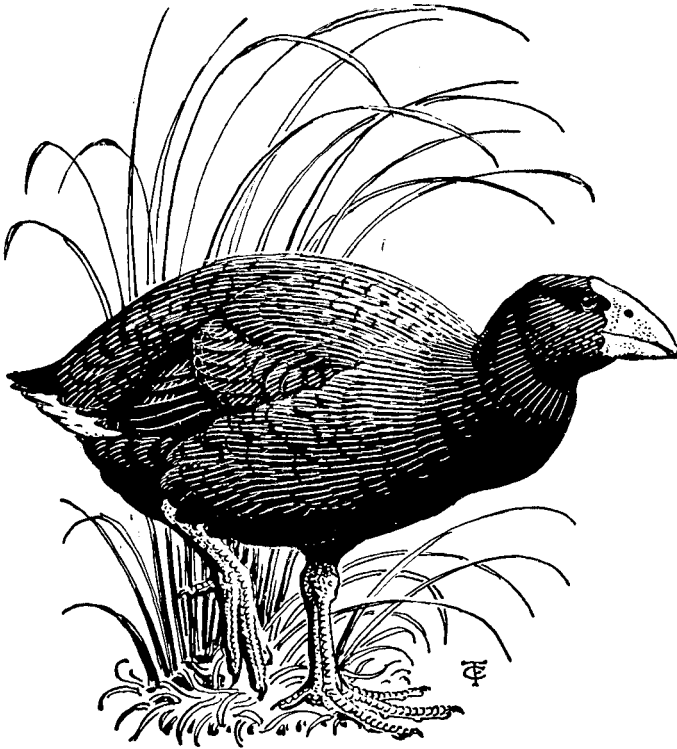


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NOTORNIS



*Bulletin of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand.
Published Quarterly.*

NOTORNIS

In continuation of New Zealand Bird Notes.

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The National Publicity Studios have presented the society with a film strip entitled "Birds of New Zealand: Natives of the Forest." The strip is available for loan to members from the society's library, and copies may be purchased from the studios at 5s.

The early cyclostyled issues, which are being published by the society, are in the printer's hands for setting.

The manuscript of the society's "List of the Birds of New Zealand" is now in the hands of the printers, Messrs. H. A. & A. W. Reed, Wellington. It is hoped that the list will be published in the first half of 1953. The price of the checklist (which can now be ordered at a special pre-publication figure of 7s. 6d. a copy) will be 10s. 6d. a copy after publication.

BACK NUMBERS.—Members who wish to complete their sets of "Notornis" should do so without delay, as some of the numbers are in very short supply. All back numbers have been priced separately, varying according to the number in hand. Prices of complete volumes are: Vol. I., 15s.; Vol. II., 16s. 6d.; Vol. III., 13s. 6d.; Vol. IV., 14s. 3d.

BLACK-BACKED GULL BREEDING AT HIGH ALTITUDES

• By W. R. B. Oliver, Wellington.

Although the breeding places of the black-backed gull are mostly at sea level or very near thereto, this species sometimes breeds at considerable heights on the mountains. Black-backed gulls are frequently encountered at high altitudes. I have had them flying overhead while I was standing on the top of the Blimit, above Arthurs Pass at an altitude of 6,000 feet, but I did not find any nests in the region of the pass. There is a record of a nest having been found at a height of over 5000 feet near Lake Wakatipu. Stead (Life Hist., N.Z. Birds, 45, 1932) gives the flat tops of mountain ranges as one of the breeding stations of the black-backed gull and refers to an extensive colony on the Rock and Pillar Range in Central Otago at an altitude of 3,000 feet. We may speculate on the causes of these coastal birds breeding on the mountains. The sea coast in south-west Nelson and northern Westland is now mostly settled and there is a road close to the shore. This probably caused the gulls of this region to abandon the coast as a breeding resort and to transfer to the open spaces on the Paparoa Range.

In February, 1949, and again in January, 1952, with Mr. A. R. Thompson, of Greymouth, I visited Mount Davy at the south end of the Paparoa Range. From Greymouth this mountain is seen to have steep forest-covered slopes and a truncated but sloping top of rock scantily covered with scrub plants. When wet and reflecting the sun's rays this rocky surface sometimes looks as though it was covered with snow, which, indeed, in winter time is actually the case. In one locality where the surface is slightly hollow and retains some soil, there is a patch of tussock which, surprisingly, contains a number of introduced plants, including Yorkshire fog, brown top, sweet vernal, poa, sorrel and gorse. The height above sea level of this nearly bare slope is from 2,500 to 2,800 feet. It is fairly extensive as it stretches for more than a mile along the mountain top. On this rocky slope, including the tussock, black-backed gulls have established a breeding colony. As the season was late on both my visits it was difficult to estimate the number of nests, but I thought there must be between 100 and 200 while some 300 adult birds were present. Mr. Thompson thought the figures should be higher. The date of the visit was January 7, 1952.

The nests were of two types: high ones, that is a foot or so high, and low nests with the rim a few inches above the surrounding rock or peat. The soil is probably always more or less boggy and the bases of the high nests were wet and rotting. The material used for the nests consisted of sticks and leaves of such mountain plants as were about. The bulk of the material was tufts of the grass *Danthonia australis* and there was a considerable proportion of moss which kept green on the soggy nests. Moss covered the ground in many places and one could see where the birds had got beakfuls of it for their nests. The white leaves of the mountain daisy (*Celmisia semicordata*) showed conspicuously on the nests, and there were stems of *Hypolaena* and *Forstera* and twigs of manuka, which, as very stunted plants, exists on this inhospitable mountain top. Lichens added to the nests made them look as though they had been purposely decorated.

In a few of the nests there were eggs. On January 7 I noted four nests with one egg each and three nests with two eggs each. There were numbers of fledglings hiding among the rocks and shrubs. One attempted to fly but was promptly set on by an adult bird which gave it some savage pecks and so forced it to the ground where I suppose the parent thought it to be more safe. They had shown a good deal of resentment at our presence.

It is evident that most, if not all, the food required for the young gulls is brought from the coast, five or six miles away in a straight line. We found pipi shells, whole valves and broken into small pieces, and we gathered a gastropod shell (*Neothais*). There were also sheep bones, some with sawn ends, evidently retrieved from back yards in Greymouth. The introduced plants mentioned above were probably brought unintentionally from the coast, and if so they show that seabirds can transport seeds from the lowlands to the mountain tops.

NOTORNIS REPORTED SEEN IN 1910.

The following letter, written by Mr. W. A. Cumming, of 23 Ngarimu Street, Palmerston North, to Mr. Edgar Dear, of Kopane, under date August 23, 1952, is published with the writer's permission:—

"Referring to our conversation of a few weeks ago regarding the re-discovery of the previously believed to be extinct notornis by Dr. Orbell in 1948, this gentleman, and no doubt other ornithologists might be interested to learn that in company with several others, I personally saw a notornis in late January, 1910.

"At this time I was serving as a leading-seaman aboard H.M.S. Challenger, when the ship left on a cruise to Stewart Island and the West Coast Sounds, calling at Preservation Inlet, Breaksea, Doubtful, Dusky, Milford and George Sounds.

"So far as I can recall, the ship anchored only at Preservation Inlet, Milford and George sounds, passing through Breaksea, Dusky and Doubtful sounds during daylight, it being purely a sight-seeing cruise for the captain, officers and ship's company, 50 per cent. of whom were Imperial ratings, the remainder being composed of Australians and New Zealanders.

"After leaving Milford, where the ship stayed several days, we made for George Sound, where we dropped anchor at a place called Gear Arm, a beautiful stretch of water surrounded by mountains from 1500 to 2000 feet or more in height covered with dense bush right down to the water's edge. The ship stayed at this spot for two days, and our racing cutter's crew (12 men and a coxswain) of which I was a member, who were in training for a race against a cutter's crew from H.M.S. Pioneer on our return to Port Chalmers, grasped the opportunity of going away for a three-mile pull, night and morning.

"On the second day after our arrival we had completed a strong workout in the cutter and were resting on our oars having a breather and would be about 50 feet or thereabouts from the shore, when without any warning a large bird emerged from the bush and walked out to a small sandspit in full view of the cutter's crew. Almost immediately I called the attention of my opposite number by saying, "Hi, Nobby, get an eyeful of the outside in pukekos. Have you ever seen one as big as that before?" To which he replied, "What a lovely shot. Wish we had a rifle in the boat." We sat quietly watching the bird for several minutes. It appeared to be watching the boat and I observed that while it appeared to have all the characteristics of a pukeko there was a marked difference in size particularly, and in colour. The beak was more powerful, and the legs stronger. I would say that it was at least twice the size of any pukeko I had seen, like a Black Orpington rooster, for instance, but more streamlined. The head, neck and breast appeared to be indigo blue, being brighter in parts; the back and towards the tail appeared to be of greenish colour, while the upper parts of the legs were more black than blue. I also observed some white feathers under the tail. The beak appeared to be bright red, changing to a pinky hue, but brighter at the tip as near as I can recall, and the legs of a reddish colour. Had the sun been shining at the time, I should imagine that it would have made this bird look very much prettier. Altogether, I should think that the bird was in full view of the cutter's crew for three or four minutes, until one of the crew dropped his oar in the water, when the bird immediately took fright and scuttled back into the bush. We waited a few minutes, but there was no further sign of the bird, and we returned to the ship. Apart from mentioning the matter to several other New Zealanders on the ship at the time, I never gave another thought to the incident until some few years later, when a schoolteacher friend of mine going overseas with the 1st N.Z.E.F. gave me a book on N.Z. flora and fauna, and on opening same the first thing I observed, it being the only coloured plate in the book, was a picture of a notornis, the replica of the bird I had seen at Gear Arm several years previously, and which I had read about as being extinct.

"Subsequently, on reading an article in the 'Auckland Weekly News' about this bird wherein it was stated that only four live specimens had ever been seen, the last in 1898, which had been caught by a dog near Lake Te Anau, and that three of these were now in museums: one in London, one

in either Berlin or Dresden, and one in the Dunedin Museum, I decided to write to the late Mr. Edgar Stead and tell him of my experience at Gear Arm in 1910. Actually, I did write a similar account of my experience as I've written here, but got the idea into my head that Mr. Stead may have thought I was romancing in view of the fact that such a long time had elapsed, and I had not reported it. The facts of the matter are that at the time I knew nothing about a notornis or that ever one existed. What I really thought I saw at Gear Arm was an outside in pukekos, and it was not until I saw the coloured plate in the book my friend gave me that I realised it was something totally different. Perhaps if we as children had been taught a little more about natural history in our schools we wouldn't have grown up so ignorant as to what this country contained in the way of bird life, etc."

INQUIRY INTO THE STATUS OF FAIRY TERN IN N.Z. INTERIM REPORT.

By Noelle Macdonald, Howick.

From over 120 questionnaires distributed to members regarding the inquiry into the status of the fairy tern (*Sterna nereis*) only 27 have been returned. These have come from all parts of the country, ranging from Stewart Island to Whangaroa, through many of the central areas of the two islands.

As far as can be judged at this stage, the fairy tern anywhere is rare, and numbers seem to have diminished in the South Island especially, where at the turn of the century this bird was comparatively plentiful. There are early records of the bird having been observed in such areas as the Rakaia River mouth and Lake Ellesmere, but recent records are mostly confined to the North Island, chiefly in the Pakiri-Mangawhai and Waipu-Ruakaka areas, though one or two birds have been observed at different times on the Kaipara, Manukau and Firth of Thames. Within the last twenty years the fairy tern has been observed at Tauranga, Manawatu, Blenheim and the Rangitikei River, and some eggs collected at Hawke's Bay are now in the Canterbury Museum; but no birds have been reported from these areas in recent years.

The only known present-day breeding ground appears to be on the sandhills just south of Mangawhai, where nests were recorded in the last twelve years. In 1951 a nest was reported to Mr. L. Wintle, who also found a fledgling that had just left the nest. In 1939, 1940 and 1941 nests were found and photographed by Dr. C. A. Fleming, Major G. A. Buddle and Mr. S. D. Potter. No other nest records have as yet come to hand, but this does not mean that the birds have not nested elsewhere. Further information in this respect is required.

Regarding population numbers, according to reports received so far, not more than six birds have been seen at any one time or place, except a very doubtful record of twenty at Stewart Island. Odd birds have been observed at various places in the North Island, but the fact that they have been recorded only once tends to show that they were probably birds of passage and not regular inhabitants.

One fact evident, even at this early stage of the inquiry, is the marked decrease of the fairy tern in New Zealand, and the extreme importance of preserving the remaining few. It is gratifying to learn that the Department of Internal Affairs has now declared the Mangawhai area—beach and sandhills—a sanctuary. Much of the credit for this goes to Mr. Wintle, who pressed the urgency of the matter with the Department.

Much more information is still required and if members have any knowledge whatsoever of the fairy tern in New Zealand would they please send it to the organiser of the inquiry, Miss N. Macdonald, Keppoch Lodge, Sale Street, Howick, Auckland. There may yet be other areas where this bird still breeds, and the importance of discovering these and taking the necessary preservation measures cannot be too strongly emphasised. Particularly important for further investigation by members are any areas of sandhills with a river or lake nearby. To those who have already helped with this inquiry sincere thanks are extended.

SUMMARISED CLASSIFIED NOTES.

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 W. Williamson, Dunedin.
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BROWN KIWI (*Apteryx australis*).—Rotoma, 3/5/52, one caught in trap near quarry (J.D.C.). Minginui, 45 miles S.E. of Rotorua, 20, 21/10/51, calling by swamp on Waiau Stream (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, three separate birds heard one night; footprints found; a good population (H.R.McK.). Bravo Island, Paterson Inlet, 4/12/51, one seen 11 a.m. on small flat (W.A.W.).

CRESTED PENGUIN (*Eudyptes pachyrhynchus*).—Observed from launch, 1/1/1951, about 2 miles off the coast, at The Steeples, Cape Foulwind; Buller, adult swimming, 6.30 p.m. (T.J.P.).

YELLOW-EYED PENGUIN (*Megadyptes antipodes*).—Lucky Beach, N-W of Saddle Point, Stewart Island, Dec., 1951, one with two half-grown chicks on culler's track (W.A.W.).

LITTLE BLUE PENGUIN (*Eudyptula minor*).—Waitemata Harbour, 22/10/51, 1; 7/1/52, 8; 9/3/52, 1 (N.W.). Bethell's Beach, Auckland, 27/12/51, one found dead on beach with a fully developed egg inside (G.E.T.)

