air and the other stayed on the ground as though to protect remaining young. (D.N.F.C.) Stirling, S. Otago, Rotoiti Pond Sanctuary, 20/5/46, heard yelping early morning; do not stay long. (R.V.McL.)

**BLACK-FRONTED TERN** (*Chlidonias albibriata*).—Taieri River, near Middlemarch, 28/11/45, pair breeding, rabbit repeatedly dived at Another pair one mile north. Long Beach, Purakanui, 22/4/46, five with flock of red-billed gulls and white-fronted terns. (I.T.)

**WHITE-WINGED MARSH TERN** (*Chlidonias leucoptera*).—Otautau, Southland, c 10/1/45, one seen in company with black-fronted

terns, appeared to be pugnacious and darted at other terns that came near it; bird seen during ploughing operations, about half a mile from the Waiau River, near Monowai. (D.M.)

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*).—Rotorua, 17/11/45, 19 on sulphur flat; one nest, one egg, and several empty nests; one nest on islet, two eggs. (P.H.O. and H.R.MeK.) Ponui Island, Hauraki Gulf, 16/6/46; a pair with one full-grown young in juvenile plumage; the chick was fed once with a fish about five inches long; it kept up a high-pitched solicitous whine, breast almost on rock, bill pointed high; it later went off and appeared to fish for itself; apparently a very late chick. (H.R.MeK.) Mouth of Waka Stream, Rotorua, 1 pair, 16/8/46; Coromandel Harbour, 9/9/46, 40 plus on rocky islet, where they are reported to nest, but this needs confirmation. (C.A.F.) One seen daily, Victoria Lake, Christchurch, autumn 1946 for about two months. (R.A.F.)

FAIRY TERN (*Sterna nereis*).—Ruakaka, North Auckland, 16/2/46. five in party seen with glasses at 20 yards; all adult; a white-fronted tern settled with them, giving excellent comparison of size. (H.R.MeK.)

WHITE-FRONTED TERN (*Sterna striata*).—Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf, 1945-46; observations for the year indicate that the Ponui-Waiheke passage, with its many islets, is a breeding and roosting headquarters for several thousand birds; up to c5,000 have been seen in this vicinity. (T.M.R.) Tiri Is., begin to arrive third week in June, and by the end of January they have left the island; 7/11/45, of 150 nests, eight contained two eggs. (S.E.) Tauranga: One three miles up the harbour during stormy weather in late July. (M.H.) Manukau: Three up a muddy creek at Karaka, 10/2/46. (R.B.S. and D.A.U.) Courtship noted in small flocks on both coasts of Firth of Thames and off Mercury Bay between 7 and 20/9/46, but apparently not occupying nesting places at those times. (C.A.F.) Colony of about 200 nesting on rock at Kai-iwi, November; much disturbed by beach visitors taking eggs; left about middle of December; from then usually about the moles, Castlecliff, till June, when most left. (W.P.M.) Rocks south of Kaikoura, 22/10/46, nesting colony 300-400 birds. (K.A.W.) Waitaki River mouth, S. Canterbury, 17/1/46, c 120 nests, also some hundreds chicks all sizes, many flying; perhaps 2000 adult birds. (E.O.W. and J.M.C.) Numerous breeding colonies on coast north of Greymouth, December. (R.A.F.)

BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus dominicanus*).—Ponui Island, 7/10/45, one sitting on nest on pinnae rock; 21/10/45, nesting all round coast. (T.M.R.) Castle Rock, Castlepoint, 11 and 18/11/45, laying and hatching both taking place, total nests 26 and 14 chicks out of nests. In addition, there were at least 13 birds sitting on projections on a sheer cliff face. About 80-100 adult birds present. (J.M.C.) In abundance in all usual situations in Canterbury. (R.A.F.) Purakanui Inlet, Otago, 19/4/46, population of about 200 (I.T.) Rees Valley and locality, 22-27/2/46, odd birds flying over. (W.A.W.)

RED-BILLED GULL (*L. novaehollandiae*).—c 6 pairs breeding on an outlying rock on Tiri; downy young being fed and brooded, 5/12/45; colony deserted 18/1/46. (R.B.S.) Rotorua, 17/11/45, over 50; 27 nests, one of three eggs, four of two, and two of one egg; colony just starting; later totally destroyed by vermin. (P.H.O. and H.R.MeK.) On

stack to south of Green Island, Mercury Group, 100 plus assembled as if preparing to nest (20/9/46); Hays Bay Reef, Mercury Bay, 300 plus roosting in evening on same date; Postmaster Baths, Rotorua, smaller numbers associated with large evening flocks of *L. bulleri*. (C.A.F.) Mouth of Clevedon River, 12/5/45, 10,000 plus flying down river at dusk; no such numbers seen before. (T.M.R. and H.R.McK.) Present in thousands at the Whaling Station, Tory Channel, July-August, 1946. (R.A.F.) Long Beach, Purakanui, Otago, 16/1/46, c 55 and another 20 on Shag Cliffs; Purakanui, Long Beach, 22/4/46, over 200. (I.T.)

