

# NOTORNIS

VOLUME SEVEN, NUMBER ONE : JULY NINETEEN FIFTY-SIX

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## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on the evening of 18 May in the Dominion Museum, Wellington. About forty-seven members attended. Places as distant as Dunedin and Gisborne were represented. The President, Mr H. R. McKenzie, was in the chair.

The general report was read by the acting Secretary, Mr E. G. Turbott; and the Treasurer's report and statement were presented in her absence by Mr McKenzie. Reports were also read from the conveners of the Ringing Committee and Christmas Cards Committee, from the Librarian and from the organizer of the Nest Records Scheme. All these reports were adopted by the meeting.

In his address the President first enumerated the many activities in which members and groups of members are engaged in different parts of the country, and then went on to discuss the importance of the Regional Organizers.

Mr D. N. Chambers was thanked for his services and unanimously re-elected the Society's auditor.

The length of business and the interesting discussions which arose from it precluded the showing of films, and the meeting closed with supper.

### *Votes of Thanks*

Special votes of thanks for outstanding services to the Society were passed to Mr R. H. D. Stidolph and Mr A. C. Hipwell.

Mr Stidolph retired last year from the position of Honorary Editor, and members took the opportunity of expressing their gratitude to him for his long period of notable service at an important stage in the development of the journal.

Mr Hipwell's drawings of the Christmas cards have already given members and friends much pleasure, and have been the subject of appreciation from both New Zealand and overseas. A vote of thanks to Mr Hipwell was carried with acclamation at the meeting.

## SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT, FOR THE YEAR 1955-6

### OFFICERS:

*President:* Mr H. R. McKenzie

*North Island Vice-President:* Mr P. C. Bull

*South Island Vice-President:* Mrs L. E. Walker

*Secretary:* Mr F. M. Brookfield,

*Treasurer:* Miss N. Macdonald

*Editor:* Mr R. B. Sibson

Mrs O. Sansom, Dr R. A. Falla, Mr E. G. Turbott

Council members elected to fill the vacancies arising at this meeting were Mr P. C. Bull (re-elected to the position of North Island Vice-President) and Mrs Sansom (elected as a new Council member). The Secretary, Mr F. M. Brookfield, left on a trip overseas in June, and Mr E. G. Turbott has continued as acting Secretary. Members will look forward to the Secretary's return, and are pleased to know that he will be resuming his position.

In the absence of the Secretary it has been necessary to divide further the now heavy secretarial duties of the Society (the position of Treasurer was separated earlier from the secretaryship). A large proportion of the Secretary's duties has been carried out during the past year by Mr J. C. Davenport, who has taken responsibility for the addressing and despatch of *Notornis*, and has dealt with all requests for back numbers and for any of the Society's other publications.

The Council can appropriately speak on the Society's behalf in expressing our appreciation of Mr Sibson's work as Editor during the past year. All members will wish to congratulate Mr Sibson on the continued high standard of *Notornis*.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The total at the end of the financial year was 713, including 55 overseas members. Details of membership are given in the Treasurer's report.

**CARD COMMITTEE:** The activities of this Committee form a separate report, but the Council wishes to take this opportunity of congratulating Mr B. S. Chambers, who has been so largely responsible for the outstanding success achieved, both in the appearance of the cards and in the satisfactory outcome financially. We are especially grateful to Mr A. C. Hipwell for giving us the drawings which have been a source of so much pleasure to ornithologists and artists alike. Appreciation of the cards has come to the Council from overseas as well as within New Zealand.

**GENERAL ACTIVITIES:** Local meetings of groups of members continue to be held, and tend to increase. Groups now meet regularly in Napier, Wellington and Dunedin, and more informal meetings are held in other centres. In Auckland, members have combined to do census work and field surveys. Mrs Walker and Mr Williamson have prepared an observer's schedule designed especially for Otago and Southland, but, it is hoped, useful also throughout the South Island.

All our members are reminded of the various special enquiries which give scope for the support of the Society's more scattered members. Reports which would help to develop these enquiries would be greatly appreciated by all organizers, and reports on the progress of the enquiries are to be found at intervals in *Notornis*.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** In order to make this more of a conference, and to enable members from all parts of New Zealand to join in the discussion of ornithological topics, a discussion session has been instituted this year. The Council is grateful to the Wellington Regional Organizer, Dr K. Westerskov, for suggesting this activity and helping to further plans up to his departure on an overseas visit. Mr K. Miers, who is acting Regional Organizer in Dr Westerskov's absence, has continued with arrangements for the present meeting and discussion programme. The speakers on this year's topic, 'Bird Behaviour', are Dr R. W. Balham and Mr L. Gurr, and the Council is especially grateful to them for assisting to start this scheme. It is hoped that this new feature of the Annual General Meeting will be a success, and will be expanded to include papers by members at future annual meetings.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS:** The business of the Council continued to be carried out by circular, five circulars having been sent out and discussed.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT, 1956**

Membership of the Society now stands at 713, 61 of these being life members, 354 ordinary members, 44 junior and 178 endowment members. Seventy-six members were unfinancial on 31 March and there were eighty resignations during the year.

