

## A GREAT KNOT IN MANUKAU HARBOUR

At Karaka shellbanks, Manukau Harbour, on 18 March 1979 while I was watching waders with M. S. Field and C. R. Veitch, my attention was taken by a medium-sized plump bird resting apart from others on a bank. Its in-between size and glimpses of its longish bill puzzled me until, as the tide fell and birds began to bathe, preen and feed, it flew showing white rump and white wing-bar and alighted in front of a flock of Lesser Knots (*Calidris canutus*). Its identity then became clear, when observed in conjunction with the smaller birds. It was a Great Knot (*C. tenuirostris*).

After a muddy stalk I was able to watch it closely through my x 15-60 telescope. It fed head down facing me, showing a very heavily streaked crown and mantle. The breast was so heavily spotted as to appear almost black, and there was some less dense spotting on the flanks. The remaining underparts were white. The back was grey, the short legs dull yellowish green, and the longish bill was slightly decurved towards the tip. The feeding action was very similar to that of the Lesser Knots. This bird was still present on 1 April 1979 when it was resting in a line of Least Golden Plovers (*Pluvialis fulva*) and Lesser Knots.

Great Knots are seldom seen in New Zealand, the first occurrence being in October 1967 (Andrew, *Notornis* 15: 207-210) at the Manawatu Estuary. Single birds were recorded in the Firth of Thames in March 1971, September 1972, and March 1973, with a pair there in February/March 1972, while a single bird was seen at Karaka in April 1972 (Class. Summ. Notes, *Notornis* Vol. 19 & 20).

BETH BROWN, 39 Red Hill Road, Papakura.



## WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERNS, NAPIER 1972

The following records belatedly the unusual build-up of White-winged Black Terns (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) that occurred at the Ahuriri Lagoons at Westshore, Napier, in the late summer and autumn of 1972; it also records the few notes we kept at the time.

In 1971, only one bird was present, from early February to late March, the last record being 20 March. It frequented the Harbour Board Marsh on the south side of the outfall channel. It was feeding on both 7 and 27 February along the muddy edge of the marsh, its bill straight down as it dipped and rose close to the water. On the 7th, when it reached a certain point it would climb well up into the wind, return at a height to the starting point, and then repeat the feeding method. It did this five or six times before coming to rest on a piece of board. After a short rest, it fed again, followed by