BLACK-BILLED GULL (*L. bulleri*).—Postmaster Baths, Rotorua, Sept. 10-16/46, flock up to 620 birds (including about 20% red-billed) assembled in evenings between 5 and 6 o'clock from different parts of lake shore. In day, smaller numbers remained and some toyed with sticks; habitual nesting islets almost submerged owing to high lake level. My first note of the species at Rotorua was in May, 1932, and others (M. E. Fitzgerald and A. H. Hooper) reported breeding on the Ward Baths Islets about the same time. I photographed nesting gulls there and at the mouth of Whakarewarewa Stream in early December, 1936, and G. A. Buddle later photographed the latter colonies. Since 1932 the black-billed gulls at Rotorua seem to have increased and the difference between summer and winter numbers supports the hypothesis that the winter flock at Miranda (Sibson, Bull. Orn. Soc. N.Z., 2, p. 8, 1942) is composed of Rotorua breeders. (C.A.F.) Rotorua, 17/11/45, 400-500 not yet nesting. (P.H.O. and H.R.McK.) Miranda, F. of Thames, 1946, usual wintering population 300-400. (R.B.S.) Manukau, Puhinui, one on 30/9/46 and 10/10/46, with a few juvenile red-billed gulls. The northernmost record for this species. (R.B.S. and P.C.B.) Hurunui River bed, near Balmoral Forest, 19/10/46, nesting colony up to 500 strong. (K.A.W.) Regular population in Christchurch riverside reserves during winter now number several hundreds; 1945 breeding season on Canterbury rivers was normal. (R.A.F.) At least 100 round Queenstown, but numbers probably variable on Lake Wakatipu; a few always follow the steamers. (W.A.W.) Of some dozens of small gulls at Greymouth on 1/9/46 all but one was black-billed. (C.A.F.)

ARCTIC SKUA (*Stercorarius parasiticus*).—Ponui Island area, Hauraki Gulf, 2/12/45, 15 plus; six on view at one time; one very light; Christmas cruise of over two weeks, including trip to Coromandel, 47 seen, some possibly seen twice; commonly seen up to 31/3/46, and then only one or two each trip up to the last trip of the season on 16/6/46. (T.M.R.)

POMARINE SKUA (*S. pomarinus*).—Ponui Island, 2/12/45, one bird very light below, yellowish neck and two rounded feathers at end of tail; flew past launch at 20 yards; almost certainly Pomarine. (T.M.R. and V.I.C.)

SKUA SP.—N.W. of Ponui Island, 18/11/45; one bird flew about launch for same time; about size of black-backed gull but with greater wings; dark all over; probably Southern skua. (V.I.C.)

PIGEON (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1945-46, from 2 to 20 seen in one day. Decreasing owing to shooting. (J.W.StP.) Arataki: Feeding on supplejack and putaputaweta berries, 12/10/45. Taupo: Feeding on cherries in mid Jan. Minginui, Te Whaiti:

Plentiful while the miro berries lasted. (R.St.P.) At least one seen frequently in city and suburbs, Christchurch, June, July, August, 1946. (R.A.F.) Haast Pass to West Coast, 27/12/45 to 3/1/46; Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Moore saw probably over 100. (D.N.F.C.) Herbert, Otago, 18/10/45, two in bluegums. (S.I.A.) Dunedin (Reservoir Reserve and vicinity), June and July, 1945, feeding on lucerne tree leaves; 19/2/46, flock of ten, largest number of year. (I.T.) Errata: Vol. 1 No. 2, line 6 page 132 should read: "Dunedin, 9/8/44, one young unable to fly. (D.N.F.C.)"

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*).—Flocks mainly from Banks Peninsula ranging over a wide area of Canterbury farmland. (R.A.F.)

KAKA (*Nestor meridionalis*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1945-46, a few seen and heard throughout the year; certainly not increasing. (J.W.St.P.) Minginui, Te Whaiti, fairly common, e.g., 9 on 27/8/46. (R.St.P.) Manaroa, Pelorus Sound, October, 1944. (A.C.O.C.) Stray birds were accidentally shot at Waiau and McRae's Flat, Central Otago, 2/10/45. (R.A.F.) Maori Saddle, n. of Haast, 2/1/46, 18-19 noted; seen also in other parts of Haast Track by Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Moore. (D.N.F.C.) Little Totara River, north of Greymouth, a pair seen, Aug., 1946. (C.A.F.)

