



OSNZ news

Edited by PAUL SAGAR, 38A Yardley Street, Christchurch 4,
for the members of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc.)

Please note that sightings recorded in this Newsletter are subject
to confirmation.

No. 19

June, 1981

**NOTE: Deadline for the September issue
will be 24 August.**

Treasurer's Report

During the year ending 31 December 1980 146 new members were admitted, 87 left by resignation and death and 52 were struck off as unfinancial. This left a net increase of 7, making the total membership 1327. The Society now has 1 honorary life, 81 life, 817 ordinary, 57 junior, 16 family, 123 corporate bodies and 116 husband and wife members, counting as two, to make the total of 1327.

The income for the year was \$24,495 which is \$8,124 more than last year. With the increase in the subscription rates which became effective from the beginning of the year the subscriptions increased by \$8,450. The profit on the sale of Christmas cards was \$2,757, a decrease of \$2,063. Although the number of cards sold was greater, the additional printing costs and postage reduced the profit. However, even though the amount is less the Society is again indebted to the Card Committee for their substantial contribution to the income for the year. Interest received from investments increased from \$2,334 to \$3,264 and \$760 of this was credited direct to the Projects Assistance Reserve Fund. A payment of \$1,500 was received from the Department of Internal Affairs as subsidy on the cost of production of articles in *Notornis* on Paradise Shelduck.

The year's expenses were \$23,088 which is an increase of \$6,042. Printing and distribution of *Notornis* increased by \$3,093 to \$16,874 and the cost of *OSNZ news* by \$185 to \$1,617. This is a total increase of \$3,278 for the year. Annual increases in printing and other costs have to be expected each year and this will have to be taken into account when fixing future subscription rates. The cost of the Amendments to the 1970 Checklist, which was distributed to members as a supplement to the June *Notornis* was \$1,524. Other expenditure, the cost of running the Society, increased from \$1,833 to \$3,179.

The surplus for the year was \$1,407, which may be considered satisfactory, but without the profit on the sale of Christmas cards a deficiency of \$1,350 would have resulted.

Sales of the Bird Distribution in N.Z. Atlas were \$114 and the Atlas Reserve now stands at \$411.

The Projects Assistance Reserve Fund totals \$12,743. Details of receipts and payments are shown in the notes to the accounts.

At the time of the balance sheet \$100 had been received as donations to the Robert Falla Memorial Appeal. To date a further \$390 has been received making the total now in hand \$490.

H. W. M. HOGG, *Honorary Treasurer*

Donations 1980

The Society gratefully acknowledges the following donations of \$1.00 or more received during the year.

L. S. Rickard \$3 and \$8; D. Blair \$2; P. Warren \$12; Mr & Mrs A. B. Cochran \$2; Mrs L. Collingwood \$3; J. Clark \$8; Mrs V. L. Roberts \$10; Dr G. I. Nicholson \$5; C. H. Parkin \$10; Mrs H. S. Newton \$10; Miss A. M. Murie \$10; K. J. Taylor \$3; Mr & Mrs K. J. Fisher \$2; R. Jackson \$10; S. R. Emmens \$8; Mrs E. Spragg \$3; Mrs M. Divers \$3; Maui Tours of N.Z. \$30; R. G. Mueller \$18; Dr E. J. Kirk \$10; Mrs P. A. Howlett \$5; E. Bodley \$4; K. E. Butler \$2; C. S. Lauder \$8; R. Cometti \$5; C. J. Foreman \$3; F. W. Loetscher \$52; S. N. Adamson \$4; D. M. Cunningham \$3; C. Mayhew \$3; Mrs S. Burton \$2; H. Wolk \$8; A. B. Coster \$8; Dr R. F. Smith \$4; Mrs E. M. Hannah \$3; P. Penna \$5; A. H. Grootegood \$2; R. Silvester \$3; G. I. Hunt \$10; Miss J. Pressland \$5; N. D. Tanner \$3; I. Southey \$14; P. McD. McLean \$10; Dr H. Grossman \$3.

Nest Record Scheme

Report for the year ending 30 April 1981

There are now 14,279 Nest Record Cards covering 150 species.

This year 69 members contributed 886 cards covering 71 species.

Two major contributions to the scheme were received from Hugh Robertson, who completed 161 cards of 13 species and from Elspeth Waghorn who contributed 158 cards on the Australasian Gannet. Colin O'Donnell of Christchurch continues to provide a large number of cards to the scheme and this year has contributed 107 cards covering 32 species.

Other significant contributions were received from D. Baker-Gabb (14); J. A. Cowie (48); S. Grant (10); J. R. Hastie (14); J. R. Jackson (15); M. Lane (13); T. G. Lovegrove (88); C.R. Lusk (14); J. R. Lusk (66); G. M. H. Peterson (21); P. M. Sagar (16).

Twenty-four colonial cards were received covering the following twelve species: Little Blue Penguin, Australasian Gannet, Black Shag, Little Shag, Spotted Shag, Black-backed Gull, Red-billed Gull, Black-billed Gull, Black-fronted Tern, Caspian Tern, White-fronted Tern, House Sparrow.

The Nest Record Scheme provides an ideal opportunity for individual members to contribute valuable information to a permanent store of facts that are available at any time to members and research workers. Cards of many species have been used by authors preparing for the forthcoming Reader's Digest Book of New Zealand Birds.

My sincere thanks to all contributors to the scheme and to those who have encouraged members to take part, and to my wife Ruth, whose assistance has been most valuable.

