

OSNZ news

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.

No: 34

March, 1985

Note: Deadline for the June issue will be 15th
May.

AGM — Hamilton

Plans for the 1985 AGM, to be held in Hamilton during the weekend of 25-26 May, are well underway. After the success of the 'live-in' style of the Nelson AGM last year, it was decided to hold a similar one in Hamilton. The Waikato University campus is the chosen venue, and members will be accommodated in the Student Village.

The field trip, lectures and workshops will be open to the general public as part of Waikato University's Continuing Education Programme. Non-members wishing to attend should register through the University of Waikato.

The field trip to the Otorohanga Kiwi House will give people an opportunity to see an excellent collection of waterfowl, including Grey Teal, Brown Teal, NZ Scaup, and Blue Duck, as well as Shore Plover, the resident kiwis, and many other native birds.

The 'Status of Kokako' and 'Wetlands' are the themes of the papers to be presented on the Saturday afternoon. Workshops on Moulting and on Beach Wreck Identifications will be held on Sunday morning, and the AGM and Conference will be concluded with short talks by Tim Lovegrove and Don Merton.

With the excellent facilities available, the Waikato members are looking forward to welcoming a large attendance.
FOLKERT NIEUWLAND

Labour Weekend Camp — Hawkes Bay

Members are reminded that there will be a dotterel count on Hawkes Bay rivers during Labour Weekend 1985.

Full details will appear with the June issue of *Notornis* and we hope for a good muster of members. All visitors will be especially welcome.

KATHLEEN TODD

Nest Records Cards

The Annual Report of the Nest Record Scheme will be completed during April and members are requested to forward all completed cards to me by 15 April.

Blank cards are available from your Regional Representative or from me (21 McMillan Avenue, Kamo, Whangarei).
DAVID E. CROCKETT

Congratulations

Congratulations to Dr JOHN WARHAM, who has been advised that his parent university, Durham, is awarding him the D.Sc. degree for his work on seabirds. John retired recently but still retains a desk in the Zoology Department, University of Canterbury, and plans to complete a number of substantial research projects in the next few years.

National Wader Count — June 1985

The second national winter wader count is planned for June 1985 and once again members and friends are encouraged to participate. Last year's count was a really good effort, when over 200 people participated to complete a truly national count.

The main aims of the winter count are to count NZ-breeding species (Banded Dotterel, Wrybill, SIPO, Variable Oystercatcher, Pied Stilt, Black Stilt), and overwintering arctic migrants.

The success of this project depends solely upon the enthusiasm of every participant, and the more participants we have, the more complete is our count. Therefore members are asked to contact their RR now, and enroll as a wader counter.

PAUL SAGAR

News from the Rare Birds Committee

The Committee had a quiet time between August and November 1984 and just when we considered that all rare birds had forsaken New Zealand things started to liven up.

The first of a flock of interesting records was a Black-tailed Native Hen, observed at Granite Creek near Karamea. The bird was first seen at the end of August and was thought to be a small 'chook' by the landowner. However, the true identification was confirmed shortly afterwards and the bird remained in the area until at least early October (N. Stopforth, F.D. Richards).

Fairy Martins were seen at Leigh, North Auckland in November 1984 and at Papakura, South Auckland in January 1985. These were probably separate individuals (K. J. Taylor, B. Brown). Fairy Martins have been recorded with some regularity throughout the country and observers are advised to keep an eye open for this species as it may be the next colonist from across the Tasman.

An Oriental Cuckoo was photographed at Tukurau, Golden Bay in early December (W.R.L. Wilkins).

Some unusual waders have been recorded recently. A Ruff was found at Lake Ellesmere in January and is the first confirmed record for New Zealand (K. Harrison, J. & J. Fennell). A record of an Hudsonian Godwit from the same location was held, pending confirmation because of the discovery of 11 Asiatic Black-tailed Godwits soon after. Two unusual stints were located at Miranda and are being reviewed at present. The Committee also has been given preliminary notification of a White-winged Black Tern at Tauranga and a Chestnut-breasted Shelduck at the Snares. Further details of these sightings are awaited.

JOHN FENNELL, Secretary R. B. C.

1984-85 Chatham Island Taiko Expedition

Following the radio telemetric trials on the Chatham Island Taiko, from October to December 1982 it becomes evident that a more comprehensive tracking system was required to obtain positive results.

With the guidance and support of Hugh Best, scientist, Research Section, Wildlife Service, a telemetric system was designed to track the fast-flying, nocturnal Taiko.

Through the generosity of 35 companies I was able to arrange sponsorship of materials and equipment, which allowed the manu-

facture of the aerials to proceed. Sponsorship of the pipes and timber for the main masts was kindly arranged by Murray Mitchell, Executive Director of the World Wildlife Fund New Zealand.

The aerials were constructed in Whangarei by Alan Gordon, Brian Pearson and Uwe Tolks. Tests of a prototype aerial were carried out on the property of Doug Ballantyne during September 1984.