KEA (*N. notabilis*).—Five seen flying above Snowy Creek, Otago (alt. about 4000ft.), 23/2/46; two seen near Cascade Saddle, Upper Dart Valley, 25/2/46; several heard and one or two seen flying near Whitburn River, 26/2/46; one seen flying above Snowy Creek, 27/2/46. (W.A.W.)

RED-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Cyanorhamphus novaeseelandiae*).—Several seen at Korapuki, Mercury Islands, 20/9/46. (C.A.F.) Dart and Whitburn River junction, Otago, 26/2/46, two seen. (W.A.W.)

YELLOW-FRONTED PARRAKEET (*C. auriceps*).—Minginui, fairly plentiful on the slopes of the hills. (R.St.P.)

PARAKEET (*Cyanorhamphus* spp.).—One seen and others heard in bush near Marnia Spring, Nelson, 16/11/45; heard in bush in Rees valley, Otago, about 12 miles n. of Rees Bridge, 23/2/46; heard many times in bush at junction of Dart and Whitburn rivers, 26/2/46. (W.A.W.) Deborrah Bay, Port Chalmers, 16/6/46, three in flight, tree tops. (W.M.) Foot of Mt. Earnslaw, Otago, 22-24/2/46, two adults and four juveniles, all making forays from bush fringe to matagouri bushes in open. (G.F.Y.)

WHITE COCKATOO (*Kakatoe galerita*).—At end of Denlair Road, Fordell, up to 22 birds seen, 16/4/46. This locality is not mentioned by Oliver (N.Z. Birds) but residents state the bird is of some 30 years' standing. (C.A.F.)

ROSELLA (*Platycercus eximius*).—Near Reservoir Reserve, Dunedin, 27/6/45, eight seen and others heard. (I.T.) Miss F. Roberts reports 8 or 9 on 10/3/46, searching hedge for berries at Wakari. Mrs. McCraw reported seeing them feeding on daisy flowers, willow flowers, gooseberries and haws. (D.N.F.C.)

SHINING CUCKOO (*Chalcites lucidus*).—Opua, N. Auckland, first heard, 10/10/45. (M.A.E.D.) L. Okataina, first heard 4/10/44, 25/9/45. (G.B.W.) Arataki, first heard, 2/10/45; Minginui, Te Whaiti, first heard 17/9/46. (R.St.P.) Moumoukai, Clevedon, first heard 25/9/45 (2).

(J.W.St.P.) Clevedon, first heard, 27/9/45, last song 6/1/46; reliable report of repeated song by one bird on 24/3/46. (H.R.McK.) 22/2/46, young ones still fed by warblers. (J.W.St.P.) Muriwai, 10/2/46, none seen where plentiful last year. (H.R.McK.) Adult male found at Springston, Canterbury, 1/11/45, and a moulting female adult caught by a cat on 9/3/46, Maruia Nelson. Immature bird picked up Merivale, Christchurch, 4/3/46; young being fed by grey warblers Rangiora and North Brighton, 12/2/46. (R.A.F.) Full call reported between Millerton and Granity, 27/7/46. (R.J.S.) Ravensbourne, Otago Harbour, 18/9/45, first call. (I.T.)

LONG-TAILED CUCKOO (*Eudynamis taitensis*).—Lake Okataina, first heard, 4/10/44, 5/10/45. (G.B.W.) Arataki, first heard, 10/10/45. (R.St.P.) Mamaku Bush, Rotorua, 18/11/45, three seen in party; one observed calling from tree; others heard. Clevedon, 18/1/46, 9.10 p.m., a single call; unusual date for this area. (H.R.McK.) Mangatangi Valley, 3/3/46, one reported as seen. (J.W.St.P.) Mangere, 28/2/46, two killed by flying into a wire at night. (R.B.S.) Adult male, Chatham Is., March, 1946. (R.A.F.) Franz Josef Glacier track, 3/1/46, one pursued by tuis; Haast Pass to West Coast, heard occasionally by Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Moore. (D.N.F.C.)