DAVID E. CROCKETT, *Convener, Nest Record Scheme*

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List of Contributors

J. Ackley, P. Anderson, D. Baker, D. Baker-Gabb, L. Barea, M. A. Barnes, D. J. Bettesworth, K. R. Bond, B. Brown, R. S. Cowan, J. A. Cowie, M. T. Craven, T. Crocker, B. Elliot, P. Fooks, A. R. Giblin, A. F. Gordon, A. H. Gordon, M. Grant, S. Grant, T. Habreken, M. Hansby, T. Harrington, J. R. Hastie, J. M. Hawkins, B. D. Heather, J. R.

Jackson, P. Jansen, P. Jenkins, T. P. Jones, C. Jowett, M. Lane, D. A. Lawrie, J. Lloyd, T. G. Lovegrove, C. H. Lusk, J. R. Lusk, A. D. Martin, K. F. Miller, P. J. Miller, J. Mills, G. Moon, A. Munn, I. A. Nicholson, C. O'Donnell, H. O'Donnell, G. M. H. Peterson, M. H. Powlesland, R. G. Powlesland, M. R. Quinn, S. M. Reed, H. A. Robertson, N. Rothwell, P. M. Sagar, A. C. Saxby, B. Searle, B. Seddon, J. Seddon, S. C. Sparrow, R. Spranger, J. G. Staniland, R. R. Sutton, R. N. Thomas, K. V. Todd, C. R. Veitch, E. J. Waghorn, J. P. Whittle, P. Wilson.

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List of Contributions

Great Spotted Kiwi (1), Southern Crested Grebe (3), Dabchick (11), Little Blue Penguin (10), Gannet (159), Black Shag (2), Little Shag (1), Spotted Shag (2), White-faced Heron (4), Black Swan (4), Paradise Duck (6), Grey Duck (4), Mallard (11), Harrier (16), N.Z. Falcon (2), Californian Quail (1), Pukeko (8), Australian Coot (5), SIPO (1), Variable Oystercatcher (7), Chatham Island Oystercatcher (4), Black Oystercatcher (6), Spur-winged Plover (10), Banded Dotterel (13), N.Z. Dotterel (17), Black-fronted Dotterel (2), Shore Plover (21), Wrybill (1), Pied Stilt (20), Southern Skua (27), Black-backed Gull (14), Red-billed Gull (2), Black-billed Gull (2), Black-fronted Tern (21), Caspian Tern (9), Fairy Tern (1), White-fronted Tern (2), N.Z. Pigeon (1), Rock Pigeon (2), Kea (13), Morepork (1), Little Owl (2), Kingfisher (12), S.I. Rifleman (3), N.I. Rifleman (1), Skylark (3), Welcome Swallow (76), S.I. Fantail (3), N.I. Fantail (3), Chatham Island Tomtit (3), N.I. Fernbird (2), Whitehead (1), Grey Warbler (2), Song Thrush (34), Blackbird (40), Hedge Sparrow (7), Bellbird (4), Tui (4), Silvereye (14), Greenfinch (3), Goldfinch (16), Redpoll (1), Chaffinch (5), Yellowhammer (1), Cirl Bunting (1), House Sparrow (14), Starling (108), Myna (4), White-backed Magpie (7), Magpie species (2), N.I. Saddleback (33).

Bird Mapping Scheme

The main activity during the past year has been the coding for the computer of data from 9,000 cards received between December 1976 (the deadline for cards to be included in the Provisional Atlas) and December 1979 (when the data-collecting phase of the bird mapping scheme officially ended). The mammoth task of coding and checking these cards was completed in the Nelson office of Ecology Division under the watchful eye of Peter Gaze.

The next step, which is being handled by Chris Robertson of the Wildlife Service, is to get the coded data into the computer and then, after some necessary modifications to the computer programme to cope with the much larger number of records, to start the production of maps. This task has to be fitted in with others (including some of higher priority) to which the Wildlife Service and the computer staff are committed, and no firm date of completion is yet available. Hopefully it will be before the end of the year.

The lack of adequate money to print a definitive atlas is a continuing worry. Preliminary inquiries indicate that we may expect some limited help from industry and perhaps elsewhere. However, firm commitments are unlikely until we can show samples of what the final maps will look like, and provide better estimates of costs and dates of production than those at present available. Chris Robertson is currently working on these and related matters.

In the meantime, if anyone still has any bird lists compiled and not yet sent in, would they please post them urgently to Peter Gaze (Ecology Division, D.S.I.R., Private Bag, Nelson). Although Peter no longer has anyone to help him with the work, he has offered to code any late cards himself, particularly cards from squares not well represented in the records. Cards received after the coded data have been sent to the computer for map making (hopefully within the next month or so) will be too late to be used in the Definitive Atlas, so please hurry along with any cards you may still have in your possession.

P. C. BULL, *Convener, Atlas Committee*

Library Report

This year borrowing was slightly down on the previous year. However, this has been offset by the success of the journal circulation scheme, which has been in operation since December 1980. At present 23 journals are being sent out to 28 members, who have been most appreciative of the scheme.

An exchange has been opened with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Britain) and we are now receiving their journal *Birds*.

Once again our members have donated valuable material to the library, these include H. R. McKenzie, R. S. Slack, J. Staniland, P. E. Roberts, R. Thomas and W. H. Way.

Barrie Heather provided great help in setting up the journal circulation scheme and Sylvia Reed has found time to write brief reviews of relevant papers from

overseas journals for *OSNZ news*, a valuable service to members.

Our very great thanks to the Director and Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum for continuing to allow us shelving space, and to Mr Thwaites and his staff for their friendly help.

A. J. GOODWIN, *Honorary Librarian*

Card Committee Report

The general popularity of the Fantail, so beautifully painted for this year's card by Mrs Janet Marshall, has boosted our sales of cards for the year and on behalf of the Society I extend to her our thanks.