After a series of successful tests, six aerials were constructed in kitset form and freighted to the Chatham Islands.

Sponsored materials were obtained and dispatched for the construction of six prefabricated shelters, to provide waterproof storage for the sensitive electronic receivers at the base of the masts.

A work party, comprising David and Ruth Crockett, Doug Ballantyne, Prue Cozens, Brian Pearson, Ralph and Mary Powlesland, Ian and Liz Sangster, Stephen Walker and Marion Wallis arrived at Taiko Camp on 18 December 1984 and remained in the field until 14 January 1985.

The following six sites were selected to provide a comprehensive telemetric coverage of the south-west region:— 1. Point Gap; 2. Lookout Hill; 3. Mobile; 4. Murphy's Hill; 5. Soretooth; 6. 281.

Fully operational telemetric monitoring stations were erected at Point Gap and Murphy's Hill and all systems were tested. During the testing, two storms were experienced, which enabled the equipment to be operated and inspected under difficult weather conditions. The results of these field tests were most encouraging.

The aerials received a good signal from a dummy transmitter positioned in a variety of places on the southwest coast.

Even in the most stormy weather the sheds proved adequate to house the sensitive telemetric equipment and provided ample space for two expedition members to monitor the transmitter through the hours of darkness.

Communication with all monitoring stations was established using citizen band radios so that instant radio contact with all operators can be maintained at all times during future telemetric surveys. Access tracks to all monitoring stations were marked so that each station can be serviced as effectively as possible.

Procedures were developed for the safe erection and dismantling of the aerials so that maintenance can be readily achieved. The Base Camp was provisioned and upgraded, ready for an efficient start to the next major telemetric effort, in September 1985.

Taiko number 24 was captured, banded and released on 2 January 1985, unfortunately too late to be involved in the telemetric exercise.

Acknowledgements: I am most grateful to Murray Mitchell, WWF/NZ, who obtained enlarged charts and aerial photographs, from New Zealand Aerial Mapping, to allow the accurate plotting of bearings.

My sincere thanks to Mike Imber of the Wildlife Service for the loan of transmitters and receivers.

The expedition was most fortunate to have the services of Ralph Powlesland, who is experienced in radio telemetric operations.

I am deeply indebted to Alastair and Audrey Gordon and all the other tireless workers mentioned earlier in the report, who gave both their time and expertise to enable the telemetric system to reach the present stage of operational capability.

DAVID E. CROCKETT, **Expedition Leader**

Frustrations!

The question of the incubation period for the Black-fronted Dotterel in New Zealand remains unsolved. From our studies in the 1982/83 season (see *Notornis* 31:34) we reckon it to be between 25 and 27 days. Therefore it was something of a thrill to locate a nest actually under construction on 23/10/84 on the Manuhakia River. Progress was avidly monitored until nest building was completed, and the typical clutch of 3 eggs duly laid.

We were very anxious about this nest as it was on a shingle island adjacent to a popular picnic spot, and was disturbed by picnickers, dogs, fishermen, swimmers, canoeists, trail-bikes and even 4-wheeldrive vehicles. At one stage there were tire marks within a metre of the nest! However, the birds persevered, as did the birdwatchers.

From Day 24 onwards visits were made every few hours, with negative results. After 34 days (and the birds still incubating) all eggs were found to be infertile!

The only useful additional information to emerge from this protracted exercise was (a) some more details about nest-building behaviour; (b) that the intervals between successive eggs being laid was about 42 hours.

PETER & MARGARET CHILD

Passerine Gulls

On 5/2/85 at 08.00 hours a single Red-billed Gull was observed perching on a powerline in the Auckland suburb of Mission Bay. The bird seemed quite secure and its feet were well curved around the cable. I have once before seen this species on a wire — a single bird on a telegraph line at Snell's Beach, Mahurangi Peninsula in March 1966.

MICHAEL TAYLOR

Coots on Taupo — at last

Although Australian Coots have been in the North Island since the 1950's and are renowned nomads, they have not been reported from Lake Taupo. However, Derek Onley and Walter Jackson independently reported coots breeding at Motuoapa, in a reed-fringed marina, during Christmas 1984. There were at least 7 adults and 15 young. Local people tell me that the coots have been there since mid-1984.

This shows the value of reporting bird lists to local RRs when you are on holiday. The OSNZ summer course in January 1986 is perfectly placed to check on how these new arrivals are doing.

JOHN INNES

A Fantail on Mt. Ngauruhoe

On a recent visit to Mt. Ngauruhoe, Peter Bellingham, Mark Kimberley and I were struck by the apparent lack of birdlife in the low, open vegetation of the upper Mangatepopo Valley. Nearing the summit of the mountain by early afternoon, however, we were greeted by a solitary Fantail, flitting amongst large scoria boulders just below the rim of the crater. The only insects seen were bright green chafer beetles and assorted flies. This observation was made at 2,240 metres a.s.l.