As shown in the accounts for this year, the Society suffered a small loss. This loss was governed by many factors, the first being that all stocks on hand have been written down to cost instead of selling price as in previous years, and since sales did not exceed the amounts written off minor losses were incurred.

Had the printing of *Notornis* been the usual cost the loss would have been considerably greater.

In actual cash the cost was much greater, but as some magazines are placed in stock as back numbers and others at the Dominion Museum special stock, these proportionate figures are not charged to the *Notornis* printing account but to stock, since these can be sold later. The *Notornis* printing figure

in the expenditure account shows the cost only of the four magazines sent to each member.

Donations increased by approximately £3 to a total of £19 1/6, which has helped greatly on the financial side. Due to the revaluation of stock the sale figures of stocks cannot be compared. The ringing scheme also benefited by donations and by a Government grant, and made a £17 11/1 gain, but this should be lower and made to pay for itself by the convener and the others controlling it collecting all the expenses incurred by them and not just the small portion they do. This should apply to the Society's organizers as a whole.

The price of envelopes doubled itself by changing from £12 9/9 to £29 16/- and postages dropped by £6 to £36 13/1. Sundry printing and stationery rose from £19 to £42 10/-, a substantial increase, but general expenses fell from £6 12/- to £1 8/-. The free brochure on bird study cost the Society £13 this year. This was half the total cost.

Subscriptions in arrears are lower this year, which is promising, but they are still too high, and efforts are to be made to lower them further. Stocks on hand have increased greatly. An account has been opened for library purchases which in later years will help in the library valuation. The loan of £50 to the Card Committee was the Society's interest in the undertaking and will be explained later in its report.

Unfortunately the cash position is getting much lower, but it is hoped that the increase in subscription rates will check this fall and enable the larger magazine to continue being issued.

The Society's thanks are due to Messrs Chambers, Worth and Chambers for auditing the books, and to Mr B. S. Chambers for his help to the Treasurer.

NOELLE MACDONALD,  
*Hon. Treasurer*

## ANNUAL REPORT — CARD COMMITTEE

It is with pleasure that I present the accounts for the Card Committee after their first year's trading. A total of 3200 cards were dispatched to members and friends, mainly in the Auckland Province. The Committee's thanks go to all those who helped make it a success.

Our thanks are also due to Mr A. C. Hipwell for the great job he did in painting eight birds, four for Christmas 1955 and four for the coming Christmas. We are deeply indebted to Mr Hipwell, and as a token of gratitude we presented Mr Hipwell with cards on behalf of the Society. Without his generosity such a project could not have been a success.

Unfortunately we left everything too late last year and we apologise to those who missed the overseas Christmas mails because we did not keep our obligations. This year, however, the cards will be ready on 20 August and all members will receive an order card early in September. We would ask that these be returned promptly with the necessary remittance to enable packing to be completed as early as possible.

Recently commercial travellers have been travelling parts of the North Island and to date have sold more than 60 dozen cards. To enable the Committee to operate efficiently 5500 cards must be sold to members and their friends. Everyone's help will therefore be appreciated, and our thanks go to those who can and will help.

Helpful criticism would be appreciated from members so that we can be sure that we are producing what the members want, as increased sales mean greater profits. It is hoped that some of the profits will be used to get more illustrations in *Notornis*, but this has not yet definitely been decided.

In conclusion I would like to thank Mr McKenzie, Mr Turbott and Mr Sibson for the assistance which they have willingly given, and look forward to their help later this year.