A total of 7,400 packs of cards were sold during the year, realising over \$12,000 of which \$950 was received by way of the 50c levy per order introduced last year for postage and handling. Expenditure by way of printing the cards and brochures, stationery and postage etc., exceeded \$9,300 thus gaining a profit of \$2,700 for the Society's funds.

A large stock of Fantail cards is still on hand for inclusion in future mixed packs but supplies of most other species have dwindled. During 1981 we shall present two new designs painted by Mrs Janet Marshall. They will feature the Kingfisher and the Welcome Swallow and by way of a change of format, the inside of the card will be left blank.

The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and our Wellington members are thanked for addressing and distributing the brochures as also are those Auckland members who readily assisted with the packing of the cards. A special vote of thanks must go to Betty and Mary Bush who did all the packing and posting of almost 2,000 orders that were received and processed.

R. N. THOMAS, *Convener, Card Committee*

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BRUCE KEELEY reports that he has found an area on the outskirts of Gisborne which is apparently favoured by Cirl Buntings. A possible flock of 13 was seen on 16/3/81 and while only some were definitely identified, the consistent behaviour of the flock indicated they were all of that species. On 15/5/81 two birds were seen in flight and later a male began singing from the top of a *Cassinia* shrub.

This area is a seaward slope of open grass mixed with *Cassinia*/Boxthorn scrub. This, incidentally, is the only habitat near Gisborne where Dunnocks appear to be established. They are notably absent from suburban gardens, unlike Hastings, Christchurch and Timaru.

Band and Tag

The Banding Office has now settled into its new accommodation in Borthwick House on The Terrace, Wellington. Furniture and records were shifted in late January and all the band stocks and archives over Easter weekend. This is the first time that everything has been together in the one unit and this will help improve efficiency. Hopefully there will be no more moving during the next few years, after a total of 12 shifts of all or part of the Banding Office since 1967. If in Wellington please call in and make yourself known to the staff.

The provisional banding total for the 1980-81 banding year was 17,767 birds banded of 98 species or subspecies. New species banded were: Stewart Island Kiwi, Chatham Island Fulmar Prion, Curlew Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint and Stitchbird.

There are now 217 species or subspecies recorded in the banding list out of a total of 305 recorded in the N.Z. Checklist.

By the time this note is published the Banding Office will have available for distribution a report giving banding totals for all species. This will bring up to date data added since the last published report for the 1973-74 season. The whole report will not be published in *Notornis*, but is available to any person by writing to: Banding Office Report, Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington. The Banding Office staff are running a sweep on the number of copies to be 'sold'.

Recoveries will not be available in the same form for some time yet. OSNZ Council was asked by the Wildlife Service to indicate a priority between the reactivation of computer systems for either the Banding Scheme or the Bird Mapping Scheme. Present staff levels will not make it possible to do both at once. It is understood that Council have expressed a preference for the Bird Mapping Scheme to be completed first.

New Banding Permits — in spite of what was thought to be a clearly explanatory circular in February a number of people have become confused.

(a) In spite of rumours it is not a plot to cut down on the amount of banding.

(b) It is designed to make operators re-evaluate their existing projects and to provide up to date information on what they are doing so that the new Banding Officer can deal with matters in a more informed manner.

(c) It is designed to tell us what band stocks we need to have on hand to fulfill

orders. People who are not prepared to give any estimate of numbers, however vague, cannot expect to have materials reserved for their use.

(d) It is designed to make the permit system more flexible so that all permits do not have to be renewed at once. New permits will be issued from late July onwards.

(e) Please let there be no misunderstanding. In future *no* colour banding scheme will operate without specific approval of the method and system to be used. This method is to be a condition attached to the issue of the banding permit. Also only those species specified on the permit may be banded. Some banders have tended to abuse their privileges in recent years.

(f) The first parts of the banding manual will be issued with the new permits.

Banding Mail Bag

Remember the recovery of a banded tree we reported previously (*OSNZ news* 16)? Another one turned up recently.

Band number 13-08783 was attached to a *Budleya davidii* in May 1972 by Ecology Division staff. The site was 500m up the Green Stream in the Orongorongo Valley. The last live recovery was in August 1974 and, as far as knowledge goes, the tree was washed away after torrential rains in December 1975. A branch with the band attached was found on 22 January 1981 on the Wainuiomata coast. It had travelled 5 km. Not bad for a tree, is it?

D-51438 New Zealand Dotterel. Reported earlier (*OSNZ news* 17) as over 28 years old broke its own record. It was sighted alive and well at Seagrove 29 years and nine months after banding. E-128852 Red-billed Gull. Banded as a pullus on 22/11/78 at the Kaikoura colonies, the bird was found dead on 9/1/81 on the shore of Maungamaungaroa Estuary, Whitford, Auckland. 640 km from 'home' in a straight line.

R-38529 Southern Royal Albatross. Banded as a chick on 22/11/80 at Campbell Island. The bird was found dead on 11/3/81 on Volunteer Beach, East Falkland Island (51°30'S - 57°50'E). M-14714 Buller's Mollymawk. Banded as an adult of unknown age on 24/1/67 at the Snares Islands. On 26/3/81 the bird was trapped in the trawling gear of a fishing vessel and subsequently died. The boat was operating 6 nautical miles off the Canterbury coast, near the Rakaia Rivermouth.

9-15225 Giant Petrel. Banded as a chick by South African researchers on Marion Island (46°53'S - 37°52'E). The bird was found dead just north of the

Manawatu Rivermouth, about five months after banding. During this time it travelled at least 9457 km.

C-31629 Knot. Banded as an adult on 17/8/80 at Taramaire, Firth of Thames. Crashed against the light tower of Sandy Cape Lightstation, Maryborough, Queensland, on 31/3/81.

