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## REVIEW

*The Book of the Huia*, by W. J. Phillips, Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., 30s.

A tremendous amount of research and enquiry has resulted in a book of absorbing interest, and one which will have a wide appeal. Part One is descriptive of the Huia, and summarises what little is recorded of its habits, food, and nesting; and a reader knowing the Saddleback cannot fail to be impressed by the extreme similarity of behaviour in the two species. The second part is devoted to a fascinating story of Maori association with the bird. In Part Three the author discusses its extinction, and postulates that the disappearance of the bush before the advancing tide of settlement, and not collecting, was the greatest contributing factor to extinction. In this connection, a statement of Buller's might be re-quoted: "Collectors were then obtaining large numbers of specimens for the European markets. Eleven Maoris scoured the wooded country between the Manawatu Gorge and Akitio, bringing in 646 skins." In Part Four, which occupies half the book, the author divides the known and probable area where the Huia existed into fourteen localities, and by an historical survey of each locality, demonstrates clearly that its range was wider than is generally accepted. The author is confident that the Huia will be rediscovered. The last quoted 'probable sighting' was on 12/10/61 on the Waikare-iti Track at Waikaremoana! A fleeting glimpse of a Tui such as attended my honey tin two years ago, with a pure white terminal band to its tail, would confound the most hardened observer. Many will find the book an indictment of a past generation which, by its cupidity and crass stupidity, brought many of the world's interesting and beautiful birds to extinction, or near extinction; but with all our increase in knowledge, are we doing any better to-day? I think not.

— A. B.