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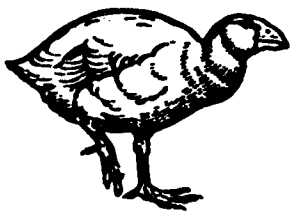


OSNZ news

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. 40 September, 1986

Note: Deadline for the December issue will be 31 October 1986.

International Ornithological Congress – New Zealand 1990

The 20th International Ornithological Congress (IOC) will be held in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1990. This exciting news came from the 19th IOC held recently in Ottawa, Canada. The fine efforts of the hard-working OSNZ Committee which prepared New Zealand's invitation were responsible for achieving this honour. So keep November/ December 1990 free to attend the congress and participate in the associated field trips.

OSNZ Annual Conference and AGM, Dunedin, May 1987

Members are invited to friendly Dunedin during the weekend of 24-25 May 1987 for the Society's Annual Conference and AGM. Yellow-eyed Penguins, Spotted Shags and Stewart Island Shags all have been lined up to make this a memorable weekend. See you in Dunedin.

PETER SCHWEIGMAN

RAOU Handbook

One of the major projects launched by the RAOU in the wake of their Atlas Project, is planning for a *Handbook* modelled on the much-acclaimed *Birds of the Western Palearctic* now emanating from Britain. Following a suggestion from the OSNZ Council, the RAOU has agreed to expand the scope of the project towards production of a *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds* (HANZAB!). It will be this country's definitive statement on Australasian birds. Four volumes are envisaged: Volume 1 – Emu to Bustard, Volume 2 – rest of non-passerines, Volumes 3 & 4 – passerines. Publication of Volume 1 late in 1992 is the target, with the other volumes to follow at 2 year intervals. The RAOU has arranged word-processing facilities for easy manipulation of the text. My present task, as the OSNZ Council's RAOU Liason Officer, has been to prepare, in conjunction with other Council members, lists of New Zealand experts whom the Australian editorial team can invite to prepare accounts of NZ species. Contributions to Volume 1 are now largely established; there was in general a very enthusiastic response from the New Zealanders invited.

B. J. GILL

New conservation project established

Recently Ducks Unlimited has established a new waterfowl conservation project.

In close association with the Wildlife Service Ducks Unlimited aims to reverse the drastic decline of the Mute Swan population in New Zealand, by supplying Ducks Unlimited members with pairs of Mute Swans and releasing birds reared into suitable wild areas.

Once numbering over 3,000 in the wild in New Zealand the Mute Swan population has shrunk to less than 200 birds. The infamous 'Wahine' storm in 1968 is thought to have been largely responsible for the decline, as the storm removed many of the weed beds on which the swans feed.

Captive swans have been placed with Ducks Unlimited members in the North Island and it is hoped that eventually 50 pairs will be established in captivity.

Although the Mute Swan is an introduced species it has always been recognised as a 'Royal' bird, and because Mute Swans are the largest species of waterfowl in the world they are a great attraction in any waterfowl collection. Mute Swans in the wild are also no threat to our native waterfowl and this new project will complement Ducks Unlimited's other waterfowl and conservation projects.

NEIL HAYES

Some falcon stories from Southland

One day a friend and I were watching a NZ Falcon on a tall gum tree near the Te Anau wharf. The falcon appeared to be watching a flock of Scaup a short distance out on the lake. The tourist boat *Te Wera* was coming in and as it passed just inside the ducks the falcon, using the boat as cover, flew down to within about half a metre of the water around the stern of the boat and picked up a Scaup. The falcon then flew off with its prey.

GRANT ALLEN

In early January this year I spent a day with visitors at Milford Sound. It was a very wet day but had cleared by the afternoon. We were standing on the grassy area in front of the hotel when we noticed a large bird at the top of the weather-beaten and much-photographed beech tree. With binoculars we identified it, with some suprise, as a falcon.

We watched it closely for a few minutes when it suddenly took off, flying low to the ground and giving its characteristic call. It disappeared from sight, past the parked tourist buses, in the direction of the inlet. Shortly afterwards we heard the alarmed quacking of ducks and soon afterwards the falcon flew back to the beech tree carrying a duckling in its talons. The falcon ate part of the duckling and then carried the remains towards a nearby bush.

This would have been an astonishing sight anywhere, but even more amazing right in front of Milford Hotel and the endless stream of buses and tourists. We were the only people watching!

MARGARET DIVERS

Fantail behaviour

About midday on 14/1/86 my wife drew attention to a disturbance in the large plum tree in our garden in suburban Rotorua. We watched as a pair of Fantails mobbed a Shining Cuckoo, fluttering around it in agitation and forcing it to move from branch to branch. Frequently one of the Fantails would distract it from in front, while the other hurtled into the cuckoo from the rear by bunching claws and hitting it full on the back with its body. Occasionally one of the Fantails would flutter away to another tree for a few seconds, while the other Fantail continued the harrassment. This continued for at least 10 minutes before the cuckoo was forced out of the tree and out of the neighbourhood. The Fantails then continued in peaceful occupation of the garden.

DAVID WILLIAMS

Birds on Mokoia Island in winter

I surveyed the birdlife of Mokoia Island, Lake Rotorua, on 19/7/85. 28 species were recorded, including 9 introduced. Some of the more interesting sightings were about 900 NZ Scaup and about 200 Fantails. Bush bird populations were most dense around the edges of the lower bush, and in open scrub at the summit.

A flock of about 160 Fantails was feeding in open bracken country around the summit, and another 40 or so were distributed around the rest of the island. Large numbers of small insects (probably chironomids) were present at the summit, which probably accounts for the large number of insectivorous birds.

I had never seen more than 20-30 Fantails together previously and it is interesting to speculate on the provenance of these birds i.e. how many were 'genuine' Mokoia Island birds, and whether any had come from the mainland. Fantails are very common in the Rotorua area and it is feasible that birds could cross the Lake to feed at Mokoia. However, it may be that I saw the total Mokoia Island population, including the previous season's young.

I have not noticed this winter flocking before, but this may be because in the bush in winter Fantails feed above the canopy, and thus are not readily seen. This is the largest number of Fantails that I have ever seen.

PHILIP BATTLEY.

Crozet Islands book

Survival on the Crozet Islands by Ian Church deals with the survivors of the wreck of the *Strathmore* in 1875. Of interest to ornithologists are the notes about penguins, albatrosses and petrels. The book includes a history of the islands, their birdlife and Robert Falla's visit in 1929. There are 115 pp; 17 illustrations and 5 maps. Production is by Heritage Press. The price is $22.00.

Orders and payment should be sent to Ian Church, 23 Portal Street, Wanganui.