MARK SMALE

Information wanted — colour-dyed albatrosses

During November-December 1984 breeding albatrosses and mollymawks at several colonies in the Kerguelen archipelago were colour-dyed on the breast. Because only known breeding birds were marked subsequent sightings gave an indication of the feeding areas favoured by each species during the breeding season.

The number of birds of each species that were dyed, and the colours used, were as follows:

Species	Number dyed	Colour
Grey-headed Mollymawk	2,500	yellow-orange
Black-browed Mollymawk	750	yellow-orange
Black-browed Mollymawk	650	rhodamine pink
Wandering Albatross	200	rhodamine pink

Many sightings of these birds have been reported by observers on fishing vessels, and on the research vessel **Marion DuFresne**; the maximum distance recorded from the breeding colonies was for Wandering Albatrosses and Grey-headed Mollymawks, some 1,450 km south of Kerguelen, near the Antarctic continent.

The colour on these birds is likely to last beyond the breeding season, and into the time period when some of these birds may frequent New Zealand waters. Therefore ocean-going OSNZ members are requested to keep a special lookout for any marked birds; the information required is species, location, date and colour mark. Reports of sightings should be sent to Paul Sagar, 38A Yardley Street, Christchurch 4, who will be collating sightings to pass onto the French ornithologists responsible for the project.
HENRI WEIMERSKIRCH & PAUL SAGAR

Native birds in high country exotic tree stands

During the summer of 1982/83 I was involved in a Forest Research Institute survey of exotic trees in the Canterbury high country. The region is large (about 1.8 million ha) but exotic trees, mostly in the form of shelterbelts and small woodlots, occupy a very small area of around 1,200 ha. Corsican pine, ponderosa pine, radiata pine, Douglas fir and European larch comprise 89% of this area, with other conifers and broadleaf species occupying 9% and 1% respectively. Our survey team managed to visit just about every stand of trees big enough to accommodate a 500m² sample plot.

The survey aimed at obtaining information on species growth rates and the major site factors influencing growth. The time taken for each sample was normally 30-90 minutes. We had intended during this time to record all birds seen or heard, but we soon realised that differentiating between the various introduced bird calls was beyond the ability of anyone in our party. Hence, recordings were restricted to native birds.

The number of native birds recorded within stands of the five major tree species is recorded in the accompanying table. Native birds were noted in only 10% of the 243 exotic tree stands visited, with Corsican pine stands being almost twice as popular as any other. The Grey Warbler was seen most often, a feature of the species being its presence in a number of small stands and isolated scrub (usually matagouri) patches well removed from any other woody vegetation.

Small stands such as those sampled in this survey offered native bird habitats which would otherwise be unavailable in the largely treeless high country landscape. Exotic tree stands also provided favoured nesting habitats for most birds, particularly the larger passerines, with Douglas fir appearing the most attractive, presumably due to its dense foliage and branching habit.

The survey moves down into inland Otago and Southland during the summer of 1985/86 and although the sampling will not be

as intensive as in the Canterbury region, it is planned to continue the bird recordings.

Native birds recorded within stands of five exotic tree species in the Canterbury high country.

Tree species	No. of sites		No. of birds				N.Z. Falcon
	Total	Birds present (%)	Grey Warbler	Pied Fantail	Pied Tit	Bellbird	
Radiata pine	53	6(11%)	3	2	—	1	—
Corsican pine	57	12(21%)	5	5	1	1	—
Ponderosa pine	59	5(9%)	3	—	1	—	1
Douglas fir	42	3(7%)	1	1	1	—	—
European larch	32	2(6%)	1	1	—	—	—
All species	243	28(11%)	13	9	3	2	1

N. J. LEDGARD

New ICBP publications

The International Council for Bird Preservation advises that it will shortly publish three new technical publications. These are:

- ★ **Status and conservation of the world's seabirds** (available February 1985)
- ★ **Threatened birds of Africa and related islands.** The ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book (due March 1985)
- ★ **Conservation of island birds** (due April 1985)

The **Status and conservation of the world's seabirds** is edited by J. P. Croxall, P. G. H. Evans & R. W. Schriber and leading experts on the ecology of seabirds from 18 countries have contributed 46 papers to this volume; New Zealand authors feature in the list of contributors. The book covers all the main seabird habitats associated with each continent or ocean, including islands, coastlines and the open seas. Hazards faced by seabirds from introduced predators and habitat destruction on islands, from commercial fisheries, gillnet mortality and oil pollution at sea, are treated in detail. A final section consists of a series of recommendations for world seabird conservation, which makes this volume a must for all scientists and conservationists working with seabirds. The price is £26.90, post free.

Threatened birds of Africa and related islands is by N. J. Collar & S. N. Stuart, and describes in detail the status of 177 species. Much new information on the ecology of each species has been included. The book identifies local threats and makes specific conservation recommendations. Norman Arlott has painted 12 full colour portraits of some of the most threatened African birds. The price is £24.00, post free.

Conservation of island birds is edited by P. J. Moors and is the result of an international symposium held at the 18th ICBP World Conference. By means of a series of case studies, a wide range of international experts survey the problems associated with the conservation of threatened birds on offshore islands. Historically, the most important cause of extinction on islands has been from introduced predators.

