

SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEETING.

The Ornithological Society of New Zealand held its annual general meeting in the Dominion Museum, Wellington, on Friday evening, May 19, 1950. The president, Mr. E. G. Turbott, was in the chair, and there was an attendance of about 35 members from most parts of New Zealand.

After the presidential address by Mr. Turbott, the committee's annual report and audited financial statement were read and approved. The secretary was instructed to write a letter to the printers expressing appreciation of their co-operation.

The annual report stated: "Your committee, in presenting its tenth annual report for the year ended March 31, 1950, is pleased to record progress in the society's several spheres of activity. Largely owing to the number of endowment members enrolled during the year, it has been possible to increase the number of illustrations in 'New Zealand Bird Notes,' and this has proved popular. An increased income has been derived from the sale of back numbers which members want to complete their files, and the year has seen the completion of Volume 3. Membership continues to grow, the total now being 484, made up of ordinary 341, endowment 112, life 30, and honorary 1. Of these, 316 were paid to date, and 88 have paid in advance, some for several years. Owing to the steadily increasing number of members, it has been necessary this year to have envelopes and invoices typed professionally. The cost of the journal per member will show to what extent the society is dependent on endowment members and donations. Taking the average number of members during the year as 459, the cost per member was 7s. 6½d.

"Thanks to the generosity of the director of the Auckland Institute and Museum, Dr. Gilbert Archey, our library is now housed at the museum, and it is hoped that members will make increasing use of it, as the world's leading ornithological journals are received by the society. Interest in ornithology continues to grow apace, and it is a healthy sign that an increasing number of field trips is made by members in the lesser known districts. Enthusiasm in the organising of field work is largely responsible for the sound position of the society today.

"This year represents an anniversary for the society, for it is just ten years since the inaugural meeting was held in the Canterbury Museum, on May 24, 1940, the attendance being eight. Since that time, progress has been steady, as is shown by the following membership totals at the end of each financial year:—1941, 53; 1942, 77; 1943, 120; 1944, 180; 1945, 200; 1946, 240; 1947, 340; 1948, 370; 1949, 435; 1950, 484. During this period the society's activities have been correspondingly expanded. From the initial annual report has sprung the present quarterly journal, and there has been a number of special investigations contributed to by many members. A checklist of New Zealand birds is being prepared and a ringing scheme is under way. The nucleus of an ornithological library has grown rapidly and film evenings and field trips have become a regular feature of annual meetings. The society is becoming known the world over and the journal is sent to 49 overseas members and institutions with which exchanges are made.

"Thanks are again expressed to Mr. F. E. Wells for his auditing of the financial statement."

The report was presented for the committee by the hon. secretary-treasurer, Mr. J. M. Cunningham.

The annual report and the balance sheet were adopted.

No election being necessary, the officers for 1950-51 were declared elected, as detailed on page 1.

The report of the Ringing Committee, which was read by the convener, Mr. J. M. Cunningham, stated: "After many years of investigation and discussion, the scheme was launched during the year, and a small number of birds has been ringed. 17,000 rings in a full range of

sizes, have been obtained and catalogued, and are now available for issue to members. Rings have so far been issued to three persons, and it is hoped that full scale ringing will take place next spring. Many inquiries from overseas have been received concerning the administration of the scheme. The society is particularly interested in ringing white-fronted tern and gannets, and it is hoped to extend ringing to black and red-billed gulls, Caspian terns and stilts, permission for the ringing of these birds having been obtained. The necessary forms for application to ring and for recording results have been printed. It is desirable for all members who wish to participate in the ringing scheme to make immediate application."

In reply to a question by Mr. J. H. Sorensen, it was stated that it was hoped that members would supply full details of all ringing carried out prior to the inception of the society's scheme. Mr. Sorensen intimated that his own records would be sent to the society for inclusion in its official records.

The report of the Checklist Committee, read by its convener, Mr. C. A. Fleming, stated: "The committee was appointed in July, 1949, and operates by correspondence. Five sections of a draft checklist prepared by the convener (*Charadriiformes*, by R. B. Sibson) have been circulated, accompanied by circulars inviting comments from members. The committee is deeply indebted to Mr. D. H. Brathwaite, who has typed most of the draft. The proposed list will contain the scientific name, an approved vernacular, status and distribution, and literature references (later than 1930) for each species and acceptable subspecies of New Zealand birds, including those which have become extinct and those which have been introduced since the beginning of European settlement. By May, 1950, approximately half of the 340 items in the draft list have been circulated for criticism. It is proposed to inform committee members of majority decisions and to take votes on controversial items of nomenclature, status, etc. At the present rate of progress, it is anticipated that the manuscript will be completed before the end of 1951."

