

SHORT NOTE

Recovery of Kerguelen-banded thin-billed prion (*Pachyptila belcheri*) in New Zealand

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Thin-billed prion (*Pachyptila belcheri*) KA 23163 (French banding scheme) was banded as a chick on Mayes I., Golfe du Morbihan, Kerguelen (49°28'S, 69°57'E) on 8 February 2000 (H. Weimerskirch pers. comm. to R. Cossee). It was recovered on Gentle Annie beach, Mokihinui, West Coast, New Zealand (41°31'S, 171°56'E) in October 2001 (date imprecise) and thus was in its second year. The recoverer, Adam Craig of Birchfield, found it as a partial corpse comprising one leg and a few attached bones.

This is the first band recovery of thin-billed prion in New Zealand (R. Cossee, National Bird Banding Office, pers. comm.), so the first whose origin is certain, and incidentally the first overseas recovery of this species for the French researchers (H. Weimerskirch pers. comm.). Thin-billed prions also breed at Crozet and Falkland Islands, and at Isla Noir off south-western Chile (Turbott 1990).

LITERATURE CITED

Turbott, E.G. (Convener) 1990. *Checklist of the birds of New Zealand and the Ross Dependency, Antarctica*. Auckland, Random Century New Zealand Ltd.

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SHORT NOTE

Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) making their own nest sites

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Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were introduced to New Zealand from Britain in 1862, with many liberations over the next 10 years (Thomson 1922). "When I arrived in Napier from England in 1875, there were only four starlings in the town. They increased rapidly and took possession of the limestone bluff that looks out over the bay, boring into the softer veins of limestone. After eleven years they were there in hundreds of thousands"

(C. Hutchins, quoted by Thomson 1922). Today, scattered burrows occupied by starlings are common, especially on roadside cuttings through volcanic ash in central North Island. As Hodgkins (1948) records: "It has a strong liking for nesting in the dry pumice soil banks on busy roads or railway lines". Some of these burrows may have been taken over from kingfishers (*Halcyon sancta*); but many, such as those housing a colony of about 60 pairs 5km north of Hunterville (Fig. 1) seem to be the work of starlings alone.

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