

NOTES AND NEWS

SPUR-WINGED PLOVER IN MARLBOROUGH

Mr Bill Chisholm of Molesworth Station, Marlborough, writes that two Spur-winged Plovers have "taken up residence since January 1973 in the swamp area of the Tardale paddock on Molesworth. Brief sightings were made at Red Gate, some eight miles north east of Tardale, in June 1968."



SWALLOW AT SEA

We are grateful to Capt John Jenkins for passing on a letter (dated 8 May 1973) from Mr R. H. Smart, Third Officer of the m.v. *Ngahere* (USS Co. of NZ Ltd.) in which he writes: "A common swallow with a white underside, orange upper breast and forked tail was seen off the vessel for five minutes prior to landing on the fore deck. The hands were off at smoko, and it remained with the vessel till they started chipping. Our position was 169°29'E, 34°15'S, Three Kings 088°, 124 miles. The vessel was headed for the islands. The weather had been settled for three days but southerly winds had been experienced in this area for two days prior to the vessel reaching the area . . ."



RARE BIRDS AT A RARE PRICE!

"A pair of rare stuffed huia were sold last night by auction in Foxton for \$1900. The long-extinct New Zealand native birds, one male and one female, were bought by an Auckland private collector. Bids for the birds started at \$450 each and went up in \$50 lots."

Source: *The Evening Post* [Wellington], 11 August 1973, p. 7.



BIRDS AND STAMPS

Those ornithologists and/or philatelists who found our notes in the March 1973 issue of *Notornis* of interest will be pleased to know that Mr Arthur Parrott is continuing his series in the Saturday editions of *The Press*, the Christchurch morning paper. In "Stamp Creatures — XV," he surveys the history of myths about the kea's habits and gives much of interest about its characteristic behaviour, concluding with a commentary from J. R. Jackson's "impartial analysis," as Mr Parrott calls it, in *Notornis* 10: 33-38, 1967. Commending this analysis, Mr Parrott says: "I know that many high country sheepmen will not agree with Mr Jackson, but what evidence sheepmen can produce is not, by any stretch of the imagination, impartially obtained or evaluated." Mr Parrott's article is worth asking to see in the newspaper files of your library if you want a good account of this delightful, and much maligned, mountain-inhabiting bird.

In a subsequent issue of *The Press*, Mr Peter Newton, former manager of several high country sheep stations and New Zealand's foremost writer on station life, disputes some of Mr Parrott's statements. One point was that, in contrast to the remark that kea nests

are usually only above 3000 feet, Mr Newton has, in more than 30 years working in kea country, found four nests below 2500 feet and he suggests that "this is because the kea normally nests in mid-winter, when the higher country is liable to be under snow." Mr Newton also gives details of the contents of the nests. He takes issue with Mr Parrott also "in his claim that as a killer the kea has been condemned on circumstantial evidence." Mr Newton concludes that, while "there will have been gross exaggeration in reports on killing by these birds . . . their depredations have been so widespread that it is hard to understand anyone still doubting that the kea is a killer." A record is also given of a kea in captivity at Mount Somers station which is now at least 27 years old.

Reference: PARROTT, A. W. 1973. Stamp creatures — XV. Kea: clever N.Z. bird condemned by many. *The Press* [Christchurch], 28 July, p. 12; NEWTON, P. 1973. Keas: another opinion. *The Press* [Christchurch], 11 August 1973, p. 12.

Further to the topic of birds on stamps, we are indebted to Mr J. W. Brodie for finding the following references to some early articles on the habits, characteristics and mythology of birds portrayed on stamps which appeared many years ago in *Scott's Monthly Journal*, an American philatelic magazine. These articles were reprinted in *The New Zealand Stamp Collector* of 1927, as follows: "'Ornithophilately,' a study of birds and of stamps" 1 August, pp. 139-142; 1 September, pp. 160-161; 1 October, pp. 175-177. Copies of these articles, provided by Mr Brodie, have been sent to the OSNZ library since they may be useful to a number of members.



LODER CUP AWARD

Fellow members of the OSNZ will wish to congratulate Mrs K. Reynolds of Whangarei on the award of the Loder Cup. This honour is made annually, "Offered to lovers of nature in New Zealand to encourage the protection and cultivation of the incomparable flora of the Dominion." The cup was presented by Mr Gerald W. Loder (later Lord Wakehurst), a notable cultivator of New Zealand plants in England, who was so impressed by what he termed the "incomparable flora" seen during a visit to this country towards the end of last century that he wanted to find some way of encouraging the preservation of the New Zealand flora. The first award was made in 1929 to Messrs Duncan & Davies Ltd of New Plymouth, and the list of recipients is impressive including many people who have played their part in fulfilling Lord Wakehurst's wish.

A history of this unique award, with names, portraits and citations of each of the winners (up to 1954) was published in 1960 under the title "*The History of the Loder Cup. A review of the first twenty-five years.*" This interesting booklet is still available (price 50c) from the Secretary of the Loder Cup Committee (Mr K. J. Lemmon, P.O. Box 450, Wellington) from whom further details of the conditions and method of nomination may be got. It is worth noting that not only are individual "lovers of nature" eligible but also "Any . . . association, society, firm, company, local body, or body of persons . . ."

WILDLIFE SERVICE SOUND LIBRARY

Those interested in natural sound recording will be pleased to know that the Wildlife Service has now issued a second edition of its catalogue of holdings of recordings as noted in *Notornis* 19 (4); 350 (1972). The number of species and subspecies of birds now available as recordings is 168 in contrast to the 143 of the earlier catalogue issued in 1971. Fur Seal, Sea Lion, Red Deer, Tuatara, frogs and cicadas have also been recorded. Conditions of loan or copying are set out in the "Introduction" provided by Mr J. L. Kendrick, Audio and Visual-aids Officer of the Wildlife Service. *Reference:* Information Section, Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington. *Sound Library Catalogue*. Edition No. 2. October 1973, 26 pp.



DEATH OF DR D. A. BATHGATE

We are sorry to learn of the death at the age of 78 of Dr D. A. Bathgate of Hastings who was well known throughout New Zealand as a naturalist and a conservationist.

"Dr Bathgate who practised medicine for 47 years was for a time doctor to men working on the Otira tunnel. He has been superintendent of hospitals at Ashburton, Waihi, Thames, and the King Country before buying a practice in Hastings in 1929. Dr Bathgate was a national vice-president of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Society and was a member of deputations responsible for having Waipoua Kauri Forest preserved and the Urewera district set aside as a national park. . . . was also a lecturer, broadcaster, and writer on nature conservation." He was the winner of the Loder Cup in 1965.

Source: Death of doctor who was noted naturalist. *The Evening Post* [Wellington], 11 September 1973, p. 16.



NEW DIRECTOR FOR TARANAKI MUSEUM

Mr Nigel Prickett has been appointed Director of the Taranaki Museum, New Plymouth, following the retirement of Mr Rigby Allan. He will take up his position at the end of November after completing his M.A. thesis in Anthropology at Otago University. Mr Prickett is 29 years old, born in Christchurch and educated at Wanganui Collegiate. He completed a B.A. in History at Victoria University of Wellington in 1968. Fellow members of the OSNZ will want to wish him well in his new position.

Source: *The Taranaki Herald*, 5 July 1973; *The Wanganui Herald*, 10 July 1973.