

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,