

OSNZ news

No. 26 March, 1983

NOTE: Deadline for the June issue will be 21st May.

A visit to Western Samoa and Niue

On 22/8/82 I flew from Auckland to Western Samoa and Niue Island, where I spent 15 days trying to tape the calls and song of the bird species found in these island groups.

I spent three days in Samoa and most of this time was stationed at Kosena College, which is set in tropical rain forest on the south side of the main island. Birds seen included Banded Rail, Wattled Honeyeaters and Red-rumped Bulbuls. Cardinal Honeyeaters favoured any flowering plant and were present in large numbers. Polynesian Trillers were seen in areas further from human habitation and seemed to prefer taller trees. Indian Mynas were extremely common in Apia but not noted elsewhere. Tape recordings were made of all these species.

On 25/8/82 I flew to Niue and on my arrival noticed the lack of birds in the immediate area of the airport but did hear a few species as we drew away from the airfield. On a walk to Alofi I heard two dominant species, the local race of the Polynesian Triller and the Polynesian Starling. These species were very vocal but not easily seen as usually they kept to the canopy. Late one afternoon I visited the local quarry and rubbish tip and was surprised to see and hear many White-rumped Swiftlets hawking insects in the still air. The reef near the quarry proved interesting as on one visit I saw two Great Frigate Birds flying silently just above the canopy on the cliff top and a few days later three Wandering Tattlers were feeding on the reef itself. A single White Tern was seen flying over the quarry on 31/8/82 but unfortunately no tape was made. On the morning of 1/9/82 I was attempting to tape the calls of White-rumped Swiftlets in the Alofi rubbish tip when a White-tailed

Tropic Bird flew by quite low and stayed in the area some time. Unfortunately the bird remained silent so no recording was possible. Later that day a Barn Owl was seen around buildings in Alofi.

Species recorded on tape at Niue were Polynesian Triller, Purple-crowned Fruit-dove, Banded Rail, Pacific Golden Plover and White-rumped Swiftlet. As far as I know these recordings represent the first tape recordings of these species made on Niue.

I would like to acknowledge the considerable help given by David and Anna Gutenbeil; without their assistance this trip could not have taken place.

L. B. MCPHERSON

Nests with a difference

After a Song Thrush nest had been deserted following predation I removed the nest to examine the materials used in its construction. The outer layer was of grasses, with a pink flowering *Primula* interwoven, but the unusual lining caught my eye. It was made entirely of filter ends of cigarettes, at least 36 of them and 2 still had their paper wrapping, all the others were fleecy, flattened and firmly stuck in.

But what of the House Sparrows favouring dog hair from my Cocker Spaniel? I had just clipped the dog and the hair was in a heap on the lawn awaiting disposal, but in the meantime the House Sparrows came down and carried all of it up to their nests.

Then there were the Blackbirds. After successfully raising a brood they began building again in a shrub a short distance away. However, instead of collecting new materials the hen pulled the old nest to pieces and while going to and fro was followed by a young bird of the first brood. I found this operation all rather intriguing, not only because the old nest was used to provide material for the new one but also because the young bird followed the hen.

KATHLEEN TODD

Edited by PAUL SAGAR, 38A Yardley Street, Christchurch 4, for the members of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc.)

Please note that sightings recorded in this Newsletter are subject to confirmation.

Tiritiri Matangi Island — a visit and some exciting prospects

An account of a group visit to Tiritiri on 21 May 1982 is written up by junior member Paul Scofield in *Tara* No. 27. In fine weather the party tallied 27 species of birds on this Hauraki Gulf island, gaining particular pleasure from sightings of Bellbirds and Red-fronted Parakeets. The population of 40-50 of these parakeets is the fore-runner of other rare native species which it is planned to release on the island as part of a joint programme of the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board and the Wildlife Service, to be supported by the World Wildlife Fund. Auckland OSNZ members heard an outline of this exciting project from Graham Turbott at their Auckland meeting which drew a record attendance of 105.

Note:— Studies by John Craig suggest that Bellbirds from the island fly to the nearby Whangaparoa Peninsula, but that it is only male birds which do so, and this may be preventing Bellbirds from Tiritiri spreading to the adjacent mainland. Any visitors birdwatching on the peninsula this summer are asked to keep a special look out with this point in mind.

MICHAEL TAYLOR

Bird Study in New Zealand brochure

Enclosed with this issue of *Notornis* is the brochure 'Bird Study in New Zealand,' which has been prepared by B. D. Heather and M. J. Taylor. This is an up-dated version of one produced in the 1960s and outlines the aims of the Society and gives details of the schemes organised by the Society.

The brochure is primarily intended for issue to all new members but the opportunity has been taken to issue a copy to all current members to bring them up-to-date with the functions and activities of the Society.

PAUL SAGAR

Hudsonian Godwit at Ohope Spit

On 22/9/82 I visited Ohope Spit, Bay of Plenty, to study migrant waders. A flock of c.1080 Bar-tailed Godwits was roosting at high tide and while counting this flock my attention was drawn to a godwit which was chased by another bird. When this bird raised its wings, the sooty black underwing coverts and axillaries formed a sharp contrast to the clear white trailing edge. Such patterning is diagnostic of a Hudsonian Godwit.

The bird was in breeding plumage and was very well coloured, more so than most of the Bar-tailed Godwits. The upperparts, including nape, mantle and folded wings were a uniform greyish-brown. By contrast, Bar-tailed Godwits appeared to have greyer upperparts and conspicuous white barring on the wing coverts. The Hudsonian Godwit had chestnut underparts with dark barring showing clearly. It was similar in size to a male Bar-tailed Godwit. When put to flight the Hudsonian Godwit was very obvious, with black and white underwings and tail pattern contrasting with the colourful underparts. This is the first record I know of a Hudsonian Godwit in the Bay of Plenty.