Winter counts of Southern Crested Grebes & NZ Scaup in Canterbury

Midwinter counts of Crested Grebes in the high country of Canterbury have become an annual event since 1981. The aim of the counts is to monitor the population of this species, which is endangered in NZ. OSNZ's national grebe count showed that there were 240-250 grebes in NZ in 1980 and about 55% of these occurred in Canterbury.

Winter counts have provided information for determining the stability of the grebe population, the number of juveniles raised each year, and an indication of seasonal movements. During the two latest winter counts NZ Scaup have also been counted in order to obtain an estimate of their population too.

The counts, which are undertaken in late July, involved 34 observers in 1985 and 27 in 1986. Many of the observers travelled long distances, often in stormy and freezing conditions. 45 lakes were visited in 1985 and 37 in 1986. The surveys required the use of 4-wheeled drive vehicles, a jet boat, and many miles of tramping through deep snow and across ice. This winter severe weather made it impossible to visit all the lakes surveyed in 1985.

153 Crested Grebes were recorded in 1985 but only 93 in 1986. These compare with 139 in 1981, 117 in 1983 and 123 in 1984. The totals of NZ Scaup were 3,871 in 1985 and 3,476 in 1986.

The distribution of these was as follows:

		1985		1986	
	No. Lakes	Grebes	Scaup	Grebes	Scaup
Hanmer area	2	2	0	n.c.	n.c.
Lake Sumner area	7	6	117	n.c.	n.c.
Lake Pearson area	7	20	275	12	342
Lake Coleridge area	6	13	3	6	4
Ashburton lakes	11	39	1,889	4	1,788
Alexandrina lakes	2	73	1,342	69	1,053
MacKenzie Basin	4	n.c.	n.c.	2	48
Lowland Canterbury	9	0	245	0	241
TOTALS	48	153	3,871	93	3,476

n.c. = no counts

Other counts of interest include Australian Coots – 138 (1985) and 89 (1986) on the Ashburton lakes and 2 (1986) on Woodend Lagoon; Australian Little Grebe – 1 each year on St. Anne's Lagoon.

The results of these counts reflect the very different conditions between years. In 1986 heavy snow lay on the ground and most lakes were at least partly frozen over. No lakes were frozen over in 1985, which is atypical for midwinter in Canterbury. Thus in 1986 grebes were concentrated on fewer lakes (9) than in 1985 (20). Lakes which supported grebes in winter were not necessarily those which support breeding populations in summer.

In both winters the highest number of Crested Grebes was found on Lake Alexandrina, confirming that this lake is the most important wintering site. Three other lakes (Coleridge, Clearwater and Lyndon) were also important in 1985 although few birds breed on them. Lake Heron, which is as important as Lake Alexandrina for breeding, had few birds in winter. This was probably because of its high elevation and harsh winter climate.

A large number of grebes were not accounted for in 1986, with numbers on the Pearson, Coleridge and Ashburton lakes being much lower than in previous years. The disappearance of the birds could be explained by the harsh winter. However, the whereabouts of these grebes is not known. I suspect that they disperse to lowland Canterbury, as birds were seen in July on Lakes Ellesmere (1986) and Forsyth (1985) and Brooklands Lagoon (1985). Colin Miskelly also reported 9 Crested Grebes from Lake Rotorua near Kaikoura in June 1986, a larger population than that reported during the summer.

Both recent winter counts confirm that breeding success is extremely low with 7 juveniles being seen in 1985 and 8 in 1986.

Thanks to members and friends who participated in the surveys: N. Adams, J. Ackerly, H. Anderson, A. Bray, D. Booth, B. Campbell, L. Carmichael, P. Cook, P. Dilks, H. Fitzgerald, D. Geddes, D. Goodale, E. Graham, E. & C. Grigg, J. Grindell, D. & P. Howden, K. Hughey, M. Lane, P. Langlands, E. Law, S. Leitch, R. Maloney, J. McVee, T. Meis, C. Miskelly, S. Moore, D. & L. Murray, H. O'Donnell, R. Pierce, M. & J. Scott, H. & N. Sinclair, A. Shadbolt, L. Smith, D. Symans, G. Spiers.

COLIN O'DONNELL

OSNZ Rare Bird Recording – 3

In *OSNZ news 38* (March 1986) we published a list of species for which descriptions are required before records can be accepted for the Checklist and CSN. Following this (*OSNZ news 39*) we published an example of a completed Unusual Bird Report form to show how a description could be attempted. This article provides some basic information on how to systematically look at birds when making an identification.

It is not unusual to return home from a day out birdwatching having seen a few unidentifiable individuals. The view might have been too brief or obscured because the little blighter played hide and seek. You may have an idea what the bird was but did not see the 'key' features. However, you might not know what the key features are for the various species that occur in New Zealand. Therefore, how can you improve your birdwatching skills and identify a greater proportion of the birds that you see? Following a few well-tested methods can help.

Luckily very little equipment is needed but there are a few essentials.

Equipment

(a) *Visual Aids.* This is not a new eye disorder but optical instruments. Binoculars are essential, do not leave home without them. If you have a steady hand a **maximum** magnification of 10x is good for most observation. If you are not so steady or prefer a lightweight binocular an 8x would be ideal. A 7x magnification can be very good in the bush but would be inadequate for most situations when watching estuary birds. Magnifications less than 7x or greater than 10x are best avoided when buying binoculars.

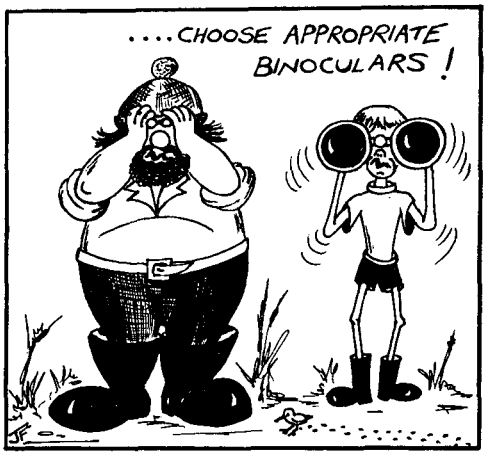
The light gathering ability of binoculars is important. The instruments are usually described using 2 numbers e.g. 8 x 30 or 10 x 50. The first number is the magnification and the second is the size of the largest lens. If you divide the second number by the first you can get an idea of the light gathering ability of the binoculars. The larger the resulting number the better e.g. 10 x 50 gives the result as 5, while 8 x 50 gives the result as 6.25 and these binoculars would give a brighter image. 10 x 50 binoculars give a brighter image than 8 x 30.

Modern lens coatings improve the image brightness because the optical coatings reduce flare between the lens to air surfaces. Flare is the light which is reflected and not transmitted through the glass.