B. S. CHAMBERS,  
*Convener*

### BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31/3/56

## LIABILITIES

<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS —</b>			
Paid in Advance for 1956-7 .....	27	5	0
Paid in Advance for 1957-8 .....	17	6	
			28 2 6
Life Members .....	189	7	6
Plus paid in 1955-6 .....	39	6	0
	228	13	6
Less transferred to Subscription A/c .....	22	10	0
			206 3 6
Total amount in advance .....	234	6	0
<b>SUNDRY CREDITORS</b> .....	2	2	0
<b>GENERAL RESERVE —</b>			
Balance 31/3/55 .....	366	16	3
Plus stock of Back Numbers brought in .....	509	11	3
	3	0	7
Less loss for year .....			506 10 8
			£742 18 8

## ASSETS

Subscriptions in arrears estimated to realise .....	12	0	0
<b>STOCKS ON HAND —</b>			
Envelopes .....	14	2	0
<i>Takahe</i> .....	6	18	0
'Checklist' .....	12	2	0
Back Numbers .....	158	5	0
Cyclostyled Issue Reprinted .....	78	0	0
Rings for Ringing Scheme .....	38	3	7
Stationery for Ringing Scheme .....	4	6	0
Brochure — 'Bird Study' .....	13	0	0
	<hr/>		
		324	16 7
<b>SDNDRY DEBTORS</b> .....		7	19 6
Printing in advance — April issue .....		21	11 0
<b>PLANT at Cost Less Depreciation —</b>			
Addressograph Machine .....	13	2	2
Addressograph Plates .....	21	17	1
	<hr/>		
		34	19 3
Special Stock of <i>Notornis</i> in Dominion Museum .....		5	12 0
Library .....		7	6 4
Loan to Card Committee .....		50	0 0
Cash — Bank of New Zealand .....	15	4	7
P.O.S.B. ....	263	9	5
	<hr/>		
		278	14 0
		<hr/>	
		£742	18 8

We report to the members of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand Incorporated that we have examined the books, accounts and vouchers of the Society for the year ended 31 March 1956 and certify that the above Balance Sheet is properly drawn up to show the true financial position of the Society at that date. We have accepted the values placed by your Secretary on 'stocks on hand'.

CHAMBERS, WORTH AND CHAMBERS  
(Signed) D. N. Chambers

# INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31/3/56

EXPENDITURE			
Printing <i>Notornis</i> .....	207	6	0
Illustrations .....	5	3	6
	<hr/>		
	212	9	6
SUNDRY EXPENDITURE —			
Envelopes .....	29	16	0
Postages .....	36	13	1
Sundry Printing and Stationery .....	42	12	0
General Expenses — Bank Fees, etc. ..	1	8	0
	<hr/>		
	110	9	1
Printing Brochur — 'Bird Study' .....	13	0	0
Depreciation .....	2	16	10

£338 15 5

INCOME			
SUBSCRIPTIONS —			
Cash received 1955 - 6 .....	279	6	0
Overdue £29 15/- and estimated to produce .....	12	0	0
	<hr/>		
	291	6	0
DONATIONS —			
General .....	18	3	3
Illustrations .....	18	3	
	<hr/>		
	19	1	6
RINGING SCHEME —			
Cost of rings and cards used .....	15	1	5
Less Donations .....	7	12	6
Government Grant ....	25	0	0
	<hr/>		
	32	12	6
	<hr/>		
	17	11	1
SALES —			
Back Numbers .....	4	5	1
<i>Takahe</i> .....	13	19	0
	<hr/>		
	18	4	1
Less Loss on Sale of:			
'Checklist' .....	4	3	0
Cyclostyled Reprints ..	13	18	6
	<hr/>		
	18	1	6
	<hr/>		
Interest .....		2	7
Exchange .....		7	0
Excess of Expenditure over Income .....		13	2
		3	0
	<hr/>		
	£338	15	5

## CARD COMMITTEE ACCOUNTS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1956

### CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry Creditors .....	15	3	11	
Interest Accrued Due .....	2	10	3	
				17 14 1
LOANS —				
Conway Clark Ltd .....	50	0	0	
Ornithological Society .....	50	0	0	
				100 0 0
Accumulated Funds .....				32 10 8
				<u>£150 4 9</u>

### CURRENT ASSETS

Chambers, Worth & Chambers Trust Account .....	37	7	9	
Stationery in Advance .....	9	17	0	
Advertising in Advance .....	1	11	0	
Closing Stock .....	53	18	0	
				102 13 9
FIXED ASSETS —				
Printing Blocks .....	69	16	6	
Less Depreciation .....	22	5	6	
				47 11 0
				<u>£150 4 9</u>

### TRADING AND PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1956

Cost of Cards (8000) .....	92	4	8	
Less Closing Stock .....	53	18	0	
				38 6 8
Stationery .....				1 15 6
Advertising .....				16 2 6
Postages .....				1 13 6
Depreciation .....				22 5 6
Interest .....				2 10 2
Net Profit .....				32 10 8
				<u>£115 4 6</u>

Sales .....	113	17	0	
Donations .....	1	1	4	
Overprinting Commission .....				6 2
				<u>£115 4 6</u>

## **LIBRARY REPORT, 1955-6**

During the year eight books and eighty-seven reprints have been added to the Library. In addition, two more journals are being received on exchange — *Alauda* and *Ostrich* — and one by subscription — *The Ring*. Donations of books were received from Mr R. Noel Johnson, Mr H. F. Watts and Mr E. G. Turbott.