Paddy Latham spent an hour observing the godwit flock on 24/9/82 before sighting the elusive American visitor. On 22/10/82 I was unable to locate the bird. By this time the godwit flock had increased to c.3700 birds and 2 Knots, 2 Wrybills, 1 Far Eastern Curlew and 24 Golden Plovers were also present. A small number of N.Z. Dotterels, Banded Dotterels, Variable Oystercatchers and White-fronted Terns were breeding at the spit.

GRAEME TAYLOR

Chatham Island Taiko expedition

The 1982-83 Chatham Island Taiko expedition was in the field from 2 August until 24 January and this was a most successful season. Ten further Taiko were banded, making a total of 15 to date and indicating that the population is larger than originally expected.

On 7 October 1982 the finding of a Taiko with its breast soiled with peat suggests that this bird had been cleaning a burrow and indicates that the breeding season probably extends from September to May. This time span concurs with the published accounts about Moriuri food gathering activities described by Skinner and Baucker.

This season radio telemetry was used

for the first time on the Taiko. Mike Imber, Wildlife Service scientist, having conducted successful trials with small transmitters on Grey-faced Petrels at Whale Island, attached the 14g transmitters to the central tail feathers of three Taiko. These transmitters will be lost when the next tail moult occurs.

After the transmitters were attached to the Taiko in mid-November an attempt was made to monitor them with aerials and receivers for the following 50 nights. Although no signals were received during the surveillance period the aerials and receivers were thoroughly tested using a spare transmitter. These tests showed that the equipment and technique is satisfactory for tracking and monitoring birds in this region. It is planned that this technique will be developed further for use on future expeditions.

Three plywood observation shelters were placed on cliff tops and these were manned at night to check on any Taiko activities but no positive information was gathered.

The search of inland bush ridges and coastal cliffs continued but no occupied burrows were located. Positive results from radio telemetry in the future would help to localise an area for intensive searching.

An aerial survey of the south west region of the main Chatham Island was conducted through the generous sponsorship of the World Wildlife Fund/New Zealand. Several areas for further burrow searches were identified during the flight.

During activities at the Net Observation Station 193 birds were banded, including White-faced Storm Petrel, Grey-backed Storm Petrel, Broad-billed Prion, Fairy Prion, Diving Petrel and Magenta Petrel.

The beaches on the main Chatham Island were patrolled regularly with mainly local species being recovered.

Expedition members completed 22 OSNZ Interim Moulting Cards. The expedition was fortunate in having the valuable assistance of David Melville, who has recently revised the British Trust for Ornithology 'Field Guide to Moulting'.

Expedition members were treated to numerous views of the feeding behaviour of the Chatham Island Pigeon in the vicinity of Taiko Camp. There are at least eight pigeons present in Tuku Gully.

It was a sad group of ornithologists who viewed the remains of a cat-predated pigeon beneath the *Myrsine* near the Net Observation Station. Un-

successful attempts were made to catch any cats frequenting the area. One dead bird represents a considerable loss in a population of about 40 individuals.

I am most grateful for the loyal support and the generous grants that have been forthcoming for this research project from the Environmental Council, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, New Zealand Wildlife Service, Federation of Acclimatisation Societies and the World Wildlife Fund/New Zealand.

To ALASTAIR GORDON for logistic support, RUSSELL THOMAS, Expedition Treasurer, and team leaders DEREK BETTESWORTH, PAT CROMBIE, REG COTTER and DAVID MELVILLE my sincere thanks.

To all members of the 1982-83 expedition my grateful thanks for their enthusiastic support.

DAVID E. CROCKETT, *Expedition Leader*

Banding Mailbag

Between 1 November 1982 and 31 January 1983 a total of 220 recoveries were reported by the public; 27 species were involved. Birds reported dead were Canada Goose (103), Black Swan (5), Shoveler (6), Paradise Shelduck (9), Grey Duck and Mallard (22 together), Red-billed Gull (15), Black-backed Gull (11), White-flipped Penguin (7), Starling (4), Blackbird (6), Gannet (2), Harrier (2) and Northern Blue Penguin, Pied Shag, Sooty Shearwater, White-fronted Tern, Shore Plover, Spur-winged Plover, Spotted Shag, Royal Albatross and Fairy Prion all one recovery each. Live recoveries, either by recapture or colour band sighting, comprise Pied Shag (7), Caspian Tern (2) and one recovery each for Red-billed Gull, White-flipped Penguin, Blackbird, Fairy Prion, Black Stilt, Wrybill, Grey-faced Petrel, and New Zealand Dotterel. One Curlew Sandpiper with a red leg-streamer was seen on 6 January 1982 at Miranda (Firth of Thames), but not reported to our office until 8 November 1982.

Really interesting recoveries seem to be a bit thin at present, only Australasian Harrier L-23447 qualified for mention here. The bird was banded as a juvenile female on 1 June 1982 near Lake Ferry (Wairarapa). It was found dead on 19 December 1982 near Mick's Lagoon, Lake Tekapo, about 470 km from the place of banding.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

Ornithology at Farewell Spit, 13-24 January 1983

On 12 January 1983 11 young OSNZ members representing different regions assembled in Nelson before spending 11 days at Farewell Spit.

Basic planning had been in the very capable hands of Brian Bell and Jenny Hawkins. Substantial grants to cover the travelling expenses of the 'Young Reps' were made from the OSNZ Projects Assistance Fund and this enabled them to come from far afield. The chosen 11 were:— Craig Hodshil (Northland), Chris Jowett and Paul Schofield (Auckland), Peter Druit (South Auckland), Roger Mayhill (Waikato), Jonathan Lusk (Manawatu), Alan Tennyson (Wellington), Donald Bate (Marlborough), Peter Fisher (Nelson), Dominic Graham and Stephen Leitch (Canterbury).

Also present were:— Brian and Sue Bell and family, Jenny Hawkins, Barrie Heather, Paul and Joy Sagar, John and Betty Seddon, Dick Sibson and Roy Slack. As a matter of courtesy they were called 'Tutors.' Some were making their first visit to the Spit but most were only too glad to have the opportunity of revisiting that alluring wilderness. Two were pioneers of the 1961 expedition.

