

	Base and outer layer	Mid layer and rim	Egg chamber	Total
Strips of bark ----	25	5		30
Smaller bark fragments ----		117	6	123
Fern stalks and fibrous material	13	49		62
Pieces of dry fern ----	7	26		33
Green fern tips ----	2	3		5
Small twig ----			1	1
Dry leaves ----	17	23	7	47
Skeleton leaves ----	9	16	57	82
Green beech leaves ----	2			2
Grass and fine material ----		1602	2003	3605
		1841	2074	3990

Having counted the components as above, I was left with about a quarter of a tea cup full of short pieces of dry grass or fibre under one inch long; some of this residue may have been broken during dismantling, but much of it had I think been nipped by the bird during building.

The strips of bark were $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide and from 4 to 7 inches long; in the mid layer three longer strips were used, 9, $9\frac{1}{2}$ and $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Most of the fine material used in the mid layer and egg chamber varied from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 6 inches in length, one piece of grass 18 inches long. In the mud layer there was some partly disintegrated material (fragments of skeleton leaves, etc.) which were not included in the count.

— A. T. EDGAR



A LOCAL NAME FOR THE TOM-TIT

Mr. D. G. Medway informs me that near Whangamomona in eastern Taranaki the settlers know the Tom-tit (*P. toitoi*) as the Butcher Bird, the name being derived from the fact that the white breast of the male resembles the white apron worn by butchers. In the Old World the shrikes are sometimes known as butcher birds and the name is bestowed for a very different reason.

There may be other local names for birds which are worth recording as part of New Zealand folklore and linguistic usage.

— R. B. SIBSON



REVIEW

Birds of the Atlantic Islands, Vol. I, by D. A. Bannerman. Oliver & Boyd, 84/-.

This handsome volume is concerned with the history of the birds of the Canary Islands and the Salvages. These islands have long attracted European naturalists and the list of visitors includes many names famous in British ornithology. Since his first visit which took place more than half a century ago, the author has made the ornithology of the Atlantic Islands one of his special studies. In the course of his travels among these islands he has shared in many original discoveries. The insular race of the Cream-coloured Courser bears his name. As might be expected, he writes with authority, understanding and sensitivity.

The Canary Islands form a mountainous archipelago, some 350 miles in length, lying roughly east and west, for the most part between lat. 28° N and 30° N. There are well-marked insular forms of many familiar European birds. The isolated Salvages in lat. 30° N are famed for the numbers of petrels and shearwaters which come ashore to breed. New Zealand ornithologists will find the accounts of these *tubinares* especially interesting.

The Frigate or White-faced Storm Petrel (*P. marina*) for which the Spanish name is *El bailerino* (the dancer) — Skipjack is the New Zealand equivalent, is represented by the race *hypoleuca*. The author hardly does justice to the status of our commonest storm-petrel with his remark that "another race inhabits the Chatham Islands." The breeding race of the Little Shearwater (*P. assimilis*) is *baroli*. As in New Zealand it is basically a winter-breeder, but with an extended season of burrow-visiting and egg-laying. Incidentally the odd *assimilis* has now been discovered coming ashore on Big Chicken in the third week of December among typical summer-breeders. Cory's Shearwater (*P. diomedea borealis*) which figures on the New Zealand list on the strength of a single waif is "by far the most numerous shearwater" around the Canaries. Its numbers are being thinned by 'mutton-birding.' In the Salvage Islands this large shearwater "constitutes the chief wealth of these uninhabited rocky islets." May one ask on what ground it appears as *diomedea* instead of *diomedea*?

The colour plates are superb. Here we may see G. E. Lodge painting storm petrels as they should be painted. Most of the plates are by D. M. Reid-Henry upon whom surely the mantle of Lodge has been cast. His birds are most attractively depicted in their natural setting, a luminous landscape or sea-scape, whether they are desert birds among the rocks and cacti or passerines in the tamarisks, or chough, swifts and falcons against a background of coastal cliffs. We may linger lovingly, too, near the painting of that exciting species, the Blue Chaffinch. Is there not a large empty ecological niche in New Zealand waiting to be filled by some realistic painter of birds? The author is indeed lucky in his illustrators. For his black-and-whites he has been able to call upon not only Lodge and Reid-Henry but also Gronvold and Roland Green. The sketches are excellent whether of chats or waders; and they enrich a long section devoted to the many regular migrants and stragglers.

After his notable series of spacious volumes on the birds of West Africa, the British Isles and Cyprus, ornithologists have come to expect something in the grand manner from Dr. Bannerman. This recent volume will not disappoint them. Its companion volume, which will deal with the birds of Madeira, the Desertas and the Azores, is eagerly awaited.

— R. B. S.

★ PERSONALIALIUM

Members will have been pleased to note in the New Year Honours list the award of O.B.E. to Dr. Charles A. Fleming, in recognition of his service to science in New Zealand, and to the Royal Society of New Zealand in particular. Dr. Fleming's services to ornithology and to the founding and development of the O.S.N.Z. are well known, and we congratulate him on his award.