Today, destruction of habitat, competition from alien species, and avian disease pose increasingly significant threats to island species. The price is £16.50, post free.

Orders and payment should be sent to: International Council for Bird Preservation, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, England.

Harriers in Central Otago

It has been reported to me that in Central Otago, where there are now few swamps or other areas of dense cover, Harriers are nesting in gorges and undisturbed, steep-sided ravines filled with scrub. There they are nesting at heights of 2.5m or so on the top of old man matagouri bushes, which are densely overgrown with muchlenbeckia and lawyer vines. The overgrowth of vine is important because it provides a good base for the nest, and also curls and grows up around the edge of the nest, effectively hiding everything from view.

This is an interesting adaption by an essentially (with one exception in Australia) ground nesting genus.
M. F. SOPER

Piscivorous Blackbird

On 8/11/84 I was whitebaiting on the Aparima River, Southland, about 5 km from the sea when I noticed a male Blackbird on a nearby gravel beach. Closer scrutiny showed that the bird picked up 3 discarded Stokell's smelt, completing quite a manoeuvre before getting them all balanced in his bill. The Blackbird flew out of sight but returned 10 minutes later and after some competition from Red-billed Gulls managed to repeat the performance. This time it took the smelt to a nest behind some rushes. Later that day I investigated the nest and found it contained 3 well-grown chicks, all with bulging crops; 3 days later the nest was empty.

I measured a good sample of the smelt and found that they ranged from 71-75 mm in length.
W. MERVYN JUKES

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

REPORT OF THE TREASURER TO MEMBERS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1984

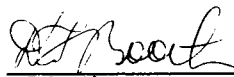
MEMBERS	31.12.83	31.12.84
Ordinary	728	731
Husband and Wife	212	204
Junior	88	41
Family	13	10
New Zealand Institutions	46	39
Overseas		
Ordinary	69	82
Institutions	75	67
Life		
New Zealand	56	56
Overseas	20	22
	<u>1,307</u>	<u>1,252</u>
	*****	*****
Exchanges	50	
Complimentary	4	

1. The register of members has been updated and unfinancial members struck off.

The fall of 47 Junior members resulted from an update of figures, resignations and those having attained the age of 20 years transferring to ordinary membership.

2. **Income**

The excess of income over expenditure after transfers to Reserve Funds was \$5,307 compared with \$4,081 last year. This was accounted for by higher interest being received on investments and increased subscriptions whilst the printing costs for "Notornis" and "OSNZ News" were held.


D F Booth
Honorary Treasurer


THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1984

ASSETS	Note	1984	1983
Current Assets			
Bank of New Zealand Current Account		11,256	36,977
Bank of New Zealand Savings Account		430	417
Amounts owing to the Society		1,582	843
Payments in advance		350	-
Short term investments		69,000	35,680
Stock of "Notornis"	2	100	100
Stock of Greeting Cards	3	4,560	5,568
Advances for future costs		-	250
		<u>87,278</u>	<u>79,835</u>
Fixed Assets			
Library - at valuation	2	1,000	1,000
Total assets		<u>\$88,278</u>	<u>\$80,835</u>
		*****	*****
LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Liabilities			
Amounts owed by Society		7,191	4,608
Subscriptions paid in advance		1,120	1,156
Total liabilities		<u>8,311</u>	<u>5,764</u>
Reserves			
Life subscriptions	4	5,714	4,168
Robert Falla Memorial Reserve	5	1,373	1,315
Projects Assistance Reserve	6	37,516	32,092
A T Edgar Junior Award Reserve	7	112	-
Atlas of Bird Distribution in NZ Reserve	8	512	8,063
Publication Reserve		1,000	1,000
Total reserves		<u>46,227</u>	<u>46,638</u>
Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning of year		28,433	24,352
Excess of income over expenditure for year		5,307	4,081
		<u>33,740</u>	<u>28,433</u>
Total liabilities, reserves and accumulated funds		<u>\$88,278</u>	<u>\$80,835</u>
		*****	*****

For and on behalf of the Council


Chairman

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

Ornithological research in the South Indian Ocean

Two New Zealanders — Sandy Bartle and Paul Sagar — were invited to join French ornithologists working on SIBEX (Second International Biomass Expedition) and Kerguelen during January and February 1985. They departed NZ in late December and made their way to Reunion, where they boarded the French research vessel **Marion DuFresne** for the cruise south. JAB and Jean-Claude Stahl were responsible for making systematic seabird observations during the SIBEX cruise Reunion — Prydz Bay (Antarctica) — Reunion; whilst PMS disembarked at Kerguelen and spent 32 days ashore, studying Kerguelen and Antarctic Terns and assisting Henri Weimerskirch to survey seabird populations, particularly on predator-free islands in the Golfe du Morbihan. The following are preliminary reports of their research.

