

by hundreds, they are gradually becoming fewer, owing to destruction by fires and cats. They are of extremely feeble flight, flying a few yards, then hopping amongst the tangle of the alpine umbrella-fern or low shrubs, and again making a short flight. If pursued they try to escape in the same manner, but are very soon exhausted, and may then be caught by hand. This bird also could hardly have crossed Foveaux Strait.

*The Yellow-breasted Tit* (*Petroica macrocephala* Gmel.).—This lively little bird, so easily recognised by its black head and back and bright-yellow breast, is met with everywhere in the forest, digging in the ground for food, but never scraping with its feet. It appears to be confined to the lower forest, not ascending to the subalpine scrub. Happily it is not averse to civilisation, and is quite at home amongst the bushes near the settlers' dwellings. The female is of dingier colour than the male. It frequently nests in holes or depressions of trees, especially of the broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*).

*The South Island Robin* (*Miro albifrons* Gmel.).—This most friendly and tamest of birds, now so rare in the South Island, is still plentiful in the virgin forests of Stewart Island, but has altogether left the settlements. It ascends to the highest portions of the forests, and is especially abundant in the neighbourhood of Port Pegasus. At one time it was a very common bird, but unhappily it falls an easy prey to cats.

*The Pied Fantail* (*Rhipidura flabellifera* Gmel.).—This sprightly little bird, darting with wide-expanded tail hither and thither in fantastic aerial dance, pursuing sandflies and such small game, is not merely a common sight in the forest everywhere, but it is quite at home in gardens and even round houses. Its nests are not uncommon in low shrubs on the forest's outskirts.

*The Black Fantail* (*Rhipidura fuliginosa* Sparrm.).—Although a common species in the South Island, this bird is quite rare in Stewart Island. I was fortunate, then, to observe one in the lowland forest, which Mr. Murdoch told me was the first he had seen for two years.

*The Native Canary* (*Clitonyx ochrocephala* Gmel.).—This is fairly common, flocks of six to twelve or more being met with in the higher forest or subalpine scrub, but never coming to the lower country. They flit busily about on the branches of the shrubs in search of insects, chirping noisily the while.

*The Brown Creeper* (*Finschia novae-zealandiae* Hutton).—These birds go together in flocks, never alone. They are abundant in the Port Pegasus forest and on Ulva. They are especially plentiful in the subalpine scrub.

*The Bell-bird* (*Anthornis melanura* Sparrm.).—From the North and South Islands alike comes the alas too-true lament that this bird is fast vanishing. Indeed, in most districts where formerly its sweet song made glad the silent forest it is gone for ever. But in Stewart Island it is still plentiful, though close to the settlements it is absent. It is to be seen everywhere in the forests, but is most abundant in the upper forest and the subalpine scrub, where it is still the most common bird.

*The Tui* (*Prothemadera novae-zealandiae* Gmel.).—The tui is the commonest land-bird of the island. During my last visit there was no portion of the forest but I heard its song. Dozens of birds, too, were in every orchard in October sipping the honey from the fruit-tree blossoms. It is present in the higher as well as the lower forest, and is to be encountered in the manuka belt and the subalpine scrub.

*The Wax-eye* (*Zosterops caeruleus* Latham).—Although this is one of the few birds not decreasing in numbers in New Zealand generally, it is not at all common in Stewart Island, and is most frequent in the winter months. It is found chiefly round the settlements.

*The Ground-lark or Pippit* (*Anthus novae-zealandiae* Gmel.).—Where the ground is open, as in the valley leading to Mason Bay, or on the boggy flat near the Frazer Peaks, one is sure to be frequently preceded by this lively but rather sombrely attired bird, with its greyish-brown plumage and white breast spotted with brown, running along the ground a few yards ahead, and rarely taking to the wing. Its nest amongst the grass or fern is not hard to find if the startled bird darts forth.

*The Rifleman* (*Acanthisitta chloris* Sparrm.).—This, the smallest of our birds, is to be found in forest-gullies busily running up the tree-trunks searching for insects in the cracks and crannies of the bark. It is particularly common in the Port Pegasus forests, but is never found near a settlement.

*The Kingfisher* (*Halcyon vagans* Lesson).—The kingfisher is common along the shores of the inlets, and may be very often seen seated on a projecting branch of the mutton-bird scrub. It builds in hollow trees.

*The Shining Cuckoo* (*Chalcococcyx lucidus* Gmel.).—This migratory bird appears in Stewart Island about the middle of October, and stays but a very short time, leaving towards the end of December.

*The Long-tailed Cuckoo* (*Urodynamis taitensis* Sparrm.).—The long-tailed cuckoo does not appear before the end of November, and leaves again at the end of February.

*The Morepork* (*Ninox novae-zealandiae* Gmel.).—This little owl is extremely common, and its curious cry is, as on the mainland, one of the most familiar sounds of the night when camped out in the forest.

*The Kaka* (*Nestor meridionalis* Gmel.).—The kaka is abundant in all the forests of the island, and even comes close to the settlements for food, in which case large numbers are shot. They go about in threes or more. Their nests are in hollow trees, and they lay about five eggs.

*The Red-headed Parrakeet* (*Cyanorhampus novae-zealandiae* Sparrm.).—This bird is not at all plentiful, but is most abundant in the upper forest. They go about in pairs, not in flocks, and build in hollow trees.

*The Yellow-fronted Parrakeet* (*Cyanorhampus auriceps* Kuhl.).—This, although more plentiful than the red-fronted species, is not abundant. It is most common near Port Pegasus.