Sighted at Miranda on 28/1/81, two Curlew Sandpipers with bright-red leg streamers. These birds are two out of a total of four that were banded and fitted with streamers on 1/1/81 at Miranda by the Miranda Naturalists' Trust. It is an experimental form of marking, which provides easy sighting of the birds. Hopefully it will be of help to determine migration patterns, feeding range etc.

Early in April a banded Cattle Egret was spotted near Aparima, Southland, for several days. Although some people tried to read the band with binoculars, nobody succeeded. The bird was obviously a visitor from Australia.

C. J. R. ROBERTSON and R. COSSEE

A low down thrush and a quail tale

A Song Thrush's deafening dawn serenade marked our first few days at Opoutere this summer. He was above our heads on the tent pole. Fortunately this did not continue and in fact once the bird adjusted to our presence he sang mainly on, or near, the ground. Frequently he took time off from feeding to sing wherever he found himself. Loud song near the kitchen window baffled me for days until at last I saw a bright eye watching me from beneath the parked trailer. This remained a favourite singing place during the remainder of our stay. His mate was incubating three eggs and he seemed inattentive, spending long periods sunning himself and even chasing her away from his favourite sunning place. The nest was later found to be empty, cause unknown.

The parked trailer had other users. During rain we noticed a hitherto unseen clod on the lawn. On looking closer we found that it was a sopping wet California Quail covering seven stripy chicks. They fed in short bursts and came obediently when called for warmth and shelter. The rain worsened and the chicks were hustled under the trailer. They stayed for half an hour or more with quiet spells and calls and movement alternating. Finally, the parent judged conditions suitable to remove her family to thicker cover in late afternoon.

BETH BROWN

New Australian Bird Journal

Bird Behaviour is an international and interdisciplinary journal which publishes original research on descriptive and quantitative analyses of behaviour, behavioural ecology, experimental psychology and behavioural physiology of birds. A major aim of the journal is to improve communication among all students of bird behaviour. To this purpose the editors strongly promote the publication of experimental papers and review articles that bridge the separate fields of behaviour. The Journal also welcomes full-length articles on specific topics and welcomes short communications, critiques of books and papers, abstracts of meetings, relevant computer programmes, research proposals and short reviews of limited areas of research.

The Journal is published three times a year (April, August and December). Subscription fees are A\$30.00 for institutions, A\$15.00 for private subscribers and A\$10.00 for students. Enquiries should be sent to Editors, *Bird Behaviour*, Department of Behavioural Biology, Research School of Biological Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

Conferences

The first information newsletter of the 18th IOC, to be held in Moscow from 16-25 August 1982, has been received. This newsletter outlines the spring and autumn excursions planned around the congress.

The itineraries of the excursions have been arranged so as to enable participants to see a wide diversity of habitats, conservation programmes and ornithological research. Special attention will be paid to rare or little-studied species.

Working Group on Granivorous Birds — INTECOL. The Third International Congress of Ecology will be held in Warsaw, 5-11 September 1982 and a special symposium on 'Granivorous Birds' will be incorporated in the programme. 'The role of granivorous birds, especially Corvidae and Columbidae' is suggested as a theme of the symposium. The theme will include the problems of population dynamics, biomass and production rates, energetics, impact of granivorous birds in ecosystems and management of pest situations. Contributions to the symposium should be with the organisers by the end of 1981.

All correspondence and requests for further information should be sent to: Prof. dr Jan Pinowski, Institute of Ecology PAN, Dziekanow Lesny, 05-150 Lomianki, Poland.

Crested Grebes in Fiordland

Having found seven Crested Grebes on Island Lake during December 1980 we decided to return to the lake and check for any juveniles.

On 25 March we found two young, each about two-thirds grown and still partly downy. Each was accompanied by a parent bird and they frequented different areas of the lake, suggesting two family groups. Three other adult grebes were also present at this time.

On 9 May we checked the area between the Control Gates and Upukerora Rivermouth on Lake Te Anau and found two separate juveniles each accompanied by a parent bird, two independent juveniles in different locations and a single adult. Farther north on 10 May, we found another juvenile at Pleasant Bay, but no birds at either Te Anau Downs or the Eglinton Rivermouth, where our search ended.

These results are very encouraging as no young were in evidence on Lake Te Anau last season. We plan to check parts of Lake Manapouri soon.

KIM & JENNY MORRISON

North Canterbury bird report

Autumn 1981 continued to provide sightings of considerable interest, both in the estuaries north of Banks Peninsula and on the *Salicornia* flats on the inland side of Lake Ellesmere.

Shortly after the discovery of the Eastern Curlew at Brooklands Lagoon, a pair, one slightly larger than the other, appeared in the Saltwater Creek area of the Ashley Rivermouth and stayed for some weeks until disturbed by duckshooters in mid-April. On 17/4/81 the high tide roost in the Ashley was visited by a small aggressive curlew, scarcely any larger than the resident Asiatic Whimbrel. This bird had a high crown, much longer legs and bill than the whimbrel and with much warmer colouration. The legs were lighter grey and the bill not as heavy as that of an Eastern Curlew which was also present. The bird commenced its visit by clearing some 43 White-fronted Terns from the roost, then made a series of lunges at some of the nearer Bar-tailed Godwits, which took little notice, before settling down.

An examination of some reasonable colour slides taken at that time allow quite an accurate estimate of the bird's size and show the lighter, warmer colouration. We suggest that it may have been an American Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*).

An albino Bar-tailed Godwit has been

seen a number of times in places as far apart as the Heathcote-Avon Estuary in the south and the Ashley Rivermouth in the north. This bird has served as well as any banded bird to show the amount of commuting done by godwits wintering over.

The Large Sand Dotterel appears settled to winter over at the Ashley. It has developed black patches below its collar markings but no other plumage changes have been noted.

