

The density of Brown Kiwi egg shell (2.42) is nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ times that of the egg contents. Because smaller (or more elongated) eggs have a proportionately larger surface area than bigger (or wider) eggs, the shell : content ratio changes through the range of egg sizes. As a result, the expression $0.565 ab^2$ may overestimate the fresh weight of larger eggs and understate that of smaller (or elongated) eggs.

Table 2 suggests such a tendency, but any skew effect is small. This method thus provides a useful, and at times precise, estimation of fresh egg weights.

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SHORT NOTE

KNOTS ATTENDED BY GODWIT

At the Heathcote-Avon estuary, Christchurch, the Knot (*Calidris canutus*) is a rather rare and brief visitor (a few days to a few weeks) compared with the Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), which ranges from about 100 birds in winter to about 1000 in summer. Consequently, the Knot is of some interest locally.

We have noticed that, when a small party of Knot, say, fewer than five, is present with the godwit flock, they seem to hide deliberately in the centre of the godwit flock at the high tide roosts. Whenever the godwits have been displaced temporarily, the Knots carefully take up the same relative positions, often being almost completely out of sight.

Late one bitter afternoon, an unusually large (for this estuary) flock of 11 Knot came in, flying low, landed nearby, and huddled together in a tight group, standing in the shallow low-tide water close to a straggle of godwit that were feeding at the tide's edge. Immediately, the two nearest godwits stopped their probing and walked over to the Knots and seemed quietly but deliberately to break up the bunch. This behaviour was not aggressive, and the Knots were evidently not afraid; meanwhile, the godwits began to rake with their feet, and probe tentatively into, the muddy sand, apparently inducing the tired Knots to feed, which they did briefly.

Soon after the godwits had moved away to continue their own probing, the Knots stopped feeding and bunched up again. For a second time, one of the godwits returned, broke up the group again, apparently persuading the reluctant Knots to resume feeding. We could see this whole episode very clearly.

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