

aviary, to be delivered to the nest later either by himself or by the female. Some three weeks after the young left the nest the male became so pugnacious that the whole family had to be separated.

The keeping of native birds in captivity is illegal, and these birds were confiscated by the authorities and released. It is to be hoped that those responsible will bear in mind the important and so far uninvestigated question of the distribution of the different sub-species of birds throughout our group of islands, and make sure that if birds are released it is only done in the locality from which they came.

The pamphlet concludes with a discussion of the attitude of the Department of Internal Affairs towards the keeping of native birds in captivity, and the bearing of the whole matter on the broad question of the protection of birds in this country. The pamphlet is illustrated by two excellent photographs of robins taken by the author.

THE EMU.—Vol. xli., pt. 4, April, 1942

The latest number of the Emu, just received, contains one New Zealand paper, "Supplementary Notes on the Royal Albatross, Part II.", by L. E. Richdale, which gives further details of the author's study of the nesting colony of these birds on Otago Peninsular. Among several papers on Australian birds there are two of general interest which may be mentioned, "The usurpation of nests, nesting sites and materials" by N. Favalaro, and "Nest borrowing amongst birds," by P. A. Bourke. The subjects of these are indicated by their titles, and, though the examples given will be unfamiliar species to New Zealand ornithologists, perhaps similar behaviour will be noted in this country. Amongst the reviews is one of a paper by E. Mayr and D. Amadon on "*Demigretta sacra* (Gmelin)." Amer. Mus. Nov. No. 1144, Oct. 13th, 1941, with map. An appeal was made in the second annual report of this Society to members to send in notes on the Blue Heron in connection with this study by Dr. Mayr. This bird has a white phase as well as the dark one, but in S. Australia and New Zealand the birds are almost exclusively dark. There is a suggestion that the New Zealand population originated from S. Australia.

3.

INVESTIGATION OF THE BREEDING SEASON OF THE BLACKBIRD AND THE WHITE-EYE.

The object of this investigation is to collect accurate information about the breeding habits of these birds and especially to determine the effect of geographical position, that is to say of different lengths of day, upon the dates of breeding. Observations are therefore required from all parts of the country, especially from the extreme north and extreme south. Everyone will have some information even if only a few dates, so send in whatever you have no matter how scanty. Preliminary breeding activities have already begun, but much remains to be noted if members remember to look out for it and to note it down. Exact dates are required for early and late singing, fights (the sexes involved to be noted), nest building, egg laying, hatching and fledging of young. Also details of the number of eggs laid and hatched and of young fledged, and the number of nests built by the same pair. Please send in notes to Count Wodzicki, The Consulate General of Poland, Wellington or to Professor Marples, The Museum, Dunedin. Fuller information about the investigation will be gladly sent on request. We want as many reliable dates as possible, so please make notes and send them in.

WHITE HERONS IN THE OKARITO DISTRICT,

by R. A. FALLA.

In December, 1941, the writer was given an opportunity of accompanying the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Westland, and a representative of the Conservator of Forests, on a visit of inspection to the only known nesting area of the White Heron.