

The Library Committee has established exchange during the period 1953 - 55 with several leading overseas journals which form important additions to the Library: *Dansk Ornithologisk Forenings Tidsskrift* (Danish, with English summaries), *Der Ornithologische Beobachter* (journals of the Swiss society for study and protection of birds), *Die Vogelwarte* (German journal of bird ringing), and *Bird Study* (published by the British Trust for Ornithology). In addition large sets of both *Audubon Magazine* and *Forest and Bird* have been received by donation and further issues of these journals have been promised to the Library.

Four further requests for exchange have been received from overseas journals and will be considered this year.

E. G. TURBOTT,

HON. LIBRARIAN

### TREASURER'S REPORT — 1955

The membership of the Society remains as last year at 772, the number of new members exactly balancing that of the resignations for the year. There are 59 Life Members, 475 Ordinary Members paying 7s. 6d. per annum, 51 Junior Members paying 5s. per annum, 169 Endowment Members paying 10s. a year, and 19 Complimentary Members to whom copies of *Notornis* are sent free. Sixty-nine members were unfinancial on 31 March, representing the sum of £36 7s. 6d. Some of these subscriptions are owing for two years. In spite of repeated reminders some members are still very slow in paying their accounts on time. This does mean considerably extra trouble for the treasurer, extra stationery (forms and envelopes), and unnecessary extra postage costs.

Although the Society appears to be holding its own, the financial position is not as good as it might be, especially as the cost of printing *Notornis* is rising all the time and next year is expected to be very much higher. The total cost this year was £257 10s., compared with £188 10s. last year. Another marked increase was in postages — this year £42 12s. 1d., compared with £22 14s. 1d. in 1953-4.

There was a slight increase in the amount of subscriptions received during the year, £278 0s. 6d. being received this year compared with £263 3s. 6d. last year. Sales of various Society publications realised £18 18s.

The Society's most grateful thanks are due to all who have sent donations during the year; and to Mr D. N. Chambers for auditing the books.

NOELLE MACDONALD,

Hon. Treasurer,

12/5/55

### REPORT OF THE RINGING COMMITTEE

For the Year ended 31 March

By P. C. BULL

Once again the number of birds ringed during the year (3496) exceeds all previous records. The number of recoveries (126) appears lower than usual, but this is only because details of many recoveries were received too late for inclusion in this report and have been held over for next year's one. It would help the recorder if operators would send in details of recoveries as soon as they are made. The usual summary of the species ringed and recovered during the year is supplied separately for the year ending 31 March 1955.

The highlight of this year's operations has been the recovery in Australia

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last winter of six white-fronted terns ringed at Lake Ellesmere the previous summer. The suspected movement of young terns to Australia was one of the reasons for starting the ringing scheme, and it is very gratifying that this movement is now an established fact. It is to be hoped that a similar movement in banded dotterel will be established in due course, but at present relatively few birds of this species have been ringed. Dispersal movements of young gannets continue to be documented with a large number of recoveries, most of them from Australia. There have also been some long-distance recoveries of harrier hawks, and useful data have been collected on the dispersal of gulls in the Auckland and in the Nelson-Wellington-East Coast areas. It is encouraging to see the publication of papers reporting the progress of studies involving birds ringed under the Society's scheme. So far there have been papers on blackbirds, harriers, gannets and gulls, and it is hoped that further work will be published before long. With this trend developing, there is less need for detailed annual lists of recoveries and, except for recoveries of special interest, it is proposed to reduce this list to a brief summary of general trends.

A less satisfactory aspect of the ringing work is that some operators are not sufficiently critical of the recoveries they report. In two instances, both involving more than one bird, ring numbers which were read in the field with binoculars have proved to be incorrect. If this sort of thing continues it may be necessary to reject from the permanent record all recoveries which are not supported by the presence of the actual ring. At present the recovery cards are marked to show clearly the circumstances under which the particular recovery was made. On another occasion an adult red-billed gull was reported at Porangahau with a yellow ring, thus indicating that the bird had been ringed in Canterbury, but there are no records of this species ever having been ringed there. Both the ringing operator (assuming it is a Canterbury gull) and the person who made the 'recovery' are experienced operators, but it would appear that one or the other has confused the red-billed with the black-billed species or else that some unauthorised person has been ringing gulls.

The excessive wear noted on some rings after only a few years' use was reported last year. In an attempt to correct this, some type B rings were obtained from America and used last season, but it is still too early to judge their worth. The Dominion Laboratory has analysed the Society's standard rings and concluded that the copper content is undesirably high. Inquiries have been made with regard to the experiences of Australian, British and American workers, but as yet there is no complete solution to the problem.

