

N.Z. BIRD NOTES

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CONTENTS.

Introduction.

Summarised Classified Notes.

INTRODUCTION.

While the main value of the Short Notes published each year continues to be record and reference value—a contribution to our knowledge of distribution and population density—there are a number of other items of more than ordinary interest. Attention may be drawn to records of rare vagrants. One of these, the Australian Wood Duck or Maned Goose, is recorded for the first time (two examples). Others such as the Spur-winged Plover, Royal Spoonbill, and Glossy Ibis are additions to existing records. The reports of arrival and approximate departure dates of the regular migrants are good material for analysis, especially in conjunction with such records as that of Pacific Godwits on passage in Fiji. Important contributions to the histories of single species are to be found in the notes on Blue-wattled Crows and on White Herons. The Reef Heron notes include an identification of the pure white phase, which should stimulate further exact determination of white heron-like birds seen. It is not at all unlikely that both the Royal Spoonbill and the white phase of the Reef Heron may sometimes inaccurately be reported as “White Herons.” A new habit record is the apparent flocking of Grey Warblers.

It is pleasing to notice that more and more attention is being given to careful records of the distribution and habits of imported birds. Their place as an integral and numerically strong part of the avifauna has too often been ignored by New Zealand ornithologists, and members are urged to include all available data on naturalised species in their annual contributions.

The editors are anxious to receive articles for publication in this bulletin. With our small and fixed number of pages it is a matter of some difficulty to arrange the contents unless there are a number of items of different lengths to select from. Short articles of half a page or a page in length are specially useful, and members are asked to bear this in mind when they make observations whose interest merits rather fuller treatment than inclusion in the annual short notes.