DABCHICK (*Poliiocephalus rufopectus*). — Cambridge Lake, July, 1952, pair reported by Rac Shanks (N.M.). Taupo, 16/11/52, 1; further south of lake, same day, pair shepherding half-grown chick (N.M.). Roto-Ngaio Lagoon, Lake Taupo, 15/4/52, 9 (F.M.B.). Bulls, 1952, lagoon, formerly dry, now two feet deep, four dabchicks appeared. (K.W.D.). Lagoon, near Foxton, 25/10/52, two (M.C.D., T.A.) Kourarau, pair reared three chicks (hatched c. 26/1/52) which remained as late as 3/8/52; 1 at least until 1/10/52. At Longridge, a few miles away, pair took up residence and reared 2 young 1950-51; two more were reared 1951-52; seen 31/5/52; then stated to be seven birds on 2 dams. (J.M.C.).

DIVING PETREL (*Pelecanoides urinatrix*).—South-West King, Jan., 1952, well-grown chick in burrow (M.E.J.). Crossing from Leigh to, Little Barrier, 25/5/52, 80plus (N.M. and L.W.). Great Barrier Is., off Port Fitzroy, 21/12/51, 3 (A.J.G.).

WHITE-FACED STORM PETREL (*Pelagodroma marina*).—Muriwai, 11/11/51, one corpse (N.M. and J.C.D.). From m.v. Viti, five miles east of Tiri Tiri Is., Hauraki Gulf, 13/9/52, 4 p.m., report by Mr. E. G. Coudrey, master, a large loose flock, the birds about 50 feet apart, quietly skipping the waves as if questing for food, stretching away as far as could be seen with binoculars, c. 1,000 in sight at any one time (M.A.d'A.). Motutapu Is., to Kawau Is., to Great Barrier Is., 21/12/51, 20 to 30 scattered all the way; 23/1/52, off Waiheke Is. to Coromandel Is., seen all the way, but none on similar trips on 25/1/52, 8/3/52 and 10/4/52 (A.J.G.). Between Tarakihi Is. and Coromandel, 23/1/52, 10. (J.McK).

BLACK-BELLIED STORM PETREL (*Fregetta tropica*).—Jan. 1952, several birds identified, South Tasman Sea, about 80 miles west of Fiordland. (C.A.F.)

CAPE PIGEON (*Daption capensis*).—Whatipu 1/2/52, one ashore (M.B.G. and G.E.T.).

GIANT PETREL (*Macronectes giganteus*).—Awhitu Pen., 10/7/52, two. (V.M.R.) Near Motutapu Is., off Auckland, 21/12/51, one on water (A.J.G.). Piha, 2/6/52, one; Whatipu, 3/9/52, two (M.B.G.). Waitemata, 27/9/52, 6 quite close in to wharves (N.M.). Rangitoto Channel, 9/12/51, one seen several times (J.C.D., G.W.G.). Maioro, 12/9/52, 2 dead (H.J.C.). Ngauranga, 26/9/52, one in white plumage phase, had many dark flecks throughout plumage; 6/10/52, another white phase. (E.B.J.).

BLUE PETREL (*Halobaena caerulea*).—Clinks Gully, Dargaville, 28/8/50, one dried corpse. (G.E.T.)

BROAD-BILLED PRION (*Pachyptila vittata*).—Muriwai, 23/3/52, 1 adult male showing full moult of primaries and rectrices, 1st, 2nd and 3rd primaries measured 48, 70, 110 m.m. respectively (J.C.D., N.M.). Maioro, 10/7/52, three collected (R.S.H.). South Brighton beach, 22/10/51, corpse (D.E.C.).

LESSER BROAD-BILLED PRION (*P. salvini*).—Awhitu, 10/7/52, 3 all fresh, 25/8/52, 1 old (V.M.R. and S.C.R.). Piha, 30/6/52, four recently ashore (J.C.D. and N.M.).

DOVE PRION (*P. desolata*).—Muriwai, 11/11/51, one dead (J.C.D., N.M.). Corpses: Port Waikato, 3/11/51, one ancient; Muriwai, 9/12/51, two (N.M.). New Brighton beach, 23/8/51, corpse (D.E.C.).

FAIRY PRION (*P. turtur*).—Awhitu Pen., 11/11/51, five dead (R.B.S., S.C.R., V.M.R.). Corpses: Ruakaka, 9-12/5/51, eight, all very

fresh (N.M.). Piha, 30/6/52, one of two birds found, a female with undeveloped gonad, had ensheathed feathers on abdomen (J.C.D. and N.M.).

FLESH-FOOTED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus carneipes*).—Awhitu Pen., 23/12/51, one (V.M.R.). Motutapu Is., to Kawau Is., 21/12/51, six singly; off Kawau Is., four, then none on to Great Barrier Is.; 23/1/52 to 10/4/52, four trips from Clevedon to Coromandel coast and back, scattered all across the firth, sometimes numerous (A.J.G.). 22/1/52, one seen off Tarakihi Is.; 23/1/52, four between Tarakihi Is. and Coromandel (J.McK.). Waitemata, 9/3/52, one; corpses, Ruakaka, May, 1951, 3 immature (N.M.). Hawke's Bay, off coast, 20-21/5/52, one (D.B.). Cook Strait, 14/5/52, five plus seen (R.B.S., C.A.F., J.M.C.).

BULLER'S SHEARWATER (*P. bulleri*).—Waipipi, Awhitu, 7/1/52, one (S.C.R.). Ruakaka, 9/5/51, one (N.M.). Ponui Is., to Kereta Bay, 8/3/52, two; Ponui Is. to Te Kouma, 10/4/52, two; Tarakihi Islet, off Waiheke Is., 27/4/52, one (A.J.G.). Muriwai, 25/5/52, two recently ashore. (J.C.D.). Piha, 2/6/52, one (M.B.G.). Hawke's Bay, off coast, 20-21/5/52, c. six (D.B.).

SOOTY SHEARWATER (*P. griseus*).—Awhitu Pen., 11/11/51, 11 recently ashore (R.B.S., V.M.R., S.C.R.). Muriwai, 11/11/51, corpses, 50 in about five miles of beach, all from strong westerlies (J.C.D., N.M.). Muriwai Beach, 23/3/52, two dead in 23 miles (H.R.McK.). Bethell's Beach, Auckland, 28/10/51, continuous flocks of dark shearwaters were seen making their way southward along the coast, many hundreds of birds must have passed during the day (J.C.D.).

SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER (*P. tenuirostris*).—Awhitu, 4/1/52, one; 10/1/52, one; 17/1/52, two (S.C.R., V.M.R.). Muriwai, 25/5/52, one recently dead, wing 252 m.m., culmen 33.5 m.m. (J.C.D.). Whatipu, 14/10/51, one corpse recently ashore (J.C.D., G.W.G.). Whatipu, 5/1/52, 1 corpse, wing 287 m.m., culmen 33.4 (J.C.D., M.B.G.).

FLUTTERING SHEARWATER (*P. gavia*).—South-West King, Jan., 1952, young found (M.E.J.). Muriwai Beach, 23/3/52, one dead in 23 miles (H.R.McK.). Motutapu Is. to Whangaparaoa Pen., 21/12/51, small lots up to 10 all the way; near Kawau Is., c. 250; no more seen until some a few miles off Great Barrier Is.; 23/1/52, Happy Bay Is., Coromandel, several small flocks; 8/3/52, Ponui Is., to Kereta Bay, Coromandel, several flocks of up to 30; 10/4/52, Ponui Is. to Te Kouma, Coromandel, none, but on return trip on 14/4/52 several flocks of up to 30; 15/6/52, off Awa-awaroa Bay, Waiheke Is., c. 50; off Putiki Bay, c. 300 (A.J.G.). Waitemata, 7/1/52, some flying; 27/1/52, two (N.M.). Tarakihi Is., 26/1/52, 10; Waiheke Passage, 22/1/52, c. 100; between Tarakihi Is. and Coromandel, 25 (J.McK.). Tauranga, 2/8/52, a fairly fresh corpse found on the harbour shore of Mt. Maunganui, first petrel ashore for some months (M.H.). Hawke's Bay, off coast, 20-21/5/52, 50 plus (D.B.).

HUTTON'S SHEARWATER (*P. g. huttoni*).—South Brighton Beach, 22/10/51, four washed up in easterly storm, one made into skin, identified by Dr. R. A. Falla, first record for this beach (D.E.C.).

ALLIED SHEARWATER (*P. assimilis*).—Awhitu Pen., 11/11/51, one dead (R.B.S., V.M.R., S.C.R.). Whatipu, 22/12/51, one dried skin (J.C.D. and G.W.G.).

WHITE-CHINNED PETREL (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*).—Muriwai, 9/12/51, corpses, 2, one male, both fresh; 27/4/52, one ancient corpse. (N.M.). Waiuku coast, 24/12/51, one recently ashore (H.J.C.).

GREY-FACED PETREL (*Pterodroma macroptera*).—Muriwai, 21/12/51, three corpses (M.B.G.).

WHITE-HEADED PETREL (*Pt. lessoni*).—Awhitu Pen., 13/1/52, one (V.M.R.). Muriwai, 21/12/51, 3 ashore (M.B.G.). Muriwai, 27/4/52 2 (N.M.). Muriwai Beach, 23/3/52, one in 23 miles, two weeks dead (H.R.McK.). Ardmore, 15/8/51, one alive on road, escaped over gorse hedge; 16/8/51, found it back on road, dead; victim of series of westerly storms (F.W.G.). New Brighton Beach, 14/6/52, corpse (D.E.C.).

MOTTLED PETREL (*Pt. inexpectata*).—Awhitu Pen., 4/1/52, one; 13/1/52, one; 25/1/52, one fresh (V.M.R., S.C.R.). Corpse: Karaka, 30/3/52, one (N.M., D.A.U.).

WANDERING ALBATROSS (*Diomedea exulans*).—Off Awatoto, H.B., 7/6/52 (D.B.).

BLACK-BROWED MOLLYMAWK (*Thalassarche melanophrys*).—Awhitu Pen., 10/7/52, one juv. (V.M.R.). Corpse: Muriwai, 27/7/52, 1 immature (N.M.). Ponui Is., Hauraki Gulf, 7/2/51, P. Chamberlain reported one between Ponui and mainland (H.R.McK.).

BULLER'S MOLLYMAWK (*Th. bulleri*).—Muriwai, 27/4/52, one corpse (N.M.).

WHITE-CAPPED MOLLYMAWK (*Th. cauta*).—Awhitu Pen., 27/1/52, one recently ashore; 10/7/52, one ashore (V.M.R.). Muriwai Beach, 20 miles up, one dead; 23 miles up, one dead (H.R.McK.). Muriwai, 25/5/52, one freshly dead adult male with 1st, 2nd and 3rd primaries missing, new feathers showing, 25, 100 and 220 m.m. respectively beyond sheaths (J.C.D.). Corpses: Muriwai, 27/4/52, one; 27/7/52, three; Little Barrier Is., 3/6/52, one fresh (N.M.). Upper Harbour, Dunedin, 29/3/52, one flying over steamer basin (L.E.W.).

GREY-HEADED MOLLYMAWK (*Th. chrysostoma*).—Awhitu Pen., 10/3/52, five; 25/8/52, three (V.M.R., S.C.R.). Corpses: Muriwai, 27/7/52, two immature (N.W.). Whatipu, 3/9/52, two juv. (M.B.G.). Whakataki, East Coast, 12/9/52, month old corpse (R.H.D.S.).

LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY ALBATROSS (*Phoebastria palpebrata*).—Whatipu, 14/10/51, one, only dried remains left, had extremely small body measurements, viz., wing 490 m.m., tail 250, culmen 92.2, tarsus 72, toe and claw 125 (J.C.D.). Muriwai, 11/11/51, dried skin, culmen 109.1 m.m. (J.C.D., N.M.); 21/12/51, skeleton (M.B.G.). Christchurch, 13/6/52, one stranded in garden, c 2 miles inland during southerly storm; it was very weak and hard to feed; when it had recovered it was released from New Brighton beach pier (D.E.C.).

RED-TAILED TROPIC BIRD (*Phaethon rubricauda*).—7/2/52, two seen in mid-Tasman Ocean between Sydney and North Cape (D. M. Goodrich, per K.C.B.C.).

PIED SHAG (*Phalacrocorax varius*).—The Steeples, off Cape Foulwind, Buller, scores roosting on the rocks, many birds still active, 7 p.m., 1/1/51; Totara River mouth, near Charleston, one, 31/12/50 (T.J.P.).

LITTLE BLACK SHAG (*P. sulcirostris*).—Maraetai, 23/7/51, 18 on a wharf (R.J.F.). Thames, 2/12/51, one (G.M.C., K.E.F.).

WHITE-THROATED SHAG (*P. melanoleucos*).—Western Springs, 23/2/50, 40 plus; 23 nests on trees on island (N.M.); 8/2/52, four nests containing eggs, eight nests with 16 chicks (A.W.D.). Maraetai—Whitford area, Auckland, at Nicholson's Beach, 12/4/52, 63 (M.A.d'A.).

SPOTTED SHAG (*Stictocarbo p. punctatus*).—Bethells, 2/8/52, c. 300, courtship display, carrying seaweed to nest sites, crests still visible, one immature bird, buff colour (N.M.). Oaia Islet, Muriwai Beach, 1951-52, a nesting colony low down on the north side of the islet; Mr. T. Wightman reported from his diary, 11/11/51, nests with one, two and three eggs (G.W.). Waiheke Is., outside Man-o-War Bay, 10/3/52, 60 plus on rocks; Hautapu Pt., Coromandel, 12/4/52, one on rocks (A.J.G.). Kaikoura, 15/5/52, 38 plus; further south, c. 60 on rock (R.B.S., C.A.F., J.M.C.). Goose Bay, 20/5/52, c. 1200 at dusk (R.B.S.). Summer Head, near Taylor's Mistake, Christchurch, breeding, 15, 14/11/51; Lake Ellesmere, one, 9/12/51 (T.J.P.). Waiiau Mouth, Southland, 16/2/52, three, the first I have seen there (J.H.S.).

BLUE SHAG (*Stictocarbo p. steady*).—About 12 on old wharf and on rocks, north end of Horseshoe Bay, Stewart Island, 19/12/51 (W.A.W.).