After a night of wind and rain we left Nelson in dismal weather but by Appleby the sky was clearing and the sun was shining as we zig-zagged up and over the imposing barrier of Takaka Hill. On the final leg from the base of the Spit to the lighthouse, the wind was so strong that we drove through a sandy haze. These westerlies persisted for most of our stay, sometimes gusting up to 50 knots and affecting our movements and the behaviour of the birds. Out of the shelter of the pines the emergency airstrip near our camp came to be known as the Polar Ice Cap. Fortunately there were long periods of unbroken sunshine; but it was generally advisable to seek observation points in the lee of solid dunes or thick vegetation.

We were never weatherbound even if once or twice we got wet. According to the state of the tide 'The Boss' would set us on our marks for the day. Then it was up to us to walk and walk, nosing into every lagoon or hollow among the great dunes. Spitend, Mullet Creek, Stockyards, Fossil Point, became familiar names, and we added another, Gannet Island. There were few places on the 20 km-or-more Spit that some of us did not investigate.

The four main waders, Bar-tailed

Godwits, Knots, SIPO and Turnstones were plentiful enough; but not in the numbers which we expected. Smallish tides and the persistent wind ruled out a reliable census. On 17 January our tallies were Godwit 5435; Knot 7686; SIPO 3318; Turnstone 350. Banded Dotterel were rather few at the start of our stay but increased to c500 by the end.

Most of the less common species which visit the Spit were duly logged. Variable Oystercatcher 49; Golden Plover 22; Grey Plover 5; N.Z. Dotterel 2; Large Sand Dotterel 1; Wrybill 5; Curlew 7; Whimbrel 10 (4 definitely Asiatic and 4 American, possibly 5 of each); Tattler 2 (?1 Siberian, 1 Alaskan); Curlew Sandpiper 5; Red-necked Stint 35; Sanderling 6; Pied Stilt 12.

Finding rarities and breaking records is always exciting. The 5 Grey Plovers favoured a lagoon near Mullet Creek where 3 were found in 1977. Four Sanderlings roosted often at full tide near the other waders at Spitend. On 18 January 6 scampered and fed on clean wet sand at the same place under a battery of optical instruments.

On 17 January Brian Bell and Dick Sibson, having put most of the team down at various stations, potted around the base of the Spit and came back with news of a White-winged Black Tern at Freeman's Pond; and, incredibly enough, of an Australian Mountain Duck among Paradise Shelducks in a paddock near Pakawau.

By way of a change 'the 11' were taken two days later to Freeman's Farm where the White-winged Black Tern kindly obliged; to Westhaven Inlet, where the only Common Sandpiper so far reported from the South Island was still frequenting the same estuary; and finally to Pakawau where there were now 2 Mountain Ducks among the Paradise Shelducks. Not far away a lake up in the hills was a haven for moulting Paradise Shelducks. The 500 or so were closely scanned for more Australians, but in vain.

Ornithologically Farewell Spit is famous for its flocks of waders and for the thousands of Black Swans which gather there to moult and feed on the abundant *Zostera*. Something we did not expect was what seemed to be a permanent assemblage of Gannets east of Spitend on one of the higher shelly banks which became an island at full tide. Up to 300 were present daily. There was much coming and going both from the open sea and also from Golden Bay. When tides were full the mouth of Mullet Creek was a favoured fishing ground. There were no active nests at

the colony; but many birds on the ground and usually many hovering overhead. None was seen in speckled first flying plumage. A nice mystery. Possibly a new colony in the making, the colonists being young adults for whom there is no room at the established colonies? Time may tell.

A few Caspian Terns had bred successfully. White-fronted Terns were remarkably few. No real flocks were seen and the occurrence of even single birds was noted. The first Black-fronted Terns were starting to reach the coasts. Red-billed Gulls numbered less than 100 each. Skuas were glimpsed but kept their distance.

Passerines were not neglected. A few pairs of Fernbirds enjoyed the tangled cover at the west end; others called near the airstrip. Welcome Swallows are breeding successfully. One day 40 were flying over the saltings at Spitend; another day 50 were perched on wires near the lighthouse. The nearby pines and other trees supported Fantails, Silvereyes and Grey Warblers and aliens such as Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Redpoll and Yellowhammer were also present. A non-but-near passerine visitor on 21 January was a Shining Cuckoo.

A stay on Farewell Spit will leave many memories. Will they be of a long smooth beach with treacherous patches or of dunes and saltings stretching seemingly without end or a couple of Royal Spoonbills statuesque but wind-blown among the *Salicornia* or of the challenging calls of Wekas reverberating among the scrub?

No expedition such as Farewell Spit 1983 can succeed without detailed planning. Two things especially do we recall with gratitude, Jenny's catering for our inner needs both on the Spit and in her eyrie of a home at Atawhai and Brian's skilful manipulation of the Toyota in response to the challenges of the sand and tide.

CHRIS JOWETT, PAUL SCHOFIELD
& DICK SIBSON

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Cattle Egrets at Berwick

There have been several Cattle Egrets which appear to be living in the Berwick area on a more or less permanent basis. They have been seen frequently over the past several months. On 22 October 1982 we saw 6 birds and 4 of these were showing breeding plumage. 'Hori' Sinclair reports seeing 6 birds on 14/1/83, 2 of them in full breeding plumage.

GEORGE & DOREEN GRANT

REPORT OF TREASURER TO MEMBERS

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1982

1. MEMBERSHIP	Increase		
	31.12.81	31.12.82	(Decrease)
N.Z. Ordinary	818	753	(65)
N.Z. Husband and Wife	232	210	(22)
N.Z. Junior	59	95	36
N.Z. Family	12	13	1
N.Z. Institutions	49	51	2
N.Z. Life Member	57	57	-
Honorary Life Member	1	1	-
Overseas Individuals	83	82	(1)
Overseas Institutions	70	74	4
Overseas Life Members	20	20	-
	<u>1,401</u>	<u>1,356</u>	<u>(45)</u>

During the year 125 new members were admitted, 63 left and 107 were struck off as unfinancial, a net decrease of 45. Notornis was sent to 49 other organisations in exchange for their publications.