For watching waders a telescope is very useful and to keep it steady you will need a sturdy tripod. A flimsy support is useless. Often telescopes have a zoom magnification of 20x to 60x but at the higher magnifications the views become rather dark as the light gathering ability of most telescopes is limited.

The decision of what brand of binocular or telescope to buy will depend upon how much you can afford to spend. Do not forget that the most important visual aids are your eyes.

Use your eyes and binoculars well.



(b) *Books.* Buy a good field guide. Use it as a field guide and not as a filler for your bookcase.

A logical choice of a general guide is *The New Guide to the Birds of New Zealand.* However, specialist guides such as *Southern Albatrosses and Petrels* and *Shorebirds – an identification guide to the waders of the world* are also particularly useful.

(c) *Notebook.* Record your observations at the time. A list of species seen during the day can be very useful when consistently recorded over a long period. When an unusual bird is seen a full description should be recorded at the time as this will help to give a positive identification later, when your description can be checked against those in a guide.

Techniques

It is very useful to know which birds are usually found in your area. Regular observations will provide a good knowledge of the resident species. Get to know the field characteristics of these species first. If the species have a distinct winter and summer plumages or very different immature plumage it helps to be aware of these. It is tempting to try and identify a rarity when confronted with a common species in unusual or transitional plumage. I was once shown a deep frozen specimen of a pied bird with a yellow and brown bill. The specimen was distorted to an unusual shape and so I immediately started my search for its identification in the Australian field guide. As the specimen thawed it turned into a partial albino male Blackbird. Well it didn't turn into one, it was one all along.

When you do see something unfamiliar you should prepare a systematic description of the bird. What are the main characteristics to look for?

(a) *Shape.* Birds are classified into different families and the species in each family generally share a similar overall appearance. For example, ducks are duck-shaped and terns are tern-shaped. Waders do not resemble finches, even when they are perching. Therefore you can start a description with a general statement as to the type of bird.

(b) *Size.* This is relative because at some distances and under some light conditions it can be very difficult to judge size. I once confused a Caspian Tern in flight for a Gannet. The tern was much closer to me than I realised. In flocks which comprise several species it is possible to relate the size of one species to that of another e.g. 'smaller than the Knots nearby and about 5 cm taller than the Red-necked Stint standing close to it'.

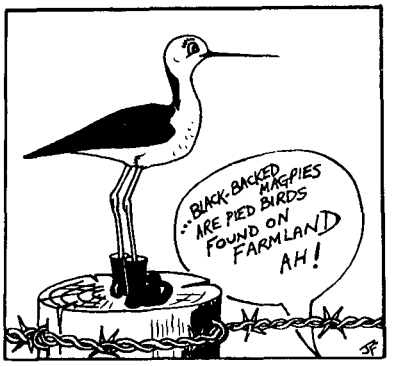
(c) *Jizz.* These are the difficult-to-define characteristics of behaviour and appearance that are typical of some species. Some species have a typical flight rythm e.g. flap and glide. Dunnocks continually shuffle their wings and Red-necked Stints often look neckless. These points should not be overlooked as they can help a lot with identification.

(d) *Plumage.* This is perhaps the most important characteristic of species identification. The plumage colour can determine the species, the sex and the age of the bird.

When observing birds try to look at their plumage colour and patterns in a systematic way. Look at the colour of the head, crown, nape, back, and so on. Most field guides include a generalised drawing of a bird which gives the names of all the main plumages. Look for eye stripes, wing bars and rump patterns. A bird with a wing bar cannot possibly be a species that does not have a wing bar.

In your field notes you should try to describe the plumage of each part of the bird you are observing. It would be frustrating to return home certain that you have seen a dowitcher only to realise that you didn't actually look at the rump pattern of the bird. The result of that oversight would make it less easy to be sure which species of dowitcher was seen. Such 'key' features of plumage are vital for the positive identification of some species. If you do not carry your field guide you may not know which are the key features at the time of observation.

(e) *Soft parts.* These include the eyes, legs, bill and wattles and a record of their colour will also aid identification.



When is a yellowlegs not a yellowlegs? When it is a Pectoral Sandpiper, Ruff or Indian Myna.

Obviously plumage colour, size, shape and jizz are used in addition to the colour of the soft parts and taking them all into account should lead to the identification of the bird.

(f) *Call.* The calls of birds are often diagnostic, however, some species are well-known for rarely giving a call. Record whatever details you can.

Therefore, when setting out to tackle the identification of a bird the steps are:

(1) Get a good look.
(2) Listen for calls.
(3) Observe behaviour as well as appearance.
(4) Compare size and shape to known species.
(5) Systematically record the colours of plumage and soft parts.
(6) Make good notes of your observations.
(7) Compare your notes with field guide descriptions.
(8) Consult other observers and if necessary show them 'your' bird.
(9) Do not despair.

Good birdwatching, and if you need any help with identification contact your RR or the Rare Birds Committee.

JOHN FENNELL, *Secretary, Rare Birds Committee*

National Wader Count – June/July 1986

A total of 128,350 waders were counted by over 250 members and friends during the third national winter wader count, completed in June/July 1986. However, the total should increase as results from the Far North were not to hand when this report went to press.

As for the 1984 and 1985 winter counts participants were asked to record the numbers of NZ-breeding species and those of any overwintering migrants. This year gales and heavy rain caused problems over most of the country and some counts were affected. Auckland and South Auckland members put in a mighty effort and covered the Coromandel coast for the first time. Further details of this appear in the Regional Roundup of this issue.

The following is a preliminary report of the results of the count.

Total numbers: A summary of wader totals by region is given in Table 1. Once again NZ-breeding species comprise the majority of birds counted and the order of abundance was similar to those recorded in the previous 2 winter counts. SIPOs easily topped the list, followed by Pied Stilts, overwintering Bar-tailed Godwits, Banded Dotterels, overwintering Lesser Knots, and Wrybills.

The totals for the NZ-breeding species, with the exception of Wrybill, are similar to those recorded in previous winter counts. Thus the 80,307 SIPOs recorded this winter compares to the 79,983 in 1984 and 78,703 in 1985; 19,734 Pied Stilts to 17,308 (1984) and 18,525 (1985); and 7,669 Banded Dotterels to 7,527 (1984) and 6,849 (1985). However, the total for Wrybills (3,017) is down substantially on previous years and is cause for concern. Of the remaining NZ-breeding species totals for Variable Oystercatcher and the NZ Dotterel are similar to those recorded in 1985. The number of Black Stilts increased slightly and is comparable to the 1984 count. Once again the number of hybrid stilts increased (10 in 1984, 22 in 1985, and 41 in 1986). Or is it just that now we know how to identify these better than previously?