GANNET (*Morris serrator*).—Oaia Islet, Muriwai Beach, north of Auckland, 1951-52, usual nesting area well occupied. Gannets mostly on

the upper east side and extending to narrow north face, the south-west ridge and over the top a little. White-fronted tern on high south-east face and spotted shags on low north face. Mr. T. Wightman reported from his diary, 11/11/51, gannets sitting on eggs and a few newly-hatched chicks (G.W.). Halfway between Ponui Is., and Coromandel, 8/3/52, a juvenile; an adult was some distance away but the two did not appear to be associated (A.J.G.). Clevedon, 23/8/51, one on partly-flooded flat on Mr. G. A. Bell's farm, six miles from sea, after N-E gale; it seemed exhausted but finally flew away (H.R.McK.). Cape Kidnappers, 6/4/52, 70, two dead (R.L.G.).

WHITE HERON (*Casmerodius albus*).—Pollen Island, Auckland, 6/9/52, one (A.W.D.). Howick (Shelly Park), from 6/6/52, one, daily visitor; also "pair" seen 14/6/52, 22/7/52 and 21/10/52, then courting (B.W.). Numerous reports during the winter from many parts of the Auckland province including 18 in the Awanui Harbour between May and July, eight at Maketu, Bay of Plenty, on 28/4/52, six at Maioro Bay, Waiuku, on 15/7/52, five near Dargaville in May besides other reports from Mangonui, Whangarei, Waipu, Manukau Harb., Howick, Hamilton, Lake Rotorua, Tauranga, Matata, Clevedon and Aotea Harb. (J.C.D.). Hamurana, Rotorua, 19/10/52, one (A.C.H.). Wanstead Swamp, seven, 5/7/52; first reported "Daily Telegraph," 15/5/52; Ahuriri Lagoon, six, 27/4/52 (D.B.). Porirua Harb., 13/7/52, two; Lake Wairarapa, 5/10/52, five, first reported in May; Ponatahi, Wairarapa, 18/5/52, 1 found dead (R.H.D.S.) Manawatu River, 26/10/52, five (M.C.D., T.A.) Lake Ellesmere, 28/10/51, three (R.P.). Lake Forsythe, 19/5/52, five (R.B.S., H.R.McK.). Lake Ellesmere, one, 9/12/51; Waipara River, one, 23/6/52 (reported by Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Brown) (T.J.P.). Lake Tuakitoto, four; Green Island, one, 18/4/52 (O.D.T.). Otokia, 14/4/52, one (H.C.B.). Reported seven seen L. Waiholia first week May, 1952; reported two seen daily between L. McKerrow and sea, 28/12/51 to 9/1/52; later one found dead, seemed to have died from natural causes (I.T.). Karitane, 10/8/51, one; Waiholia, 9/1/52, one (K.P.S.). Stirling, 17/6/52, one on pond; Stirling Hill, 28/6/52, eleven reported roosting in macrocarpa trees (R.V.McL.). Lake Tuakitoto, 10/5/52, 12 reported in one group (L.E.W.). One, Waitati, 29/3/52 (Miss C. White, D.N.F.C.). One Merton Swamps, 2/5/52 (Mrs. J. A. Moore, D.N.F.C.). Near Invercargill, 20/4/52, one; Oreti, 4/5/52, one; Lake Waituna, four reported (R.M.R.).

WHITE-FACED HERON (*Notophox novaehollandiae*).—Parengarenga Harbour, 13/5/52, nine (A.H.W.). Karaka, 30/3/52, six (D.A.U.). Shelly Park, 5/7/52, five (H.R.McK.). Other side of creek, 30/8/52, eight (N.M.). Karaka, 26/7/52, four seen (A.P.). Firth of Thames, 15/6/52, one (R.B.S.). Kauroa, Raglan, first week May, 1952, one (J.M.D.). Ahuriri Lagoon, H.B., one on 12/7/52 and 26/7/52 (D.B.). Manawatu River, 26/10/52, three (M.C.D., T.A.). Waikanae, 28/10/52, one (M.C.D.). Lake Wairarapa, 18/9/52, two (I.E.B.); 5/10/52, two (R.H.D.S.). Porirua Harbour, 13/7/52, five (R.H.D.S.). Picton, 15/5/52, two; Kaikoura, one (J.M.C., R.B.S., C.A.F.). Kaikoura, 21/5/52, two (R.B.S.). Lake Forsythe, 19/5/52, three, possibly four (R.B.S., H.R.McK.). Ashley mouth, 18/5/52, 11 (H.R.McK.). Shag River, Dunback, 15/1/52, two (J.P.C.W.). Berwick, Otago, 29/5/52, one (H.C.B.). Waikouaiti River, Karatane, 4/11/51, two; Blueskin Bay, Waitati, 11-16/4/52, two; reported pair nested in pinus insignis; Blueskin Bay, 15/5/52, three (I.T.). Motueka, 11/1/52, two on mudflats; Merton, Otago, 19/1/52, one ((L.E.W.). Of 15 birds recorded in five localities in Otago and Canterbury, between 30/10/51 and 14/11/51, one at Pounawea, Otago, 9/11/51, was the most southerly, and one at Kartigi, 12/11/51, was the most northerly (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Waitati, 1-5/5/52, one (Miss C. White, D.N.F.C.). Invercargill Estuary, 15/2/52, 15 (J.H.S.).

REEF HERON (*Demigretta sacra*).—Waterfront, Auckland, 5/10/52, one (N.M.). Nelson, 13/1/52 and 14/1/52, one (L.E.W.). Kaikoura Stream mouth, 25/8/51, one (R.M.J.). Jan., 1952, one seen near Anita Bay, Milford Sound (C.A.F.).

BITTERN (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*).—Maoro, 12/9/52, one flying (H.J.C.). Minginui, May, 1952, one came as usual for its annual moult; Lake Whakaki, May 1952, up to six seen in one day (R.St.P.). Roto-Ngaio Lake Taupo, 15/4/52, nine to ten disturbed (F.M.B.). Taupo, 14/11/51, one at Motuopa (N.M.). Waitotara, 26/10/52, one (J.M.C.). Manakau, Manawatu, 23/5/52, one seen from train (E.D.). Shag River, Dunback, 22/10/51, one or two (T.R.B.). Tomahawk Lagoon, Dunedin, 3/9/51, one; Te Moana, South Canterbury, 19/1/52, one present for three weeks (L.E.W.). One on road about half-way between Outram and Berwick, 16/7/52 (W.A.W.). Waianakarua, Otago, bitterns have frequented a farm in this district for over 70 years, usually only one bird seen at a time, but on two occasions two birds were observed together; the present bird is very tame. (S.K.).

ROYAL SPOONBILL (*Platalea regia*).—Manawatu, last week August week Sept., 1952, five (K.C.B.C.); 26/10/52, two (R.H.D.S.).

PARADISE DUCK (*Casarca variegata*).—Minginui, Aug., 1951, two reported on flats; Lake Whakaki, 23/4/52, c. 100 in one flock, others distant (R.St.P.). Lake Forsythe, numerous, 17/5/52 (T.J.P.). Lindis Pass, 1/11/51, pair attacked by two white-backed magpies refused to give ground, male with head lowered and outstretched wings ran towards magpie when on ground; magpies also dived from the air (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

GREY DUCK (*Anas poicilorhyncha*).—Western Springs, nest containing eight eggs, 22/12/51, completely destroyed about five days later (A.W.D.). Bird Sanctuary, Cheviot, 6/1/52, 51 on lake (L.E.W.). Moa Flat, Otago, July, 1952, occasional visitors until numbers of small dams were built for watering stock; now regular visitors and increasing, with 12 regularly on one dam and, during shooting season, up to 130 frequented the largest dam; no young seen (A.J.H.).

MALLARD (*A. platyrhyncha*).—Pond, Stirling, 27/9/51, nest on willow branch, ground level, 11 hatched; by 22/10/51, none left. Others nest further away, drakes stay on pond. 4/10/51, new brood on pond; 7/4/52, pair bowing heads up and down facing each other (R.V.McL.).

GREY TEAL (*A. gibberifrons*).—Lower Waikato River, 5/5/52, a specimen, female, accidentally shot, skin in the Auckland Museum (E.G.T.). Waimangu, L. Rotomahana, 20/1/52, c. 40 (R.B.S.). Patearoa, Otago, one shot during season; Waikouaiti, Otago, May, 1952, a report was received that four had been shot; June, 1952, 29 on Waikouaiti Lagoon (L.E.W.).

SHOVELLER (*A. rhynchotis*).—Hirania Creek, Manukau Harbour, 20/3/52, one female (or juv.) (R.B.S.). Clevedon, 31/8/51, pair swimming close to shore (H.R.McK.). Maoro, 12/9/52, 15 seen resting on sandbanks (H.J.C.). L. Rotomahana, 20/1/52, 20 plus (R.B.S.). Stirling, pond, pairs, Sept. to Nov.; 25/11/51, pair with eight young (R.V.McL.). Tomahawk Lagoon, Dunedin, 23/4/52, 25 on lagoon (L.E.W.).

BROWN DUCK (*Elasmonetta chlorotis*).—Ruakaka, five, 1/1/1952 (T.J.P.). One on small stream, Little Bungaree, Stewart Island, 6/1/52; two near mouth of Freshwater River on 16/1/52; four on beach at north end of Horseshoe Bay, 31/1/52 (W.A.W.).

BLACK TEAL (*Aythya novaezealandiae*).—Mokoia Is., Rotorua, 23/1/52, female with five young only a few days old; L. Okataina, 26/1/52, female with two young; it was reported here that both black-backed gulls and kingfishers thin out the broods (R.B.S.). Lake Tutira, 27/7/52, 70 (D.B.). Bird Sanctuary, Cheviot, 6/1/52, 18 on lake (L.E.W.). Lake Heron, six reported, Nov. 1951 (T.J.P.).

BLUE DUCK (*Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus*).—Waioka Gorge, 29/12/51, five in gorge about 35 miles south of Opotiki at elevation of 750 feet, all mature ducks; they seemed curious, but timid enough to swim out of sight behind a boulder, one emerged and acted as sentry; after an interval all swam up-stream; later same day met with a single duck with a young one apparently two or three months old (N.P.). Minginui, Waiou Stream, Oct. 20, 1; 21st, 12; 22nd, 1; no young seen (R.St.P.). Forgotten

River, Olivine Dist., 8-12/3/52, two (B.W.C., H.J.T.). Takahē Valley, 17/2/52, on river below lake, male, female and five young (W.R.B.O.).

BLACK SWAN (*Cygnus atratus*).—Western Springs, 8/2/52, 25 nests with eggs including several deserted nests. This bird breeds all the year round at the lake (A.W.D.). Clevedon River mouth area, 1951-52, not known to breed here, so numbers small in spring, but up to 305 in autumn (A.J.G.). Matata Lagoon, Bay of Plenty, 27/5/52, 50 (M.A.d'A., C.D.B.). Tauranga Harbour, main haunt is a large stretch of mudbank lying out in the harbour between Tauranga and Omokoroa, 200 plus counted there during the winter, smaller numbers at other times of the year (M.H.). West Shore Lagoon, Napier, 22/6/52, c. 840 (J.M.C.). L. Hatuma, H.B., 1/1/52, c. 1000 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

WHITE SWAN (*C. olor*).—Korarau, 25/11/51, seven chicks week old; all were reared (J.M.C.). Tomahawk Lagoon, Dunedin, eleven in 1952 (L.E.W.).

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*).—Heathcote-Avon Estuary, 2/2/52, seven flew over towards S.E. (G.G.).

BUSH HAWK (*Falco novaeseclandiae*).—Ardmore, Papakura, third week in May 1952, one, thought to be no other than this species, seen closely on several days, then disappeared (F.W.G.). Rotorua, 17/1/52, seen hunting in the Government gardens and again on 25/1/52 (R.B.S.). Minginui, July 1951-June 1952, one or two seen occasionally most months but absent for nesting season (R.St.P.). Retaruke, 8/11/51, King Country, two, or one seen twice, flying down Retaruke River (H.R.McK.). Top of Desert Road, 12/5/52, one; also one near Taihape (R.B.S.). Kakariki, Wairarapa, 17/3/52, one (R.L.G.).

HARRIER (*Circus approximans*).—Minginui, July 1951-June 1952, two or three in a day, maximum six; May 1-12, about Lakes Whakaki and Karetu, H.B., from seven to 40 daily (R.St.P.). Mt. St. Mary foothills, Waitaki Valley, 13/12/51, six seen at once; Tophouse, 12/12/50, open country (W.R.B.O.).

PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*).—Dargaville, hen with eight chicks near roadside, 5/1/1952 (T.J.P.).

BROWN QUAIL (*Synoicus ypsilophorus*).—Ruakaka, 12/5/51, three; Mangawhai, 1/2/52, three (N.M.). At Cory Avenue, Bluff Hill, Napier, heard one calling 12/1/52 and again on 21 and 22/6/52; have recollections of hearing birds in July, 1947; children in neighbourhood know of no aviaries which could have captured birds (J.M.C.).

CALIFORNIAN QUAIL (*Lophortyx californicus*).—Taupo, pair with six chicks, 15/11/51; many everywhere, 13-18/11/51. Howick, some usually about except in winter (N.M.). Hilderthorpe, North Otago, 11/11/51, calls heard in nearby tree and bird settled on power lines, much to the concern of about 30 greenfinches, chirping and twittering on wires close by; only second quail seen in district (C.W.McL.).

CHUKOR (*Alectoris chukor*).—Lindis Pass, 1/11/51, pair, male displaying to female by running round her with drooping wings and head and tail lowered; female then ran round male (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

SOUTH ISLAND WEKA (*Gallirallus australis*).—On bush road 16 miles south of Karamea, Buller, pair with two chicks, curious and noisy, 6.50 p.m., 21/10/51 (T.J.P.).

BANDED RAIL (*Hypotaenidia philippensis*).—Swamp, near Waiwera-Puhio Road, 23/5/52, two (N.M.). Kamo, one, near roadside, 2/1/52 (reported by Mrs. A. Packer); Whangaroa, one, 7/1/52 (T.J.P.). Port Waikato, 3/11/51, one (R.B.S.). Maioro, 12/9/52, one (H.J.C.).

PUKEKO (*Porphyrio poliocephalus*).—Ruakaka, 7/5/51, four (N.M.). Western Springs, 30/8/52, five; in 1951-52 season a pair reared one chick (A.W.D.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, about small swamps and beds of Wanganui and Retaruke rivers; seems out of place in this steep, rugged country. Mapiu, King Country, 13/11/51, one crossed road carrying a live blackbird (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Kairimu Road, Te

Kuiti, 1952; past season good breeding one; for years population on farm 10 to 20, this year 28 to 35 seen on about 20 acres close to house; on 12/6/52, six simultaneously flew over harriers attacking flock, harriers foot or two off ground, pukekos evidently pecked hawks (R.E.W.F.).