2. INCOME

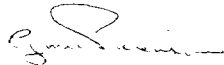
The excess of income over expenditure after transfers to Reserve Funds was \$1,252, a decrease of \$5,353 from the previous year. Income from the sale of greeting cards was down \$2,939 from the previous year because of decreased sales and increased printing costs. Subscription income was \$1,276 less than the cost of printing and distributing "Notornis" and "O.S.N.Z. News". Stocks of greeting cards have been printed for sale next year.

3. PROJECTS ASSISTANCE RESERVE

Grants from this fund as detailed in the notes to the accounts totalled \$4,370 in 1982. Interest income earned by the fund was \$2,840. The shortfall was well covered by additional Royalties received on the sale of the Field Guide which totalled \$5,996 in 1982.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Using membership figures at 31 December 1982 subscription income should approximate \$24,000 in 1983. The cost of "Notornis" and "News" should approximate \$26,000 being a deficit of \$1,800. To enable these costs to be met by subscription income for at least the next two years without placing unnecessary restrictions on the size and content of "Notornis" and "News" it is recommended that subscriptions be increased by 33 1/3% effective from 1 January 1984.



G.M.H. Peterson
HON. TREASURER

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1982

	1981	1982
GENERAL INCOME		
Subscriptions	\$17,023	\$21,469
Transfer from Life Subscriptions Reserve	377	452
Donations	332	275
Profit from sale of Greeting Cards	4,371	1,432
Profit from sale of Back Numbers	138	665
Profit from sale of Car Stickers	19	17
Profit from sale of Society Ties	49	41
Profit from sale of Biology of Birds	40	203
Total General Income	<u>22,349</u>	<u>24,554</u>
INVESTMENT & OTHER INCOME		
Interest earned by all funds	5,429	6,821
Royalties on Field Guide to N.Z. Birds	5,063	5,995
Sales of Provisional Atlas	192	44
	<u>10,684</u>	<u>12,860</u>
Less: Royalties credited to Projects Assistance Reserve	5,063	5,995
Interest credited to Reserves	1,864	3,622
Atlas sales credited to Atlas Reserve	192	44
	<u>7,119</u>	<u>9,661</u>
Investment and other income retained in General Funds	3,565	3,199
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$25,914</u>	<u>\$27,753</u>
COSTS AND EXPENSES		
Printing and distribution of "Notornis" & "OSNZ" News	\$16,551	\$22,745
Audit Fee	300	400
Beach Patrol Scheme	-	196
Book Plate Award	-	50
Cost of Annual General Meeting	52	24
General Expenses	100	147
Junior Award	-	50
Library Expenses	132	60
Nest Record Scheme	144	152
Postages	576	753
Printing and Stationery	565	512
Purchase of Back Numbers	145	-
Royal Society Affiliation	87	378
Regional Representatives Allowance	120	140
Subscriptions to other Societies	-	65
Travelling Expenses	537	829
TOTAL COSTS AND EXPENSES	<u>19,309</u>	<u>26,501</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure transferred to Accumulated Funds	<u>\$ 6,605</u>	<u>\$ 1,252</u>

The accompanying notes form part of and should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

Band and Tag

With the Christmas holidays over and the New Year started, we would like to extend best wishes for 1983. Actually, by the time you read this, the banding year has expired as well. We would like to remind banders that schedules for all species banded between 1 March 1982 and 28 February 1983 are now due. Please forward them immediately.

The report summarising the birds banded in New Zealand for the 1981/82 year is now available. Please order your free copy from the Banding Office.

Only one permit was issued during the period lapsed. John Innes holds this (institutional) permit for the OSNZ Volcanic Plateau group, and this covers banding of the Red-billed Gull, Black-billed Gull and Little Black Shag populations at Sulphur Bay, Lake Rotorua.

The Bird Atlas is nearing its final stages. Maps were produced for all species and over the last few months have been checked by Peter Gaze and Dr Peter Bull. The last corrections are now being processed.

RODERICK O. COSSEE

White-faced Herons on the Chatham Islands

It is always interesting to read of the activities of OSNZ members in other areas and in this respect I feel that OSNZ news fills a worthwhile niche. 'Chatham Island notes' by Kevin Taylor (OSNZ news 22) was especially interesting to me as I am very well acquainted with the main Chatham Island, Wharekauri, having been there on several occasions at different times of the year with the Taiko Expeditions. However, I feel that people could be misled by the statement in the above account that 'White-faced Herons seemed to congregate round the shores of the lagoon, being rarely seen elsewhere.' H. A. Robertson and M. D. Dennison make a similar observation (Notornis 26: 198) 'none was seen on marshy pasture or inland creeks, both habitats commonly used by White-faced Herons in New Zealand.' I agree that both these statements would be correct for the time of year when observations were made.

In April 1979, my wife and I visited practically every area on the main

Chatham Island and everywhere we went we saw White-faced Herons in small groups or pairs. The largest group was 11 at Mamakau Point, where they frequented the grassland and the edges of swampy patches of pasture. Along the south west coast they were well inland. On the many occasions that we went along the shores of Te Whanga Lagoon we saw no herons.

According to a local informant living at Port Hutt, the White-faced Herons always nest in the tall *Pinus radiata* trees in the settlement. There are many areas east and north of Waitangi with tall trees apparently suitable for the White-faced Herons to nest in, but there are few on the south west coast.

The main Chatham Island is covered mainly with peat or peaty soil and this dries out very easily in the summer months, as do the shallower ponds. This makes the grassland less attractive to the White-faced Herons and they utilise the Te Whanga Lagoon at that time.