The large numbers of Red-necked Stints and Curlew Sandpipers reported earlier at Lake Ellesmere (*OSNZ news* 18) coloured up during April and provided excellent opportunities to see these waders in transition and then breeding plumage before the majority left at the end of the month. 34 Red-necked Stints, 4 Curlew Sandpipers and 15 Wrybills were still present on 10 May. However, most of these birds have since departed, leaving only 5 Red-necked Stints, 2 Curlew Sandpipers and 6 Wrybills on 31 May.

Some 800+ Banded Dotterels remain at Lake Ellesmere and when disturbed these birds fly about in flocks, wheeling and twisting at high speed, exactly as the Wrybill is described as doing at Miranda.

Finally, two Black Stilts, one in first adult plumage and the other a first cross hybrid, were seen at Lake Ellesmere during April. Also present then was a Little Tern, seen attempting to displace roosting Black-fronted Terns from posts in the lake.

PHIL HOWELL & KATHLEEN HARRISON

Large concentration of Harriers

From a bus window during a trip from Invercargill to Waipapa Point Lighthouse on 26/4/81 I noticed an unusually large number of Harriers drifting along into a head wind. While standing on a sandhill near the lighthouse, I had no trouble in counting 30 Harriers cruising along near the coastline just above the sandhills and quite a number out over the sea. As we were leaving Harriers could still be seen coming from the same direction. This is the largest concentration of these birds that I have seen anywhere.

Other birds seen around the lighthouse included 14 Welcome Swallows, a good number of Spur-winged Plovers and 8 Black Oystercatchers in with two small flocks of SIPOs feeding in paddocks.

MERVYN JUKES

New Australian Field Guide

Copies of the new one-volume *Field guide to the birds of Australia* by Graham Pizzey are available from Dr P. C. Harper, Department of Extension Studies, University of Canterbury, Private Bag, Christchurch. Price \$31.50 plus postage.

Falla Memorial Award

At its meeting on 22 May 1981 Council decided that the following details shall apply to the Falla Memorial Award.

The two basic requirements shall be:
(1) Valuable contributions to the study of birds in New Zealand or the Southern Ocean and (2) Sustained service to the OSNZ.

The Award shall be in the form of a book token together with a bookplate.

Preferably the Award shall be made annually. At its meeting in May the Council shall decide, perhaps from a list of nominees, the winner for the preceding year.

The decision shall be entirely with Council of the OSNZ and it does not have to be unanimous. Nominations shall be in the hands of the Hon. Secretary by 30 April. Nominations must be signed by at least two members of OSNZ and shall state clearly the claims of the nominee on a national scale, together with a brief ornithological vitae. Nominations may remain valid for three years.

New Sound Catalogue

Sound Catalogue No. 2 by L. B. McPherson reports tapes held in his natural history sound library. These are predominantly bird recordings but also include mammal, amphibia, reptile and insect sounds.

Copies of the catalogue are available from L. B. McPherson, P.O. Box 21083, Edgware, Christchurch. Price \$1.50.

Birds in hook sedge

While hunting in the Waimana Valley, Urewera National Park, in January 1977 WILLIE SHAW found an adult Kokako with one wing completely entangled in the seed heads of a hook sedge, from which it was unable to escape. While he held the bird to disentangle the wing it pecked his hand and uttered loud screeching alarm calls. These calls attracted a number of Tuis which were very excited and repeatedly dive-bombed him until the Kokako was released into a nearby tree.

MIKE TARBURTON also reports a bird caught in hook sedge. This was a juvenile Song Thrush found in Kowhai

Bush, near Kaikoura. The sedge bound one of the bird's wings securely and although it was alive and well the bird must have been imprisoned for some days if the cleared ground and faecal deposits were any indication. The parents were nearby and came when it called. This, plus the good condition and full crop of the juvenile, indicated that it was still being fed. The wing feathers were badly damaged but the bones were sound and the bird made off through the ground cover upon release.

Colour-banded waders

Some new information has just arrived on colour banding of waders overseas.

At Newcastle, north of Sydney, Fred van Gessel is putting colour bands on the right tibia (above the knee) of Bar-tailed Godwits as follows: red for 1980/81, yellow for 1981/82 and dark blue for 1982/83. The metal band will be on the right tarsus.

I will be meeting Fred in mid-May and will obtain further details then.

In Japan between February 1977 and January 1980 Bar-tailed Godwits and Knots were banded as follows: left tarsus green, right tarsus metal or left tibia green, right tibia metal (13 godwits, 0 Knots); left tarsus metal, right tarsus green (2 godwits, 2 Knots); left tarsus green, right tarsus white over metal (36 godwits, 5 Knots).

Wader banding at Miranda has not gone as hoped. Godwits are proving to be very cunning and during summer the Knots are usually associated with them.

RICHARD VEITCH

South Indian Ocean voyage

In November 1980 I was invited to participate in an oceanographic mission to the South Indian Ocean on board the French research ship Marion-Dufresne. This cruise was part of an international programme (11 participating nations) organised by the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR). The first expeditions were made in the austral summer of 1980/81 to estimate the abundance and distribution of the Antarctic Krill, and of the total planktonic biomass in the South Atlantic and Southwest Indian Oceans.

The South Indian Ocean and the French islands of Kerguelen and Crozet are of great interest to New Zealand ornithologists because many of the oceanic seabirds which breed there disperse into the Southwest Pacific in winter, sometimes occurring in New Zealand waters in large numbers. However,

no New Zealand ornithologist has visited this area for over 50 years, since the BANZARE Expedition on which the late Sir Robert Falla was ornithologist.

In addition to the general opportunity that this mission gave to visit the area and the islands of Kerguelen and Crozet, this particular voyage provided an opportunity to correlate patterns of seabird distribution and abundance with environmental factors.

