change throughout the year. Another application may be less obvious but more important as it reveals information that could not as easily be obtained in any other way: to locate roosts and nest sites to study the birds' diet (pellet analysis or direct observation) and breeding biology.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very specially grateful to G. D. Ward for his constant help and advice throughout the study. Furthermore, I would like to thank A. H. Whitaker for providing unpublished results of his mist netting programme for this article, the Wellington Zoo for letting me test the equipment on their birds and Drs M. R. Rudge, B. M. Fitzgerald and J. E. C. Flux for giving valuable comments on this manuscript.

LITERATURE CITED

CUNNINGHAM, J. M. 1948. Food of a morepork. N.Z. Bird Notes 3: 22-24.
DANIEL, M. J. 1972. Bionomics of the ship rat (**Rattus r. rattus**) in a New Zealand indigenous forest. N.Z. Jl. Sci. 15: 313-341.
DANIEL, M. J. 1973. Seasonal diet of the ship rat (**Rattus r. rattus**) in lowland forest in New Zealand. Proc. N.Z. Ecol. Soc. 20: 21-30.
HOGG, M. J.; SKEGG, P. D. G. 1961. Moreporks in a nesting box. Notornis 9: 133-134.
LINDSAY, C. J.; ORDISH, R. G. 1964. The food of the morepork. Notornis 11: 154-158.
MOON, G. J. H. 1957. Focus on New Zealand birds. 132pp. Cameo Press, Warkworth.
SOUTHERN, H. N. 1969. Prey taken by Tawny owls during the breeding season. Ibis 111: 293-299.
SOUTHERN, H. N. 1970. The natural control of a population of Tawny owls (**Strix aluco**). J. Zool., Lond. 162: 197-285.
SOUTHERN, H. N.; LOWE, V. P. W. 1968. The pattern of distribution of prey and predation in Tawny Owl territories. J. Anim. Ecol. 37: 75-97.
WARD, G. D. 1972. Techniques for tracking opossums (**Trichosurus vulpecula**) by radio telemetry in New Zealand lowland forest. N.Z. Jl. Sci. 15: 628-636.
WHITAKER, A. H. 1972. An improved mist net rig for use in forests. Bird-Banding 43: 1-8.

Dr Christoph Imboden,
Schweizerische Bund fur Naturschutz,
Secretariat, CH-4052 Basle,
Wartenberg Strasse 22, Switzerland

MORE ABOUT OYSTERCATCHERS

Another contribution to the biology of the New Zealand Oystercatchers has appeared recently:

> BAKER, A. J. 1975. Morphological variation, hybridization and systematics of New Zealand oystercatchers (Charadriiformes: Haematopodidae). *Journal of Zoology, London* 175: 357-390, text-figs 1-5. Abstract: "Variation in eight morphological variables was analysed for the three New Zealand species of oystercatchers, *Haematopus ostralegus finschi,* Martens, *H. unicolor,* and *H. chathamensis,* Hartert. Within species, significant size variation was detected among age classes and between the sexes separately in ensuing taxonomic comparisons. Analysis of morphological variation in hybridizing forms of *H. unicolor* suggests that gene exchange between the parental black and pied phases is extensive. Univariate and multivariate statistical analyses isolated three phenetic entities, consistent with three species as proposed in recent classification."