The numbers of overwintering migrants were up on previous years. Presumably this reflects greater breeding success during the previous northern summer. Significant increases were shown by lesser Knots with 4,752 this year compared with 2,367 in 1984 and 3,503 in 1985; 816 Turnstones compared with 719 in 1984 and 292 in 1985; and 9,362 Bar-tailed Godwits compared with 9,071 in 1984 and 7,192 in 1985.

Distribution: Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted are listed in Table 2, and the general distribution of waders is shown on the accompanying map. These show the same general pattern of distribution that occurred in June/July 1984 and 1985 i.e. that in winter the important areas for waders are in the north, the Nelson region, and at Lake Wairarapa, Lake Ellesmere, Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Otago Harbour (Aramoana, Papanui and Hoopers Inlet), and Awarua Bay.

TABLE 2 — Localities where more than 1,000 waders were counted in June/July 1986

Location	Number of Birds
Manukau Harbour	32,511
Firth of Thames	23,086
Kaipara Harbour	15,185
Farewell Spit	9,031
Whangarei Harbour	3,832
Avon-Heathcote Estuary	3,386
Kawhia Harbour	3,218
Motueka Estuary	3,104
Golden Bay	2,852
Whitford Inlet	2,395
Lake Ellesmere	2,393
Otago Harbour	1,676
Awarua Bay	1,630
Waimea Estuary	1,225
Waitemata Harbour	1,213
Aworoa	1,200
Lake Wairarapa	1,182
Aotea Harbour	1,097
Ohope/Ohiwa	1,055
Nelson Haven	1,005

Once again ther were some marked changes in the totals for some major areas e.g. Kaipara 15,185 (1986), 20,505 (1985) and 11,506 (1984); Manukau 32,511 (1986), 28,376 (1985) and 34,783 (1984); Firth of Thames 23,086 (1986), 15,088 (1985) and 18,418 (1984). However, there is less variation for the national totals – 128,350 (1986), 122,078 (1985) and 122,722 (1984).

TABLE 1 — Waders counted in New Zealand, June-July 1986

	N'land	Auckland S.Auck.	Waikato	BOP	Gisborne Wairoa	Hawke's Bay	Taranaki	Manawatu Wanganui	Wairarapa	Wellington	Nelson	Marlborough	West Coast	C
S.I. Pied Oystercatcher	2,561	52,653	2,755	550	—	20	6	31	5	20	14,334	19	523	
Variable Oystercatcher	148	608	4	211	12	11	7	71	24	28	231	11	26	
Golden Plover	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	
Spur-winged Plover	—	49	—	4	11	201	67	11	29	2	*	*	*	
N.Z. Dotterel	75	324	5	124	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	
Banded Dotterel	416	1,338	422	670	52	71	40	79	125	2	1,576	61	23	
Mongolian Dotterel	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Black-fronted Dotterel	—	—	—	—	—	46	1	6	8	3	—	—	—	
Wrybill	188	2,709	—	51	—	40	—	12	—	8	1	—	—	
Far-Eastern Curlew	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	
Asiatic Whimbrel	—	7	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Whimbrel species	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	
Bar-tailed Godwit	438	4,472	601	932	33	138	—	100	—	11	1,862	—	21	
Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Hudsonian Godwit	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Greenshank	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Tattler species	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Turnstone	—	285	—	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	303	30	—	
Lesser Knot	—	4,177	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	509	—	—	
Curlew Sandpiper	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Red-necked Stint	—	2	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Pied Stilt	601	11,996	510	1,014	104	1,156	179	379	1,068	72	371	26	24	
Black Stilt	—	4	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Hybrid Stilt	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
TOTAL	4,427	78,630	4,313	3,649	212	1,688	300	689	1,259	156	19,201	147	617	

* Spur-winged Plovers are numerous and widespread in the South Island, therefore this species is not included in the South Island totals

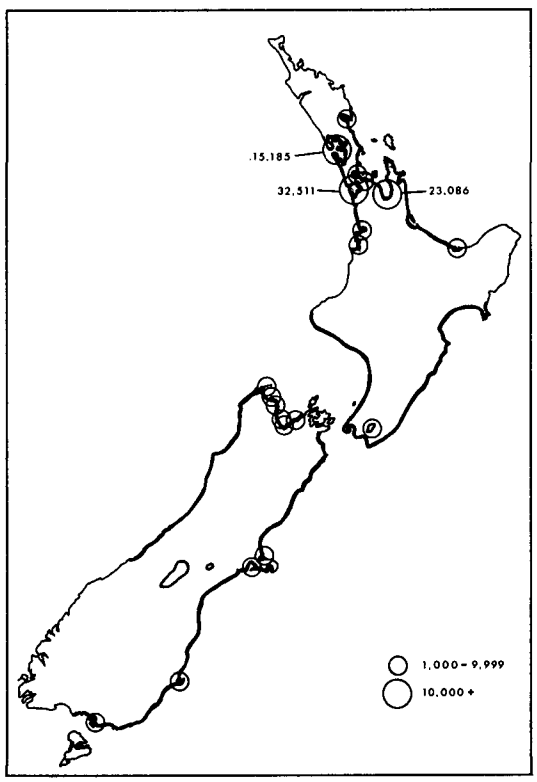
The extent of coverage in most regions is now very good. More areas were covered in the North Island this winter than during both 1985 and 1984 – new areas were Coromandel, Wairoa and South Taranaki. In the South Island the areas covered were consistent with previous years. The substantial efforts from regions where there are few members but large distances to travel are certainly appreciated.

Species Distribution: Once again the harbours of the north, and the Nelson region were the most important wintering grounds for SIPOs. Over 50% of the Pied Stilts counted were concentrated in the Auckland/South Auckland regions. The highest count of stilts was at the Firth of Thames – 5,234, followed by Kaipara – 3,305, and Manukau – 2,278. Other important areas were Whangarei Harbour – 540, Westshore – 674, Lake Wairarapa – 1,041, and Lake Ellesmere – 840. Lake Ellesmere and Farewell Spit were the most important wintering areas for Banded Dotterels, with 1,521 and 1,169 birds respectively. Other important areas were Whangarei Harbour – 318, Manukau Harbour – 542, Kawhia Harbour – 422, Tauranga airfield – 250, Ohope Spit/Ohiwa Harbour – 350, Westhaven Lagoons – 204, and Awarua area – 401.

We now have the results of 3 each summer and winter national wader counts. These are being analysed in detail and a paper will be prepared for *Notornis*. Out of this will come some suggestions for future studies of waders. At the Annual Conference and AGM in Wellington in May the Council and RRs enthusiastically agreed that summer and winter national wader counts should continue at least until the detailed analysis of current results is prepared. Therefore I look forward to receiving more wader counts after our November/December efforts.