The *Marion-Dufresne* left La Reunion on 25 January and cruised south, making scheduled stops at Kerguelen (2 February) and Crozet (7 & 28 February) before returning to La Reunion on 5 March.

In all, 52 seabird species were recorded, including several not previously seen in the South Indian Ocean, and one particularly rare species, *Pterodroma atterrima*. At-sea observations indicated the existence of a new subspecies of the Sooty Albatross.

A preliminary analysis allowed the definition of seven distinct latitudinal seabird faunas between 20°S and 65°S, excluding assemblages associated with bathymetric features and/or breeding sites. Little agreement between the distribution of seabird species and the major oceanographic features could be found, and it was clear that the situation in the Southwest Indian Ocean is much more complex than has been previously supposed.

An important finding was that the Antarctic Convergence does not form an important boundary for seabirds in this area. This result is in sharp contrast to previous studies.

Preliminary work suggests that there is no close correlation in this area between the distribution and abundance of oceanic birds and the abundance of zooplankton, including krill.

Full results of this voyage, plus the results of four previous voyages in the region, will be prepared in a joint paper with two French ornithologists.

J. A. BARTLE

Bird slides required

Rigby International are currently preparing a N.Z. natural history publication and hope that OSNZ members may be able to assist with colour transparencies of the following species: Little Spotted Kiwi, Cook's Petrel, Reef Heron, Kakapo, Long-tailed Cuckoo and Stewart Island Bushwren.

For further information contact the editor, M. Jungowska, Stanbeth House, 26 Customs St East, P.O. Box 3051, Auckland 1.

New Beach Patrol Scheme Organiser

Members are advised that Richard Veitch has retired as Beach Patrol Scheme Organiser and Ralph Powlesland, Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington, has been appointed to the position.

New Regional Representatives

Two new Regional Representatives were appointed by Council at its meeting in May. John Innis replaces Ray Jackson in Volcanic Plateau and David Medway replaces Ron Lambert in Taranaki. There was also a boundary change approved, with Wanganui being incorporated into Manawatu and becoming the responsibility of Dr L. J. Davies.

Classified Summarised Notes

Members are reminded that the CSN year closes on 30 June and observations made up to that date should be sent to the Recorder as soon as possible for inclusion in the report for the 1980/81 year.

DOUG. BOOTH

Publications

The foraging of New Zealand honeyeaters. John L. Craig, Anne M. Stewart and Murray E. Douglas. New Zealand Journal of Zoology 8: 87-91. 1981.

The effects of factors such as body size, dominance status, movement, and time of year on the diet of New Zealand's three honeyeater species are outlined, and predictions of differences between species and sexes are made. A brief comparison of foraging in relation to flora is made between New Zealand and Australian species.

Food of house sparrows and greenfinches in a mixed farming district, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. B. W. H. Mac-Millan. New Zealand Journal of Zoology 8: 93-104. 1981. House sparrow diet was 31% wheat and 23% maize, with weed seeds making up most of the remainder. The corresponding greenfinch diet was 27% maize and 12% fodder radish, with weed seeds making up the balance. Adults of both species took a few arthropods, particularly during the breeding season. Adult house sparrows fed arthropods to their nestlings particularly in the first 10 days after hatching. Older nestlings were fed an increasing percentage of vegetable matter. By contrast insects were rare in greenfinch nestling diet, where weed seeds predominated.

The Little Penguin Eudyptula in Victoria, II: Breeding. P. N. Reilly and J. M. Cullen. Emu 81: 1-19. Little Penguins were studied at Phillip Island, Victoria, on weekly and, later monthly visits during 11 years. This paper discusses breeding numbers, timing of breeding, breeding success, pair bond and various other points. There were some marked differences between the breeding of the species at Phillip Island and in Tasmania.

Migration by Hutton's Shearwaters. S. A. Halse. Emu 81: 42-44. Observations of large flocks of Hutton's Shearwaters were made off the West Australia coast and two specimens were collected during August 1978 and 1979. The timing and date of collection of other Australian specimens is discussed.

Does Hutton's Shearwater circumnavigate Australia? John Warham. Emu 81: 44. Halse's report, taken in conjunction with other recent sightings round Australia suggests that part of the population of this shearwater may circumnavigate Australia in a counter-clockwise direction. This note draws attention to the possibility that the pre-breeding part of the population may circumnavigate Australia but there is a need for further sightings, specimens and even nil reports from the seas off northern Australia.

Food, feeding ecology and ecological segregation of seabirds at South Georgia. J. P. Croxall and P. A. Prince. Biological Journal of the Linnean Society 14: 103-131. 1980. At the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia 25 of the 29 breeding species are seabirds. 15 of these have been studied in some detail. By examining the timing of their breeding seasons and their diet and feeding ecology (especially feeding techniques and foraging ranges), the nature of their ecological isolating mechanisms, and in particular the way in which they partition the resources of the marine environment are reviewed.

The New Zealand flea fauna. R. L. C. Pilgrim. Proceedings of the International Conference on Fleas, Peterborough, U.K., 21-25 June 1977. pp. 173-184. The N.Z. bird fauna is unusual and there are very few native mammals. This is reflected in the flea fauna, in which the endemic bird fleas outnumber the endemic mammal fleas by 19:1. There is one introduced bird flea, which presumably arrived with domestic poultry. The native species are almost entirely confined to ground-nesting or flightless or poorly-flying birds.

The foods of Great and Sooty Shearwaters Puffinus gravis and P. griseus in eastern Canadian waters. R. G. B. Brown, S. P. Barker, D. E. Gaskin and M. R. Sandeman. Ibis 123: 19-30. 1981. The foods of Great and Sooty Shearwaters are described from birds collected off eastern Canada. There was a broad overlap in diet but Great Shearwaters tended to take more squid and tough-bodied fish, while Sooties take more euphausiids and soft-bodied fish. These differences are apparently related to differences in bill structure and in the degree of adaptation to swimming underwater.