The number of books, journals and reprints borrowed during the year was thirty-six.

The Library has become very crowded, and is badly in need of more shelving. At present it is impossible to shelve the books and journals in their right places, which makes the Library very inconvenient for members.

ENID A. EVANS,  
*Hon. Librarian*

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF NEST RECORDS SCHEME**

Through Dr R. A. Falla's courtesy the card collection was transferred during the year to the Bird Room of the Dominion Museum for safe housing. The Society deeply appreciates the provision of this facility. To help administration, applications for loans should be made to the Organiser. In response to a request to Mr Turbott, the British Trust for Ornithology was provided with full information about the scheme. A suggestion having been made that the record card at present in use should be revised, the organiser asked the opinion of experienced members and regional organisers. However, judged by the few accessions to hand this year, the printing of a new style card is not justified meantime.

The organiser is disappointed at the lack of interest shown this year in the scheme, which entails little effort. Wellington workers, as an arbitrary example, made little attempt to work urban gardens on the one hand, or such alternative, accessible and productive spots as the banks of the Waikanae, Otaki and Ohau Rivers in nearby countryside on the other. Members are urged accordingly to give more support to this scheme so that the Society can get at an early date an understanding of such matters as species' peak laying times, variations in clutch size and related information. Cards can be obtained free of charge, preferably from regional representatives. As their printing and distribution involves expense they should be completed promptly and returned to the regional representative, or the organiser direct, to preclude likely loss. Members are asked to pay particular attention to getting records of the Song Thrush and Blackbird in the season 1956-7.

Contributors for the year and present accessions respectively follow as under:

R. Watson, W. C. Clark, H. R. McKenzie, H. L. Secker, P. Williams, E. B. Jones, R. V. Roberts, R. St Paul, D. McMillan, A. R. Harris, and W. A. Williamson. W. H. Secker and F. Luke (non-members).

Yellow-eyed Penguin (2)	Bush Pigeon (1)
Little Blue Penguin (1)	Rock Dove (24)
White-flipped Penguin (7)	Morepork (1)
Little Grebe (1)	Kingfisher (4)
Grey Faced Petrel (1)	Skylark (6)
Gannet (2)	Fantail (18)
Reef Heron (4)	Pied Tit (3)
White-faced Heron (1)	Yellow-breasted Tit (1)
Bittern (1)	Northern Robin (4)
Grey Teal (7)	Whitehead (4)
Black Swan (3)	Grey Warbler (13)
Brown Duck (2)	Song Thrush (162)
Grey Duck (8)	Blackbird (157)
Mallard (3)	Hedge Sparrow (32)
Harrier (10)	Pipit (5)
Pukeko (5)	Bellbird (3)

Black Oystercatcher (5)  
 Pied Oystercatcher (2)  
 Banded Dotterel (23)  
 New Zealand Dotterel (5)  
 Pied Stilt (19)  
 Black-backed Gull (24)  
 Red-billed Gull (1)  
 Black-fronted Tern (3)  
 Caspian Tern (2)  
 Fairy Tern (1)  
 White-fronted Tern (10)

Tui (1)  
 White-eye (26)  
 Greenfinch (5)  
 Goldfinch (19)  
 Lesser Redpoll (11)  
 Chaffinch (25)  
 Yellowhammer (3)  
 House Sparrow (20)  
 Starling (15)  
 White-backed Magpie (1)

H. L. SECKER

## REPORT OF THE RINGING COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 1956

The year's ringing operations are summarised in the accompanying table which this year provides a complete list of all the species for which the Society has ringing records.

The number of birds ringed during 1955-6 (2717) is nearly 800 below last year's total, a fact which may be explained by the absence overseas of several operators who normally ring large numbers of birds. On the other hand, the number of recoveries (270) is higher than ever before. This is due partly to the large number of birds ringed in 1954-5 and partly to the fact that some of the 1954-5 recoveries were reported too late for inclusion in last year's summary and have been carried forward into 1955-6. The number of ringing operators has remained fairly constant at a little under 20 for the last four years.

The most spectacular recovery of the year was that of a Gannet ringed as a chick at Horuhoru and recovered 30 miles north of Geraldton in Western Australia eight months later; there were also some interesting recoveries of gulls in New Zealand. Black-backed Gulls from Rangitoto dispersed as far as Whangaparaoa, Whatipu and Tauranga, while a Red-billed Gull ringed at White Rocks on the Wairarapa coast was recovered at Waiau Pa near the Manukau Harbour. These, and previously published long-distance recoveries of gulls and harriers, show that these species may disperse over wide areas, and such information on species which frequently feed on dead animals could be of considerable economic importance in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease among farm stock. A novel recovery was the finding of a ring inside a fish caught in the northern part of the Hauraki Gulf. The ring had been put on a young Black-backed Gull at Rangitoto 17 months earlier.

