

## SUMMARY

USE OF BANDING SCHEMES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE  
TO RED-BILLED GULLS

The banding of Red-billed Gulls started in New Zealand in 1943. A small number (73) were banded by the speaker at Nelson between 1943 and 1945, and subsequent checks on this small group of banded birds has proved most informative. Between 1950 and 1958 one or two hundred Red-billed Gulls were banded annually, but in 1958 more than a thousand were banded. The returns then started to come in more frequently and the potential of the species as a suitable subject for a special banding study was realised and it was chosen as a special O.S.N.Z. project in 1960. A five year colour banding scheme was launched and to date 21,085 birds have been banded and 4,778 returns have been recorded.

The various uses that could be made of this data, its possibilities and limitation were then discussed. The question of longevity of this species was considered. Band wear and loss, however, greatly reduced the value of the results to date and the answers to this question are still to be provided. With the use of monel metal bands this should be overcome in the future. The knowledge of the extent, pattern and rhythm of dispersal of this species in New Zealand has been greatly enhanced by banding. The certain identification of individuals made possible by banding has told us much about its breeding biology. Information is now available about age of first breeding, number of years that individual birds breed, attachment to natal colony, position within the colony and general breeding success. Plumage and soft part cycles are now well documented because banded birds of known ages were able to be identified with certainty.

The prospects for the future of this scheme were then outlined. It was stressed that it was a co-operative effort and that it depended on the goodwill of many people. The speaker then concluded with thanks to all members who had contributed to the success of that scheme in the past.

— L. GURR



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