The social behaviour of the Dunnock Prunella modularis. M. E. Birkhead. Ibis 123: 75-84. 1981. Observations were carried out on a colour-banded population of Dunnocks. During the winter regular feeding groups formed, with hierarchies being weight-related. Three categories of breeding territory were established: solitary males, male-female pairs and pairs plus a male helper. Pairs plus a helper had larger territories than pairs alone; however, pairs raised significantly more young.

Wildlife — A Review 1980 contains articles of general conservation interest. These include: Little Spotted Kiwi by J. N. Jolly; Whangamarino Swamp Hunter Survey by J. Cheyne; Some Demographic Characteristics of New Zealand's Black Swan by Dr M. J. Williams; Recent Kakapo Research on Stewart Island by H. A. Best; Harrier Studies at Pukepuke Lagoon by D. Baker-Gabb and H. A. Robertson; and Feral Cats on Little Barrier Island by C. R. Veitch.

Once again this publication provides a valuable and interesting review of the work of the Wildlife Service.

PAUL SAGAR

Summer Field Study Course

Members are advised that a Field Study Course is planned for the Mt. Ruapehu area this summer; tentative dates are 10-16 January 1982.

The main aims of the course will be to survey waterfowl on the new hydro lakes in the area, complete a bush bird survey and examine the numbers and distribution of Blue Ducks. Little is known about the birds of this area so the challenge of the unknown should make an exciting week.

Full details will be announced in the September issue.

Organiser: Dr L. J. Davies, 390A Botanical Road, Palmerston North.

Moult Recording Scheme

Moult is an important phase in the annual cycle of birds. It is a period of physiological demands and consequently may affect their movements, behaviour and even survival.

The moulting patterns of New Zealand birds are generally not well known though a few individual studies have been carried out (e.g. Gannet, Weka and House Sparrow). With a high proportion of endemic species study in this area seems desirable. There is an interesting opportunity to compare moult (i) across a gradient of flying to non-flying forms; and (ii) between closely-related forms. A critical study of plumage and moult may also clarify methods of ageing and sexing New Zealand birds.

Moult examinations generally do not attempt to record in detail the moulting sequence of the total plumage, but focus on key areas such as the major flight feathers and tail feathers. From such information the following types of questions can be raised:

- (1) How often does a species moult, and how extensive is the moult at such times?
- (2) Is there a difference between the moulting pattern in different age groups or between males and females?
- (3) What is the relationship between timing of the moult and other events in the life-cycle of the species, e.g. breeding or migration?
- (4) How synchronised is the onset of moult within a population of a species?
- (5) What is the duration of moult — does it represent a major period in the annual cycle?
- (6) Does the loss of flight feathers significantly affect the species' ability to fly, and is moult more rapid in flying than non-flying species?

The opportunity to examine birds for moult may occur in a variety of ways e.g. examination of museum specimens, examination of birds found dead during beach patrols, and examination of birds caught for banding.

With this in mind OSNZ Council has decided to promote the systematic recording of moult in New Zealand birds and is developing standard methods most suited to New Zealand conditions. The scheme used in New Zealand will parallel schemes used overseas as closely as possible to make direct comparisons of results easier.

In the meantime the earlier (less complicated) B.T.O. Moult Card will be used on an interim basis.

Further information about the scheme

and cards are available from Dr Ben D. Bell, 45 Gurney Road, Belmont, Lower Hutt.

BEN D. BELL

Do you want a Telescope ?

I don't know why it's so hard in most parts of NZ to get a suitable birdwatching telescope, even at full retail price. I have recently spoken to the importer of a well-known brand of Japanese spotting scope that many members, including myself, already have. I hope soon to have some prices and will place an order for all members who want one. I assume the prices will be wholesale plus sales tax — I would guess at least \$200. Optical gear of quality is never cheap!

Meanwhile, if you are seriously thinking of getting a telescope, write to me now. I'll give you the cost as soon as I can, and you can decide whether to order.

I've boiled down the various scopes to a choice of three — a lightweight mini that some members seem to prefer, and two of normal size that differ mainly in the angle of eyepiece and where they focus. All three will screw on to any camera tripod, and so I shall not be ordering tripods, largely a matter of personal taste and readily available.

1. Spotting scope you look straight through (like a large monocular) and focus with a separate knob. My preference.
2. Spotting scope you look down into at 45°, and you focus by twisting the eyepiece (helicoïd focusing).

Both these are about 400 mm (16.8 inches) long in the body, weight 1100-1200 grams (30-40 oz), and have front objective diameter of 60 mm. Both come with 25x eyepiece, and we can order interchangeable eyepieces also of 15x, 20x and 40x. Note, however, that the luminosity drops rapidly with increased magnification so that on a dull day you see little through higher powers and on a bright day you only magnify heat shimmer. Luminosity of 15x is 16, of 20x is 9, of 25x is 5.75, of 40x is 2.25, and of 60x is 1.)

3. Mini spotting scope. A straight-through type, body length 240-250 mm, weight 650 grams, helicoïd focusing, front objective diameter 50 mm, interchangeable eyepieces 10x, 15x, 20x (I don't know which is standard).

If you seriously may want one, write to me now: *B. D. Heather, 10 Jocelyn Crescent, Silverstream.*

AGM

The AGM was held at the Auckland Museum over the weekend of 22-24 May. Over 100 members from as far away as Westland and Otago gathered for a very enjoyable and interesting weekend's activities.