A feature of operations this year has been the ringing of a considerable number of petrels. Many of these have been ringed at sea in the Cook Strait area from a vessel engaged in fishing. In this instance the ringing of birds of uncertain age and breeding station appears justified because frequent trips to the same fishing ground provide an unusually good chance of obtaining recoveries. These petrels and a Fairy Tern at Mangawhai have been handled under special individual permits granted by the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs.

It is still too early to judge the lasting qualities of the Society's new rings, but evidence that the old type are unsatisfactory (especially if fitted too loosely) continues to accumulate. The rings on Gannets returning to Cape Kidnappers this year had to be replaced after only three to five years on the birds.

The Ringing Committee is most grateful to the Department of Internal Affairs for providing a grant of £25 for the purchase of rings. These funds have now been used, but thanks to those members of the Society who have generously contributed to the ringing fund, it may not be necessary to request a further grant from the Department of Internal Affairs this year. The willingness of members to give financial support to the ringing scheme is most gratifying, since it strengthens the Committee's hand in negotiating for



further Government grants in future years, and at the same time emphasizes the Society's independent status. It is hoped that even greater support will be given to the ringing fund during the forthcoming year by ringing operators and especially by those other members who, while not able to ring birds themselves, are nevertheless interested in this aspect of the Society's work.

The Committee notes with concern that some operators appear to have overlooked certain provisions of the ringing instructions. Although the infringements noted so far have not been serious, all operators are requested to read through the instructions again before undertaking any further ringing operations. Any operators who have lost their instruction leaflets may obtain new ones from the Convener. Strict compliance with these instructions is necessary if the Society is to continue enjoying the confidence of the Department of Internal Affairs, which issues permits for the handling of protected birds.

Mr P. C. Bull has asked to be relieved of his duties as Convener of the Ringing Committee in order to spend more time on his own research work; his resignation becomes effective with the publication of this report. The Committee has been fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr F. C. Kinsky as the new Convener, and from now on all correspondence on ringing matters should be addressed to Mr Kinsky, c/o Dominion Museum, Wellington.

In conclusion the Committee wishes to acknowledge its indebtedness to Mr J. Moreland (Dominion Museum) for his work as Ringing Recorder, to the Dominion Museum for housing the Society's rings and records, to the Department of Internal Affairs for the grant of £25 and for its co-operation in issuing permits, to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research for clerical assistance, and last but not least to the many members of the public who have sent in rings from dead birds.

P. C. BULL  
Convener

## SUMMARY OF RINGING OPERATIONS TO 31 MARCH 1956

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

In addition to the usual details of birds ringed or recovered during the current year, the present summary provides a list of all species for which the Society holds records of ringing or recovery. It includes a number of 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.

Species are listed below in the order in which they appear in the Society's *Checklist of New Zealand Birds* (1953); similarly, the vernacular names are those used in the *Checklist*.

### BIRDS RINGED AND RECOVERED

(\* indicates coloured rings used during 1955-6)

<i>Species, Operator and where ringed</i>	<i>Totals for 1955-6</i>		<i>Grand totals to 31/3/56</i>	
	<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Recov.</i>	<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Recov.</i>
WHITE-FLIPPED PENGUIN			11	3
WANDERING ALBATROSS			31	1
ROYAL ALBATROSS			374	14
BULLER'S MOLLYMAWK			44	
SHY MOLLYMAWK			1	
LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY				
ALBATROSS			23	11
GIANT PETREL			38	2
F. Abernethy, Cape Campbell	19			

