

LONG-TAILED CUCKOO *Eudynamys taitensis* (Karavia)

Alarm calls were heard from two separate birds in tall scrub on Maungapu track on 31 August; one was seen by the roadside later the same day. On 1 September, one flew out from bushes on the islet of Moturakau and returned to the same spot.

INDIAN MYNA *Acridotheres tristis* (Government bird, Manu kavamani)

Abundant, especially around settled and cultivated areas. A few were noticed on the SE motus. Upon return to Rarotonga on 4 September, we found that the government had just decided to impose a bounty of 10 cents per beak on this bird because of the damage it is causing to fruit and vegetable crops. It is also blamed for the alarming decrease in native forest birds on Rarotonga. (The myna was introduced 50 years ago to control white aphids and other insect pests of citrus orchards.)

LITERATURE CITED

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SHORT NOTE

CHATHAM ISLAND PIGEON AND POSSUM SHARE FOOD

The Chatham Island Pigeon (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae chathamensis*) survives as a precariously small population on the main Chatham Island. Competition for food with the introduced possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) could be a contributing factor. The following observations were made in late August and early September 1980 in the Tuku Valley, while I was a member of a party led by D. E. Crockett searching for the nesting area of the Taiko.

The Chatham Island lancewood (*Pseudopanax chathamicum*) was fruiting profusely and Pigeons were seen on several occasions feeding on the berries. All Pigeon droppings found under these trees consisted entirely of lancewood seeds in a purplish matrix (the colour of the ripe berries). Many possum droppings were found in the same area, each containing between 25% and 50% by volume of lancewood berries and the rest macerated plant material. There appeared to be no shortage of berries at the time, but this may not always be the case at other times and for other foods.

An island flora has fewer species than an equivalent area of mainland, and on the main Chatham Island plant diversity has been further reduced by introduced mammals. Competition for the remaining succulent fruits and shoots may therefore be acute.

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