A. H. GORDON

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF N.Z. (INC)

BALANCE SHEET
31 DECEMBER 1982

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Cash at Bank of New Zealand	\$ 9,448	\$ 4,715
Amounts owing to the Society	56	353
Short-term Secured Debenture Stock (Note 1)	20,000	25,000
Stock of "Notornis" (Note 2)	100	100
Stock of Christmas Cards (Note 3)	-	7,845
Total Current Assets	29,604	38,013
<u>Investments</u>		
<u>Life Subscriptions Reserve:</u>		
Bank of New Zealand Savings Account	64	316
Deposits at Bank of New Zealand (11.5%)	2,600	700
Marac - Secured Debenture Stock (16.5%)	400	400
A.G.C. Secured Debenture Stock (15.75%)	330	330
B.N.Z. Finance Debenture Stock (15.0%)	-	2,320
	3,394	4,066
<u>Robert Falla Memorial Reserve:</u>		
Broadlands Secured Debenture Stock (17.25%)	1,000	1,000
Cash at Bank of New Zealand	142	242
	1,142	1,242
<u>General Investments</u>		
N.Z. Government Savings Stock (11%)	5,000	5,000
Local Body Stocks (9.5%)	3,000	-
B.N.Z. Finance Co. Ltd - Secured Debenture Stock (15%)	8,000	8,000
Dvlpt Finance Corp - Secured Debenture Stock (14%)	3,000	3,000
	19,000	16,000
Total Investments	23,536	21,308
Library - at valuation (Note 2)	1,000	1,000
Advance - for January 1983 Summer School	-	1,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$54,140	\$61,321
<u>LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>		
<u>Liabilities</u>		
Amounts owed by the Society	\$ 4,522	\$ 5,489
Subscriptions paid in advance	1,403	985
Total Liabilities	5,925	6,474
<u>Reserves</u>		
Life Subscriptions Reserve (Note 4)	3,394	4,066
Robert Falla Memorial Reserve (Note 5)	1,142	1,242
Projects Assistance Reserve (Note 6)	18,929	23,395
Bird Distribution in N.Z. Atlas Reserve (Note 7)	650	792
Publication Reserve	1,000	1,000
Total Reserves	25,115	30,495
<u>Accumulated Funds</u>		
Balance at beginning of year	16,495	23,100
Excess of Income over Expenditure for Year	6,605	1,252
	23,100	24,352
TOTAL LIABILITIES, RESERVES & ACCUMULATED FUNDS	\$54,140	\$61,321

For and on behalf of the Council

R. B. Simpson
Chairman

The accompanying notes form part of and should be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF N.Z. (INC)

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

31 DECEMBER 1982

GENERAL ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

The general accounting principles recognised as appropriate for the measurement and reporting of results and financial position under the historical cost method of accounting have been adopted by the Society.

PARTICULAR ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

Particular accounting principles which materially affect the measurement of excess of income over expenditure and financial position have been applied as follows:-

- SUBSCRIPTION INCOME
No subscriptions in arrears have been included in income. Subscriptions in advance have been excluded from income. Life Subscriptions received are included in the Life Subscriptions Reserve, from which 10% of the closing balance is annually transferred to current income.
- ROYALTY INCOME
Royalties on the sale of Field Guide to N.Z. Birds are deducted from income and credited to the Projects Assistance Reserve.
- SALES OF BIRD DISTRIBUTION IN N.Z. ATLAS
Proceeds from the sale of the Provisional Atlas are deducted from income and credited to the Atlas Reserve.
- INTEREST EARNED
Interest earned by investment of Reserve Funds is credited to those Reserves.

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF N.Z. (INC.)

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31 DECEMBER 1982

- Short-Term Secured Debenture Stock
This item comprises:
General Finance Limited @ 15.5%p.a. \$ 5,000
B.N.Z. Finance Limited @ 14.0%p.a. 5,000
U.D.C. Group Holdings Limited @ 14.0%p.a. 5,000
Australian Guarantee Corporation Limited @ 14.5%p.a. 5,000
B.N.Z. Finance Limited @ 15.5%p.a. 5,000

\$25,000
- Stock of "Notornis" and Library
These are included at a nominal value.
- Stock of Christmas Cards
These are Christmas Cards printed in 1982 and held for sale in future years. They are recorded at cost.
- Life Subscriptions Reserve

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 2,876	\$ 3,394
Life subscriptions received	560	640
Interest earned	335	484
	3,771	4,518
Less Transfer to Current Income, 10% of balance	377	452
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 3,394</u>	<u>\$ 4,066</u>
- Robert Falla Memorial Reserve

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 100	1,142
Contributions received	1,075	28
Interest earned	17	172
	1,192	1,342
Less Grant to Mr A. Blackburn	50	100
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 1,142</u>	<u>\$ 1,242</u>
- Projects Assistance Reserve

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
Balance at beginning of year	\$12,743	\$18,929
Royalties on Field Guide	5,063	5,996
Interest earned	1,465	2,840
	19,271	27,765
Less grants made:		
Miranda Naturalists' Trust - Travel	342	-
Te Whanga Lagoon Survey - D. Crockett	-	200
"Totoro" South America Expedition - G. Clarke	-	2,000
"Derwent" South Pacific Expedition - T. Lovegrove	-	2,000
Brown Creeper Survey Cards - S. Lauder	-	40
Whitehead Survey Cards - J. Innes	-	130
	342	4,370
Balance at end of year	<u>\$18,929</u>	<u>\$23,395</u>
- Bird Distribution in N.Z. Atlas Reserve

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 411	\$ 650
Atlas sales during the year	192	44
Interest earned	47	98
	\$ 650	\$ 792

Wilkinson Wilberfoss
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

The Members
The Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc)

In our opinion, the financial statements on pages 2 to 5 fairly present the financial position of the Society at 31 December 1982 and the results of its activities for the year ended on that date.

Wilkinson Wilberfoss

Auckland, New Zealand
22 January 1983.

Record release of rare Brown Teal

In early December 1982 the largest ever release of captive reared Brown Teal took place at Puke Puke Lagoon near Foxton, when 34 birds were released into the wild.

The release was the first of several that will take place over the next few months and indications are that a new record will also be set for the total number of Brown Teal reared and released in a single season.