TAKAHE (*Notornis hochstetteri*).—Takahe Valley, 17-20/2/52, in flat tussock country above lake, three adults seen. The birds always see you first and give the alarm call "umph," and may walk parallel with you at a distance of 10 to 20 yards before disappearing among the tussocks. According to the caretaker, there are seven pairs in the valley. (W.R.B.O.).

SOUTH ISLAND PIED OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus finschi*). Ruakaka, 7-14/5/51, one (N.M.). Firth of Thames, 4/11/51, two; 6/1/52, 51; 1/3/52, c. 400; 15/3/52, c. 300 (N.M., H.R.McK.). Firth of Thames, c. 40 summered; the wintering flock for 1952 was bigger than before recorded, c. 500 (R.B.S.). Westfield, Manukau Harb., 12/10/52, 45 (J.C.D., F.M.B.). Puketutu, Manukau Harbour, 5/2/52, 11; 10/2/52, 194; 2/3/52, 240; 28/6/52, 240; 24/8/52, 65 (R.B.S., N.M., et al.). Porangahau, H.B., 5/7/52, 62 — (D.B.). Lake Wairarapa north (head of lake, c. 20 miles inland), 2/3/52, two (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Manawatu, 29/10/52, six (with six *reischeki*) (J.M.C., M.C.D.). Kaikoura, 15/5/52 (R.B.S., C.A.F., J.M.C.). Heathcote Estuary, 18/5/52, c. 2700; Brooklands, c 1100; Ashley Estuary, some hundreds (J.M.C., R.B.S.). Ashley River 5/10/52 c 300 (E.W.D.). On Hampden Beach, 2/1/52, one probed sand; examined holes, all contained bivalves; from some, the mollusc had been cleanly removed, in others the bivalve was tightly closed. (O.R.C.). Purakanui Inlet, 19/7/52, 80 (E.M.M.). Reported in field, Kuri Bush, 30 in flock, others scattered about the field; first time seen away from the shore in this area by constant user of the road, on or about 14/9/51 (I.T.). Hoopers Inlet, Otago Peninsula, recorded throughout the year except in November and December. Numbers rose suddenly to hundreds late in January, 1952 (B.J.M.). Oreti, 4/2/52, over 500; Awarua Bay, 14/2/50, c. 50; Aparima estuary, early February. c. 300 (J.H.S.). Morris Mains, Otago, birds arrive at farm about mid-August; numbers increasing steadily; 30 last year; some of the birds nest in the Cardrona Riverbed (L.M.). One on Butterfield's Beach, Stewart Island, 30/1/52; one at Port William, 31/1/52 (W.A.W.).

NORTH ISLAND PIED OYSTERCATCHER (*H. reischeki*).—Ruakaka, 7-14/5/51, two (N.M.). Ruakaka, 1/8/52, two (R.B.S.). Waikaretu Beach, 19/10/51, one seen (R.B.S.). Firth of Thames, single non-breeder present Sept.-Dec., 1951 (R.B.S.). Rangitikei, 29/10/52, two; Waikanae, 23 and 28/10/52, two (with three scrapes in sand, 1 well moulded). These four birds were black with a little white below and on wings. Manawatu, 29/10/52, six, varying from fully pied to almost all black (I.M.C., M.C.D.). Kawakawa, Palliser, 30/12/51, two (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Waikanae, 2/12/51, two (J.M.C.). Kaikoura, 15/5/52, four (R.B.S., J.M.C., C.A.F.) Jan., 1952, Harrison Cove, Milford Sound, one bird in *reischeki* plumage mated with a black, on territory, but nest not found, another seen (C.A.F.)

BLACK OYSTERCATCHER (*H. unicolor*).—Ruakaka, 7/14/5/52 two; Mangawhai, 30/1/52, six on ocean beach; 2/2/52, two (N.M.). Westfield, Manukau Harb., 12/10/52, one seen with S.I. pied (F.M.B., J.C.D. and R.B.S.). Mt. Maunganui, 6/9/52, two seen on open coast, moved along beach when approached (M.H.). Two miles south of Tarawera River, Bay of Plenty, 27/5/52, two, on open coast (M.A.d'A., C.D.B.) Porangahau, 1/1/52, one; Mataikona, 23/12/51, two with nest, one egg just hatched and two chipping; coast to Castlepoint, three (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Bay of Many Coves, Queen Charlotte Sound, 5/6/4/52, three on rocks (A.J.G.). Totara River mouths, near Charleston, two pairs and one fledgling; chick quite active and unafraid when handled, 31/12/50 (T.J.P.). Blueskin Bay, 50, 15/5/52 (I.T.). Two, Sandfly Bay, 11/11/51 (Mrs. Conroy, D.N.F.C.). Waitaiti, 30, 5/5/52 (Miss C. White, D.N.F.C.). Aparima Estuary, early February, odd birds with pied (J.H.S.).

OYSTERCATCHERS.—During a camping tour from 30/10/51 to 14/11/51, from Christchurch via inland Canterbury past the cold lakes to

Tuatapere, thence via a coastal route northwards to Christchurch, we found pied oystercatchers to be very widely distributed. Breeding was recorded in a variety of inland situations, though on the coast the black oystercatcher appeared to replace the pied as a nesting species. Inland records were as follow: Opihi R., 2. Tussock-covered McKenzie Plains, 2 week-old chicks, one parent carrying what appeared to be a 6in. worm: and again 2, 1 and 1; total 6. Omarama R., 10 in c. 1 mile. Fairlight, 2 in green farmhouse paddock. Cardrona R., 1 bird of a pair moulting nest in sandy patch in shingle. An egg, presumably lost from an earlier nest measured 58.3x37.5 m.m. South of Kingston, at a swampy tarn in pasture land, were two birds displaying as if nesting. Nokomai, on dry pasture beside railway line, nest with two eggs (55.9x38.6, 59.6x38.7mm.). A little shingle and small bits of wood were in the nest, one bird sitting. Mossburn, nest lined with straw in stubble paddock, 1 egg 54.0x37.9mm. Waiau R., in ploughed paddock c 1 mile from coast, 1. Riverton-Invercargill, 2 in marshy paddock. Rangitata R., 1. The above birds were all pied, but at Papatowai Estuary a pair of black oystercatchers was seen, one bird sitting on a nest on a sand-bank. Flocks of apparently non-breeding birds were present at all tidal estuaries visited as follow: Riverton Rocks, sandy beach, 26 black; sandy beach east of estuary, 47 pied, 10 black; estuary, 36 plus pied. Oreti estuary east, c. 100 pied. Toetoes Harbour, c 80 pied, 4 black. Waikawa estuary, 36 pied. Papatowai estuary, 18 pied, 2 black. Pounaweia estuary, 77 pied, three black. Blueskin Bay, c 80 pied. Kartigi, sandy beach, one black. Heathcote estuary, 150-200 pied. No *H. reischeki* were seen (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*)—Firth of Thames, 21/11/51, one; Puketutu, 2/3/52, four (N.M., R.B.S.). Puketutu, 28/10/51, 10; 5/2/52, 28; 20/3/52, 39 (R.B.S.); 14/6/52, one (G.W.G., J.C.D.). Karaka, 26/7/52, six (A.P.). Napier Inner Harbour, 12/1/52, three; Manawatu, 26/10/52, two, showing much colour (R.H.D.S., A.S.W.). Palliser Spit, 25/11/51, two (J.M.C.). Kaikoura, 15/5/52, 8 on rocks, 2 almost in full breeding dress (R.B.S., J.M.C., C.A.F.). Oreti Estuary, 6/11/51, three (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*)—Firth of Thames, 15/3/52, 11 not coloured, 7 males in breeding plumage (N.M., H.R.McK.). Firth of Thames, 8/10/51, 35; 2/12/51, 65; 1/1/52, 60 plus (H.R.McK., R.B.S., et al.). Waitakaruru, Firth of Thames, 2/12/51, c. 65 on ploughed field (E.G.T., J.C.D.). Napier, Inner Harbour, 12/1/52, five (J.M.C.). Rangitikei mouth, 29/10/52, 17 (J.M.C., M.C.D.) Oreti, 4/2/52, over 100; Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, 36 plus (J.H.S.).

BANDED DOTTEREL (*Charadrius bicinctus*)—Mangwhai, 30/1/52, 34; 1/2/52, 42; 2/2/52, 179 (N.M.). Ruakaka, 7-14/5/52, up to 20 most days; Port Waikato, 3/11/51, 14, 1 fledgling (N.M.). Clevedon North, July, 1952, c. 150; 25/7/52, flock of 100; Aug., gradually dwindled; 8/9/52, flock of 10 seen (G.K.McK.). Whatipu, 14/10/51, 10 plus (J.C.D., G.W.G.); 3/9/52, 5 seen (M.B.G.). Maraetai to Whitford area, 12/4/52, 150; 12/5/52, 150; Waikopua Creek, 100 plus (M.A.d'A.). Ohuka, Waikato Heads, 19/10/51, a small colony seen (R.B.S.). Tauranga Harbour, 21/5/52, c. 30 seen on the upper harbour flats near the mouth of the Wairoa Stream; about this number are usually noted around this time at this spot (M.H.). Silica flat, Rotorua, 12/10/52, up to 20 (A.C.H.). Taupo, 14/11/51, 12 plus, bands very prominent; 16/11/51, 16 at Motuopa (N.M.). Tutackuri mouth, 21/6/52, 19 (J.M.C.). Lake Wairarapa north, 2/3/52, c 40 (1 only full band) (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.); 13/4/52, none (J.M.C.). Lake Onoke, 11/4/52, 63 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Lyall Bay, Wellington, 19/8/50, three feeding on beach (A.W.D.). Kaikoura, 15/5/52, six, one with full band (R.B.S., C.A.F., J.M.C.). Lake Tekapo, 31/10/51, flock 13 with full bands; L. Wanaka, two chicks c. nine days old; Washdyke, 13/11/51, c. 12 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Waimakariri Est., 18/5/52, 13; Lake Kaituna, 19/5/52, c 20 (H.R.McK., R.B.S.). Salt Meadow at Hoopers Inlet, Otago Peninsula; the flock which had wintered there left between 22/7/51 and 19/8/51; none were seen until December when five were present. During January and February the numbers built up to 70-80, as

last winter, remaining at this level until 23/7/52 when only 55 were counted (B.J.M.). Lake Hawkins, Southland, 4/2/52, over 100; Oreti, 4/2/52, many hundreds, too numerous to count; Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, 200-300, airport c. 50 (J.H.S.). About four seen at the Old Neck, near the entrance to Paterson Inlet, Stewart Island, on 20/12/51 (W.A.W.).

GEOFFREY'S SANDPLOVER (*C. leschenaulti*).—Firth of Thames, 4/11/52, one; 28/9/52, one in good plumage, orange band right round throat (R.B.S., N.M., et al.). One often recorded between 26/8/51 and 13/1/52 (R.B.S. et al.).

N.Z. DOTTEREL (*Pluviorhynchus obscurus*).—Ruakaka, 7-14/5/51, up to 15, six very red, displaying and guarding territory (N.M.). Muriwai, 17/2/52, one near creek; Whatipu, 14/10/51, 6 plus, one nest with one egg; 22/12/51, at least 10 seen (J.C.D., G.W.G.). Whatipu, 3/9/52, at least 12 birds seen (M.B.G.). Clevedon, 1951-52, from three up to 10; three pairs nested; Kaiaua-Miranda, 1951-52, up to five, but erratic; breeding was certainly attempted but was unsuccessful (H.R.McK. et al.). Kaiaua, Thames Estuary, 10/1/52, nest, one egg, on upper part of beach, opposite Kaiaua Hotel; no further egg laid; watched up to 18th, but egg gone on 22nd, probably taken by picnickers; a clutch of one egg is, of course, unusual for this species, but it would be accounted for if, as is thought, this pair had nested once or twice earlier in the season at a nearby spot and lost the eggs (R.J.F.). Waikato Heads, 3/11/51, at least two pairs (R.B.S.). Oreti, 4/2/52, six or seven, no colour (J.H.S.). One on summit of Mt. Anglem, Stewart Island, 3/1/52 (W.A.W.).

WRYBILL PLOVER (*Anarhynchus frontalis*).—Puketutu, 31/12/51, 14 back; 8/1/52, 36; 5/2/52, 160; 2/3/52, 220-225; 20/3/52, c. 305; 6/5/52, 349; 28/6/52, 405, a good count; 24/8/52, 125; 9/9/52, 85 (R.B.S., N.M., J.C.D. et al.). Firth of Thames, 20/10/51, six; 4/11/51, 1; 2/12/51, 22; 22/12/51, 31; 6/1/52, c. 70; 15/3/52, 1200-1400; 22/6/52, c. 50; 10/8/52, 1000 plus; 31/8/52, c. 400; 14/9/52, 50 at Miranda, c. 800 at Waitakaruru; 28/9/52, c. 100 (H.R.McK., R.B.S., N.M. etc.). Lake Rotorua, 19/1/52, two seen at mouth of the Whaka Stream could not be found on subsequent days (R.B.S.). Manawatu mouth, 26/10/52, four, all showing good bands (R.H.D.S.). Lagoons head of Lake Pukaki, 23/1/51, one (I.T.).

SPUR WINGED PLOVER (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*).—Lake Hawkins, Southland, 4/2/52, 25-30; reported by Les Wilson at Wairaki-Waiu River (J.H.S.).

KNOT (*Calidris canutus*).—Ruakaka, 8/5/51, one; Mangawhai, 2/2/52, 175, some very coloured (N.M.). Puketutu, 3/2/52, 320; 24/2/52, 500; 2/3/52, 1500 plus (R.B.S.). Mataitai, Clevedon, 23/9/51, seven; one partly coloured; possibly winterers from northern N.Z., moving south for summer; they do not stay at Clevedon (H.R.McK.). Rangitikei mouth, 29/10/52, six (J.M.C., M.C.D.). Selwyn mouth, L. Ellesmere, 13/11/51, seven with one godwit (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Kew, Oreti Est., 6/11/51, at least one flying with godwit (R.H.D.S.). Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, 44 (J.H.S.).

AMERICAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*C. melanotos*).—Waitotara mouth, 26/10/52, one (J.M.C.).

SIBERIAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*C. acuminata*).—Firth of Thames, 4/11/51, two at pools (N.M., R.B.S.). Firth of Thames, 8/10/51, three; 14-15/12/51, four at Miranda and three at Waitakaruru; 22/12/51 to 1/3/52, five; 18/3/52, three; 19/4/52, one (H.R.McK., R.B.S., et al.).

