

Referring to the Pied Shag, *The Atlas of Bird Distribution in New Zealand* (Bull *et al.* 1985) states that "the few reports of this coastal species from far inland need confirmation because of possible confusion with the pied form of the Little Shag (*P. melanoleucos*)." As it happened, on this occasion the Pied Shag was accompanied by just such a bird, a pied form of the Little Shag, which gave me visual confirmation that I was seeing a Pied Shag. The Little Shag was an uncommon visitor to this farm dam, being seen only on rare occasions.

In this case, both birds looked somewhat storm battered and bewildered and stayed on the dam for two days before departing.

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REVIEW

World Birds, by Brian P. Martin. Guinness Books, Enfield. ISBN 0 85112 891 2. Price: 13 pounds. 1987.

World Birds is a compilation of information on avian records. The records are arranged in chapters that cover extinct birds, bird populations and distribution, anatomy, performance and endurance (flying, diving and longevity), breeding, feeding, and birds and man. Background information is included with most records, making the book enjoyable to read or to browse through. For example, the section on rare birds includes half a page on each of the Black Robin and the Kakapo, and two pages on the Californian Condor.

Many species of the New Zealand region are mentioned, with information on these species largely but not entirely accurate. For example, it is mentioned that the Kakapo has recently been rediscovered in north-west Nelson. The acknowledgments show that the author has consulted a wide range of professional ornithologists. The book does not contain references, and it is not possible to judge the accuracy of particular statements. Nonetheless, it may well be the best available source of information on the remarkable variety of birds and their capabilities. It is easy to read, is clear and includes an index of both species and subjects. The book is recommended for reference collections and for anyone interested in ornithology.

J.F. Cockrem