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SHORT NOTES

KINGFISHER TAKING A SILVEREYE

Andrew Grant's note about predation of a Goldfinch by a Kingfisher (*Notornis* 30: 318) reminded me of a similar experience we had on 8 June 1982 near the Matukituki River mouth, West Wanaka. A richly coloured New Zealand Kingfisher (*Halcyon sancta*), after resting in a kowhai tree, flew to the top of a dead manuka, from whence it darted into a live manuka and emerged with a small bird; later in good sunlight we identified this prey as a Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*). It then moved in a series of flights of 20-30 metres towards a swampy pond, at each stop bashing its prey against its perch and gradually swallowing it, feathers and all. Progress was easy to follow because at each stop it was mobbed by two or three Fantails (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*). A few minutes later, with a very distended stomach, it stayed about the pond — where we recorded one a few years ago. (The Kingfisher is a rare bird in Central Otago.) Other potential prey species in this vicinity probably include insects, tadpoles and frogs of *Litoria aurea*, skinks, and trout fry.

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