PAUL SAGAR

terbury	Otago	Southland	Stewart Island	TOTAL
,481	1,318	1,639	392	80,307
10	45	24	31	1,502
—	—	—	—	1
*	*	*	*	384 *
—	—	30	14	578
,328	26	425	15	7,669
—	—	—	—	1
24	—	—	—	88
2	—	6	—	3,017
1	—	—	—	8
—	—	—	—	10
—	—	—	—	4
256	257	241	—	9,362
1	—	—	—	1
1	—	—	—	1
—	—	—	—	1
—	—	—	—	1
1	—	114	—	816
—	—	60	—	4,752
1	—	—	—	3
5	—	—	—	11
,479	465	290	—	19,734
48	—	—	—	58
32	—	—	—	41
,670	2,111	2,829	452	128,350



Distribution and numbers of waders in New Zealand, June/July 1986. The bold line indicates the areas covered during the count.

Gull-billed Tern near the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Christchurch

During the afternoon of 4/7/86 we noticed a large white tern feeding on partially flooded farmland adjacent to the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Christchurch. The tide was almost full and many birds were taking advantage of the extremely wet conditions to feed in the paddocks. The tern was feeding alone at the edge of a pool, and although there were several White-faced Herons nearby there was no interaction between the species.

We thought it unusual for a large tern to feed in a paddock and so took particular notice of the bird. It had a black bill which was about the length of its head and rather heavy, although not as heavy as the bill of a Caspian Tern. We also decided that in overall size this bird was smaller than a Caspian Tern. On closer examination, we saw that the head was mottled grey which extended down the nape. A large black eye patch almost met at the base of the bill. The mantle was very light pearl-grey and the underparts were white. The broad wings were tipped black. When the bird flew we could see that the tail was short and forked. After circling the area once or twice the tern would land and snatch up what we thought were earthworms. We observed the particularly graceful flight of the tern, which hovered just before landing. The legs were black but we were unable to see the feet because of the long grass.

On consulting various field guides we concluded that it was a Gull-billed Tern. This species has appeared in various parts of the country on rare occasions but as far as we know this is the first report from this locality.

We alerted several OSNZ members who were able to see the tern during the following weekend.

KATHLEEN HARRISON, SHEILA PETCH, DIANA WATSON

Sighting of a Royal Penguin

Earlier this year Mr & Mrs Jones of Moeraki, Otago, reported that they had seen a species of penguin that was unknown to them. The bird was in a small cave at Katiki Point, North Otago on 17 & 18/3/86 and when found was in the final stages of moult. A few photographs were taken and then the bird was left undisturbed.

The penguin was about the same size as a Yellow-eyed Penguin (this comparison was easily made as 3 occupied the same cave). Reference to the photographs showed grey-blue upperparts and white underparts. The chin was white and the face light grey. The lack of dark feathers on the chin, cheeks and throat point to a Royal Penguin.

The photographs have been sent to the Rare Birds Committee for comment.

PETER SCHWEIGMAN

Brown Booby

On 18/5/86 I made a brief visit to Coromandel Beach, where there was a moderate south west wind and intermittent light rain.

Near the headland I noticed a large bird being harassed by 2 immature Black-backed Gulls. When the bird approached to within 30 m I identified it as a Brown Booby, its white belly and dark brown upperparts being clearly visible. It flew in a gliding circle and appeared about to make a dive but was again harassed by the gulls. It then headed out of sight towards Manukau Head.

GEOFF MOON

[Betty Searle adds that 2 Brown Boobies were seen at Little Huia in October 1985 by Chris Smuts-Kennedy. In November 1985, 1 bird was seen fishing offshore and this latest report confirms that at least 1 Brown Booby is still in the Manukau area – Ed.]

Kiwi Call Scheme

Recent logging and burning of forest and scrubland throughout New Zealand, particularly in northern Hawkes Bay and Taranaki, has caused concern about the fate of many kiwis. While the kiwi is a bird familiar to most New Zealanders, its nocturnal and secretive nature has ensured that very little is known of its habits and distribution.

The Wildlife Service has introduced a Kiwi Call Scheme to collect data about the distribution and abundance of kiwis throughout New Zealand. Such data could help save threatened populations of kiwis.

The Kiwi Call Scheme has 3 main aims:

(1) To determine the national distribution of kiwis.

(2) To relate kiwi density to location and habitat.

(3) To assign a kiwi call index at a know time of the year to each listening station. This will enable the dynamics of the population to be determined with time. Repeated listenings at these stations after 5, 10 and 20+ years may indicate whether a population is stable, increasing or declining.

Kiwis advertise their presence by occasional calls. This scheme involves people listening at one location for a certain time and recording any calls heard. Record cards will be sent to interested OSNZ members to fill in whenever they spend a night in likely kiwi habitat. An explanation sheet and instructions will accompany these cards. In addition, if a blank cassette is sent this will be returned with the recorded calls of both sexes of all kiwi species, plus other animal calls which could cause confusion.

If interested in assisting with this scheme please contact: Rogan Colbourne, Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Private Bag, Wellington.

ROGAN COLBOURNE

Gordon Williams Postgraduate Fellowship in Biological Sciences

Applications are invited from suitably qualified people for an award of the Gordon Williams Postgraduate Fellowship in Biological Sciences.

The Fellowship is available to a student engaged in or planning to be engaged in a Masters or PhD programme at Lincoln College, Canterbury, in the biological sciences with preference to those studying Wildlife Management. It is awarded on an annual basis and is estimated to be $4,000 per annum in the first year. An extension of a second year is a possibility.

Applications are available from the Registrar, Lincoln College, Canterbury, with whom applications close in 1 October for the following year.

Cattle Egret Survey

We keep more than doubling our numbers. In our first full late-August count, in 1977, the national total was 293. In 1980, it was 771. In 1984, it was a little over 1500. In 1986, it is 3113 on present figures.

As in 1984, the doubling has been in all regions except Nelson, West Coast and Canterbury. At this rate of increase, and if New Zealand breeding still does not happen, the Cattle Egret will come to rival some of our Arctic migrant waders in number.

Once again, some members have done a lot of travelling and some devilish counting to get results. I found it hard enough getting an accurate count of the Wairarapa flock of 52. Then I see people have managed such counts as West Taieri 90, Stirling 100+, Grovetown 110, Parakai 120, Unahi 147, Wyndham-Mataura I. 155+, Foxton 240, Aka Aka 291; and I am ashamed at my own problems. Then, to cap it all, we have 350 at Ruawai (Dargaville) and 480 at Rangiriri (Waikato), and I give up.