(1) **Preliminary report on ornithological research undertaken during SIBEX**

During FIBEX the opportunity was taken to undertake an integrated study of the

distribution and abundance of seabirds by using fully the oceanographic and meteorological data collected during the cruise. Such studies have been attempted before but never on such a large-scale basis, while yet involving data from physical, chemical and biological oceanography, information on ocean structure and proximal meteorological influences. Several interesting theories arose from a detailed analysis of these results and it was important to seize the first available opportunity to test these theories in an adjacent, but comparable sea area to see whether their predictive forces remained. SIBEX provided such an opportunity.

Seabirds are at the highest trophic level in the pelagic food chain, and thus provide the most sensitive indicators of oceanographic changes, both short-term and long-term. Because of their high mobility, they can quickly take advantage of changing oceanographic conditions and food availability. The species we are studying are mostly either penguins or albatrosses, petrels, fulmars etc and have adapted a strategy involving slow maturation, low reproductive rates, and considerable longevity. Thus, at

any time, a considerable proportion of the total population is made up of subadult birds and non-breeders. These birds may not visit land for many years at a time, and we were interested in studying their distribution, rather than that of breeders, whose distribution is ultimately limited by their foraging range from the nesting grounds.

Objectives and methods: Our main objective was to obtain numerical data on the abundance of seabirds which could be used to test the hypotheses generated by the FIBEX analysis. Secondary objectives included the determination of distribution patterns, feeding behaviour, moult, and age-class segregations in all species. For statistical purposes large numbers of specific counts were necessary because of the viability of bird abundance under any set of conditions.

The technique used was to count all birds around the vessel during a 10-minute period. This is the standard technique recommended for the SCAR seabird programme, and we used the SCAR cards, thus enabling our data to be precisely compared with other participating nations in the SIBEX ornithological programme.

continued on page 6

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1984

GENERAL INCOME	1984	1983
Subscriptions	25,689	21,049
Transfer from Life Subscriptions Reserve	634	463
Donations	480	271
Profit from sale of greeting cards	3,451	3,499
Profit from sale of back numbers	501	562
Profit from sale of Car stickers	8	32
Profit from sale of Society ties	-	37
Profit from sale of biology of birds	-	.4
Total general income	30,763	25,917
INVESTMENT AND OTHER INCOME		
Interest earned by all funds	7,555	6,719
Royalties on Field Guide to NZ Birds	3,322	6,478
Sales of Provisional Atlas	-	86
Grants received for Atlas Publication	2,530	7,250
	13,407	20,533
Less: Royalties credited to Projects Assistance Reserve	3,322	6,478
Interest credited to Reserves	6,067	4,013
Atlas sales credited to Atlas Reserve	-	86
Atlas grants credited to Atlas Reserve	2,530	7,250
	11,919	17,827
Investment and other income retained in General Funds	1,488	2,706
TOTAL INCOME	32,251	28,623
COSTS AND EXPENSES		
Printing and distribution of "Notornis" and "OSNZ" News	22,039	21,041
Audit fee	550	495
General expenses	12	130
Junior Award	30	25
Library Expenses	513	68
Postages	580	323
Printing and stationery	789	407
Cost of summer school	-	850
Royal Society Affiliation	348	-
Regional Representatives Allowance	340	420
Subscriptions to other Societies	128	65
Travelling expenses	1,615	718
TOTAL COSTS AND EXPENSES	26,944	24,542
Excess of Income over Expenditure transferred to Accumulated Funds	\$ 5,307	\$ 4,081
	=====	=====

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



AUDITORS' REPORT

The Members
The Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc)

In our opinion, the financial statements on pages 3 to 6 fairly present the financial position of the Society at 31 December 1984 and the results of its activities for the year ended on that date.

Arthur Young
Auckland
NEW ZEALAND

28 March 1985

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1984

1 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

GENERAL ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

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

PARTICULAR ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

A. 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.

B. Royalty Income

Royalties on the sale of Field Guide to N.Z. Birds are credited to the Projects Assistance Reserve.

C. Interest Earned

Interest earned by investment of Reserve Funds is deducted from income and credited to respective reserves at a rate of 12%.

2 STOCK OF 'NOTORNIS' AND LIBRARY

These are included at a nominal value.

3 STOCK OF GREETING CARDS

These are cards printed in 1982 and held for sale in future years. They are recorded at cost.

4 LIFE SUBSCRIPTIONS RESERVE

	1984	1983
Balance at beginning of year	4,168	4,066
Life subscriptions received	1,500	-
Interest earned	680	565
	6,348	4,631
Less transfer to current income, 10% of balance	634	463
Balance at end of year	\$5,714	\$4,168
	=====	=====

5 ROBERT FALLA MEMORIAL RESERVE

	1984	1983
Balance at beginning of year	1,315	1,242
Interest earned	158	173
	1,473	1,415
Less grant	100	100
Balance at end of year	\$1,373	\$1,315
	=====	=====

6 PROJECTS ASSISTANCE RESERVE

	1984	1983
Balance at beginning of year	32,092	23,395
Royalties on Field Guide	3,322	6,478
Interest earned	4,250	2,807
	39,664	32,680
Less grants made	2,148	588
Balance at end of year	\$37,516	\$32,092
	=====	=====