RED-NECKED STINT (*C. minuta ruficollis*).—Firth of Thames, 14/12/51, two; 6/1/52, five with wrybill; 1/3/52, three; three throughout winter still present on 28/9/52 (R.B.S., N.M., H.R.McK.).

CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Erolia testacea*).—Miranda, 8/10/51, two; 14-15/12/51, two; 21/12/51, one at pools; Waitakaruru, 14/9/52, one feeding with wrybill still in very red plumage; 28/9/52, one, probably same bird still with wrybill, colour fading a little, but still quite dark. (N.M., R.B.S.).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*).—Ruakaka, 7, 8, 11/5/51, two; 10, 12/5/51, six; 13/5/51, three; 14/5/52, 27 (N.M.). Mangawhai, 30/1/52, c 50; 1/2/52, 58; 2/2/52, 325, some very red (W.M.). Mangere, Auck., 5/10/51, c. 20 flying low in gale (R.B.S.). Puketutu, 2/5/52, c 3,500 (R.B.S.). Mataitai, Clevedon, 1951 spring migration build-up: 1/9/51, 10, all pale; 23/9/51, c. 80, all pale; 25/9/51, 140, distant, but thought to be migrants; 27/9/51, 500 plus; 1/10/51, c. 500; 2/10/51, c 700; 3/10/51, 600 plus; 7/10/51 from 800 to 'over 1000; 11/11/51, 1,100 plus; 3/11/51, 1,200 plus (G.M.C., K.E.F., F.M., H.R.McK. et al.). Clevedon river-mouth area, summer, 1951-52, up to 250; 10/5/52, six; 17/5/52, one (A.J.G.). Ohiwa Harbour, Bay of Plenty, 27/5/52, N.W. corner of harbour, 20 (M.A.d'A., C.D.B.). Napier Inner Harbour, 22/6/52, 29, one showing red and larger (J.M.C.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, 66 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Waitotara, 20/10/52, 13; Turakina, 27/10/52, none; Wanganui, 27/10/52, 25; Waikanac, 23/10/52, 28/10/52, 30/10/52, none (J.M.C.). Rangitikei, 29/10/52, 68; Manawatu, 191 (J.M.C., M.C.D.). Waikawa, 31/10/52, three (J.M.C.). Heathcote estuary, 18/5/52, 500-600 (J.M.C., R.B.S.). Christchurch estuary, 1952, c 30 wintering (E.W.D.). Otakou Bay, Otago Har., 22/6/52, a few (I.T.). Hoopers Inlet, Otago Pen., last seen, three on 9/9/51; one seen 18/11/51; appeared again 19/1/52 when there were 30; then 300 on 22/1/52, and hundreds during February, March and April; fewer since then (B.J.M.). Warrington, Otago, 9/11/51, 300-400 reported present on flats at incoming tide (J.G.). Oreti, 4/2/52, several hundred; 14/2/52, Awarua Bay, over 500; Invercargill airport, 23 plus; Aparima, early February, many scattered all over estuary; Oreti estuary, several hundreds reported wintering each year (J.H.S.).

LARGE-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius madagascariensis*).—Te Ara-roa, East Cape, mid Sept., 1952, one on river bed, reported and described accurately by Mr. J. Rangihura, seen once only, probably migrant, no other wader in this locality (H.R.McK.). Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, two; also Invercargill airport, several reported 5/2/42, "look like kiwis but they fly." (J.H.S.). Invercargill Estuary, 18/5/52, "close up view of one,"; Awarua Bay, May, 1952, seven reported (R.M.R.).

ASIATIC WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus*).—Piha Beach, 14/9/52, two extremely tame birds watched for some time feeding voraciously at water's edge; a fortnight later, on 28/9/52, another two birds seen at the Muriwai Stream mouth, c. 8 miles north of Piha (J.C.D., D.A.U.). Mataitai, Clevedon, 30/10/51, one; 31/10/51, one; legs noted to be quite blue; twice seen to put its bill down a crab-hole and extract a crab; it twisted its head round to get its curved bill down the curve of the crab-hole; 3/11/51, again seen to take a crab from a hole; 17 and 27/11/52, one; 8/4/52, one (G.M.C., K.E.F., F.M., H.R.McK.). Firth of Thames, one on 14/12/51, 31/1/52, 1/3/52, and 8/3/52; two wintering 15/6/52 (R.B.S., et al.). Turanga Creek, Whitford, 12/10/52, one seen with a flock of c. 500 godwit; call heard several times (N.M., M.C.).

PIED STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*).—Whangarei Harb. 31/12/51 a scattered and rather small population for such a large area (H.R.McK.). Mangawhai, 29/1—2/2/52, always present, greatest number 40 (N.M.). Ruakaka, 7-14/5/51, usually c. 10 about (N.M.). Hiranua Creek, Manukau Harb., 2/6/52, between 4500 to 5000 (R.B.S., H.R.McK.). Onehunga, 3/3/52, two flocks of 40 and 45; Puketutu, 13/4/52, flock of 60 (A.W.D.). Glen Murray, 20/10/51, two pairs inland by a swamp (R.B.S.). Clevedon, 1951-52, nested at Mataitai and inland at North Road, East Road, Ness Valley Road, Ardmore and Hunua; a few young reared but many eggs and chicks lost (H.R.McK.). Clevedon river-mouth area, summer 1951-52, up to seven; winter, 1952, up to 70; decreased to five on 26/7/52 (A.J.G.). Silica Flat, Rotorua, 12/10/52, c. 16, one on nest (A.C.H.). Lakes Whakaki and Karetu, H.B., 2-12/5/52, up to 800 seen in one day (R.St.P.). Taupo, 14/11/51, 25 plus at Motuopa, one immature (N.M.). 21/6/52, Tutaekuri mouth, 66; Tuki Tuki, above Black Bridge, 11; mouth 66; Haumoana 46; Inner Harbour, 22/6/52, c. 80 (J.M.C.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, eight; L. Wairarapa north, 2/3/52, c.

212 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.); 13/4/52, none (J.M.C.), L. Onoke, 11/4/52, one (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Pyramid Valley, 4/10/52, three pairs, two nests each four eggs (E.W.D.). Waitotara, 26/10/52, eight, and 15 up river in swamp; Wanganui, 27/10/52, 16; Turakina, 27/10/52, five; Rangitikei, 29/10/52, three; Manawatu, 12; Waikanae, 23/10/52, three (J.M.C.). Lake Grassmere, 21/5/52, 14 (R.B.S.). Lake Kaituna, 19/5/52, 100 plus; Lake Forsythe, 19/5/52, c. 250 (H.R.McK., R.B.S.). Waikouaiti, 23/1/52, c. 80 (E.W.D.). Berwick, 6/6/52, two (H.C.B.). Abbots Creek, Green Island, 28/6/52, 30 feeding (R.G.F.F.). Harrington Pt., Otago Harb., 29/5/52, three (R.M.J.). First time known to nest on "Kelvin Bank" farm, Waimumu, Gore, spring 1951; Andersons Bay inlet, 26; Ellisons and Otakou bays, Otago Harb., 30 plus, 22/6/52 (I.T.). Present in Otago Harbour and Peninsula at all times of year (B.J.M.). Anderson's Bay Inlet, Dunedin, 26/6/52, 22 feeding (L.E.W.). Dowling Bay, Otago Harb., 29/6/52, 30 (K.V.F.). Waitati, 5/5/52, four (Miss C. White, D.N.F.C.). Long Beach, Otago, 30/1/52, c. 60 (E.W.D.). Lake Hawkins, Southland, 4/2/52, c. 40; Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, 37 plus (J.H.S.).

BLACK STILT (*Himantopus himantopus*).—Hirania Creek, Manukau Harb., 14/6/52 and 9/8/52, one entirely black (R.B.S.). Miranda, 15/3/52, one (H.R.McK.); 22/6/52, one adult and one immature (N.M.). Omarama, 1/11/51, two displaying moderately (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

BLACK-FRONTED TERN (*Chlidonias albigularis*).— Three miles south of Matata, Bay of Plenty, 27/5/52, 30-50 in inland field (M.A.d'A., C.D.B.). Tuki Tuki mouth, 21/6/52, 9 (J.M.C.). Lake Wairarapa north, 2/3/52, four (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Waikanae Est., 13/2/52, c. 60 (R.B.S.). In Cook Strait, 14/5/52, one; 22/5/52, two (R.B.S.). 18/5/52, Heathcote Est., c. 60; Brooklands, a few (J.M.C.). Lake Forsythe outlet, 18, 17/5/52 (T.J.P.). On Five Rivers Plain over tilled land in numbers seven to 34, 24/1/52; hundreds following a tractor, Waimumu, Gore, 22-24/1/52 (I.T.). Makarora River, Otago, 26/12/48, found a number of terns nesting on river flats about five miles from lake; nests were about 30 yards apart and scattered over a shingle bed. Several birds had no black on their heads but were all grey with a black patch over the eye (J.M.).

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*).—Clevedon river mouth, 16/12/51, six, one smudgy young; 20/12/51, eight and two young, the young had probably returned with their parents from some distant breeding place; 1951-52, best tally is 70, as last year; does not breed here (A.J.G.). Mataitai, Clevedon, 1951-52, spring as usual, 11 to 29, but autumn down to 36 (other years 150-200) (H.R.McK.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, five (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Palliser Spit, 1951, nesting c. 20 pairs unsuccessful (J.M.C.); 2/12/51, one nest with dead chick and a live one a few days old; small flocks of adults resting on beach and about 20 remains of nesting hollows (W.R.B.O.).

FAIRY TERN (*Sterna nereis*).—Ruakaka, 1/8/52, one (R.B.S.). Mangawhai, 1/2/52, five flew in from ocean, then one flew by itself toward sea—about 10 minutes later four flew from north out to sea and later four flew south inland towards northernmost lake (N.M., L.W.). Waitakaruru, Firth of Thames, 2/12/51, two birds flying around white-fronted tern colony (J.C.D., E.G.T.). Waitakaruru, Hauraki Gulf, 19/1/52, one immature, flying (dark on wings and dark bill) giving high-pitched call "peep peep peep," in an urgent and excited tone (R.J.F., O.C., H.R.McK.).

WHITE-FRONTED TERN (*S. striata*).—Cuvier Island, 1952, a few breed here (R.B.J.). Oaia Islet, Muriwai Beach, 1951-52, a nesting colony high up on the S.E. side (G.W.). Clevedon Village, 25/10/51, at 8.30 p.m., heard party flying overhead against strong north wind; Orere Point, 12/1/52, nesting colony with 50 non-flying and c. 20 flying young (H.R.McK.). Waikanae, 23/10/52, 22; 28/10/52, c. 140, several pairing, one with pink flush on breast, several with white crowns; 30/10/52, none (J.M.C.). Waitotara, 26/10/52, four; Turakina and Wanganui, 27/10/52; Rangitikei, 29/10/52, none; Manawatu, 29/10/52, six only (J.M.C.). Beach north of Paekakariki, 27/10/52, 20 (M.C.D.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, not nesting (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Palliser, 1951 nesting, c. 30 pairs unsuccess-

cessful (J.M.C.). Ngawe, 30/12/51, none nesting (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Ashley River mouth, 4/2/52, c 100 nests on small island, chicks just hatched, several eggs pipped, 17 chicks dead (D.E.C.). Heathcote Est., 18/5/52, c 80 adults (J.M.C.).

BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus dominicanus*).—Rangitoto Island colony, 18/11/51, 540 nests counted, probably 100 plus more; hatching in progress (G.W.G.). Palliser Spit, 2/12/51, 33 nests, four with one egg, 13 with two eggs, 12 with three eggs, one with two eggs and 1 chick, 1 with one egg and dead chick, two with two chicks (W.R.B.O.). Ward Island, Wellington Harb., 19/11/50, 45 nests, 15 with one egg, 11 with two eggs, 17 with three eggs, one with one egg and one chick, one with four eggs (W.R.B.O.). Mahina Bay, one swallowed good sized rat which I had caught and thrown on to the seashore opposite my place (E.W.H.). Several at high altitudes (5,000 to 6,000ft. above sea-level), in mountains (Cassidy and Blimit) near Arthur's Pass, 26/12/51; two or three at Browning's Pass (4,500ft), 4/1/52 (F.M.B.).

RED-BILLED GULL (*L. novaehollandiae*).—Feb.-April, 1952, large numbers seen daily going up valley from sea to "peel off" at the various farms, then seen returning in formation at dusk; May-Aug., numbers dwindle till 9/9, none seen at all; 9/10 previous two days stormy, first sight of small flock, one near house appeared in bright plumage (H.G.W.). Christian Bay, Matakana, Nth. Auckland, 30/12/51, of 30 more than half were young of the season (A.J.G.). Cuvier Island, 1952, "hundreds" breed here (R.B.J.). Whitianga River mouth, 11/1/52, a colony nested, according to locals for the first time, on some rocks at the mouth; on this date there were 70 plus chicks in varying stages of growth (G.W.G.). Tuki Tuki, 21/6/52, 200-300 following plough with more black-backed and a few black-billed gulls (J.M.C.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, over 100 birds nesting c. 70-80 downy chicks (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Castlepoint, 19/1/52, four downy young left on rock; 24 flying (J.M.C.). Palliser Spit, 1951, nesting c. 15 pairs, unsuccessful (J.M.C.). Ngawe Point, 30/12/51, nesting unsuccessful, 1951 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Picton, 15/5/52, of c. 100 small gulls examined all but one were this species (J.M.C.). Road to Christchurch, many thousands on coast (J.M.C., R.B.S., C.A.F.). Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 6/1/52, cleared forest, 2500ft. (W.R.B.O.).

BLACK-BILLED GULL (*L. bulleri*).—Firth of Thames, 1952, winter 300 plus as usual; on Nov. 4 two mobbed an intruder like breeding birds (R.B.S. et al.) Thames waterfront, 2/2/52, 11 (H.R.McK.). Tuki Tuki mouth, 20/6/52, c. 12 (J.M.C.). Porangahau, 1/1/52, 16 not nesting; L. Wairarapa north, 2/3/52, 19 (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Picton, 15/5/52, one (J.M.C.). North of Kaikoura, c 300 in paddocks (J.M.C., R.B.S., C.A.F.). Oamaru, 23/1/52 and 1/2/52, common, about three times as many as red-billed (E.W.D.). Near Balfour, hundreds following a tractor, 24/1/52; Matura Valley, flocks up to 50 on tilled land and one on field of turnips, 25/1/52 (I.T.). Cardrona River bed, Otago, colony of approx. 300 nest here each year (L.M.). Awarua Bay, 14/2/52, c 100 (J.H.S.).