BIRDS RINGED AND RECOVERED — *continued*

<i>Species, Operator and where ringed</i>	<i>Totals for 1955-6</i>		<i>Grand totals to 31/3/56</i>	
	<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Recov.</i>	<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Recov.</i>
CAPE PIGEON			82	
F. Abernethy, Cape Campbell	82			
FAIRY PRION			51	
FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER			286	
F. Abernethy, Cape Campbell	258			
BULLER'S SHEARWATER			17	
B. D. Heather, Poor Knights Is.	17			
SOOTY SHEARWATER			44	
FLUTTERING SHEARWATER			5	
ALLIED SHEARWATER			7	
R. B. Sibson, Mokohinau Is.	7			
GREY-FACED PETREL			26	
PYCROFT'S PETREL			8	
WHITE-FACED STORM PETREL			3	
DIVING PETREL			52	4
GANNET		61	3482	144
K. Wodzicki and co-workers, Cape Kidnappers Plateau	80			
P. A. S. Stein, Mahuki	100			
P. A. S. Stein, Horuhoru	640			
P. A. S. Stein, Bush Is.	100			
PIED SHAG			4	
LITTLE BLACK SHAG			2	
WHITE-THROATED SHAG			7	3
BLUE HERON			2	
BLACK SWAN		21	161	21
PARADISE DUCK			4	
GREY DUCK			4	
DUCK (Mallard/Grey cross)			1	
HARRIER		4	250	72
N. B. McKenzie, Pakowhai	6			
J. S. Watson, Maraekakaho	15			
PHEASANT			710	197
CALIFORNIAN QUAIL			22	
BANDED RAIL			4	
PUKEKO			2	
PIED OYSTER-CATCHER			1	
BANDED DOTTEREL		1	52	1
*H. R. McKenzie, Miranda	3			
NEW ZEALAND DOTTEREL			10	5
BAR-TAILED GODWIT			1	
PIED STILT			33	2
SOUTHERN SKUA			6	
BLACK-BACKED GULL		65	3358	173
J. M. Cunningham, Palliser Spit	24			
J. C. Davenport, Rangitoto Is.	528			
RED-BILLED GULL		35	706	124
BLACK-BILLED GULL		10	2688	42
W. C. Clark, Ashley R.	475			
CASPIAN TERN		3	357	3
M. A. Waller, Kaipara Heads	111			
H. G. Warburton, Kaipara Heads	1			
FAIRY TERN			1	
*Miss N. Macdonald, Mangawhai	1			
WHITE-FRONTED TERN		3	1846	60
J. C. Davenport, Kaipara Heads and Motutapu Is.	3			

# BIRDS RINGED AND RECOVERED – continued

Species, Operator and where ringed	Totals for 1955 - 6		Grand totals to 31/3/56	
	Ringed	Recov.	Ringed	Recov
KEA			7	
SHINING CUCKOO		1	1	1
LONG-TAILED CUCKOO			1	
NORTH ISLAND FANTAIL			19	3
GREY WARBLER			16	1
SONG THRUSH		10	163	26
*P. C. Bull and co-workers, Lower Hutt	30			
N. B. McKenzie, Pakowhai	3			
BLACKBIRD		52	664	124
*P. C. Bull and co-workers, Lower Hutt	120			
H. L. Secker, Karori	12			
*S. S. McDonnell, Khandallah	5			
HEDGESPARROW		2	57	5
P. C. Bull and co-workers, Lower Hutt	18			
WHITE-EYE			5448	189
R. D. Bell, Blenheim	26			
GREENFINCH			12	
GOLDFINCH			12	
N. B. McKenzie, Pakowhai	12			
CHAFFINCH			4	
YELLOWHAMMER			4	
HOUSE SPARROW			7	
STARLING		2	123	3
H. L. Secker, Karori	21			
WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE			1	1
MAGPIE SP.			1	1
KOKAKO			3	
Numbers Ringed and Recovered 1955 - 6	2717	270		
Numbers Ringed and Recovered to 31/3/55	18643	967		
Numbers Ringed and Recovered to 31/3/56	21360	1237	21360	1237

## NOTES ON 1955-6 RECOVERIES

### GANNET

A total of 25 Gannets ringed at Horuhoru were recovered in Australia during the year and a further 12 in New Zealand. The Australian recoveries were distributed as follows: Queensland 7, New South Wales 11, Victoria 5, South Australia 1, and Western Australia 1. The last of these constitutes a record for long-distance travel, the bird being recovered 30 miles north of Geraldton eight months after being ringed as a chick at Horuhoru. Two of the above 25 birds were in their second year, the rest being first-year birds. Except for one Horuhoru Gannet found dead in Tasman Bay, the 12 New Zealand recoveries were confined to the Hauraki Gulf and North Auckland coastline. Of these 12 birds, seven were recovered in their first year, one in its second, one in its third, and three in their fourth year.

Four Gannets ringed at Bush Island in January 1956 have been recovered already, two from New South Wales and two from New Zealand (Cape Palliser and Orewa). No. 28154, ringed at Mahuki, was recovered in Victoria, having travelled some 1700 miles within eight days of its estimated date of

leaving Mahuki. This is the fastest trans-Tasman crossing so far recorded.

