

the garden. (This happens about this date every year). Thrushes, blackbirds and tuis were the most notable chasers. From this date occasional songs of thrushes were heard daily morning and evening. (I.T.)

BLACKBIRD (*T. merula*).—Dunedin, Aug., 45, song heard daily at noon and eve, first daytime song, 14/8/45; building with mud, 16/1/45; last song, 11/1/46, but at Purakanui, Otago, 12/1/46; Dunedin, sub-songs, 19/2/46, and 1 and 3/3/46; much excited chasing 12/3/46, also later; males back on song perches, 5/4/46; Dunedin, 8/4/46, a tui which fed from the escallonia flowers near the site of last season's blackbird's nest was attacked repeatedly by a male blackbird. (I.T.) Two or three seen and heard in subalpine scrub near junction of Dart and Whitburn rivers, 26/2/46. (W.A.W.)

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Appear to be increasing throughout district, Wanganui to King Country. (W.P.M.) Very common on road to Te Awaite, East Coast, Wairarapa; more numerous beyond Martinborough, and along the coastline, where 56 were seen in one paddock c 5 acres, 22/12/45. A total of 80 was recorded on a 30-mile road. (J.M.C. and R.A.D.) Occasionally seen Dunedin suburbs and near Middlemarch. (I.T.)

DISTRIBUTION OF MYNA.—In New Zealand the myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) is a species of rather restricted distribution and accurate information is required of the precise localities where it is found. It is proposed to publish a distribution map shortly, and all members are requested to help by informing J. M. Cunningham, 39 Renall Street, Masterton, of the localities where this bird is found. Mention should be made as to whether the occurrences are regular or occasional and all records of birds on the limits of distribution in an area should be given. It is even more important to state areas where this bird is NOT found. Members are requested to send in the information before the end of January.

REVIEWS.

The Blackbird, by A. F. C. Hillstead. (Faber & Faber, 1945.)

The author's approach to many of the problems of bird behaviour lacks the very essential of a clear, unbiased, scientific attitude, and even calls in the aid of occult powers to explain certain of his woolly-minded theses. One is left with the impression that the main object of this book is not to contribute anything of importance to the study of this most interesting bird, but, rather to tilt at the tendency of some workers to over-emphasise the instinctive nature of bird behaviour without sufficient recognition of the variability in behaviour of individuals. This tendency and the anti-anthropomorphist are his pet aversions and most of the space in his book is occupied busily engaged knocking down these two "straw men." Altogether, in this most unsatisfying work on the blackbird it is surprising that the author finds so much to say about so few facts, although he claims a lifetime study of this bird.—L.G.

"Birds of the South West Pacific," by Ernst Mayr.

It is not often that there is published a book of direct concern to New Zealand ornithologists. Although New Zealand lies to the south of the area covered by this concise and authoritative handbook, it is inevitable that it should contain frequent mention of the birds of this