The problem of paying for the ever-increasing numbers of bird rings required by the Society is becoming urgent. While the Department of Internal Affairs has helped in the past, requests for further assistance would be more convincing if it could be shown that the members of the Society had made a substantial contribution themselves. If, as appears to be the case, the Society cannot spare any contribution from its general funds, it may be necessary to establish a ringing fund and ask members for donations to it.

With the approval of the Department of Internal Affairs, a small quantity of size 8 rings was sold to the North Canterbury Acclimatization Society for use on black swans, because that Society's long-continued ringing work with swans was threatened by a temporary shortage of rings.

In conclusion, the Ringing Committee wishes to place on record its thanks to Mr J. Moreland (Dominion Museum) for his work as Ringing Recorder; to Mr J. M. Cunningham for work carried out in Europe on behalf of the Committee; to the Dominion Museum for housing the Society's records and for clerical assistance; to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research for typing duplicate recovery cards and for the chemical analysis of rings; to the Department of Internal Affairs for their co-operation with permits and for allowing the Society to comment on the draft provisions of the new Wild Life Act; and finally to the many members of the public, both here and in Australia, who have sent in rings from dead birds.

# RINGING OPERATIONS

## SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 1955

*Compiled by P. C. BULL, Lower Hutt*

The following is a statistical summary of the birds ringed and recoveries during the past year. It includes a number of birds of various species outside the normal scope of the Society's scheme, ringed by special permission of the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, and also some birds ringed with other than the Society's rings, but details of which have been provided by the operators. No distinction is made in either case. The list includes only those species which have been ringed or recovered during the present year; species which have been ringed in other years may be found by consulting *Notornis*, Vol. 5, No. 5, and Vol. 6, No. 1.

### BIRDS RINGED AND RECOVERED

(Asterisk denotes coloured rings also used)

<i>Species, Operator and Where Ringed</i>	Totals for 1954 - 5 <i>Ringed Recov'd</i>	Grand Totals to 31/3/55 <i>Ringed Recov'd</i>
WANDERING ALBATROSS		31    1
R. A. Falla, Wellington	1	
SHY MOLLYHAWK		1
R. A. Falla, Wellington	1	
FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER		28
R. B. Sibson, Hen Is.	1	
SOOTY SHEARWATER		44
R. B. Sibson, Hen Is.	2	
GREY-FACED PETREL		26
R. B. Sibson, Hen Is.	8	
PYCROFT'S PETREL		8
R. B. Sibson, Hen Is.	4	
GANNET		48    2562    83
P. A. S. Stein, Horuhoru and Bush Is.	757	
K. Wodzicki, Cape Kidnappers	120	
BLACK SWAN		161
North Canterbury Acclimatization Society, Lake Ellesmere	161	
HARRIER		14    229    68
J. S. Watson, Hawke's Bay	13	
BANDED DOTTEREL		49
*J. M. Cunningham, Whakataki	1	
*H. R. McKenzie, Firth of Thames	5	
NEW ZEALAND DOTTEREL		10    5
*H. R. McKenzie, Firth of Thames	2	
PIED STILT		33    2
J. M. Cunningham, Ohau R.	1	
R. B. Sibson, Ohau R.	1	
BLACK-BACKED GULL		32    2806    108
J. M. Cunningham, Palliser Spit	48	
J. C. Davenport, Rangitoto Is.	636	
F. C. Kinsky, Baring Head & Somes Is.	99	
P. A. S. Stein, Fan Is., near Waiheke	2	
RED-BILLED GULL		6    706    89
J. M. Cunningham, Castlepoint	19	
BLACK-BILLED GULL		3    2213    32
*E. W. Dawson, Ashley & Waitaki Rivers	451	
D. H. Braithwaite, Ngaruroro R.	20	

<i>Species, Operator and Where Ringed</i>	Totals for 1954 - 5 Ringed Recov'd	Grand Totals to 31/3/55 Ringed Recov'd
WHITE-FRONTED TERN		
*W. C. Clark, Waitaki R.	301	8 1843 57
CASPIAN TERN		245
M. A. Waller, South Kaipara Head	236	
SHINING CUCKOO		1
*R. B. Sibson, Auckland	1	
BLACKBIRD		10 527 72
*P. C. Bull, Lower Hutt	88	
H. L. Secker, Karori	14	
H. G. Warburton, Mairangi Bay	8	
SONG THRUSH		2 130 16
*P. C. Bull, Lower Hutt	27	
H. G. Warburton, Mairangi Bay	3	
HEDGESPARROW		39 3
P. C. Bull, Lower Hutt	7	
SILVER-EYE		2 5422 189
B. D. Bell, Blenheim	18	
D. Medway, New Plymouth	34	
J. S. Watson, Eastbourne	384	
STARLING		1 102 1
H. L. Secker, Karori	22	
OTHER SPECIES (previous years)		1427 241
Numbers Ringed and Recovered 1954 - 5	3496 126	
Numbers Ringed and Recovered to 31/3/54		15,147 841
Numbers Ringed and Recovered to 31/3/55		18,643 967

