

ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

JIM COUNSILMAN writes of himself: I first became interested in birds through my father, a veterinarian and Pigeon-fancier. However, I studied history for three years as an undergraduate at Fresno State College in California before recognizing the opportunities for research and travel in ornithology as a profession. After completing a Bachelor of Arts in Biology I moved to New Zealand and entered the University of Auckland, where I received a Master of Arts (First Class Honours) in Zoology in 1971. My Master's thesis included research on display behaviour and communal sleeping activities of the Indian Myna as well as the work presented in this issue of *Notornis*. At present I am completing a Ph.D. at the University of Queensland under a Post-graduate Scholarship from the Commonwealth of Australia. My research is on the time-activity budget and feeding ecology of a communal-breeding bird, the Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*).

BRIAN REID was introduced to readers in the September 1972 issue of *Notornis*. On 10 July of this year he left for a temporary appointment at Mendi, Papua New Guinea, where he will advise on the management of cassowaries as a food source at the request of Foreign Aid Division of the New Zealand Government. Cassowary numbers have been declining rapidly within recent years because of overhunting and the inability of the local people to rear young birds in captivity. Brian Reid hopes to put some of his Mt Bruce experiences to good use during his six months away and will investigate the feasibility of setting up cassowary farms along the lines of the ostrich farms of Africa.

RICHARD D. CRAWFORD is an Instructor in the Fisheries and Wildlife Section, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, and hopes to complete his Ph.D. in wildlife biology in May 1975. Although he has taught general ornithology, vertebrate biology and wildlife ecology, his major interests are in seabird ecology and the biology of waterfowl. His doctoral research is based on the effects of age on reproduction in the American Coot. Previous research has dealt with Mourning Doves, Great Horned Owls, age-related studies of Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and on the polyandrous breeding of Short-billed Marsh Wrens. His work on Adelie Penguins is based on three months in Antarctica during the austral summer of 1972/73 while on a National Science Foundation Grant.

LES McPHERSON was born in Dunedin on a cold, snowy day, 1 June 1943. At the age of about 15 days he migrated south to Invercargill where he stayed for the next 17 years. For his first 12 years he lived in the city but later moved to a farm at Awarua Bay, about 8 miles south of Invercargill. He believes that this is where his interest in birds first began to show and he can well remember watching a Grey Warbler on the nest in the scrub on this property when he was about 14.

He relates — "I left home to strike out on my own at the age of 16½ after some differences of opinion with my stepfather and stayed for about three months in Dunedin. The first commercially published records of New Zealand bird song came on the market about this time, and I bought myself a set of these which started me off on a collection on an international scale. I reached Christchurch a week before my 17th birthday and I'm still here after 14 years. My interests are centred on collecting records of bird calls and making tape recordings on a commercial scale. For a living I pack feminine lingerie, a job much removed from my spare time interests, but, despite this, I'm still single!"

Another profile of Mr McPherson, reprinted from the Christchurch newspaper, *The Press*, appeared in *Notornis* 20 (2): 185-6, June 1973. Most of his commercial recordings of bird song have also been reviewed in *Notornis*.

A. T. EDGAR, author of the report of the Wildlife Service/OSNZ 1974 visit to Farewell Spit in the last issue of *Notornis*, and indefatigable compiler of the annual Classified Summarised Notes, is known to his friends as "SANDY." He has lived in New Zealand since 1959 and has played a prominent part in the Society's activities. Sandy Edgar was born in 1900 and was educated in Scotland. He lived in Malaya from 1919 to 1940, managing a rubber plantation in Perak. He is the author of *Manual of Rubber Planting* published in 1938, rewritten in considerably enlarged form and republished in 1960. His war service from 1940 to 1945 in the Malayan Local Forces, and later the Indian Army, included 3½ years as a prisoner of war in Singapore and on the notorious Siam Railway. Mr Edgar returned to Malaya in 1946 as Planting Adviser to a number of rubber companies and he came to New Zealand in 1959.

He says — "Watching birds has been my favourite spare-time occupation for sixty years, even as a P.O.W. in Siam where the birds were good but the Japanese took away our binoculars and some slight vitamin deficiency temporarily dulled one's eyesight."

Services to the Malayan Local Forces earned Mr Edgar the MBE in 1939, the ED in 1950 and the OBE in 1953, and for services to the Malayan rubber industry he was awarded the JMN in 1960, a Malayan decoration roughly equivalent to the CBE.

Sandy Edgar's ornithological work has included regular correspondence in pre-war years with F. N. Chasen, then Director of the Raffles Museum in Singapore and part author of *The Birds of the Malay Peninsula* (1929-1937, 4 vols). He collected eggs of some Malayan birds at the request of the British Museum (Natural History) and published a 41 page paper on the nidification of some Perak birds in the *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* in 1933. Later he had regular correspondence with Dr C. A. Gibson-Hill during the preparation of his annotated checklist of the birds of Malaya published in the *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* in 1949. Mr Edgar was joint founder and first Secretary of the Malayan Nature Society in 1940, President in 1952, and subsequently an Honorary Life Member.

Sandy Edgar joined the OSNZ in 1947 while on leave from Malaya. He was Regional Representative for the Far North/Northland from 1960 to 1973, Hon. Secretary of the OSNZ from 1962 to 1967, and has been Recorder and Compiler of the Classified Summarised Notes since 1963. His publications in *Notornis* include articles on the Mercury Islands, the Kermadecs Expedition, N.Z. Dotterel, Welcome Swallows, Nankeen Kestrels and reports on field study courses.

J. W. (JOE) ST. PAUL, co-author of "The Kokako . . . in the Hunua Ranges" in the last issue of *Notornis*, came to New Zealand in 1899 at the age of three years and, after several moves, his family settled on a farm in Moumoukai Valley in the area now known as the Hunua Ranges. On leaving school he did farm development and other work and bush-felling each winter until he went to World War I in 1917. Severely wounded, he returned in 1918 and soon took up a "soldier farm" on the edge of the main bush, marrying in 1926. Later, the farm was bought by the Auckland City Council for water catchment and he was appointed a ranger, doing surveying, tending rain gauges, controlling animal and vegetable pests and other work. In all of this time he observed the birds and the trees of the forest, gaining a wide knowledge of both of these. Of special interest to him was the Kokako and when he retired in 1963 he very frequently returned to the bush, often camping out and still enjoying his studies. His interest was shared by his wife and family. After joining OSNZ in 1941 he regularly contributed to the Classified Summarised Notes and also supplied some short articles. In recent efforts to save the declining Kokako he has played a major part. He still has hopes of finding and saving from pests another nest of this bird. The Editor apologises to him for removing the full stop from the prefix to his surname as it appears throughout his article.



JUST PUBLISHED !

A Kea on my Bed, by Molly Falla. 40 pp., illus. Auckland and London: Collins. 19 September 1974. \$3.50.

Another delightful book of watercolours and photographs by Lady Falla telling of the activities of a Kea chick brought into the Falla home at the age of 3 weeks and quickly becoming a dominant personality in the household. A charming text with some unusual illustrations of the growth and development of a bird known only to most of us as a raucous adult high amidst the South Island mountains and careering down the tin roof of an alpine hut. Lady Falla's book requires no further recommendation to her admirers, and appears just in time for a good Christmas present for young and old alike. Thank you author and publisher !

E. W. D.