SMALL GULLS (*L. novaehollandiae* and *bulleri*).—On an extensive camping tour of Southland, Otago and Canterbury from 10/10/51 to 14/11/51, no red-billed gulls were seen inland, though many nesting colonies of black-billed were found in inland riverbeds. Some black-billed were seen near the coast between Waiau and Riverton, but no more were recorded on the coastal route until one at Blueskin Bay. Northwards, they were commonly distributed in coastal regions, and there was a breeding colony of c. 1500 birds at the Waitaki mouth. Red-bills were, however, commonly found along the coast from Riverton to Dunedin, but northwards, only sparingly. A large proportion of the red-bills were in immature plumage (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

ARCTIC SKUA (*Stercorarius parasiticus*).—Muriwai, 2/6/52, seen chasing white-fronted terns at the stream mouth, an unusually late record (E.G.T., J.C.D.). During cruise round Motutapu Is. 7/1/51, single bird seen twice (J.C.D., N.M. and E.G.T.). Waitemata, 7/1/52, two; 24/2/52, one; 9/3/52, one chasing white-fronted tern; 27/9/52, one chasing black-backed gull. Kaiaua, 15/3/52, one chasing gulls out at sea (N.M.).

SOUTHERN SKUA (*Catharacta skua lonnbergi*).—Central Tasman Sea, about 34° S, 160° E, 16/8/52, solitary bird (C.A.F.).

NATIVE PIGEON (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*).—Mt. Eden, Auckland, 9/9/52, one (A.W.D.). Clevedon, 1951-52, seen about patches of bush on farm almost daily; 26/5/52, flock of nine flew over house (A.J.G.) Maracetai, Auckland, 21, 22/4/52, three eating Taraire (M.A.d'A.). Minginui area, numbers seen: July 1951, to Feb., 1952, up to three daily but not regular; March-April, up to 24; May-June, scarce again. Feeding noted: July-Aug., 1951, kowhai leaves and supplejack berries; Nov., leaves; Dec., seen eating green fruit of pigeonwood; Feb., 1952, konini; March, April, May, tawa, miro and matai fruits, konini on high country; June, miro (R.StP.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, plentiful and tame; not shot here; in pairs; feeding on kowhai and willow; the kowhai flowers were either eaten whole or after the petals had been shaken off; one eating clover (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Tauhara Mt., Taupo, 17/11/51, c. four; Henderson Valley, 26/12/52, one (N.M.). Tararua Range, 6/9/50, very common near Tauherenikau Hut, eight seen in about 15 mins. (A.W.D.). In past year within Dunedin City, have extended areas visited. Our garden, Maori Hill, one and two common, largest counts last year, eight, 8/8/51; nine, 16/12/51; ten, 30/6/52. This winter for first time have eaten the puriri berries and flowers available for about 10 years (I.T.). Mt. Cargill, 5 p.m., 17/11/51, at least 8 (D.N.F.C.).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*).—Awamokoho Valley, near Kurow, 16/12/51, nesting in limestone cliffs (W.R.B.O.).

KAKA (*Nestor meridionalis*).—Little Barrier Is., May-June, 1952, up to six seen at different times (N.M.). Great Barrier Is., Dec., 1951, quite a number seen and heard at Port Fitzroy, Karara Bay, and Whakaparapara Harbour. At Fitzroy we brought two pairs right down close to us by calling with leaves. A tui made attacking passes at them but they ignored it (A.J.G.). Ponui Island, Hauraki Gulf, 8/12/50, P. Chamberlain reported a party flying overhead at dusk (H.R.McK.). Ponui Is., Hauraki Gulf, 31/8/52, heard flying over at night, report by Mr. P. Chamberlain (H.R.McK.). Government House grounds, Auckland, 6/11/51, one seen and heard (J.C.D.). Birkenhead, Auck., three reports in neighbourhood during July, 1952 (A.P.). Clevedon, 14/9/51, two flying high on line from Waiheke Is. to Hunua. Ness Valley, Clevedon, one caught by toe in opossum trap; taken home by Maori trapper but died through lack of proper attention (H.R.McK.). Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1952, a few early in winter, then none. They may move to Great and Little Barrier Islands as there have been reports from Orere Point and Ponui Island of birds flying over (J.W.StP.). Minginui, July 1951-June 1952, usually two or three about bush workings, but more in the higher beech country; up to 15 seen on hunting trips (R.StP.). Maunga, Haurangi Range, 4/11/51, one seen, several heard in forest (W.R.B.O.). Tararuas, 6/9/50, near Dobsons Hut, 3000ft.—(A.W.D.).

KEA (*N. notabilis*).—Takahe Valley, 17/2/52, flying high over valley (W.R.B.O.). Olivine District, 20/3/52, c. 40-50 (B.W.C., H.J.T.)

RED-FRONTED PARRAKEET (*Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae*).—Little Barrier Is., 27-31/5/52, five (N.M.).

YELLOW-FRONTED PARRAKEET (*C. auriceps*).—Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, up to five, but often none, more plentiful about upper Whirinaki and Waiau rivers, fond of feeding on fruit of totara (R.StP.).

EASTERN ROSELLA (*Platycercus eximius*).—Whangarei town area, September, 1951, two birds seen by E. Saul; December, 1951, a pair recorded by D. Purser. Takapuna, 26/8/52, two seen in bush on edge of L. Pupuke by R. Simpson, these were reported as yellow-fronted parrakeets in "N.Z. Herald" on 29/8/52 (E.G.T.). Chingford Park, Dunedin, 24/3/52, pair of rosellas feeding in short grass after shower of rain. They seemed to resent the attentions of a number of chaffinches and frequently drove them off. When rosellas flew up into the trees, the chaffinches followed and continued to annoy them. When rosellas again returned to feed in the grass the small birds also returned. This was repeated four times and they con-

tinued to feed until two more rosellas appeared and they all flew off chattering and apparently quarrelling (J.M.). Since March, 1952, one or two occasionally in garden after being absent since 1948 (I.T.). End of summer, 1952, back in Maori Hill Reservoir Reserve after absence for few years (E.M.M.).

SHINING CUCKOO (*Chalcites lucidus*).—Oruru, 20/9/52, first call and seen (H.G.W.). Ponui Is., Hauraki Gulf, 22/10/50, P. Chamberlain reported first song (H.R.McK.). Howick, 5/4/52, one in garden; 30/9/52, first heard (N.M.). North Rd., Clevedon, 10/10/51, 12.40 p.m., first song (M.J.B.). Clevedon, 18/10/51, first heard; 13/1/52, last heard; 9/11/51, seven in party in tea-tree; 8/2/52, one seen working up and down the trunk of a kowhai (A.J.G.). Clevedon, Ness Valley Road, 11/9/52, first song report by W. Moisley; Whakatiri, 16/9/52, first song, reported by Mrs. W. F. McCallum; Clevedon, 28/9/52, first song (H.R.McK.). Clevedon, first song, North Road, 4/9/51, report from Miss M. Waters, a reliable observer (H.R.McK.). Moumoukai, Clevedon, 20/10/51, 0531 hours, two feeding in a rangiora bush, moved like bellbird, one calling sharp "tiu tiu" and the other a godwit-like call I have not heard before. Neither changed its call. Another joined them and it gave the "tiu tiu" call consistently (H.R.McK.). Clevedon, 28/9/52, first song (R.J.F.). Moumoukai, 24/1/51, last song; 22/9/52, first song (E.St.P.); 28/9/25, first song (J.W.St.P.). Kawa Kawa Bay, 15/9/51, first song (R.P.S.). Minginui, 23/9/51, first heard; 26/9/51, first seen; 11/2/52, last seen and heard (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, numerous, yet a grey warbler's nest had its own three incubated eggs with cuckoos all round (H.R.McK.). North-and, Wellington, 6/10/52, first heard from house; for three years (1950-52) the first call has come from exactly the same quarter (A.A.B.). Nelson, Reservoir Reserve, 10-13/1/52, young cuckoo being fed by two grey warblers (L.E.W.) First calls heard, Maori Hill Reservoir Reserve, 24/9/51 (E.M.M.). Last week October, 1951, calling at Ravensbourne in night at 3 a.m. (C.M.T.). Waitati, 8/3/52, four young cuckoos feeding on native pines and one on ragwort (W.H.D.). First recorded calls, Dunedin, from Mr. McCraw, Sullivan Dam, 22/9/52. One young in garden 23/2/52, two young 12/3/52, one young 6/4/52, all fed on grubs on kowhai trees (I.T.). D.N.F.C. members: Heard N.E. Valley, 23/9/51 (Mrs. Bullock); heard and seen, Roslyn, 10 a.m. 24/9/51 (Mrs. E. Ancell); heard Ravensbourne, 3-10/11/51 (Mrs. E. A. Campbell); two birds called repeatedly from 2 to 4.30 p.m., slopes Mt. Cargill, gave only final notes, from other locality on slopes full calls occasionally heard, 17/11/51 (D.N.F.C.); first fortnight October heard repeatedly Opoho, but until 17th final long notes not heard (Miss I. McArthur). Outram Glen, Otago, 23/9/51, three (L.E.W.). Vauxhall, Dunedin, 5/3/52, one young bird in kowhai tree ((L.E.W.).

LONG-TAILED CUCKOO (*Eudynamis taitensis*).—Howick, 20/2/52 one in garden (N.M.). Clevedon, 9/10/51, 2005 hrs, one call; 26/2/52, 0143 hrs., three calls flying, apparently going N.E.; 4/3/52, 2212 hrs, one flying, calling, going from S.W. to N.E. This direction of flight at this point seems odd. 20/3/52, Mr. S. Street found one newly dead on tide line near telephone lines; Mr. E. G. Turbott found it to be a young female going into adult plumage. Papakura, 26/9/51, Mr. Ian Colquhoun reported one flew in large circle in dark, giving four calls at intervals (H.R.McK.). Tauranga, in April, 1952, one was reported found dead at Welcome Bay; apparently killed by flying into telegraph wire (M.H.). Minginui, 23/10/51, first seen; 26/1/52, last seen and heard (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, strong population, many seen and heard (H.R.McK.). Okiti Valley, Bank's Pen., 16/1/52, one seen (D.E.C.). Repeated calls, bush, Piano Flat, 25/1/52 (I.T.) Bluff Hill, Southland, 6/11/51, heard (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

MOREPORK (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*).—Oruru, Feb.-April, 1952, calls heard regularly all night long throughout valley; 15/5, first noticed calls had ceased; 18/7, one only heard calling for short time; from then on only odd calls till Oct., when noticeable increase in calls, though not as much as earlier in year (H.G.W.). Mt. Eden, Auckland, calls heard from area of native bush at 3.15 p.m. on 22/9/52 and 8 a.m., 23/9/52 (A.W.D.).

Clevedon, 8-9/1/52, parents feeding young in dusk in pine trees by house; the young made a rasping noise (M.J.B.). Burkes, Dunedin, 14/3/52, one called from pine trees about 7.30 p.m. and was joined by a second and they flew off together; calls heard 11/4/52 and 19-20/4/52 (W.W.). Takeka Valley, 17-20/2/52, often heard in mountain beech forest above 3000ft.; Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 6/1/52, beech forest, 2500ft., heard at night (W.R.B.O.).

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*).—Stirling, 1952, several pairs in township (R.V.McL.). Kakahu, Canterbury, 30/10/51, heard; Niagara, 7/11/51, heard; Dunedin, 11/11/51, one seen; these were the only birds recorded on a 15-day camping tour from Kakahu via cold lakes to Tuatapere, thence via a coastal route to Christchurch (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Garden, St. Kilda, 31/3/52, one; present again 14 and 16/4/52 (A.C.P.). Early February, 1952, not a single bird was seen or heard; two were reported near Orepuki; in years past they were seen everywhere in western Southland in large numbers (J.H.S.).

KINGFISHER (*Halcyon sanctus*).—Orongo, Thames, 29/4/51, one flew out of tree and took a flying preying mantis (H.R.McK.). Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, only odd ones in winter; return for breeding, Sept., Oct.; leave again Feb., March; thought to winter on and towards the coast via the Rangitaiki River (R.St.P.). Tophouse, 12/12/50, forest clearings (W.R.B.O.). Observed along the Otago Harbour and Hoopers Inlet, Otago Pen., a distance of 15 miles; the most seen over this distance was 13 on 18/8/51; after this the numbers seen decreased until the last was seen 21/9/51; one was seen on 21/3/52, and the number increased to 11 on 2/6/52, at which level it has remained until the end of July (B.J.M.). Waitati, 19/4/52, eight (Miss C. White, D.N.F.C.). One in tree surrounded by chirping sparrows, 3/7/51 (G. J. Billings, D.N.F.C.). Count, Waverley to Otakou Bay, Otago Harb., 20, 22/6/52 (I.T. and Mrs. Hickman, D.N.F.C.).

KOOKABURRA (*Dacelo novaeguineae*).—Waiwera, 6/7/52, four heard and seen in pine trees (A.P.).

RIFLEMAN (*Acanthisitta chloris*).—Stratford Mountain House, Mt. Egmont, 9/8/52, two seen, also noted to be calling all the time (A.J.G.). Ruakaka Bay, Queen Charlotte Sound, 1/4/52, two working on the trunk of a large tawa (A.J.G.). Lewis Pass, 15/1/52, three seen; calls heard almost continuously from Maruia to other side of Lewis Pass (L.E.W.). Canterbury, at Peel Forest, 14/5/52, five, very tame; Akaroa, in bush domain at end of township, 19/5/52, three seen and others heard (R.B.S., H.R.McK.). Reservoir Reserve, Dunedin, 6/12/51, six; 21/2/51, two (R.M.J.). Two north end Wickliffe Bay, 22/12/51 (B.W.C.). Dunedin, June, 1952, returned to garden where have nested previous years (E.M.M.). Lake Te Anau, west side, 16/2/52, in beech forest; Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 7/1/52, beech forest, 2500 feet., climbing trunks of trees; Tophouse, 11/12/50, beech forest (W.R.B.O.).

ROCK WREN (*Xenicus gilviventris*).—Temple Basin, Arthur's Pass, Dec., 1951 (C. A. Teschner, D.N.F.C.). At about 5,000ft. on Barrier Mts. above L. Ohau, 16/2/52, five seen (J.E.P.).