However, Wellington had 100% increase on all previous August counts! One bird, within 1 mile of my home.

Provisional totals are South Island 827, North Island 2286, New Zealand 3113.

Regional results

These are given in reverse order to the usual, that is, south to north, for three good reasons:

1. Why not?
2. Southland is offering members a mouth-watering week of activity in January.
3. Otago is doing great things *and* is hosting the 1987 AGM.

Southland: 352+. Waikoikoi 1, Mataura 8, Wyndham-Matuara Island 155+, Otautau 13, Tuatapere 1, Isla Bank-Drummond 6, Otaitai Bush 41, Woodlands 64, Taramoa 36+, Otatara 15, Greenhills 8, Gorge Road 3, Te Anau 1, Scott's Gap 12. Wynston Cooper, Susanne Lobb, Roger Sutton, Maida Barlow, Owen Linscott, Peter Muller, Lloyd Esler, Alan Wright.

Otago: 207+. West Taieri 90, Waikouaiti district 10, Tapanui 1, Stirling 100+, Paretai 6, Mr & Mrs Grant, Mr & Mrs McKinlay, Helen Bremner, Dave York, Bill Ahless, Mary Anne Ramshaw, Alison Neville, Mona Taylor, Ken Gager, Peter Schweigman.

West Coast: 48 (Westland numbers to come). Karamea 34, Rotomanu 3, Inchbonnie 7, Arahura Valley 4.

Canterbury: 98. Waikuku 23, Ellesmere 57, Clandeboye 18. Paul Sagar, Richard Holdaway, Kay Stark, Fraser Ross.

Nelson: August numbers not available.

Marlborough: 110, all at Grovetown, Blenheim. The Kaikoura 18 of late July and the lower Wairau 11 of early August could not be found and may have joined the Grovetown flock. B. North, B. Elliott, N. Pickins, G. Timpson, H. Newton.

Wellington: One at Silverstream. B. D. Heather, D. & R. Bacheler.

Wairarapa: Tuhitarata 52. B. & R. Heather.

Manawatu: 392. Foxton 240, Lake Horowhenua 60, Woodville 60, Whangaehu 32. W. Jackson, P. Menzies, S. Creswell, O. Torr.

Taranaki: Near Barrett's Lagoon 30-50 on various dates. D. Medway.

Hawke's Bay: 57. Fernhill 9, highway 50 16, Otane 5, Waipukurau 24. H. Andrews, F. Boyce, M. Craven, R. Giblin, B. Gillies, J. Hamilton, L. Hodgson, N. Langham, E. Lewis, J. Lloyd, C. McRae, J. & M. McFadzien, C. Saxby, H. Selderbeek, T. Smith, B. Taylor, K. Todd, M. & W. Twydle, K. & L. Walker, R. Wheeler, B. Wright. (Just over two birds each!)

Gisborne/Wairoa: 31. Tolaga Bay District 4, Waimata Valley 8, Gisborne 14, Muriwai 1, Nuhaka 3. J. Henley, M. Williams, G. Foreman.

Bay of Plenty: 167. Kaituna Cut/Maketu 33, Awaiti 86, Opotiki 33.

Waikato: 480, all at Rangiriri (Ohinewai). F. Nieuwland *et al.*

South Auckland: 291, all at Aka Aka. A. J. Goodwin *et al.*

Auckland: 174. Parakai 120, Orewa 32, Mangere 22. M. Taylor, R. Child, J. Dowding.

Northland: 455. Dargaville airstrip 34, Ruawai 350, Oakleigh 71. G. Garlin *et al.*

Far North: 147, all at Unahi. L. Howell.

The only Australian-banded birds I am aware of are a wing-tagged bird seen in Taranaki early in the season and the return of last year's two banded birds to the Lake Horowhenua flock, Manawatu.

Will some of them breed here? Presumably not; the birds seem to regard New Zealand as part of their winter range; "breeding home" is still SE Queensland/NE New South Wales. Thus, a much higher density may be a needed stimulas, or New Zealand may be just too far south to match the breeding requirements, whatever they are.

BARRIE HEATHER

New feeding behaviour of Tui?

On 28/5/86 I watched a Tui in the top of an apple tree for about 5 minutes. The Tui moved around the apple tree and took moisture from fruit that had been damaged by Blackbirds and Silvereyes. Because the fruit was not quite ripe it had not fallen when the Blackbirds and Silvereyes pecked it and after a short time a small amount of moisture had gathered in the damaged area. This is what the Tui was gathering.

Tuis visit us regularly when flax and red-hot pokers are blooming in the garden. However, in the case of the apple I think that this was an example of a bird exploiting a new and apparently profitable situation.

ALASTAIR GORDON

Faithfull SIPO

On 18/8/86 a banded male South Island Pied Oystercatcher was seen with an unbanded female on R. J. Golden's Springvale property, near Alexandra. The male was banded green over yellow on the right leg but the left foot was missing and only about 4 cm of tarsus remained therefore no bands were on this leg!

It is highly probable that this bird is K-4797 and if so then this is the 16th season that it has returned to this property.

MARGARET CHILD

High Altitude Birds

Earlier this year I recorded some interesting observations while climbing in Fiordland.

On 31/3/86 a fledgling Rock Wren was seen among summit rocks on Marion Peak (an altitude of about 2,000 m) in the Darren Mountains. On the same day Redpolls were seen at about 1,800 m on the ridge between Barrie Peak and Marion Peak. Finally, in late February a NZ Falcon was seen chasing a Blackbird on the Gertrude Saddle, at about 1,600 m.

IAN DANIEL

Banded Dotterel Migration

During autumn and winter 1986, over 7,500 Banded Dotterels were checked for colour bands. This total comprised equal numbers of birds on both sides of the Tasman. Not all records are in yet, but emerging trends include:

(1) Inland breeders of the South Island tend to be found in Australia e.g. all 9 sightings of Central Otago birds were made in Australia, Mackenzie Basin birds (24 Australia, 4 North Island), Mid-Canterbury birds (10 Australia, 3 North Island).

(2) North Canterbury and Marlborough birds tended to move north (5 sightings of at least 3 birds, all in the North Island. Hawke's Bay birds were found at Whangarei (2) and Tasmania (1), and 1 Nelson bird was found in Victoria.

(3) In some lowland areas e.g. South Canterbury coast and Southland coast, there was a lot of sedentary behaviour. 50% of the colour-banded South Canterbury birds were found wintering close to their old nest sites.

We wish to thank all those people and birding groups who chased the elusive colour bands. There were some big efforts on either side of the Tasman and Cook Strait.