MOREPORK (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*).—One reported chasing a bat in the Waitakeres, about 3 years ago. (R.B.S.) Heard near Lewis Pass. 15/11/45, heard in bush about 6 miles south of Charleston, Nelson, 17/11/45. (W.A.W.) Heard plentifully in Westland, Dec., 1945. (R.A.F.) Dunedin, 1/6/45-31/5/46, calls recorded 10 times from garden 30 Stonelaw Terrace (previous year 43 times). (I.T.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., 3/8/46, often heard by Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*).—Dunedin, 1/6/45-31/5/46, recorded 26 times from 30 Stonelaw Terrace. Purakanui, 12-20/1/46, heard almost nightly; on January 18th one noted on a post at Purakanui Station. The stationmaster reported that it came to this post in the evening after dark to catch the moths that hovered around the light on the post. (I.T.) Herbert, Otago, 5/12/45, young one flying in garden, 2 p.m., dull, cold day. (S.I.A.) Mt. Alfred, Otago, eastern slopes, 22-24/2/46, pair, judging by hunting calls at dusk, native birds at bush fringe were very disturbed. (G.F.Y.)

KINGFISHER (*Haleyon sanctus*).—Wanganui: Absent from garden during summer; appeared again in March; seen feeding on lizards. (W.P.M.) Wellington Harbour, between Seaview Road and Point Howard, 2/6/45, three. (A.A.B.) Dunedin, 1/6/45-31/5/46, recorded in or near the garden, 30 Stonelaw Terrace, 19 times (previous year 28 times). (I.T.) St. Leonard's-Port Chalmers coast, May and June, 1946. (W.M.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., first week August, 1946, "at every cove and corner one was seen, sometimes a pair."—Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguineae*).—Report of one on Tiri Is., where it perched on the flagpole about 18/9/46; evidently a visitor from Kawau. (S.E.) One also reported from the Waitakeres, winter, 1946. (R.B.S.)

RIFLEMAN (*Acanthisitta chloris*).—Minginui, "always seem to be in pairs." (R.St.P.) Day's Bay, Wellington, 1945-46 season, well up to

usual numbers. (A.A.B.) Wanganui district, rather local in bushed areas from Waitotara to the Wanganui, but noted in small numbers at several widely separated localities, summer, 1945-6. (C.A.F.) Still widely distributed in beech forests, Canterbury, but appears to be less abundant than formerly. (R.A.F.) Commonly seen and heard in beech forest in Rees and Upper Dart valleys, Otago, where it is probably the most numerous native bird, 23/2/46-1/3/46. (W.A.W.) Paradise, Otago, 23/2/46. (G.F.Y.) Dunedin 1/6/45-31/5/46, occ. birds seen in Reservoir Reserve; Purakanui, Otago, three seen. (I.T.) Miss Woodhouse reports occasionally seen in garden at St. Clair; Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Moore reported, 27/12/45-3/1/46, only few seen from Makaora, via Haast Pass to West Coast, but at Maori Hill, Dunedin, previous season, two pairs nested in garden. (D.N.F.C.)

PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*).—Few pairs, Tiri Is.; Rangitoto, odd birds on summit, 19/1/46. (R.B.S.) Arataki, 12-20 running round the sawdust from the mill, Jan.-Feb. (R.St.P.) Several seen and heard in Rees Valley, Otago, 22, 23, 28/2/46; one seen near Snowy Creek saddle (alt. about 4000ft.), 23/2/46; many seen near Cascade Saddle, Upper Dart Valley, 25/2/46. (W.A.W.)

FERN BIRD (*Bowdleria punctata*).—Recorded Whitianga and Tairua, Sept., 1946. (C.A.F.) Tauranga: One or two heard daily. (M.H.) Ruakaka, 21/2/46, two seen, others heard. (H.R.McK.) Isolated swamp towards end of Whangaparaoa Pen., 16/2/46. (E.G.T.) Present near Minginui; "hundreds must have perished in the Taupo fires." (R.St.P.) Wairarapa Lake, May, 1944 and 21/5/45, two birds seen and heard by Mr. L. de Chateau. (R.H.D.S.) Reliably reported near Charleston, Dec., 1945. (R.A.F.)

GREY WARBLER (*Pseudogerygone igata*).—Commenced an early nesting season before the end of August, 1946, in Christchurch. (R.A.F.) Heard singing spasmodically in bush of Rees and Upper Dart valleys, Otago, 22/2/46-1/3/46. (W.A.W.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., 3/8/46, many seen and heard by Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

YELLOW-BREASTED TIT (*Petroica macrocephala macrocephala*). Exceptionally bright male specimen was caught by a cat at Islington, 22/3/46; first Christchurch suburban record for some years. (R.A.F.) Cromwell, Otago, 9/2/46, one seen in garden; found dead next day; very rarely seen here. (J.M.) Dunedin neighbourhood, recorded several localities; Purakanui, Otago, 20/4/46, 10 males and 5 females recorded. (I.T.) Commonly seen in the Rees Valley and in the Upper Dart Valley, Otago, 22/2/46-1/3/46. (W.A.W.)

