

## SHORT NOTE

### A second Grey Phalarope at Lake Wainono

On 21 June 1987, RM found a Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) swimming among a group of Pied Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*) in a shallow muddy pool at the northern end of Lake Wainono, South Canterbury.

As the phalarope was indifferent to our approach, we were able to watch it closely from 5 m away for an hour. On three occasions Pied Stilts, flying low and noisily overhead, caused the phalarope to fly. Each time, after a brief circular flight, it landed on the mud before dashing into the water to resume feeding. It fed very actively by turning buoyantly and constantly submerging its head in search of food. Pirouetting was not seen.

It was slightly larger than a Banded Dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*) seen nearby but with an unusually pot-bellied appearance. On land its proportionately short legs were noticeable.

The phalarope was last seen on 22 June by J. and J. Fennell.

*Plumage:* Black hindcrown, white forecrown, grey nape and hindneck, black "phalarope-mark" through eye, white lores and underparts, except for grey sides to breast and thickly streaked grey flanks. Small white patch beside carpal joint (cf. Brown & Latham 1978, p.201), pure grey mantle, grey scapulars and lesser coverts with small black centres, other coverts black with grey fringing, rusty orange tertials, black primaries, broad white wingbar conspicuous in flight, grey rump and tail.

*Bare parts:* Bill straight, sturdy and broad, the width especially noticeable from above. Basal half reddish orange, tip black. Legs brownish, short.

*Voice:* A sharp high-pitched *wit*.

Cramp & Simmons (1983, p.651), referring to post-juvenile moult in oceanic winter quarters, noted the "... partial replacement of first non-breeding by first breeding May-August and non-breeding on part of body directly replaced by second non-breeding; moult of flight feathers apparently also May-August. These birds probably do not visit the breeding grounds".

On this basis our bird was probably a first-year non-breeder in moult, as shown by its mixture of worn and fresh plumage. The bicoloured bill, being typical of adults in breeding plumage, also indicated changes in the moult cycle.

All four Grey Phalaropes previously recorded in New Zealand were in breeding plumage (Brown & Latham 1978). The first New Zealand record of a Grey Phalarope was also from Lake Wainono (= Waimate Lagoon) in June 1883 (Haast 1883).

We thank Ian McLean for criticising this note.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- BROWN, B.; LATHAM, P. C. M. 1978. Grey Phalarope in the Bay of Plenty. *Notornis* 25:198-202.  
 CRAMP, S.; SIMMONS, K. E. L. (eds). 1983. The birds of the Western Palearctic. Vol. 3. OUP.  
 HAAST, J. von. 1883. On the occurrence of *Phalaropus fulicarius* Pennant (the Red Phalarope) in New Zealand. *Trans. Proc. NZ Inst.* Vol XVI.

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