

feathers and was very thin. No berries were available and I was at a loss what to give it. I took a quarter cup of frozen peas and poured hot water over them; they were accepted, in the daylight. I continued this diet, varying it with frozen vegetables, boiled rice and mashed potato, each time adding several drops of multi-vitamin syrup. After 3 days in a dimly lit corner, the bird started moving about, and so on the fifth day, I put it outside on an inconspicuous perch where I could still place food in its reach — three half-cups a day. After a week it joined two adult birds, returning regularly to feed and roost until I frightened it one night with a strong torch.

In my note on the foods of Tuis (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*) in *Notornis* 26 (4): 356, 1979, I mistakenly wrote haekaro (*Pittosporum umbellatum*) instead of houpara (*Pseudopanax lessoni*) as the berry so eagerly taken in June.

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POSSIBLE EARLY RECORD OF CATTLE EGRETS IN NEW ZEALAND

An apparent early record of Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) in New Zealand has come to my notice. Mr C. and Mrs M. Hamann of Thames told me of seeing a small flock of about five "white herons" with cattle, in the upper Moutere district near Nelson, in the early 1950s. The Hamanns travelled that way once or twice a year. Mrs Hamann later wrote to me saying "We stopped to watch them for a few minutes as they reminded us of the tick birds we had seen in South Africa; to the best of my recollection one at least was on a beast's back."

It was suggested that I should write to Mr R. Smeaton, a long term farmer and orchardist at Upper Moutere who has an interest in birdlife. His reply confirms the information saying "... we did have a visit by what I considered at the time were Egrets during 1956. I was sure they were not White Herons as we only see the 'odd' White Heron here and they are usually a bit larger. The birds we had stayed for a couple of months and then disappeared..." It has not been possible to fix a definite time of year for the birds' visit.

These recollections put back the possible time of arrival of Cattle Egrets in New Zealand to about seven years before the Belfast, North Canterbury, record of one on 28 September 1963 (Turbott, Brathwaite & Wilkin 10: 316).

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