The release programme is part of Ducks Unlimited's operation 'Pateke' which aims to save the endangered and endemic Brown Teal from extinction by breeding birds in captivity and releasing them into suitable wild areas.

The project is currently in its 6th season and to date Ducks Unlimited members have reared 350 Brown Teal in captivity. The New Zealand Wildlife Service is also rearing Brown Teal at the Mt. Bruce Native Bird Reserve and over 200 Brown Teal have been reared there over the last 4 years.

Ducks Unlimited's project aims to re-establish the Brown Teal in the Manawatu, which is an area where Brown Teal were plentiful in the early part of this century. One major reason for the Brown Teal's decline is thought to have been excessive shooting. To counteract this problem duck hunters at the release area have decided to limit their shooting hours, and they will hunt only during daylight hours. This should ensure that they do not shoot the totally protected Brown Teal by mistake. This highly creditable move by the duck hunters is an all time first in New Zealand.

NEIL HAYES & PAUL PIRANI

Cattle Egrets wearing wing tags

In an effort to learn more about their movements, wing tags are being attached to Cattle Egrets in Australia by Neil McKilligan of the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, Toowoomba; and Darryl Reimer of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service, Warwick. For the past three years banders in south-east Queensland and north-east New South Wales have been applying colour bands to the legs of Cattle Egret chicks. It is hoped that the use of patagial tags will result in a greater number of sightings of marked birds than has been the case with colour bands.

Each Cattle Egret colony has been allocated its own tag colour and each

tag bears a combination of two letters or numbers. Persons sighting a tagged Cattle Egret are asked to notify either David Purchase, Australian Bird-banding Scheme, Division of Wildlife and Rangelands Research, CSIRO, P.O. Box 84, Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602, Australia, or Roderick O. Cossee, Banding Officer, Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington. Please supply full details of the place and date of the sighting, the tag colour and its inscription, and the appearance of the bird (e.g. if in breeding plumage). Each report will be acknowledged and the information passed on to the banders.

These Cattle Egrets also wear a conventional metal CSIRO bird band on one leg. Reports of the recovery of Cattle Egrets wearing these bands have come from as far south as Tasmania (three birds) and as far east as New Zealand (one bird).

DAVID PURCHASE

Long-tailed Cuckoo

A Long-tailed Cuckoo came into our garden at Kiwi Valley, Wairoa in Hawkes Bay on 27/10/82 and stayed until 3/11/82. It flew across the lawn and immediately caught my attention, with its long tail, large size and brown colouring. The Blackbirds saw it too and kept chasing it from shrub to shrub. It perched on a rose bush for a few minutes and gave a wonderful opportunity for a close view of its back, which was a rufous brown with bars and white spots, a mottled effect.

On another occasion it came from thick vegetation, driven out by Blackbirds, Fantails and Silvereyes, and went to ground under a large *Hebe*. Fantails chased it everywhere while it flew, and other birds mobbed it as they do Moreporks in the daytime. It was always the alarm calls of the Blackbirds that alerted me to the presence of the cuckoo, and this was always in the late afternoon.

LUCY HODGSON

New Rare Birds Committee Secretary

Mr J. E. Squire has moved to Australia and resigned as Secretary of the Rare Birds Committee. Mr J. F. M. Fennell has been appointed to the vacant position on the Committee.

Therefore future reports and correspondence should be addressed to: Mr J. F. M. Fennell, 184 Horndon Road, Darfield.

Wreck of Long-tailed Skuas

A wreck of Long-tailed Skuas occurred along the west coast of the North Island during late January and February 1983. Many of these birds were originally identified by the people who found them as Arctic Skuas but all proved to be Long-tailed Skuas on closer examination. The birds were very difficult to identify because they were probably fledglings from the previous northern breeding season going through their first moult. All had confusing immature plumages and none had elongate tail streamers.

Many of the characters given in standard reference works and used to separate Long-tailed from Arctic Skuas proved to be unreliable. So if you find or see what you cautiously think is an Arctic Skua, check it very carefully.

Incidentally, an experienced English bird observer and bird artist, Peter Hayman, visiting New Zealand a few years ago, already claimed at that time that at least some of the birds we were identifying as Arctic Skuas were in fact Long-tailed Skuas.

SANDY BARTLE

Manawatu Estuary count

Ten members from Manawatu and Wellington completed a survey of the Manawatu Estuary on 27/2/83 and were well rewarded for their efforts. The estuary lived up to its reputation as a good wader habitat with counts of 23 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, 2 Curlew Sandpipers, 1 Terek Sandpiper, 4 Red-necked Stints, 1 Turnstone, 39 Golden Plovers, 3 Far Eastern Curlews, 320 Bar-tailed Godwits and 140 Knots. This very good variety of waders emphasises the importance of this area as a wader habitat in the southern half of the North Island. Have members noticed an increase in sandpiper numbers at other estuaries?

In addition to the waders already mentioned we were very pleased to count 51 Caspian Terns, 7 Royal Spoonbills and 3 Cattle Egrets (2 still showing colour on the head and neck).

LINDSAY DAVIES

Birds of China — Passerines

Les Oiseaux de Chine, de Mongolie et de Corée. Passereaux by R. D. Etchecopar and F. Hue was due for publication in November 1982. This volume has 600 pages and 22 coloured plates. This is a companion to the non-passerine volume by the same authors and published in 1978.

A *Notornis* index

For some months I have been compiling a comprehensive index (from the annual indices) for *Notornis* volumes 1-28 inclusive, and by the time this issue of *OSNZ news* is received the job should be completed.

The index is in *two sections*:—

(a) One sheet for each species (or subspecies), *strictly named by common name as per New Zealand Checklist and Amendments* e.g. do not request 'Godwit' if you want Eastern Bar-tailed Godwit. The scientific name is included on the sheet heading.

For most large groups there is an additional index of unspecified references e.g. if you order Wandering Albatross you will also get an index of 'Albatross, unspecified.'

