

have been given rather pointed tips. This is a common artist's fault — presumably because they don't know the birds in flight themselves — and hence they draw the outermost primary the longest, which it's not.

A useful innovation is a diagram naming the bill plates of petrels, a figure that follows von Boetticher in his "Albatrosse und anderer Sturmvogel" (1955) and "The Handbook of Australian Sea-birds" (1971). A diagram that is retained from earlier editions of the bills of prions could well have been redrawn as it still shows very narrow-billed *vittata* and *salvini* that would have been better labelled *salvini* and *desolata*.

The content of the work is well organised on lines familiar to users of earlier editions. There are useful end-paper maps and the book is well printed and bound in Collins' admirably tough style designed to stand up to the battering of field use. The book will enable most New Zealand birds to be identified if properly seen: it is mainly with the "difficult" ones that users will encounter frustrations.

JOHN WARHAM

*Birds of a feather*, edited by Atholl Anderson. 1979. NZ Archaeological Association Monograph II. BAR International Series 62.

This book consists of 17 osteological and archaeological papers written and published in honour of Ron Scarlett. The papers are written, in collaboration or individually, by 22 authors, including Scarlett himself, who apparently collaborated in one paper and wrote another on request without knowing where they were to be published.

The ornithologist with an interest in our extinct birds, or even in the past distribution of our living species and their exploitation by the Maoris will find 7 anthropological papers of little interest but the remaining 10 of much interest. Scarlett (Avifauna and Man), B. F. Leach (Maximising minimum numbers: avian remains from the Washpool midden site), J. M. Davidson (Archaic middens of the Coromandel Range: a review), E. W. Dawson (Some osteological contemplation on Maori and Kakapo in early Wellington) and D. G. Sutton (Island and coastal fowling strategies of the prehistoric Moriori) bring together some interesting analyses of human middens, while G. F. van Tets analyses the avifaunal composition of skua middens on some Australasian sub-antarctic islands. For the taxonomist, J. C. Yaldwyn has shed further light on the types (and validity) of some of the moa species and genera described by W. R. B. Oliver. G. E. Hamel (The breeding ecology of moas) has written a thought-provoking hypothesis that is a timely reminder that moas were once living creatures and that our studies of their bones should aim at giving us a greater understanding of them as birds.

I find this book of great interest, but it is decidedly of more interest to the archaeologist than to an ornithologist whose interest in birds is mainly in living species.

D. H. BRATHWAITE