PIED TIT (*P. m. toitoi*).—Arataki: 14/11/45, "I saw a young female pied tit being fed by the male parent. On several occasions in different places I have noticed that the male parent tit feeds the young females, while the female parent feeds the young males; and should anything happen to the female parent, the male bird will rear the whole brood." "On 13/2/46 I saw two pied tits feeding one young bird in the same locality where two young were being fed in November; so I would surmise it was the second sitting for the season." 21/2/46, two young pied tits seen just out of the nest. (R.St.P.) Recorded Coromandel Range on Coroglen Road, 22/9/46. (C.A.F.)

ROBIN (*Miro australis*).—Mamaku Bush, Rotorua, 15/11/45. three seen at different places. (P.H.O. and H.R.McK.) Minginui, seen daily. (R.St.P.) Abundant, Mamaku, Sept., 1946, singing for 15 to 20 minutes on end. (C.A.F.) Reliably reported south end Kaimanawa Ranges, opposite Desert. (W.P.M.) Still reported as plentiful at Parnassus, and on Conway River. (R.A.F.) Heard singing in bush near Rahu Saddle, South Nelson, 16/11/45; two seen beside Rees Valley track about 2½ miles north of Rees Bridge, 1/3/46. (W.A.W.) Dunedin: Reported by Mr. Williams, 30/3/46, robin seen and heard at Whare Flat. (D.N.F.C.) Foot of Mt. Earnslaw, Arcadia, Otago, 22-24/2/46, two adults, one juvenile; Diamond Lake, one, very tame, fed from hand. (G.F.Y.)

FANTAIL (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*).—The high proportion of black fantails is still noticeable in Canterbury. (R.A.F.) Dunedin, 1/6/45-31/5/46, of the fantails observed from the garden 30 Stonelaw Terrace, 11.9% were black; outside the garden area 22.2% were black. (I.T.) D.N.F.C. records for the same period, 25.8% black. (D.N.F.C.) Herbert, Otago, April and May, constantly seen in ones and twos about garden; one or two black also seen, sometimes with a pied bird. (S.I.A.) Upper Clutha flats, Otago, both forms appeared 27/4/46; they stayed among willows on river banks until first frosts. (J.M.)

YELLOWHEAD (*Mohoua ochrocephala ochrocephala*).—Manaroa, Pelorus Sound, October, 1944, c. 2000ft., 6-8 seen. (A.C.O'C.) Near junct. Dart and Whitburn rivers, Otago, 26/2/46. A flock (number unknown) heard in bush, 2 only seen, flock appeared to be accompanied by 2 or 3 tomtits and several riflemen. (W.A.W.) Dunedin, reported by Mr. Williams about end of March, 1946; two seen at Maori Hill and some weeks earlier few seen in Leith Valley. (D.N.F.C.) Foot of Mt. Earnslaw, 22-24/2/46, flock c. 10 "bark-feeding" on beech trees. (G.F.Y.)

WHITEHEAD (*M. o. albicilla*).—Minginui: Still in large numbers some of the flocks numbering c. 40, Aug., 1946. Still seem to be traveling in little batches, but a few are pairing off, 6/10/46. (R.St.P.) Wanganui district: Noted in most bush areas between Fuaou (Waitotara) and Pitangi Track (east of the Wanganui), Dec., 1945-March, 1946. (C.A.F.) Day's Bay, Wellington, 1945-46 season. (A.A.B.)

BROWN CREEPER (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*).—Manaroa, Pelorus Sound, October, 1944. (A.C.O'C.) Dunedin (Maori Hill and Reservoir Reserve), 3/6/45 to 21/5/46, largest number 10-12 on 7/2/46. Akatore River, near mouth, 23/9/45, calls heard; Purakanui, 1/18/46, recorded in six different places, nos. 2 to 6; do., 20/4/46, three. (I.T.)

WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*).—Mangere: Biggest winter flock, 1946, was c. 15 birds. (R.B.S.) Mōumoukai, Clevedon: July and August, flocks of 20 and 30 all over the high country; September, smaller flocks and many pairs; October, November, December, flocks almost dissolved owing to breeding; January, 1946, small flocks of 6 to 10 common, probably largely family parties; February, flocks building up further; March to June, flocks up to 30 seen everywhere on old flock areas. (J.W.St.P.) Very plentiful in Westland. April, 1946; distribution in Canterbury patchy, but quite plentiful in some parts throughout the winter. (R.A.F.) Heard once or twice in Rees Valley bush, Otago, 23/2/46; heard singing

several times near Dart Hut, 24/2/46; many seen flying in small flocks above the subalpine scrub (alt. about 4700ft.) near the junction of Dart and Whitburn rivers, 26/2/46. (W.A.W.) Glenleith, Dunedin: Mrs. E. Sutherland reported, 24/1/46, ten feeding on willows badly infected with gall. (D.N.F.C.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., first week August, 1946, numbers feeding on fuchsia trees, reported by Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

TUI (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*).—Rodney County, North Auckland, December, 1945, a great increase noted in comparison with 30 years ago. Moumoukai, Clevedon, 13/1/46, with Dr. R. A. Falla, Mr. E. G. Turbott, Major G. A. Buddle, Mr. J. W. St. Paul, Miss M. J. McCallum and party, watched a pair carrying large insects to nest in top of rimu; height of nest estimated at 80 feet; 15/1/46, Mr. J. W. St. Paul saw food still being carried, but none on subsequent days, the young no doubt having left. Wayby, North Auckland, 12/2/46, three young, orange at gape, out of nest, being fed by parents in totara clump. (H.R.McK.) Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1945-46, not decreasing, though shot by Maoris. (J.W.St.P.) Tiri I., one or two only, perhaps 1 pair, Jan., 1946. Mangere: Very scarce, occasional visitor to gums at Middlemore. (R.B.S.) Tauranga: More plentiful in early winter. (M.H.) Te Whiti, Masterton, 3/3/46, feeding on ngaio berries. (R.H.D.S.) Day's Bay, Wellington, 45-46 season, less prominent. (A.A.B.) Not quite as numerous as usual in suburban gardens, Cashmere, winter, 1946 (R.A.F.) Dunedin, Maori Hill, numbers fluctuate; 22/2/46, four young seen; none seen from 26/10/45 to 8/1/46. (I.T.) Paradise, Otago, 23/2/46. (G.F.Y.) Herbert, 27/1/45, one on flowering bluegums at 3 p.m., fine day; heard whisper songs made with the neck stretched, beak wide open, punctuated by loud sucking noise; constantly flying from branch to branch; 28/1/45, one on bluegums; 29/1/45, heard early morning; 4/2/45, one seen and heard in early afternoon. (S.I.A.) Stirling, South Otago, Jan., 1945. (R.V.McL.) Haast Pass to West Coast, 27/12/45 to 3/1/46, Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Moore report tuis plentiful. (D.N.F.C.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., 3/8/46, heard everywhere, Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

BELLBIRD (*Anthornis melanura*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1945-46, plentiful at times on Mt. Kohukohunui and a few elsewhere; probably a small increase. (J.W.St.P.) Tiri Is., several pairs in the bushed gullies; often seen on pohutukawas round the coast. (S.E. and R.B.S.) Seen near summit Coroglen Rd., Coromandel, 18/9/46; Korapuki Is., Mercury Is., seen; very general in the area between Waitotara and Mangowhero rivers, not only in sizeable bush patches but in scrubby gullies. Mr. H. G. Drew substantiates earlier reports that the species was very rare or even not present in the district fifty years ago. (C.A.F.) Wanganui, absent from garden in summer. On 29/3/46 one examined wattle trees when just in bud (first flowers out on 2/5/46); has visited wattles most days in June and July; sometimes feeds on ground in garden below the trees. (W.P.M.) Day's Bay, Wellington, 1945-46 season, more numerous than for past 21 years. (A.A.B.) No sign of much change in the Canterbury population. (R.A.F.) Dunedin, Maori Hill, Feb., 1946, possibly 20 present in garden at times; continuous song. (I.T.) Dunedin, 9 Cairnhill Street, Mrs. E. Sutherland, largest count 9 in June and July, 1945; disappeared in Sept., returning in Dec. (D.N.F.C.) Paradise, Otago, 23/2/46. (G.F.Y.) Stirling, South Otago, summer 1945-46; May,

1946. (R.V.McL.) Rees Valley bush, Otago, 22/2/46, heard once; 28/2/46 and 1/3/46, heard singing several times. (W.A.W.) Haast Pass to West Coast, 27/12/45 to 3/1/46, Mr. and Mrs. Moore report very few bellbirds seen. (D.N.F.C.) Bravo Is., Stewart Is., 3/8/46, heard everywhere, Mrs. J. Harrison. (O.S.)

**BLUE-WATTLED CROW** (*Calleas cinerea wilsoni*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1945-46; frequently seen and heard; no change in numbers noted. Singing apparently stopped for several days over an area of four square miles on each occasion of heavy blasting at manganese mine, but birds still present about the mine. (J.W.St.P.)