Council met on Friday 22 May and completed a full day of business. Important matters considered included publication of the definitive bird atlas (see the Atlas Committee report), procedures for recording moult (see elsewhere in this issue) and the selection of species for special study. It was decided that the Black-fronted Tern should be studied during 1981/82 and Barrie Heather (North Island) and Paul Sagar (South Island) were appointed to prepare details and co-ordinate this study. Details of the survey will be published in the September issue of *OSNZ news*. Species suggested for study during 1982/83 were Whitehead (North Island) and Brown Creeper and Yellowhead (South Island).

Details of the Falla Memorial Award were finalised and Council unanimously decided on the recipient of the first such award (see below).

A letter was received from M. L. Falconer, who regretted that he had decided to resign his position as Vice-President of the Society as business commitments now left him insufficient time to deal effectively with Society affairs. Council received and accepted this notice with considerable regret. Mrs Beth Brown was co-opted from Council to serve as the new Vice-President.

While the RRs were meeting on Saturday morning many members took advantage of the fine weather to join a field trip to Tahuna Torea. Saturday afternoon activities included three talks and a number of well-presented poster displays. All the talks were of a high and stimulating standard. Dr Peter Jenkins showed us how complex the songs of Starlings are and the intriguing methods he has used to record them. Graham Turbott showed us how amateurs had contributed much to ornithology by studying birds within the city environment in detail. Finally, Phil Millener proved that subsocial birds can make a lively and stimulating study.

In his Presidential address Mr R. B. Sibson announced that Mr H. R. (Ross) McKenzie was the first recipient of the Falla Memorial Award. This was received with prolonged acclamation from those present.

The meeting closed with a full round of applause for Sylvia Reed and her organising committee.

PAUL SAGAR

Unusual habitats for migrant waders

Two migrant waders, a Mongolian Dotterel and a Terek Sandpiper were seen recently in habitats not mentioned in the *Field Guide to New Zealand Birds*.

The Mongolian Dotterel was seen on 27 October 1980 by a group of Wildlife Service staff and volunteers during a fauna survey of the Waimakariri Riverbed. The dotterel conveniently landed only a few metres away from where we were having lunch. This 'difficult species' was determined by NOEL HELLYER and although in eclipse plumage, its longer slate-grey legs, more upright stance and greyer upperparts helped distinguish this bird from juvenile Banded Dotterels. The bird seemed to prefer areas of sand and silt on dry riverbed islands away from the main flow. The sighting was made more than 15 km inland from the Waimakariri Rivermouth, near MacLeans Island. As Turnstones and Wrybills were seen farther upriver, perhaps wader observers should give attention to riverbeds as well as estuaries.

The Terek Sandpiper was also found in an unexpected habitat. While completing a beach patrol near the Waimakariri Rivermouth on 11 April, a strange bird was noted among c60 juvenile Banded Dotterels. This bird was foraging among debris between the high tide mark and sand dunes along a stretch of sandy beach. COLIN O'DONNELL, PAUL KEARTON and I identified the bird by its very bright orange legs and long upcurved bill. It is probable that the sandpiper was found on the beach due to the rather noisy opening-morning activity of duck shooters on the adjacent estuary.

GRAEME TAYLOR

For Sale

A set of *Notornis* issues 1968-1979 inclusive, price \$40.00. Write Ian Granville, 403 Mt. Albert Road, Mt. Roskill, Auckland.

Defoliation by House Sparrows

While working at Lincoln College during the spring of 1980 I observed House Sparrows defoliating an ash tree (*Fraxinus* sp.). Over a period of several weeks a large number of sparrows stripped much of the foliage off a tree some 6 m high and 4 m across. I estimate that the birds removed 60% of the foliage over a period of three weeks. The leaves and leaflets removed were carried off to nearby nests, presumably to be used for nest building.

After stripping most of this tree the birds then shifted their attentions to another nearby ash tree and proceeded to strip it in a similar fashion.

Most of the defoliated parts of the original tree were supporting new growth within a month of the birds shifting their attention to the other tree.

The rapid and drastic impact on a reasonably large tree caused by these relatively small birds must make us question the role of birds in the evolutionary development of some plant species.

W. SHAW

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Collecting lice

Several members have asked about how to set about collecting lice from birds, where to send them, and what is wanted. RICARDO PALMA, the authority on lice at National Museum, will welcome any material members can collect and send him. If you are handling live birds or are likely to find freshly dead ones, you can with a little care and preparation provide very helpful material.

Live birds

1. Use a pet insecticide ("Nuvan" aerosol is recommended), and spray it among the feathers of the bird. Note: Don't use a household fly spray, which may harm the bird.

2. Hold the bird for a few minutes in a plastic bag (keeping its head out). If the bird flaps a bit, so much the better to shake lice from among the feathers.
3. Leave everything that comes off the bird, including dust and rubbish (which may contain parasites you can't see) in the bag, put in a label giving the species of bird, date, place, and your name, and seal it with adhesive tape.
4. Post the bag and its contents to Mr R. L. Palma, National Museum, Private Bag, Wellington.
5. Use a separate bag for each bird.

NOTE: Let the bird go before you seal the bag!

Dead birds

1. You must be careful to use only birds that have not been in contact with others (e.g. in the same bag on a beach patrol).
2. Unless the bird has just died, you won't get lice by spraying it.
3. Put each bird you pick up in a *separate* plastic bag (obviously, so that the lice don't get shaken or move from one host to another, falsifying later the identity of lice and hosts).
4. Put the *whole carcass*, together with a label giving the date, place, circumstances, and your name, in a sealed plastic bag.
5. Send it to R. L. Palma by whichever means is easiest for you and appropriate to the size and state of the bird
 - by post
 - by rail
 - by air freight
 - by Newmans bus (in North Island).

When sending by freight, make sure you give instructions for the Museum to be telephoned when it arrives.

As a last resort, you can send just the bird's feathers, which can still yield some results.

BARRIE HEATHER