7 A T EDGAR JUNIOR AWARD

	1984	1983
Gift from A T Edgar Estate	100	-
Interest earned	12	-
Balance at end of year	\$112	\$ -
	===	===

8 ATLAS OF BIRD DISTRIBUTION IN N.Z. RESERVE

	1984	1983
Balance at beginning of year	8,063	792
Atlas sales during year	-	86
Interest earned	967	115
Grants received	2,530	7,250
	11,560	8,243
Less publication costs incurred	11,048	180
Balance at end of year	\$ 512	\$8,063
	=====	=====

The frequency of observations was increased to 1 count per half-hour during all daylight hours. An increased frequency gave improved sample sizes over the steep environmental gradients encountered, for example, over the continental slopes and (often narrow) adjacent shelves.

We do not believe that these counts provide an absolute measurement of abundance or density, but rather an index, allowing comparative changes to be assessed. At one extreme a total of around 8,500 individual birds of 13 species was recorded at first light off Ile de l'Ouest, Kerguelen — in a single 10-minute period. In this, and a few other cases, we had to estimate abundance rather than count individuals. The presence of the vessel obviously has an impact on apparent abundance, but our data will provide information to help assess that impact.

Results: Just under 1,000 10-minute counts were completed during the 8,500 mile voyage Reunion — Reunion. This represents 166 hours of counting, representing less than 30% of the time spent in making continuous observations.

The modified cruise programme, with the main krill survey grid being re-located into the area 61-64°S, and extended in size, resulted in greatly improved coverage of the different oceanic regimes and improved sampling under varying weather conditions. This was an unexpected bonus, for the diversity of bird species in this area was higher than at 65-67°S, in Prydz Bay.

Dominating the avifauna in the area 61-64°S (and especially in the eastern part) were flocks (of up to 800 individuals) of non-breeding Sooty Shearwaters, which nest in temperate and subantarctic islands of the New Zealand region and in Bass Strait. This species is known to feed on krill in Antarctic waters and the presence of flocks proved to be a useful indicator as to the abundance of krill in the upper 50m. Large numbers of these shearwaters have been recorded in the south Indian Ocean before, but generally further south and later in the year, in April and May. The domination of the northern Antarctic avifauna by a species which does not breed in the Indian Ocean shows how important the pelagic food resource in this area is in global terms (because shearwaters are prepared to fly such vast distances to feed there), and especially for non-breeding birds. In contrast, the avifauna of the FIBEX study area (to the northwest of Enderby Land) was dominated by the species which breed on Marion, Crozet and the Prince Edward Islands, and Sooty Shearwaters were almost totally absent.

The total number of seabird species recorded during SIBEX was 63. Many of these are rare and little-known, especially at sea. Several of the tropical species are in this category. Others, such as the Great Shearwater, which breeds on the Tristan da Cunha group and on Gough Island; and the Short-tailed Shearwater from Bass Strait, were little-known in the Indian Ocean previously. Mediterranean Shearwaters, apparently of the Atlantic race, were again seen in

abundance, as well as a vagrant Eleanora's Falcon, 600 miles east of Madagascar.

J. A. BARTLE & J. C. STAHL

(2) Kerguelen archipelago

When compared with the Crozet and Amsterdam archipelagos, relatively little ornithological research has been conducted on Kerguelen. However, during the summer of 1984/85 a preliminary survey of seabirds was undertaken, with the object of establishing research priorities for succeeding years. At the invitation of Dr Pierre Jouventin I went to Kerguelen to assist French ornithologist Henri Weimerskirch with several projects. Our main aims were; to obtain data on the seabird faunas of predator-free islands so that they can be ranked for conservation; to select a suitable island with a sufficiently large and diverse seabird fauna for a planned long-term population monitoring study; to obtain information on the breeding biology of several species. In addition, I had an opportunity to study the food and feeding habits, and the breeding of Kerguelen and Antarctic Terns.

I was on Kerguelen from 10/1 — 11/2/85 and during this time covered a large proportion of the southern and eastern areas of the main island, plus several islands in the Golfe du Morbihan.

Our first project was a helicopter survey of Courbet Peninsula, to take aerial photographs of King and Macaroni Penguin colonies. This would allow counts to be compared with those obtained in the late 1960's. This was followed by a survey of burrowing petrels, cormorants and Shear-bills on the south side of Prince of Wales Peninsula. Subsequently we concentrated our efforts in a survey of burrowing petrels along the south coast and on islands in the Golfe du Morbihan. This involved searching burrows during the day and mist netting petrels at night. The latter was made exciting by the wide variety of petrels caught and by the variable weather conditions. Our final evening's netting, on Ile Mayes, resulted in the capture of 8 species — White-chinned Petrel, White-headed Petrel, Blue Petrel, Thin-billed Prion, Antarctic Prion, Wilson's Storm Petrel, Grey-backed Storm Petrel and Black-bellied Storm Petrel; fortunately a low-flying Giant Petrel just clipped the pole and did not fall into the net! We were particularly interested in examining as many prions from as many islands as possible in order to assess the degree of variation in plumage and measurements. Other species recorded during the survey of petrels included Grey Petrel, Grey-faced Petrel, South Georgian Diving Petrel, Southern Diving Petrel, and Fairy Prion.