The indices in Section (a) list *volume and page numbers only*.

(b) A topic index, with one sheet per topic (unless numbered below in brackets).

Affinities/taxonomy/genetics (2)

Anting

Census methods

Classified Summarised Notes

Climatic & other casualties

Field Study Courses

Foods & feeding

Fossils/extinction

Helpers

High altitude

*Localities (5)

Measurements

Moas

Parasites

Pellets

Predation/aggression

S.W. Pacific (4)

Vocalisations

Waders, unspecified

* Localities includes only those places where general lists/observations were made, not individual species i.e. 'Birds at Orewa Beach' qualifies but 'Turnstones in Mt Eden Quarry' does not.

These indices will be incomplete obviously, as much of the subject matter would have been recorded under species' accounts. The indices in Section (b) list *author and title*, as well as volume and page numbers.

In addition to the above a start has been made on the following topics: Annual reports of Banding, Beach Patrols and Nest Records; Authors; Bird Mapping Scheme; Letters, Obituaries and Reviews.

ORDERING: To recover cost of duplicating (twice), paper, typing, etc., I shall have to charge 25c per sheet (A4).

Please forward money with order for

named sheets, and a stamped, self-addressed foolscap (or larger) envelope. There may be some delay in responding while final copies are being typed from the rough drafts. The total index will be about 400 sheets.

PETER CHILD, 10 *Royal Terrace, Alexandra*

RAOU Congress

The Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union plans to hold its annual Congress in Auckland during September 1983 and OSNZ members are invited to participate in all activities and to lead field trips. Field trips planned for the Congress include visits to Tiritiri Island, a wader haunt and a local forest area. Pre- and Post-Congress tours are proposed for (1) Christchurch, West Coast and McKenzie Basin; (2) Christchurch, Nelson, West Coast and Cook Strait; (3) Auckland-Waikato wetlands, Waitomo caves, Pureora Forest, Rotorua Lakes, Coromandel forests and Firth of Thames; (4) Little Barrier Island and Kaipara Harbour.

Further information is available from the organiser, Mr C. R. Veitch, P.O. Box 2220, Auckland.

Wanted: Nest Record Cards

The report on the cards received during the 1982-83 breeding season is being prepared. A considerable number of cards has already been received but more are required if the effort of 1980-81 is to be equalled.

Members who are holding completed Nest Record Cards are asked to please forward them to the Convenor as soon as possible so that a report can be compiled for the AGM in May and for publication in the June *Notornis*.

DAVID E. CROCKETT, *Nest Record Convenor, 21 McMillan Avenue, Kamo, Northland*

Invasion of Chestnut-breasted Shelducks

There have been many reports of Chestnut-breasted Shelducks from a wide area of the country since Canterbury members saw a female at Lake Ellesmere in early December 1982. This Australian species associates readily with Paradise Shelducks so it is well worthwhile checking flocks for strange birds. The Chestnut-breasted Shelducks are easily distinguished from Paradise Shelducks. They resemble male Paradise Shelducks in overall appearance but have a broad chestnut band across the breast. Females have a white ring around each eye, a band of white at the base of the bill and may have a narrow

white neck ring. Males have a broader white neck ring and may have a white band at the base of the bill but *do not* have a white eye ring.

In Australia the birds prefer coastal lagoons and estuaries and this seems to be the general trend here but some inland sightings have been reported. To date reports have come from: Bay of Plenty, 2 at Maketu Estuary on 26 & 27/1/83 and 1 at Sulphur Bay, Lake Rotorua, on 13/2/83 (Graeme Taylor & Paddy Latham). Nelson, 2 at Paka-wau on 20/1/83 (OSNZ junior members' course) and 1 at Lake Rotoiti on 17/2/83 (L. W. McCaskill). Marlborough, 2 at Ward and 8 at Lake Elterwater in late January (Brian Bell & Pauline Jenkins). Canterbury, 1 then 2 at Lake Ellesmere in December and early January (Canterbury OSNZ); 1 at the Cass River Delta, Lake Tekapo, in late January (Ray Pierce) and 8 at Washdyke Lagoon on 30/1/83 (Paul Sagar). Southland, 2 on Riverton Estuary, 7 on Lake George (west of Riverton) and a possible 2 at the Waimutuku Rivermouth (Roger Sutton).

Barrie Heather has searched Lakes Horowhenua and Wairarapa and Manawatu members have checked out their sand dune lakes but all to no avail. However, these birds are likely to be found anywhere.

A female has been found with Paradise Shelducks at Barrett Lagoon, New Plymouth, by David Medway and Rob Wheeler. This, and the Bay of Plenty birds, are the only North Island birds found so far.

It is important that we document the occurrence of Chestnut-breasted Shelducks in New Zealand. Please send all reports to Mr B. D. Heather, 10 Jocelyn Crescent, Silverstream, who is collating sightings.

PAUL SAGAR

Discount travel to AGM

The Secretary has 10% Air New Zealand discount vouchers available for those members flying to Christchurch for the AGM. Anyone wishing to obtain these should write to Mr R. S. Slack, c/- Post Office, Pauatahanui.

R. S. SLACK

New edition of the Field Guide

A new edition of the *Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand* is planned and the authors would like to correct any errors which appeared in the previous edition. Anyone noting errors in species accounts or plates are invited to contact Mr R. B. Sibson, 26 Entrican Avenue, Remuera, Auckland.

Regional Roundup

Far North/Northland: Alastair and Audrey Gordon report that they saw a White-necked Heron at Waipu River Wildlife Refuge on 24/2/83. The bird was perched on an old log near the middle of a dry sand area and allowed a good description to be made.

Bay of Plenty: The Maketu Estuary has produced more waders than usual this summer. Graeme Taylor reports that 1 Terek Sandpiper, 21 Red-necked Stints, 4 Pectoral Sandpipers, 30 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and 3 Curlew Sandpipers have been seen there recently. He also reports that the Little Black Shag colony on Sulphur Bay, Lake Rotorua, has produced c950 nests and new nests are still being built! The low level of the lake has allowed more nest sites to be occupied this summer. The estimated population is 2000+ and feeding flights returning to the island from out on the lake sometimes top 700 birds.