## RECOVERIES

### GANNET (*Sula bassana serrator*)

Thirty-three gannets ringed as chicks at either Horuhoru or Cape Kidnappers were recovered in Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria) during the year, and two others were found dead on New Zealand beaches. Most of these birds were in their first year, but five of those recovered in Australia were in their second year and one nearly in its third. Thirteen gannets ringed as chicks at Cape Kidnappers have been identified at the colony as three- or four-year-old birds. One of these, No. 15322, a four-year-old bird, was breeding, but the others appeared to be unemployed.

### HARRIER (*Circus approximans*)

Nine birds were recovered in various parts of Hawke's Bay (Kereru, Tikokino, Otane, Waipukurau, Weber and Norsewood) and five from further afield, namely Tolaga Bay, Waitoa (near Te Aroha) and Whangarei to the north, and Masterton and Annat (Canterbury) to the south. Several of these birds had been ringed for two years prior to recovery, the others for shorter periods.

### BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus dominicanus*)

Twenty-one of the recoveries were birds ringed at Rangitoto Island; sixteen of them were found in the vicinity of Auckland, two at Motutapu Island, one at Te Kauwhata and one near Cape Rodney. Twelve of these birds were recovered during their first year, six during their second, two during their third, and one during its fourth. Eight gulls ringed at Baring Head have been recovered during the year, four of them at the place of ringing,

three in Wellington and one at Masterton, all birds being in their first or second year when recovered. Two gulls ringed at Paliiser Spit were recovered in Wellington, one being in its first year and the other in its fourth.

#### RED-BILLED GULL (*Larus novaehollandiae*)

Two birds ringed at the Boulder Bank, Nelson, were recovered near Nelson when in their second year. A gull ringed as a chick at the Brothers Lighthouse was recovered in Wellington during its third year. Another Wellington recovery was a bird ringed at White Rock (East Coast) 18 months previously. Two red-billed gulls have been recovered in New Plymouth, one was found dead and the ring number of the other was read with binoculars. Both were originally ringed as chicks at Snapper Rock and when recovered were two and three years old respectively.

#### BLACK-BILLED GULL (*Larus bulleri*)

Three black-billed gulls ringed as chicks at the Ashley River have been recovered within a year of ringing, two of them in Christchurch and the third near Rangiora.

#### WHITE-FRONTED TERN (*Sterna striata*)

Six birds ringed as chicks at Lake Ellesmere in January 1954 were recovered in New South Wales during the following winter (May to August). This is the first occasion that New Zealand white-fronted terns have been proved to visit Australia, although the existence of such a movement has for long been suspected. Two birds were recovered in New Zealand not far from where they were ringed.

#### BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*)

Ten ringed blackbirds were recovered at or within a mile of ringing stations in Lower Hutt, Karori and Masterton, all within two years of ringing.

#### SONG THRUSH (*Turdus ericetorum*)

Two birds were recovered within a half of where ringed in Lower Hutt, one eighteen months and the two two and a half years after ringing.

#### WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*)

Two birds ringed at Mahina Bay were brought in by cats at Day's Bay within a few days of ringing.

#### STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

A starling ringed as an adult at Karori was retrapped at the same ringing station five months later.

#### CORRECTION TO 1953-54 RINGING REPORT

*Notornis*, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 16. Black-backed gull No. 13823 was recovered at Orapiu, at the south-east end of Waiheke Island, not at Henderson as stated.

#### ANNUAL REPORT OF NEST RECORDS SCHEME

The convener, Mr Hallam Secker, Wellington, who succeeds Mr J. King, Feilding, reports the accession of some 100 cards for the nesting season of 1954-55. There are now almost 600 accession cards classified as follows:

Bellbird (2), Bittern (1), Blackbird (140), Yellow Bunting (3), Chaffinch (22), Banded Dottrel (22), New Zealand Dottrel (4), Rock Dove (17), Brown Duck (2), Grey Duck (6), Mallard Duck (2), Fantail (16), Gannet (2), Goldfinch (17), Little Grebe (1), Greenfinch (5), Black-backed Gull (10), Silver Gull (1), Harrier (10), White-faced Heron (1), Reef Heron (2), Sacred Kingfisher (3), Skylark (6), Magpie (1), Morepork (1), Black