At Cape Kidnappers 10 birds were recaptured for the first time at the breeding colony where they were reared three years (two birds) and five years (eight birds) earlier. (In addition, some Gannets included in last year's summary were again recaptured this year, but these are excluded from this summary.) Five Cape Kidnappers Gannets were recovered dead in New Zealand, three at Cape Kidnappers, one at Pukerua Bay and one near Dargaville; three of these birds were in their first year and two in their second. Finally four Cape Kidnappers Gannets were recovered in Australia, two first-year birds in Queensland and a first-year bird and a second-year bird in New South Wales.

#### BLACK SWAN

Of 161 Swan ringed at Lake Ellesmere in January 1955, 21 have been recovered so far, 20 from the vicinity of Lake Ellesmere and one from Parnassus in North Canterbury. One bird was caught and released again, the remainder were shot.

#### HARRIER

Four Harriers were recovered in Hawke's Bay within 10 miles of where they were ringed. One was recovered within a year of ringing, another in its second year and two in their fourth year from the date of ringing.

#### BANDED DOTTEREL

A young Dotterel ringed at Whakataki, near Castlepoint, was found dead at the same locality two days later.

#### BLACK-BACKED GULL

The 65 birds recovered during the year were ringed at Rangitoto (55), Baring Head (5) and Palliser Spit (5). All recoveries were of dead birds except for 15 of the Rangitoto ones, these 15 being identified by reading the ring numbers with binoculars. Ring No. 22911 was found inside a fish trawled in the northern Hauraki Gulf. Another Rangitoto bird was recovered at Whangaparaoa, a third at Tauranga and a fourth at Whatipu; all the others were found near Auckland city or suburbs.

Gulls from Palliser Spit were recovered at Lake Ferry (3), Karori and Wellington Harbour, while those from Baring Head were found at Karori, Wellington City (2), Lake Wairarapa and Spring Creek (Marlborough).

Most recoveries were of first-year birds, but 12 gulls were in their second year, five in their third and one in its fourth.

#### RED-BILLED GULL

Bird No. 9600 was ringed as a fledgling at White Rock, on the Wairarapa coast, in January 1953, and was recovered at Waiau Pa, Patumahoe, in August 1954.

The remaining Red-billed Gull recoveries were of birds ringed as fledglings at the Boulder Bank, Nelson, and subsequently identified in the vicinity of Port Nelson by reading the ring numbers with binoculars. Of these 34 gulls, 11 were in their first year of life, 19 in their second, two in their third and two in their fourth. Some additional birds were also identified under the same circumstances, but these were repeats of recoveries published in earlier reports and are therefore excluded from the present one.

#### BLACK-BILLED GULL

Ten Black-billed Gulls, originally ringed as fledglings on the Ashley River, were recovered during the year. Two of them were identified on the Avon River in Christchurch by reading the ring numbers with binoculars, but the other eight were recovered dead, four of them in Christchurch, one near Halkett, one near Fernside Station (Ashley River), one by the Waimakariri Bridge and one at the mouth of the Waitaki River. Two of these gulls were in their first year of life, three in their second, three in their third and two in their fourth.

#### CASPIAN TERN

Three Terns ringed as fledglings at South Kaipara Head were recovered during their first year of life at Manganui Bluff, Muriwai Beach and Miranda respectively.

### WHITE-FRONTED TERN

A bird ringed at the Waitaki River mouth was recovered on the North Spit, Dunedin, 14 months later; another ringed at Miranda was found dead at Papanawa Beach, Coromandel, two years afterwards, and finally a Tern ringed at the mouth of the Tutaekuri River was found dead at the Napier Breakwater nearly four years later.

### SHINING CUCKOO

An adult Cuckoo ringed in Auckland was caught by a cat the following day within a quarter of a mile of where the bird was released.

### SONG THRUSH

Ten Thrushes were recovered in the Hutt Valley. Six of these were retrapped at the place of ringing, another was recognised nearly a mile from the ringing station by its colour combination, and three were found dead, one a little over a mile from where it was ringed and the other two at lesser distances.

Seven of these birds were recovered within a year of ringing and the rest within two years. In addition to the above, some birds recorded in earlier reports as recovered by retrapping were again retrapped during 1955-6.

### BLACKBIRD

Of 46 Blackbirds recoveries in Lower Hutt, 17 were dead birds, 28 were of birds retrapped at the place of ringing and one was identified by its colour combination near where it was ringed. Most of the dead birds were found within a mile of where they were ringed, but two had exceeded previous records by moving two and three miles respectively.

Three birds were retrapped at the Karori ringing station and a fourth bird was found dead within 200 yards of it. A bird ringed at Mairangi Bay was caught by a cat at the ringing station, and another ringed at Khandallah was retrapped there.