PIPIT (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, 27/12/51, nest, one egg; 28th, two; 29th, three (R.St.P.). Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, usual numbers; the pumice flats favour this species; two stay about to be fed on huhu grubs when I am splitting posts. They cannot deal with the large grubs unless they are broken for them when they pick them away in dainty little pieces. Chaffinches deal readily with the largest huhu, while the hedge-sparrows take only the tiny fragments left by the other birds (R.St.P.). Plentiful on 11-mile stretch of gravelled road to L. Monowai, c. 40 plus, and at Freestone Hill, near Manapouri, seven in 100 yards of road, 23/1/52; very common on gravel roads Five Rivers Plain and Wai-kaia Valley, 24-25/1/52 (I.T.). Seen commonly on the Freshwater Plain, between the landing and the Ruggedy Range, Stewart Island, 17/1/52 (W.A.W.).

FERN BIRD (*Bowdleria punctata*).—Ruakaka, 10/5/52, two heard (N.M.). Tophouse, 12/12/50, one seen on edge of forest, 2000ft (W.R.B.O.).

YELLOW-BREASTED TIT (*Petroica macrocephala macrocephala*).—Whare Flat, Otago, three seen, 27/4/52 (W.W.). Takahe Valley, 17/2/52, male seen in mountain beech forest; Lake Te Anau, west side, 16/2/52, beech forest; Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 7/1/52, in beech forest, 2500ft.; Tophouse, 11/12/50, beech forest (W.R.B.O.). Bluff Hill, Southland, 6/11/51, male; Papatowai, 8/11/51, two young out of nest (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

PIED TIT (*Petroica m. toitoi*).—Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, from two to fourteen, though none at times; very quiet and secretive in breeding season; trips to higher country, 22, 20, 8, 12 and 18 seen (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, several seen and heard; breeding, but nests not seen (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Valley of Waitahanui River, Lake Taupo, one, Easter, 1952 (F.M.B.).

ROBIN (*Miro australis*).—Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, seldom seen as I have not been working in the heavy bush; Oct., twenty-four seen on trip to Waiau River; March and April, ten to twenty up the Whirinaki River (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, several heard in gorge of Waiwhakauka Stream, a tributary of the Wanganui River (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Retaruke, March, 1952, heard in early morning and a little at dusk, but silent during the day (W.P.M.). Tophouse, 14/12/50, one seen in beech forest (W.R.B.O.). One in big stand of manuka, Flagstaff, 23/3/52, this was in a new locality where not before seen (G. C. Arras, D.N.F.C.); 15/6/52, again seen in this locality (Miss Tweedie, D.N.F.C.). Piano Flat, Waikaia Valley, 25/1/52, four seen, two heard (I.T.). Two in manuka scrub near snow tussock, Lammerlaw Range, April, 1951, no native bush within 14 miles; not noted following year, but during last 15 years odd birds noted in locality by miners (J.E.P.). One seen beside the track (altitude about 1500ft.) Mt. Anglem, Stewart Island, 3/1/52 (W.A.W.).

FANTAIL (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*).—Le Roy's Bush, Birkenhead, 24/11/51, pied pair feeding three chicks on nest (N.M.). Ardmore, 27/7/52, one black phase seen by Mr. T. W. Finn at his house, about a mile from the site of some previous records from Clevedon South (H.R.McK.). Minginui, 1951-52, up to seven pied in a day seen in breeding season, but up to 26 for balance of year; 14/12/51, three advanced flying young being fed (R.St.P.). October, 1952, Orakei, up to ten at one time feeding in two kowhai trees in flower; they frequented these trees daily until the flowers dropped and then disappeared. Beach Haven, Auckland, 27/10/52, black one seen clearly (A.C.H.). Acklands, nr. Mt. Peel, 15; Blands Bush, 19; camping ground, Mt. Peel, 7, mostly pied birds, 18/5/52 (E.M.M.). June 1, 1951 to May 31, 1952, inside garden 91 pied, 27 black; outside garden 72 pied, 25 black (I.T.).

YELLOWHEAD (*Mohoua o. ochrocephala*).—Lewis Pass, 16/1/52, four together (L.E.W.).

WHITEHEAD (*M. o. albicilla*).—Minginui, 1951-52, seen in old bush workings but mostly in heavy bush; odd lots up to 50; on deer-stalking trips up to 250 seen in a day (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, one seen, several heard; not plentiful (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Tauherenikau Valley, Tararua, 6/9/50, pair seen in manuka on outskirts of bush (A.W.D.). Putangaroa, Palliser, 30/12/52, one seen to chase shining cuckoo (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.).

BROWN CREEPER (*Finschia novaeseelandiae*).—Akaroa, 19/5/52, c 12, in small domain of native and exotic trees beyond wharf (R.B.S., H.R.McK.). Arthur's Pass, 16/1/52, 27 in one rimu (D.E.C.). Bluff Hill, Southland, 6/11/51, heard (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Heard calling in bush at the south end of the Ruggedy Range, Stewart Island, on 17/1/52 (W.A.W.).

SILVER EYE (*Zosterops lateralis*).—Cuvier Is., 1952, large number; breed (R.B.J.). Howick, 19/3/52, 20 on golden rod eating seed, also

eating grass-seed and about July flocks eating privet berries; several nests in garden, September, 1952 (N.M.). Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1951-52, the increased numbers of last year have been maintained; flocks of up to 30 (J.W.St.P.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, a record of the highest count for a day in each month indicates the dispersal to higher country for breeding and subsequent return for the next winter: July, 1951, 150; Aug., 60; Sept., 50; Oct., 15; Nov., 8; Dec., 4; Jan., 1952, 4; Feb., 18; March, 40; April, 100; May, 200; June, 300. A few, of course, breed locally; 26/11/51, nest 3 eggs; chicks flew on 9/12/51. April, 1952, road trip to Wairoa, H.B., c 1000, return trip c 700 (R.St.P.). Tauhara Mt., 17/11/52, many seen (N.M.) Burke's, Dunedin, two birds ringed 1948-49, seen Feb., 1952, and one on 22/6/52 (W.W.). Dunedin, 12/2/52, adult feeding young in garden (R.M.J.). Kurow, Waitaki Valley, 17/12/51, feeding on flax nectar (W.R.B.O.). Centre Island, Bluff, June each year, dozens visit island (G.F.H.).

TUI (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*).—Three Kings, Auckland city, 22/9/52, several singing in bluegum trees, present on most fine mornings (A.W.D.). Moumoukai, Clevedon, 20/10/51, dawn song, 4.33 to 4.55 a.m. (H.R.McK.) Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1951-52, the most numerous bush bird in this area (J.W.St.P.). Minginui area, numbers seen: July, 1951 to June, 1952, up to 26 in a day, and 70 on May 14; on trips up Whirinaki river, up to 160; Aug., spring notes being added to song (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, plentiful, none seen to be nesting; one bullied a pigeon from a kowhai tree (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Maunga, Haurangi Range, 4/11/51, common in forest (W.R.B.O.). Mahina Bay, saw one catch a cicada and eat it; on two occasions saw a tui catch and devour two or more mantids, each about 4 inches long, swallowing them after having first passed them along the beak to soften them (E.W.H.). Pelorus Bridge, 8/1/52, very numerous; one near our camp gave exact imitation of the cry of an opossum, bird actually seen giving the cry (L.E.W.). Wycliffe Bay, Otago Pen., reported to be increasing (R.G.D.). Moa Flat, Otago, calls heard for some months and one bird seen January, 1952; calls heard since; first record of tui here (A.J.H.). Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 7/1/52, beech forest, 2500ft. (W.R.B.O.). Centre Island, near Bluff, 1951 and 1952, two (G.F.H.)

BELLBIRD (*Anthornis melanura*).—Cuvier Island, 1952, "hundreds" but no tuis (R.B.J.). Moumoukai, Clevedon, 1951-52, well distributed, especially in second-growth country, not reported at Clevedon this year (J.W.St.P.). Minginui area, numbers seen: July, 1951 to June, 1952, highest day's tally monthly, 9 to 30, very steady; trips up Whirinaki River, up to 200; Waiau River, 80; road trip to Wairoa, H.B., 140. Song: Jan., coming into full song; Feb. to May, full song; June, only a few in full song (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, plentiful; bad weather; none found nesting; very few on kowhai flower; very little song (H.R.McK.) Takahe Valley, 17/2/52, two seen in mountain beech forest, 3,000ft; Mt. Davy, Paparoa Range, 6/1/52, common in beech forest, 2,500ft. Top-house, 12/12/50, forest (W.R.B.O.). Craigieburn Reserve, 1/3/52, 15 bellbirds and two tuis feeding on *muhlenbeckia* (W.H.D.). Clifton, Chch., 28/1/52 and 12, 13/2/52, one in garden, unusual visitor (G.G.).

STITCHBIRD (*Notiomystis cincta*).—Little Barrier Is., 27/5/52, one male; 30/5/52, three pairs on Thumb and Summit tracks (N.M.).

GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*).—Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, maximum winter flocks on flats and edge of bush workings, 800; Aug., 250; Sept., 16; only a few pairs on to April; increasing flocks May and June, maximum 100 and 200 respectively. The dispersal from Sept. to April seems to indicate a long breeding season. One chick seen being fed on March 6 (R.St.P.).

CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla coelebs*).—Birkenhead, Auck., 21/7/52, first song (A.P.). Clevedon, 28/11/51, very young flying chick being fed by hen in garden; 16/1/52 last song; 12/8/52, first song (A.J.G.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952; 14/7/51, first song, colouring, winter flocks on flats up to 450; breeding dispersal mid-Sept. to Feb., apparently a much

shorter season than greenfinch. Murupara-Kaingaroa road, 7-mile hill, a favourite place for large wintering flocks (R.St.P.). Bird Sanctuary, Cheviot, 6/1/52, male feeding on azolla on lake (L.E.W.).

REDPOLL (*Carduelis cabaret*).—Awhitu Pen., 11/11/51, probably nesting in cassinia (R.B.S.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, best day's count, 120, seasonal flocking and movements erratic and not easy to understand; some large parties seen in breeding season (R.St.P.). Retaruke, King Country, 10/11/51, flock of c. 20 (F.M.). Northland, Wellington, two appeared 8/8/52, thence in varying numbers, maximum 16, on 6/9/52, until second week of October (A.A.B.).

GOLDFINCH (*C. carduelis*).—Moumoukai, Clevedon, winter, 1952, small flocks up to 30, decline from last year (J.W.St.P.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, winter flocks up to 500, prolonged breeding dispersal as greenfinch (R.St.P.).

SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*).—Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, up to 500 seen in one day; Sept., nesting began; Nov., some still building, others feeding young. Grass seed is perhaps the main diet in the autumn. In February they were busy all day catching and eating cicada. The roads and tracks were a silvery mass of cicada wings. The matai trunks, 40 to 60 feet high, are coated with cicadas at 4-inch intervals from ground to branches. The sparrow flies to the trunk, picks one off and carries it to the nearest piece of bare ground to break off the wings before eating it; if the selected cicada flies, the sparrow chases it and dive-bombs it until it is caught, although there are plenty more on the tree. It is quite common to see 15 to 20 sparrows at one time on the road breaking wings from cicadas (R.St.P.). Mahina Bay, in winter, 1952, seen feeding regularly on the berries of taupata (*Coprosma retusa*) in company with silvereyes and blackbirds, surely something unusual for the sparrow (E.W.H.).

YELLOWHAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*).—Muriwai, 27/7/52, 20 feeding on beach; Howick, 13/9/52, first heard singing (N.M.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, small lots up to 30 in winter and hardly any in summer; rather scarce here compared with localities such as Lake Whakaki, H.B. area and Moumoukai, Clevedon; song first noted in Nov. (R.St.P.).

CIRL BUNTING (*E. cirius*).—Manawatu, 1951, two (E.D.); Wellington, near waterfront, 20/6/52, one; 1/7/52, two (E.B.J.). Waikari, North Canterbury, 16/1/52, one on fence wire (L.E.W.). Mt. Pleasant, Christchurch, one, 17/8/52 (T.J.P.).

SONG THRUSH (*Turdus ericetorum*).—Oruru, May, 1952, first singing heard since beginning of year (H.G.W.). Howick, 9/6/52, first song (N.M.). Clevedon, 27/4/52, first song (A.J.G.). Clevedon, 5/8/52, heard singing about 9 p.m., when we retired, then at 10.45 p.m., one heard singing strongly by member of family coming home; it was a moonlight overcast night with white but not clear light, perhaps giving the birds the light effect of dawn (B.J.L.). Duder's Beach, Clevedon, nest five eggs, found 12/2/52; Maungaturoto, 27/8/52, nest, very small eggs without yolks (J.McK.). Minginui, song records: July, 1950 to Feb., 1951, singing; March the slack month, hardly any song; April, singing well; May to Feb., 1952, song continued; March, decreasing; April the slack month, hardly any song; May, singing at top; June, song reduced somewhat. It will be noted that the silent period here is later than in the lower country; it also differed a month in the two years (R.St.P.). Stirling, hatching dates of four nests: 16/9/51, 30/9/51, 5/10/51, 15/11/51; size of clutches, two to five; song heard 13/3/52 and other times in March to July period, thence constant to December (R.V.McL.).

BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*).—Howick, 9/6/52, first heard singing (N.M.). Ardmore, Papakura, 1951, Mr. C. A. Spragg reported two nests of four eggs each on the ground in short grass, one in a 3-acre paddock one chain from a gorse hedge, and one in the middle of a 6-acre paddock; this may indicate a realisation on the part of a local line of birds of the rat menace in the gorse hedges (H.R.McK.). Minginui, July, 1951 to June, 1952, nesting commenced Sept., feeding young Nov. In May some go into the main bush, while others stay to feed on the hawthorn on the pumice

flats. The song period seems to vary. For six or seven years I noted that there was no song in Oct., Nov. and Dec., but after that they sang right into the winter. The last two years have been quite different and these again differ somewhat from each other. 1950, May, June, not noted; July, Aug., Sept., silent; Oct. to Feb., 1951, singing well; March, April, song decreasing; May, June, July, silent; Aug. 28, first song; Sept. to Feb., 1952, singing well; March to May, song decreasing; June, almost faded out (R.St.P.). Stirling, 3/7/51, earliest song heard; 27/8/51, nesting material carried; 15/9/51, laid first egg; 5/10/51, three eggs hatched; nest 3½ft. above ground in spindle tree; latest nest seen, four hatched, 14/12/51 (R.V.McL.). St. Kilda, 30/6/51, first recorded song, garden (A.C.P.). Stafford St., Dunedin, 30/6/51, first song of season (Mrs. J. Rhodes, D.N.F.C.).