We have still got a long way to go before patterns of movement are fully understood. This season, banding will be extensive (ranging from Ruapuke Island to North Cape) and so expect better pickings on mudflats next year. The Victoria Wader Study Group has banded several hundred Banded Dotterels this winter too, so please, eyes peeled everywhere – we still have no North Island sightings of Australian banded birds but about 50 were found in the South Island last year.

Please keep me informed of sighting details, including number checked for bands and instances of 'Nil' returns as well. The latter figures will help us estimate population size.

BANDED DOTTEREL STUDY GROUP, c/o Ray Pierce, P.O. Box 69, Lake Taupo

Errata

Annual Report of the OSNZ Rare Bird Committee (*OSNZ news 30*). Japanese Snipe – One at Mangere Ponds on 13 and 14/10/85 (credits should be M. J. Taylor, D. Baker, R. Child, S. Davies).
Red-necked Phalarope – A bird seen at Mangere Ponds from 6 to 10 June 1985 (credits should be T. Lovegrove, R. B. Sibson, S. Towle).

JOHN FENNELL, *Secretary, Rare Birds Committee*

Regional Roundup

Far North/Northland: George and Julia Watola have reported on their observations at lakes and sewerage ponds near Kaikohe. The Plumed Egret has gone, after at least 2 weeks on the Kaikohe Sewage Pond but now there is an Australian Little Grebe. The grebe probably came from Lake Owhareiti, where there were 100+ Paradise Shelducks, 100+ Black Swans, 50+ Grey/Mallard, and 3 Shoveler, plus 50 Pukeko, 3 White-faced Herons and 4 Cattle Egrets at the edge of the Lake. We also found 2 Spur-winged Plovers, 3 Australian Little Grebes and 1 Australian Coot. On 8/6/86 there were 10 Australian Little Grebes in the area.

Auckland: A wide involvement in the ornithology of the region is shown by the fact that 40 members contributed to CSN for the past year, and that 70 members (which is nearly half the Auckland roll) subscribe to the local bulletin *Tara*. Their contributions and the reports of field work maintain an output of 12-15 pages per quarter issue.

A fuller picture of bird distribution within the region is being gathered by the series of species maps being compiled by Mike Graham. Specific records of Pollen Island, a Fernbird Refuge in the Waitemata Harbour, recently came to the fore when the possibility of a conservation zone was debated during the hearings of the maritime planning scheme.

Broader aspects of OSNZ activities were on display during Conservation Week and our meeting that week, an excellent talk by Alison Davis on her studies of the Shore Plover, was timely and well-received.

Fieldwork in June-July centred on locating and counting at wader roosts, with the presence of 6 Royal Spoonbills and a Black-tailed Godwit at Mangere and 4 Black Stilts on the Kaipara, as bonuses along the way. Following several years of wader survey it seems safe to put the region's tallies of Variable Oystercatchers and NZ Dotterel each at 200-300, which are worryingly low numbers. Birds on the increase probably include Shoveler and Paradise Shelduck – or are we just getting better at finding their flocking site? A likely sighting of Sooty Terns is being referred to the RBC.

After some quieter months the Muriwai beach patrollers (25 strong on 10/8/86) collected 827 birds of 18 species. These were mainly prions from the storm 1 week earlier during which Graham Turbott and others had witnessed these feeding in the upper reaches of Manukau Harbour. Of 735 prions identified to species in this large wreck Fairy Prions comprised 55%, followed by Thin-billed Prions (23%), Antarctic Prions (10%), Salvin's Prions (9%), and Broad-billed Prions (3%). Birds stranded alive were transferred to Bird Rescue, but on this occasion most appeared too weak to survive. (Michael Taylor)

South Auckland: The first ever shoreline count of waders of the Coromandel Peninsula was attempted during Queen's Birthday weekend and proved to be a great success. Much credit must go to the strong Auckland team, which joined South Auckland in the venture. Teams based at Coromandel and Whitianga, using camping ground cabins for accommodation, covered west and east coasts respectively. 60 places were covered in cold and sometimes wet conditions. At least one prodigious walk took place over difficult terrain and was rewarded by the bonus find of a beach-cast albatross. Totals were: Black Shag 12, Pied Shag 148, Little Black Shag 56, Little Shag 98, White-faced Heron 80, Reef Heron 6, Royal Spoonbill 1, Paradise Shelduck 68, SIPO 884, VOC 385, Spur-winged Plover 28, Banded Dotterel 176, NZ Dotterel 92, Bar-tailed Godwit 130, Pied Stilt 323, Eastern Knot 32, Turnstone 2, Caspian Tern 356. In addition, large feeding flocks of many hundreds of Fluttering Shearwaters, Red-billed Gulls and White-fronted Terns were seen on Mercury Bay. The coast from Te Puru, a little north of Thames, on the west coast, right around to the Otahu River, at the southern end of Whangamata Harbour, was covered. It is hoped that this exercise can be repeated in summer to get an idea of the numbers of birds present over 2 seasons. Concern was expressed at the low number of Reef Herons found on this apparently ideal coast.

The hang-gliding son of member Josie Driessen was more than a little surprised to find himself being buzzed by a Nankeen Kestrel while airborne over the cliffs near Karioitahi, north of Waiuku, on 18/5/86.

The winter censuses have come and gone with no problem in the Firth of Thames, and no surprises either. Manukau was different, with appalling weather. The SW gale was one to be literally leaned on and at Seagrove 12,000 SIPO tested the ability of the counters. Bonuses were a mystery tern, an Asiatic Black-tailed Godwit, and 'Wimble' the soon-to-be 36 year old male NZ Dotterel. (Beth Brown)

Waikato: Calm weather and a good turnout of boats ensured the success of the winter census of Kawhia and Aotea Harbours. Highlights were 3 Asiatic Whimbrels flying overhead and the mixed group of 4 Black and 9 hybrid Stilts, in additon to the 2,755 SIPO, 600 Bar-tailed Godwit, 510 Pied Stilt and 422 Banded Dotterel (no leg bands).

The Whangamarino Swamp proved to be a very wet environment, but Tony Roxborough guided us expertly and apart from a large number of Black Swans we saw a variety of waterbirds (Grey Teal, Shoveler, Bittern), and were treated to positive responses to taped calls of Spotless Crake just behind the old Island Block School.

Our annual Cattle Egret count revealed 480 birds in the Ohinewai flock, an impressive sight not only when spread out in the paddocks but also in flight. We searched for wing tags but found none. Some birds were seen 'messing about' with sticks in the trees and so perhaps the day of a NZ nesting colony of CEs is not too far away.