**GREENFINCH** (*Chloris chloris*).—Hampden, Otago, 29/9/45, nest, 2 eggs, in lawyer, 6t. high. (I.T.)

**CHAFFINCH** (*Fringilla coelebs*).—Opua, North Auckland, two chicks in orchard close to residence, 7/12/45. (M.A.E.D.) Year's record of common song of chaffinch from garden, 30 Stonelaw Terrace, Dunedin, 1945: The uncommon canary-like trilling song was not heard at all throughout the year. Last recorded song of season, Jan. 1, but occasional calls still heard; call notes heard March 10, April 7 and 21, and heard almost daily in May. First song, May 8, and not heard again until May 14. Though calls heard on occasional days in June, no song was recorded from May 23 until July 8. Song heard again on July 10 and 24. In August there was an increase in song, and by the end of the month the bird was in full song. In December song decreased, and the last song recorded was on Jan. 5, but was heard at Purakanui on Jan. 12, 1946. (I.T.)

**REDPOLL** (*Carduelis cabaret*).—Dunedin, 1/8/45, first recorded song; 12/8/45, first chasing flight noted. Purakanui, 12-20/1/46, common along the shores of Inlet, some with young and others making song flights. (I.T.)

**GOLDFINCH** (*C. carduelis*).—Wanganui, feed in garden from April and through the winter. (W.P.M.) Between Middlemarch, Otago, and Taieri River, 21-28/11/45, flocks of 20-40 on cultivated grounds. Dunedin, Sept. and Oct., 1945, flocks up to 50. Purakanui, Otago, 18/1/46, nest, four newly-hatched young; rat reported seen eating eggs in goldfinch's nest. Reported hundreds on a field of rape, Waianakarua, N. Otago, 25/1/46. It was grown for seed, but when cutting commenced it was discovered there was no seed to harvest in this field of approx. 10 to 15 acres; goldfinches had taken the lot. Dunedin, 7/2/46, first date noted young being fed in the garden; last date do., 19/2/46. (I.T.)

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*).—Already building early nests, Christchurch, 29/6/46. (R.A.F.) Dunedin, 12/7/45, male and female both carrying straw to nesting box. 3/11/45, sparrow noted with a very large bright green stick-insect almost as long as itself; it methodically nipped off all the legs and then ate the remainder. (I.T.)

**YELLOWHAMMER** (*Emberiza citrinella*).—Purakanui, Otago, 12-21/1/46, fairly common. (I.T.)

**THRUSH** (*Turdus ericetorum*).—Opua, N. Auckland, first young heard, 11/10/45. (M.A.E.D.) Clevedon, 20/7/46, nest with four chicks three or four days old. (H.R.McK.) Dunedin, 12/3/46, light rain after a very hot day. In the late afternoon birds were chasing excitedly about

the garden. (This happens about this date every year). Thrushes, blackbirds and tuis were the most notable chasers. From this date occasional songs of thrushes were heard daily morning and evening. (I.T.)

BLACKBIRD (*T. merula*).—Dunedin, Aug., 45, song heard daily at noon and eve, first daytime song, 14/8/45; building with mud, 16/1/45; last song, 11/1/46, but at Purakanui, Otago, 12/1/46; Dunedin, sub-songs, 19/2/46, and 1 and 3/3/46; much excited chasing 12/3/46, also later; males back on song perches, 5/4/46; Dunedin, 8/4/46, a tui which fed from the escallonia flowers near the site of last season's blackbird's nest was attacked repeatedly by a male blackbird. (I.T.) Two or three seen and heard in subalpine scrub near junction of Dart and Whitburn rivers, 26/2/46. (W.A.W.)

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Appear to be increasing throughout district, Wanganui to King Country. (W.P.M.) Very common on road to Te Awaite, East Coast, Wairarapa; more numerous beyond Martinborough, and along the coastline, where 56 were seen in one paddock c 5 acres, 22/12/45. A total of 80 was recorded on a 30-mile road. (J.M.C. and R.A.D.) Occasionally seen Dunedin suburbs and near Middlemarch. (I.T.)

DISTRIBUTION OF MYNA.—In New Zealand the myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) is a species of rather restricted distribution and accurate information is required of the precise localities where it is found. It is proposed to publish a distribution map shortly, and all members are requested to help by informing J. M. Cunningham, 39 Renall Street, Masterton, of the localities where this bird is found. Mention should be made as to whether the occurrences are regular or occasional and all records of birds on the limits of distribution in an area should be given. It is even more important to state areas where this bird is NOT found. Members are requested to send in the information before the end of January.