It was a real pleasure to see living Blue Petrels, Antarctic Prions, Thin-billed Prions and Kerguelen Petrels after having picked up so many tattered remains of these species on New Zealand beaches.

By covering such a large area of Kerguelen we were able to see most of the remaining species reported from the archipelago.

Colonies of Gentoo Penguins were scattered around the coast of the main island, and mixed colonies of Macaroni and Rockhopper Penguins occurred mainly along the south and east coasts. Wandering Albatrosses were incubating whilst Black-browed Mollymawks and Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses were feeding downy chicks. Most Southern Skuas and Southern Black-backed Gulls had fledged young already.

I was particularly interested to observe the feeding and breeding habits of the Kerguelen Tern. This species is very similar in many respects to our Black-fronted Tern — breeding is essentially finished by the end of January, and a wide variety of feeding habits are used to take marine, freshwater and terrestrial prey.

No, I have not forgotten to mention the landbirds — there are none on Kerguelen. Perhaps the nearest species to a land bird is the endemic Eaton's Pintail, which is very common and was seen everywhere — from the coast to bare mountain scree.

From every aspect, this is a remarkable and interesting group of islands for the ornithologist.
PAUL SAGAR

Sir Walter Lawry Buller

Currently I am gathering material for a biography of Sir Walter Lawry Buller (1838-1906). Buller made his name by his work on NZ birds, while making his fortune as a lawyer specialising in Maori land transactions, and became the first NZ-born person to receive a knighthood or become a Fellow of the Royal Society.

I am particularly interested in hearing of any relevant letters or photographs, or any comments about him in the writings of his contemporaries. Anyone with such information is asked to write to me at P.O. Box 6, Onewhero, South Auckland.
ROSS GALBREATH

Regional Roundup

Auckland: The wader roosts of the South Kaipara have contained an interesting range of species recently, including Golden Plover, Whimbrel (both Asiatic and American), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Terek Sandpiper, and a tattler or two. The Wrybill count at Jordan's Farm on 12/2 was 240. The annual survey of the Muriwai Dune Lakes on 10/2 tallied 33 NZ Dabchicks, including 1 young bird, but did reveal a newcomer when Brian Ellis found a solitary Australian Little Grebe on Lake Kereta South, which may indicate that this species could begin to spread southwards.

Some banding of Caspian Terns at Mangawhai, and Gannets on the Muriwai rock stack and cliff top, took place again this season. Evening meetings were well attended throughout last year and an excellent monthly programme is in prospect for 1985. Having recently returned from some months

in the UK, the RR is grateful to Brian Gill and other members for their good work in his absence. (Michael Taylor)

South Auckland: A keen team is now patrolling our west coast monthly and 3 members are doing Whangamata-Opoutere in the east. The results show that these efforts have been well worthwhile, with a total of 658 birds recovered from 167 km patrolled; this total included 18 White-headed Petrels, 106 Kerguelen Petrels, 3 Cook's Petrels, 121 Blue Petrels, 14 Antarctic Prions, 74 Thin-billed Prions, 1 Fulmar Prion, 205 Fairy Prions, 1 Westland Black Petrel, 7 Hutton's Shearwaters, and 17 Australasian Gannets.

A Ringed Plover, a partial albino Wrybill and up to 4 Terek Sandpipers have been among the throng of birds at Access Bay; whilst Karaka had a Marsh Sandpiper, a Wandering Tattler, 11 Whimbrels, a Large Sand Dotterel, and a vast flock (c.20,000) of Knots. (Beth Brown)

Waikato: The last months of 1984 saw a flurry of activity from many of our members. The Hamilton Lake survey produced results very similar to those of last year, and judging by the numerous nests and young seen the Australian Coots are thriving in the area. Our Robin transfer has kept many members busy; 6 birds have been transferred to Waingaro and these appear to be thriving. (Folkert Nieuwland)

Volcanic Plateau: This year there were 430 nests of Little Black Shags at Sulphur Bay, Lake Rotorua. This is less than half the number of two years ago. A new colony of Little Shags has established in the Hemó Gorge, on the southern outskirts of Rotorua; it has about 60 nests in willows near the Puarenga Stream.