Stella Rowe reports that just before August strong winds brought a very large wreck of prions to the west coast, with 5 species being wrecked. Fairy Prions and Thin-billed Prions comprised the majority of the wreck but a few Blue Petrels were present too. (Folkert Nieuwland)

Bay of Plenty: The higest count of Black-fronted Terns this winter was a poor one of 11 on the Matata coast and 3 at Matahui Point.

In June there were 75 Cattle Egrets at Awaiti, 32 at Maketu, 20 at Katikati, and 26 at Opotiki. (Pady Latham)

Gisborne/Wairoa: A white Variable Oystercatcher was reported from Mahia in 1985 and this year one has turned up at Tolaga Bay. All the plumage is white while the bill and legs are the normal colour.

3 Cattle Egrets appeared at Nuhaka on 7/6/86 but did not stay.

Many years ago I recorded Fernbirds at Whakamahia Lagoon, alongside the Wairoa River Estuary but had not seen any since. However, in June this year a report of 3 birds came my way and I saw 2 birds in blackberry on 25/6/86. Fernbird have been located at the eastern end of Whakai Lagoon as well.

On 15/7/86 a group of 21 Little Black Shags was feeding in the Wairoa River. I observed them from the town bridge and food items taken that I have seen clearly are tiny flounders and yellow-eyed mullet. (Geoff Foreman)

Hawke's Bay: During the drought of 1982/83 Hurimoana Swamp, a popular birdwatching spot, dried out and did not fill again until early 1985. It was devoid of birds for 2 years but a visit there on 25/4/86 showed that many birds had returned. Among those counted were 200-300 Paradise Shelduck, 180 Black Swan, 100 Mallard, 50 Grey Teal, 24 Dabchick, 43 Pied Stilt, 56 Black-fronted Dotterel, and many Welcome Swallows. In much smaller numbers were White-faced Heron, Little Shag, Black Shag, Shoveler, Pukeko, and Spur-winged Plover. A flock of 400-500 House Sparrows was seen feeding on water pepper seedheads and then flying into nearby willows.

On 18/5/86 Horseshoe Lake had its usual large quota of waterfowl which included 170 NZ Scaup, 200 Grey Teal, 160 Shoveler, 12 Australian Coot, 50 Little Black Shag, and 61 Black Shag. A pair of young Mute Swan has been added recently by the Wildlife Service, in the hope that they will establish and breed in this sheltered and secluded lake. (Kathleen Todd)

Taranaki: A short-tailed Shearwater, found on the North Taranaki coast by W. B. Messenger on 29/4/86, contained a splendid sample of plastics. These were white, blue and clear and were located in the proventriculus. In addition, there were 2 small bits of rock – pieces of Australia – in the gizzard.

An unfortunate White-fronted Tern recovered dead on Oakura Beach on 30/6/86 had 10 nematodes in its air sacs, a tumor in one saltgland, and a tapeworm in its intestine. It was a parasitologist's dream! A full complement of parasitological notes on more than 100 birds is held at the Taranaki Museum and we will expand these this winter as we continue a study of the food and parasites of birds. (John Clark)

Manawatu/Horowhenua/Wanganui: In early May 8 members took part in a very successful series of beach patrols. The bag included 200 Short-tailed Shearwaters, 7 Fluttering Shearwaters, 10 Sooty Shearwaters, 3 Buller's Shearwaters, 1 Yellow-eyed Penguin, 1 Little Blue Penguin, 5 Gannets, 2 Grey-faced Petrels, 2 seals, and 2 whales!

On 11/5/86 Walter Jackson and Alan Carpenter completed the first complete census of Lake Horowhenua by boat. In just under 3 hours they counted 2,050 Black Swan, 2,014 ducks (Mallard, Grey & Shoveler), 17 Grey Teal, 42 Paradise Shelduck, 2 Canada Geese, 122 Dabchick, 65 Pied Stilt, 10 harrier, 15 Pukeko, 26 shags, 4 Black-backed Gull, and 2 Black-billed Gull. As expected, the count shows the wealth of waterfowl on the lake. The 122 Dabchicks probably represents about half of those in the region. Walter Jackson reports that since the count 1 White Heron, 1 Australian Coot and 1 Bittern have been seen at the lake.

At the Whangaehu Estuary G. Randle, O. Torr and P. Battley saw 68 Spur-winged Plover and 10 Banded Dotterel on 8/6/86. In scrub at the north side of the estuary they noted several Fernbirds. (Lindsay Davies)

Nelson: Alvin Brett has covered a large area of the region and located 27 Cattle Egrets in Golden Bay and a further 30 at Appleby.

The latest count of shags roosting in the Norfolk pines was 120 Pied Shags and about 50 Little Shags. (Jenny Hawkins)

Canterbury: While we usually consider winter to be a rather lean time for unusual birds this year has been a marked exception. In early July a Gull-billed Tern was seen at Bromley Sewage Farm (see report elsewhere in this issue) and this stayed for several weeks. A small white heron, photographed at the Avon-Heathcote Estuary by Peter Reese and subsequently seen at Ellesmere, is possibly the first Intermediate Egret for the South Island. This record is currently being reviewed by the Rare Birds Committee. In mid-July a Nankeen Kestrel was reported from Kaitorete Spit (Lake Ellesmere). However, the most exciting news is Kathleen Harrison and Shona Mulligan's sighting of a Painted Snipe at Ellesmere on 6/8/86. This record, a first for New Zealand, has been accepted by the Rare Birds Committee.

In addition to chasing rarities members have been involved with the winter wader count, Cattle Egret survey, searches for colour-banded dotterels, and junior members Andrew Crossland and Peter Langlands have continued bird counts at the Bromley Sewage Ponds and Avon-Heathcote Estuary. (Paul Sagar)

Otago: During a field trip to Aramoana on 24/4/86 we saw an unusual number of 233 Black-fronted Terns on the mudflats. 4 Caspian Terns were also present and at least three of these were banded. The 4th bird flew off before Bruce McKinlay could confirm it too carried a band.

On 2/5/86 Peter Schweigman saw 1 Chestnut-breasted Shelduck amongst 26 Paradise Shelducks at the Toko Mouth.

Reports of a Cirl Bunting and Marsh Crakes near Hoopers Inlet are to be confirmed.

A tattler remained at Papanui throughout the winter. Alison Neville saw a Tree Martin at Clarendon on 20/4/86. A Black-fronted Dotterel seen on the Upper Taieri, near Patearoa, by Rob Soulsby and Monty Wright is a first for the area. George Grant reports a flock of 7 Black-fronted Dotterels near the Taieri at Outram in early July.

John Miles from Hawea has seen 2 NZ Falcons in the built-up area of Wanaka.

Malcolm Foord reports a Fernbird in snow grass and thin manuka in the Glendu State Forest and wonders whether they are resident in the area. (Peter Schweigman)

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