HEDGE SPARROW (*Prunella modularis*).—Oruru, Feb., 1952, single note call heard often; 10/3/52, change to two-note call; 23/3, one seen in open, agitated calling with two notes and single note answer; 30/3, full song heard for first time this year; 7/4, early morning and late afternoon often hear full calls; 20/7, bright warm morning after rain, full-throated calls from tops of several trees at once; Aug., two singing in "chosen" positions daily, sometimes in answer, using full call (H.G.W.). Clevedon, 16/1/52, last song, heard after silence of two weeks; 5/5/52, first short song; 6/5/52, first full song (A.J.G.). Taupo, 13-18/11/51, many; Howick, 23/3/52, one singing in rain; 9/6/52, one singing, pair about from July on (N.M.). Bay of Many Coves, Queen Charlotte Sound, 9/4/52, numerous in pine plantation, behave like house-sparrows, eating crumbs and coming into house (Mrs. Blade) (A.J.G.). Stirling, 17/9/51, nest *olearia* hedge, four eggs laid Oct. 2 to 5, later robbed (R.V.McL.).

SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*).—Miranda, 4/11/51, one imitating calls of banded dotterel (N.M.). North Beach, Westport, nest with four eggs, near foreshore, 25/12/1950 (T.J.P.).

STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—Oruru, Feb.-June, 1952, often seen in flocks; 26/7, first bird seen inspecting an old nesting site; Aug., many seen inspecting nesting sites in barns, etc., as well as hollow *puriiri* fence posts; 2/10, first egg reported found in post nest; 12-13/10, several nests found with first egg (vide starling inquiry from Scotland) (H.G.W.) Minginui, July, 1951-June, 1952, up to 220 in one day. July, Aug., Sept., small flocks present through breeding season; increased March to May to maximum of 350. The large autumn numbers of last year did not arrive owing to a poor crop of *kahikatea* fruit following the bountiful one of last year. Breeding notes: Aug., looking at sites; Sept., building; Nov., some young being fed; end of Jan., breeding finished (R.St.P.). Taupo, 13/11/51, at least three pairs nesting in soft sandstone; watched them taking food to young which could be heard; one egg found on beach. Waiheke, January, 1952, pair with young in hollow fence-post, cheeping could be heard, parents taking food to young (N.M.). Kopane, Manawatu, 3/4/52, eating apples on trees (E.D.). Several flocks rose from flowering *Phormium* beside Manapouri-Mossburn Road, one of about 50, 23/1/52. Three separate flocks totalling over 200 rose from flowering *Phormium* beside Mataura River at Cattle Flat, 24/1/52 (I.T.).

MYNA (*Acridotheres tristis*).—Brown's Bay, Auck., first two birds seen in this district reported by Mr A. V. Williams, appeared on his lawn on 15/9/52 (E.G.T.). Birkenhead, Auck., 9/7/52, one seen flying north, first record for this district (A.P.). Mt. Albert, Auckland, 5/8/52, flock of 20 in Phoenix palm (A.W.D.). Orakei, 20/9/52, 28/10/52, pair apparently nesting (A.C.H.). Parnell, Auck., 24/8/52, one seen on top branch of *macrocarpa* tree in my garden, in full song—first seen here (E.G.T.). Howick, 4/5/52, six having noisy fight in fig tree; at least half-a-dozen always about now (N.M.). Clevedon, winter of 1952, a flock of a little over 200 roosted in a row of *Cupressus macrocarpa* on my farm. In the evening they would come in noisily as starlings do, in groups of eight or so. In this district I have not previously heard of winter flocks of more than 30 (P.T.O.). Nukuhau N. (Opotiki), Nov., 1951, two, since disappeared (J.D.C.). Road junction south of Te Kuiti, 7, 13/11/51; present

along roads west to Taranaki and north to Waikato, but not seen along road south towards Taumaranui (F.M., H.R.McK.). Kairimu Road, Te Kuiti, 1952, increasing again, troublesome with fruit (R.E.W.F.).

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Glen Murray, 20/10/51, a pair found nesting seemed to be only pair in district (R.B.S.). Nukuhou N. (19 m. Opotiki), four or five during last three or four years; Tirohanga (5m. E. Opotiki), 8/5/52, one reported for past three months (J.D.C.). Rangipo, south of Lake Taupo, April, 1952, five reported where only two had been before, probably had bred (K.E.F.). Retaruke, King Country, 8-12/11/51, plentiful, none seen north of Taumaranui on this trip (W.P.M., F.M., H.R.McK.). Mt. Ruapehu (Salt Hut, altitude 5080ft.), two birds 21/3/52 (F.L.N.). Havelock North, 1952, one with two black-backed, first white-backed I have identified in this district (D.B.). 15/5/52, most northerly seen c. six miles north of Kaikoura (J.M.C.). Lindis Pass, 1/11/51, two; Dunback, 12/11/51, two, the most southerly seen on an extensive camping tour (R.H.D.S., J.M.C.). Evansdale, Otago, 25/2/52, one reported about six miles north of Evansdale; in summer of 1950-51 about 24 seen just north of Waikouaiti, Otago (J.G.). St. Leonards, West Harbour, Dunedin, one seen by several people 17-18-19/3/52; none seen before or since (W.W.).

BLACK-BACKED MAGPIE (*G. tibicen*).—15/5/52, four seen north of Waiau, Marlborough (J.M.C.).

NOTES ON BLACK TEAL NESTS.

By H. W. Axbey, Wildlife Division, Rotorua.

Black teal are not uncommon in the Rotorua lakes district; however, it is seldom that nests are found in numbers. While investigating black-backed gulls' nests on Banded Hill Island with Mr. R. T. Thomson, of Murupara, from November 15-19, 1951, several nests of this teal were found.

The following notes of interest relating to these nests were taken:—

1.—Situating 20 yards from water on steep incline in a depression on top side of cutty grass clump—no lining, one egg (fresh) in slight depression scratched in ground. Cover good, nest hidden from all angles.

2.—Situating 20 yards from water in a depression between two cutty grass clumps, thin lining of grass; three eggs (fresh). Cover good, but could be seen from one point—directly above.

3.—Situating at base of tutu bush, 20 yards from water, lining of dead tutu bark and leaves. Tutu branch in background was bent back from over the nest to obtain photos. Bird was sitting when discovered—seven eggs.

4.—Situating at bottom of narrow gap 30 yards from water on a steep incline, no lining, eight eggs in a shallow depression at base of tutu bush surrounded by cutty grass, cover excellent.

The above four nests were found on the south-eastern side of the island in an area 25 yards by 25 yards. Five, 6 and 7 were found on the north-eastern side in an area 10 yards by 10 yards.

5.—Situating at base of tutu bush 10 feet from water; five eggs, lining of tutu leaves and dead bark with a little down. Cover excellent when bird sitting, but exposed when bird absent.

6.—Situating beneath a rock and sheltered on open side by cutty grass clumps, down lined, eight eggs, 20 feet from water. Bird sitting when discovered.

7.—Situating on side of narrow gap eight feet from water at base of tutu bush and toe-toe plant; one egg, no lining.

TEREK SANDPIPER IN NEW ZEALAND IN WINTER.

By R. B. Sibson, Auckland.

The presence of a single Terek sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*) near Miranda, in the Firth of Thames, between December, 1951, and March, 1952, has been reported by H. R. McKenzie (Notornis 4, 212). It is now known that two birds of this species spent the winter in the same locality. The second bird seems to have joined the one already present some time after March 1st, perhaps having come up from the south with other waders. The two were still together on September 28th.

On 15/6/52, Miss N. Macdonald, R. N. Buttle and I, during a census of waders in the Firth of Thames, had been allotted the coast to the north-west of the Waitakaruru River. As we were examining a large flock of rather somnolent wrybills, N.M. remarked that on the edge of the flock two small waders with orange legs were moving about. Weather conditions for identification were perfect—no wind and crisp winter sunshine, with the light behind us—so that with telescope and field glasses x 8 even at 100 yards we could be certain that we had under observation two Terek sandpipers. To approach within 40 yards was not difficult. Their long upturned bills were now clearly visible. Feeding actively they wandered away from the wrybills among scattered stilts and banded dotterels. Finally, in flight, they passed close to us, conspicuously showing the white-tipped secondaries. No trill was heard.

On 13/7/52 they were seen in the same locality by J. C. Davenport, G. W. Gummer and D. A. Urquhart. On 28/9/52 they were again located, but not with such wrybills as had not yet gone south, by F. Murray, T. Renouf and Miss L. M. Burnside. Thus, another Arctic wader joins the company of those which may remain in New Zealand during the southern winter.

INTRODUCTION INTO NEW ZEALAND OF THE AUSTRALIAN BLUE WREN IN 1923.

By K. E. Westerskov, Wildlife Section, Department of Internal Affairs.

During examination of a series of old files of the former Department of Tourist and Health Resorts on acclimatisation matters, a file on the introduction of the Australian blue wren (*Malurus cyaneus*) attracted my attention.

Thomson (1922) could not well have had any information about the introduction of this species, as the birds were not introduced until January, 1923, although action in the matter began as early as 1918, and none of the following accounts, such as Thomson (1926) and Oliver (1930) mention the importation of this bird.

As a careful look through the literature has not disclosed any published record of the blue wren in New Zealand, it seemed that a short statement of the matter should be published, especially as it is remotely possible that remnants of the species might still persist.

It may also here be mentioned that the blue wren still is on the list of absolutely protected birds, included in the New Zealand Gazette of 27/2/1952, under the name: blue wren (or superb warbler) (*Malurus cyanochlamys*).

The first correspondence about the introduction of this bird dates back to May, 1918—initiated by the Tourist and Health Resorts Department. Importation of up to 12 pairs of blue wrens was authorised by the Minister of Internal Affairs on 3/9/1918, in a permit which stated that the importation was "for the purpose of liberating them within the Rotorua Acclimatisation District."

Through the New Zealand Government Agent in Sydney, contact was arranged with the Director of the Sydney Zoo to try to get the birds. Five pairs of blue wrens were ordered and during the next couple of years a fair number of letters crossed the Tasman Sea re blue wrens.

Finally, on 24/1/1923, twelve birds arrived with the s.s. Ulimaroa in Auckland. The ranger of the Rotorua Acclimatisation Society, Mr. W. Cobeldick, went to Auckland and picked them up. There were four males and eight females, costing a total of £4/2/6.

A short account in the "Rotorua Chronicle," 31/1/1923, gives some general information on the blue wren. The N.Z. Gazette of 15/3/1923 contains an official announcement: "Blue wren or superb warbler absolutely protected," as effective from 1/3/1923, the bird being included in the First Schedule to the Animals Protection and Game Act, 1921-22.

The blue wrens were kept for a couple of weeks at the ranger's home, after which they were liberated in four separate localities, in groups of two females to one male at Rangitaiki, Rotoma Hill, Mokoia Island (in Lake Rotorua) and at the base of Mt. Tongariro.

Nothing more is recorded about the fates of the introduced blue wrens and a recent paper on the birds of the Rotorua District (Phillipps and Lindsay, 1948) makes no mention of the blue wrens.

The colder climate, less abundant growth of vegetation, lack of accustomed food, and the small number of birds released are apparently major reasons in the failure of the experiment.

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WHITE HERON FEEDING HABITS.—On April 14, 1952, a white heron was seen on the mudflats near the Taipa camping ground, four miles north of Mangonui, Northland. The bird was feeding on the mudflats at almost low water. Sometimes it would stretch fully upright and peer around as if searching the water; then it would stalk very slowly forward with neck outstretched; on seeing something (or just prior to attack) the neck would develop a kink just below the head, so that the head was brought back a little; then the whole neck would swing downwards, with the kink still in place, and there would be a sudden darting forward of the head and bill as the spring-like kink straightened out; a small object was snatched from the water, and the head raised quickly to swallow it. The stalking was upstream, very slowly. A catch was being made about every half-minute, and I watched this for about twenty minutes. This bird remained in the area for some time but it finally disappeared on May 3. However, a heron was later seen at Mangonui, five miles away, and was presumably the same bird.—H. G. Warburton.

POSTURING IN LESSER REDPOLL.—Further studies by the writer of the habits of the lesser redpoll indicate that he was mistaken in his view put forward in a previous issue that nuptial displays in this species are limited to a couple of phases only. In fact, there are several kinds of postures to be seen at this stage. In addition to those already described, the cock performs a hovering, hesitant manner of flight over the hen, apparently just before coition takes place. There is also what might be called supplication flight. Two forms coexist. The writer has watched a cock and hen bird making threat calls, and anxiety notes, characteristic of mated birds in the presence of strange birds entering a gully held as a

territory. While the hen perched on a bush uttering calls denoting threat at the intruders, the cock flew round it, wings rigid, in circles. The hen then took wing and approached the cock, quivering the wings, retracting its head, and protruding its breast. Evidently such behaviour keeps mated birds together if they are disturbed. The latter actions closely resemble threat posturing in flight, previously regarded by the writer as display flight proper. Threat behaviour is seen until mid-February.—H. Secker, Wellington.

MEETING OF DUNEDIN MEMBERS.—Dunedin members and friends met in the Biology Lecture Room of the Otago Museum on September 16, 1952, there being an attendance of 67. Mrs. I. Tily presided and gave a report of the annual meeting held in Christchurch, and of the excursions which followed. The local regional organiser, Mrs. L. E. Walker, outlined practical methods whereby members could take an active part in observing and recording bird life, her talk being illustrated by coloured pictures of the birds under discussion. These pictures were shown through an epidiroscope so that all present could see the special points mentioned. Some excellent films taken by Mr. E. G. Turbott, of Auckland, and depicting bird life in Notornis Valley in winter, and on Little Barrier Island were shown, and, in another room, Professor B. J. Marples had on display a fine selection of reproductions of sketches and paintings by eminent bird artists.

PIED TIT IN NORTH AUCKLAND.—On 8/3/52, in company with Mr. S. G. Gittos, a brief visit was made to the forest area of some 1000 acres at the head of Waiwhio Valley, immediately north of the Dome State Forest, Warkworth. The area, containing heavy mixed forest with some kauri, is separated from the Dome Forest only by the comparatively narrow belt of farmland occupying Waiwhio Valley. One tit was heard and another seen. The latter was a male, the greyish throat indicating that it was immature. The pied tit occurs elsewhere so far as is known only at Waipoua Forest on the mainland north of Auckland, although it was "virtually ubiquitous in 1840" (Fleming, Trans. Roy. Soc. N.Z., vol. 78, p. 35). As indicated by this brief visit, it appears that the Waiwhio forest at present forms an "island" with an established population. None was observed in the Dome State Forest, of which a longer examination was made on the previous day.—E. G. Turbott, Auckland Museum.

NEW MEMBERS.

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