The sewage ponds at Kaiwarau attract some interesting birds and on 13/10/82 Roy Weston saw 1 White Heron, 8 Little Black Shags, 4 Dabchicks and 2 Grey Teal. On 19/12/82 Roy saw 300-400 White-fronted Terns breeding at Port Ohope Spit and on a return visit on 7/1/83 he found 27 Golden Plover, 100+ Banded Dotterel and 12 NZ Dotterel.

Hawkes Bay: On 4/9/82 Peka Peka Swamp provided members with a view of Spotless Crake and another highlight was a Spur-winged Plover's nest, previously found by Wayne and Margaret Twyde.

2/10/82 was census day at the West-shore Ponds and the count included 160 Bar-tailed Godwits, 531 Pied Stilts, 2 Gull-billed Terns (seen later in the month), 14 Caspian Terns, 1 Golden Plover, 9 Spur-winged Plover, 4 SIPO, 57 White-faced Herons, 4 White Herons, 1 Reef Heron, 6 Cattle Egrets and 1 Little Egret. Report from Kathleen Todd.

Manawatu: Charles Fleming reports that on 4/1/83 he and Mrs Fleming, fed up with Waikanae's grey skies, drove to the Manawatu Estuary and observed the wader flock near high tide. They were joined by Mike Tarburton and saw about 260 Bar-tailed Godwits, 130 Knots, 2 Golden Plovers, 1 Turnstone, 15 Banded Dotterels, a handful of Wrybills, 4 Red-necked Stints and an Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit.

Later in the month Manawatu members were able to add 1 Gull-billed Tern, 2 Curlew Sandpipers, 11 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, 1 Terek Sandpiper

and 2 Far Eastern Curlew to this impressive list.

Wellington: The region seems to have a monopoly on Crested Terns, with 1 being reported from Wellington Harbour in December 1982 and 1 at Waikanae in early January. In addition Alan Tennyson saw a frigate bird (provisionally identified as a Lesser Frigate Bird) fly over his house at Waikanae on 5/1/83 and he found a dead Sooty Tern on the Waikanae Beach on 31/12/82. **Nelson:** The sewer outfall at Atawhai proved a great attraction for seabirds recently, with over 50 Giant Petrels and about 500 Cape Pigeons feeding — more than are usually seen during the winter.

Canterbury: Marion Lane found a small wreck of 9 Mottled Petrels on the beach near Ashburton on 20/11/82. In late August the sea in this area was alive with small fish and these attracted an interesting group of penguins to feed, with 23 Little Blue Penguins, 10 Yellow-eyed Penguins and 2 Erect-crested Penguins walking about the beach at once. However, there was much movement from the surf to the shore and it was difficult to get an accurate count.

Local members continue to make frequent trips to Lake Ellesmere and this summer counts have included 9 Golden Plovers, 162 Red-necked Stints, 2 Sanderlings and a Terek Sandpiper. The Ashley Estuary has not been neglected and a Large Sand Dotterel was present during February.

Spider Lagoon, South Canterbury, continued its good record for terns when Frank Hollay, Les McPherson and Paul Sagar counted 6 White-winged Black Terns there on 30/1/83.

Compiled by PAUL SAGAR

Black-fronted Dotterels breeding on the Taieri River

After an absence of 4 years Black-fronted Dotterels have returned to the Outram area of the Taieri Plain. They had been present at irregular intervals in this area since 1966 but previous sightings were always of non-breeders. However, on 10/12/82 1 adult was seen to do a broken-wing display. This was investigated further and on 15/12/82 one adult and 2 chicks about 10-14 days old, were observed. These birds were observed subsequently until after the 2 chicks had fledged.

This seems to be the first breeding record of the Black-fronted Dotterel in coastal Otago.

PETER SCHWEIGMAN, GEORGE GRANT & DOREEN GRANT

Help!

(1) White-fronted Terns — chicks were banded on the Boulder Bank, Nelson, again this summer. Red bands were used this time and members are asked to check any juvenile White-fronted Terns in their area for bands. The previous summer's banding produced at least two reports from Australia and one from the North Island.

Any records should be sent to Jenny Hawkins, 772 Atawhai Drive, Nelson. (2) Black-fronted Terns — about 120 chicks were colour banded on Canterbury riverbeds this summer in an attempt to follow the plumage changes and movements of known-age birds. Should members see any of these birds please note (a) plumage details, including the bill colour, and (b) the number of birds in the flock with similar plumage.

Reports should be sent to either Barrie Heather, 10 Jocelyn Crescent, Silverstream, or Paul Sagar, 38A Yardley Street, Christchurch 4.

Wrybills on the Hunter

For nearly 20 years I have been making occasional surveys of the 'riverbed species' in Central Otago.

The main extensive shingle areas of the Hunter River (head of Lake Hawea) were ruined when the lake was raised for hydro storage in 1959. Consequently about 10 km of riverbed was covered and subsequent artificially low lake levels (such as have prevailed during the past few months) expose a barren waste, with hundreds of hectares of mud, silt and sand through which the remaining dead trees protrude. These areas are devoid of birdlife except for a few Pipits gleaning insects from the surface. There are still some smaller areas of shingle upstream.

No Wrybills were found in a 1969 survey. However, under very rainy conditions in September 1971, 4 birds were found but no nests. A month later I was likewise unable to find a nest.

The next survey was made during Labour Weekend 1982, under bitterly cold southerly conditions with showers of rain, sleet and snow. Nevertheless we managed to find 14 adults, including 2 pairs each with 2 young chicks, and 1 nest with 2 eggs. We could easily have missed a few others (hidden by foggy lenses and snowflakes). It is a great pity of course that no survey was completed before 1959.

Wrybills now breed on three riverbeds in Central Otago, the others being the Makarora and Matukituki.

PETER CHILD