In accordance with notice of motion, Dr. R. A. Falla moved and Mr. E. Dear seconded, "That in Clause 16 of the constitution, the words 'N.Z. Bird Notes' be deleted and replaced by 'Notornis.' " This change of name of the society's bulletin, which was recommended by the outgoing committee, was fully discussed by the meeting and passed by a majority of 22 to 6.

The arrangements for the field trip the following day were announced.

Mr. R. B. Sibson was appointed the society's representative at the tenth International Ornithological Congress, at Upsala, Sweden.

Thanks were expressed to the Royal Society for the use of its rooms, and films taken by Dr. Falla, Messrs. Sorensen and Turbott were shown to the meeting, which concluded with supper.

FIELD DAY AT WAIKANAЕ.

A field excursion to the Waikanae River-mouth on the day following the annual meeting gave members an admirable opportunity to see birds typical of West Coast estuaries during winter months. Thirty-three members attended and fine weather and a friendly atmosphere among members made the day a most enjoyable one.

In the evening, members were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Fleming at their residence in Wadestown, where a screening of films taken by Mr. J. H. Sorensen on Campbell Island, showing the domestic lives of albatrosses, mollymawks, penguins and other species provided a most interesting and educational programme, which was much appreciated. Members were entertained at supper by Mr. and Mrs. Fleming.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ended 31/3/1950.

INCOME.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Subs., 1949, and arrears	140	5 0	"N.Z. Bird Notes"—		
Donations	16	9 3	Vol. 3, Nos. 6—9	97	4 9
Sales (back numbers)	21	5 1	Illustrations	17	9 6
Interest, P.O.S.B.	7	6 6	Envelopes	13	13 1
			Stationery	6	15 6
			Typing	5	14 6
			Postages	13	5 6
			Sundry		11 11
			Library Expenses	6	3 10
			Rings and Records Cards,		
			£62/7/10, less Ringing		
			Fund transferred, £50	12	7 10
			Excess of Income over Ex-		
			penditure transferred to		
			General Fund	11	19 5
	£185	5 10		£185	5 10

BALANCE SHEET as at 31/3/1950.

LIABILITIES.			ASSETS.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Subs. paid in advance	153	10 0	Subs. in arrears, estimat-		
Sundry Creditors (a/cs.			ed to realise	2	0 0
due but unpaid)	26	0 0	Stationery on hand	11	6 0
General Reserve	133	12 10	Cash	2	4 0
			Bank of New Zealand	1	6 9
			P.O. Savings Bank	301	6 1
	£318	2 10		£318	2 10

Audited and found correct.—F. E. Wells, 2/5/50.

(A more detailed audited statement of the accounts was presented to the annual meeting and copies may be obtained on application.)

RINGING IN NEW ZEALAND.—As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, members who have carried out ringing of birds are invited to make their records available to the society. It is suggested that this be done not only to duplicate records in case of possible loss, but also because it is desirable to have all records kept in a uniform system in a single file, for future reference. Forms suitable for this are available from the undersigned and will be sent to any member who requests them. A different form should be used for each species, and the approximate number required should be stated. Each sheet holds about 45 ring numbers. It is emphasised that all records of any species ringed are desired, however insignificant they may appear. It is proposed to publish a summary of the numbers of all species ringed on the lines of overseas summaries. It would be appreciated if those members who have large numbers of records, which will naturally take some time to duplicate, would in the meantime provide a list of species ringed to date, and the number of "recoveries" (birds recorded more than two miles from "where ringed," more than three months later, and dead birds).—J. M. Cunningham, Masterton.

A HUIA-BILLED STARLING.—A report that a huia had been seen in a Masterton garden recently caused me to raise my eyebrows, but when I saw the bird in my own garden I realised at once that there was some justification for that statement. The bird, a starling, had a perfectly formed down-curved bill, resembling that of the female huia, and about three times the usual length of a starling's bill; that is, it was about three inches long. The bird was watched for some minutes feeding on scraps with two normal starlings and it appeared to have considerable difficulty in gathering up its food, as its tongue, which was of normal length, was not of much assistance. The food was picked up in the bill and the head and bill were then elevated to allow the food to drop downwards, a fair amount falling out of its bill in the process. It wiped its bill frequently on the ground with a scythe-like motion. The bird looked to be in good fettle. It was seen on December 20, 1949.—R.H.D. Stidolph, Masterton.