The cause of death was usually unknown, but seven birds were brought in by cats, two were killed in rat traps and three were found dead on roads presumably after being hit by cars. Of the total recoveries 33 birds were in their first year since ringing, 10 in their second, six in their third, one in its fourth and two in their fifth year. In addition to the above there were further repeats by retrapping of birds included in earlier reports.

### HEDGESPARROW

Two birds were retrapped at the ringing station in Lower Hutt three months and 12 months respectively after ringing.

### STARLING

Two Starlings were recovered at or near the ringing station at Karori three months and three years respectively after the date of ringing. One of them was caught and released, the other was killed by a cat.

*Note:* While stocks last, copies of ringing reports for the last three years may be obtained from the convener.

## EXTRACT FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Last year I discussed the membership of the Society. This year I wish to mention the Regional Organizers. At the very beginning provision was made for the appointment of Regional Organizers in the several parts of the country. The wisdom of this early step has been amply proved by experience and the system has been amplified by making the country into more and smaller regions. If the ordinary member is 'Tommy Atkins', the R.O. is the sergeant-major — though a more sympathetic approach may be required of him in the O.S.N.Z. than in the Army.

In the Rules of the O.S.N.Z. there is a long list of suggested activities for the R.O. It is not expected that anyone could carry out all of these at once. He can do only what is permitted by local circumstance and pursue the objects which lie to his hand or for which he is particularly talented. Of course work in an urban area must differ from that of a far-flung country district. He must judge for himself what is required in the way of field work,

evening meetings, fostering of Society schemes and co-operation with other bodies.

Relationship with the Executive is not subservient but co-operative. The R.O. is entitled to expect help and encouragement from the various officers in his many duties and his problems. For his part he is expected to keep his records up to the time required and assist the Executive in every way open to him.

Of the members in his region the R.O. will expect willingness to help in all his responsibilities. One man cannot do all that is required in a region to make the Society successful in its aims and objects. It has to be remembered that he is usually kept quite busy making a living and carrying out other public functions so cannot make ornithology a full-time job. So please, member, go to him and ask for something to do. The R.O. will do his best to learn what the members like to do and will try to co-ordinate their efforts. He will seek active new members, especially in places not yet covered by observers, so that eventually the whole country will be under close study.

It seems that the R.O. needs to be patterned on the lines of the virtuous angel Gabriel, the patient Job, and the evangelistic Paul. This is a high aim, but our success depends upon its being attempted by ordinary men and women, so we wish 'all the best' to those who try.

## EXCURSION TO WAIKANAЕ

The excursion which takes place on the day following the Annual General Meeting is a significant social occasion in the Society's year. It is perhaps more important that our scattered members should have the opportunity of meeting one another and discussing at leisure mutual interests and problems than that a wide variety of birds should be on view. This year we went to Waikanae, where under most pleasant conditions in the motor camp we were able to take our time over morning tea and lunch, and at the same time some members were able to watch at close range species which they had never seen before.

The west coast of the province of Wellington is now a stronghold of the White-faced Heron, of which several were seen on the inlets beside the main road and later at Waikanae. Snugly hidden among the dunes, the Waikanae lagoon is a sanctuary; and as the last shots of the shooting season had not yet been fired, it was crowded with ducks. Pride of place must go to the Shovelers, a group of which contained at least 17 drakes. Some of these were of especial interest as they showed much more white on the breast than is normally seen. The Paradise Duck, a firmly established breeding species on this coast, was represented by several dark-plumaged birds and two white-headed adult females. Mallard and hybrids unfortunately outnumbered genuine Greys by a large margin. A Grey Teal which had been seen a few days before could not be found. Some Black Swans and a noisy albino Grey-lag completed the list of *anatidae*.

From the lagoon we moved to the estuary, with its terns (three species), gulls (three species), shags (two species), Pied Stilts and rather elusive Banded Dotterels. One of the features of this estuary in winter is its flock of Black-fronted Terns, which some of the visitors had to see closely, even if to do so necessitated wading the cold knee-deep river. Fortunately the tide was low and the birds were approachable as they rested in a compact group on the sand. Of thirty-four examined, thirty had the glossy caps and orange bills of adults and only four were in the much less striking plumage of young birds in their first winter. As a parting gesture a Reef Heron appeared and received honourable mention; for this species is now very much in a minority on this coast as compared with the aggressively adaptable White-faced Heron. Our beachcombers had no luck, although a few days before there had been a vast southward movement of Sooty Shearwaters through the strait.

Wellingtonians are inclined to be rather diffident about what the environs of their city have to offer to the visiting ornithologist. Those visitors who went on this excursion would assure them that there is no reason why they should be unduly modest about the birds of their coast. R.B.S.