

measured with vernier calipers, and the function above can then be used to assign sex with nearly 99% accuracy. The function can be easily used in the field with the aid of a pocket calculator, enabling a captured bird to be sexed before being banded and released.

As growth in most body parts is largely completed by 4-6 months of age (Nugent 1981), the function can be used to sex all birds older than 6 months of age.

There may be regional differences in mean size of gull populations in New Zealand (Kinsky 1963). Therefore, the accuracy of the classification function may differ between populations and would have to be tested in each population with a small sample of known-sex birds.

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SHORT NOTE

FAR-INLAND SIGHTING OF WELCOME SWALLOW

On 15 November 1981, while conducting a survey of the Kyeburn Riverbed, east of Ranfurly, Central Otago, my wife and I saw three Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo tahitica neoxena*) flying over the river, occasionally soaring to great heights (out of sight to the naked eye) and then descending close to the water again; they were not seen to land. There were no structures suitable for nesting in the immediate vicinity. (Grid Ref: 393367, NZMS 18, Sheet 23.)

This is the first sighting for Central Otago, and also the furthest distance from both east and west coasts that this species has been reported.

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