A visit to the upper Hinemaiaia Dam, Taupo, on 12/1/85 revealed 28 Canada Geese (a rare species in the North Island), plus a Banded Dotterel. A Chestnut-breasted Shelduck was seen on Lake Rerewhakaaitu, Rotorua, on 28/1/85. The bird was by itself in a secluded part of the southeast bay. (John Innes)

Manawatu: Once again the Manawatu Estuary has provided some good wader viewing. On 6/2/85 C. R. & P. M. Slack and Lindsay Davies recorded 351 Bar-tailed Godwit, 220 Lesser Knot, 31 Golden Plover, 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 2 Far Eastern Curlew, 77 SIPO, 8 Variable Oystercatcher, 59 Banded Dotterel, 18 Wrybill, 107 Pied Stilt, 2 Little Tern, 12 Caspian Tern, and 33 White-fronted Tern. Knot and Golden Plover numbers are high this summer but sandpiper and stint numbers have been low. A Terek Sandpiper seen at the sandspit in January by J. L. & M. Moore is probably the most interesting record of the summer.

Walter Jackson and Malcolm Olsen have kept a close watch on the Cattle Egret flock at the south end of Lake Horowhenua. During the winter and spring 1984 a maximum of 82 egrets were present, but most left the area in November/December. However, a group of 28 has remained over the summer and were still present on 12/2/85. The birds did not breed but 19 of them

developed apricot coloured plumage. Perhaps breeding will take place next summer. (Lindsay Davies)

Nelson: All Black-backed Gull nests on Rabbit and Bells Island, and the Boulder Bank were counted in November 1984; in addition, 136 chicks on Bells Island and 276 chicks on the Boulder Bank were banded. The Bells Island chicks have a white band on the right leg and metal on the left, whilst the Boulder Bank chicks have a yellow band on the right and metal band on the left. Anyone seeing these birds is asked to contact Jenny Hawkins.

No White-fronted Tern chicks were banded on the Boulder Bank this summer because the colony was deserted shortly after the chicks hatched. However, there was a successful colony on the northern side of the Delaware and a later one on the Motueka sandspit.

In December, Mr Wilkins of Renwick saw and photographed an Oriental Cuckoo at Tukurua Camp, Golden Bay. During the November wader count Eileen and Edwin Heatherbell saw 4 Little Terns near Mapua. (Jenny Hawkins)

Canterbury: Lake Ellesmere was the focus of attention during the summer and birds reported include 2 Glossy Ibis, 1 Royal Spoonbill, 2 White Heron, 2 Pectoral Sandpiper, 17 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 11 Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit, c.70 Red-necked Stint, 35 Curlew Sandpiper and 1, possibly 2, Ruff.

The Ruff was found on 8/1/85 by Kathleen Harrison, and confirmed by John and June Fennell on 13/1/85. Subsequently a Ruff was seen several times and was last reported on 24/2/85 but some reports indicate that 2 birds may have been present. (John Fennell)

On 6/10/84 Donald Geddes visited the lower Ashburton River and located a pair of Black-fronted Dotterels. One of these birds was false brooding and after retreating about 100m and watching for 45 minutes Donald finally found 2 chicks. This appears to be the first confirmed breeding of these dotterels on the Ashburton. (Paul Sagar)

Compiled by PAUL SAGAR

Birds of the Matemateaonga walkway, inland Wanganui

In January 5 Manawatu members walked through one of the last North Island native forest wilderness areas. The 42 km long Matemateaonga walkway follows the ridge-line of the Matemateaonga Range from inland Taranaki to the Wanganui River and is an easy grade, although the range itself is steep and is covered with heavy bush. The forest type is mixed hardwood/podocarp with tawa, rata, hinau, toru, maire and rewarewa common, and kahikatea important at higher altitudes. Opossums appeared to be numerous and rata in particular showed signs of damage.

Birds noted during the 2½ day trip were: N.I. Robin, Long-tailed Cuckoo, Shining Cuckoo, N.I. Kaka, parakeet species, Tui, Bellbird, Whitehead, N.Z. Pigeon, Pied Tit,

Grey Warbler, Fantail, Silvereeye, Kingfisher, Morepork, Harrier, Chaffinch, and Blackbird. Robins were rated as common, with 4 being seen during the trip and at times, others heard calling every 100-200 m along the track. Pied Tits were also numerous. 2 Kaka were seen and parakeets were heard twice. Whiteheads were quiet and only 1 was seen but they must be reasonably numerous in the area as their parasite, the Long-tailed Cuckoo, was often encountered. A total of 15 Long-tailed Cuckoos were heard and 4 were seen in flight. On 1 occasion 3 Long-tailed Cuckoos were heard calling loudly together from a clump of tawa. Kiwis were not noted but other trampers reported hearing them in the vicinity of the Puketotara Hut.

C. R. & P. M. SLACK, L. J. DAVIES
& R. J. WASLEY

Albinistic godwit

During the week before Christmas 1984 we visited the Firth of Thames and observed a white godwit roosting with a large number of other Bar-tailed Godwits at Access Bay. Most of the plumage of this bird was off white but it had a pale brown nape and flight feathers. The bill and legs were normal colour. In flight this godwit stood out as an all white bird amongst the other godwits. WAYNE & MARGARET TWYDLE

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Please contact: P. Williams, 754 Atawhai Drive, Nelson.

Due to unforeseen circumstances we regret delivery of the latest issue of Notornis will not take place until the middle of May.