## REVIEWS.

### **The Blackbird, by A. F. C. Hillstead. (Faber & Faber, 1945.)**

The author's approach to many of the problems of bird behaviour lacks the very essential of a clear, unbiased, scientific attitude, and even calls in the aid of occult powers to explain certain of his woolly-minded theses. One is left with the impression that the main object of this book is not to contribute anything of importance to the study of this most interesting bird, but, rather to tilt at the tendency of some workers to over-emphasise the instinctive nature of bird behaviour without sufficient recognition of the variability in behaviour of individuals. This tendency and the anti-anthropomorphist are his pet aversions and most of the space in his book is occupied busily engaged knocking down these two "straw men." Altogether, in this most unsatisfying work on the blackbird it is surprising that the author finds so much to say about so few facts, although he claims a lifetime study of this bird.—L.G.

### **"Birds of the South West Pacific," by Ernst Mayr.**

It is not often that there is published a book of direct concern to New Zealand ornithologists. Although New Zealand lies to the south of the area covered by this concise and authoritative handbook, it is inevitable that it should contain frequent mention of the birds of this

country, and it is a most valuable addition to the library of the ornithologist who is interested in the origins, affinities, range and migrations of many New Zealand birds.

Of special interest are the sections on petrels, terns and waders. *Puffinus griseus* is noted as straying only rarely into the Central Pacific; *Puffinus bulleri* is not mentioned, but may have been overlooked, as there is a white-bellied form of *P. pacificus* which much resembles it. Neither Caspian nor White-fronted Terns have been recorded—in the South West Pacific; but there is the suggestion that the Arctic Tern may pass through that area on migration as “it has been found repeatedly in New Zealand waters”—a statement that needs investigation.

To turn for a moment to taxonomy; the Red-necked Stint is rightly made a subspecies of *minuta*, and it is noteworthy that the Hudsonian Godwit becomes a subspecies of *Limosa limosa*. The Long-tailed Cuckoo loses its generic isolation and is put in the genus *Eudynamis*.

The rarity of the Sanderling in New Zealand is explained by the statement that “normally it reaches only the northern fringe” of the South West Pacific. The Stilt is recorded only from New Britain, where it seems to be an irregular visitor from Australia.

Our Gannet is not mentioned, and there is no evidence that immature Gannets go north and cross the Equator as they might be expected to do, on the analogy of British gannets which in their first years move south to the equatorial waters of the Atlantic. The only representative of the shags to get into the South West Pacific is the Little Pied (*Ph. melanoleucos*).

Nine races of Banded Rail occur in the South West Pacific; Sooty Rail (*tabuensis plumbea*) and Pukeko have a wide distribution. A special plea is made for the study of the Reef Heron, of which grey, mottled and white specimens occur in the tropical islands. In New Zealand, although there is no real problem of plumage variation, observers should be on the look-out for aberrations; e.g., the white-phase example at Wairau Bar.

In the introduction it is modestly stated that the study of the birds of the South West Pacific has only just begun. The contents of this volume somewhat belie this. The future field-worker may be thankful that he has really to hand an excellent guide book in which the problems are clearly set before him.—R.B.S.

“Emu,” Vol. xlv., pt. 3, January, 1946.

Particular interest centres on a paper on the White-fronted Tern (*Sterna striata*) by K. A. Hindwood, of Sydney, who discusses the distribution of this species on the east coast of Australia and Tasmania. On the information available, it is suspected that the tern, which occurs in Australian waters principally between May and November, is a migrant from New Zealand, though it appears that a small proportion only of the birds breeding in New Zealand crosses the Tasman. Most of the birds in Australia are in immature plumage. Extensive banding of young birds in New Zealand is necessary to determine definitely the migratory movement, a field which members of the Ornithological Society could well take up. The article is illustrated by excellent photographs.

The flocking of the silver eye (*Zosterops lateralis*) with particular reference to 1944, in the winter of which year this bird was exceptionally scarce in many districts, is dealt with by J. M. Cunningham, Masterton. The winter of 1944 was a mild one and the possible effect of these conditions on flocking is considered. As the writer states, further information is required of dates of flocking and their possible correlation with weather and hours of daylight, and also more estimates of comparative population.

The occurrence of Geoffroy's sand plover (*Charadrius leschenaulti*) in New Zealand is recorded by R. B. Sibson and P. C. Bull. The record is a sight one, on August 20, 1943, on Manukau Harbour. It is the first record of this bird in New Zealand. The bird was seen again on September 5.—R.H.D.S.