



OFF BAY OF ISLANDS.

# BIRDS

*New Zealanders!*

*Protect your Native Birds!*

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ISSUED BY

**N.Z. NATIVE BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY**

**E. V. Sanderson, Hon. Sec., Box 631, Wellington**

OBJECTS—To advocate and obtain the efficient protection and preservation of our native birds, a bird day for our schools, and unity of control of all wild life.

Affiliated with the International Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds.

The foundation of true conservation is in the setting aside of sanctuaries efficiently and rigidly controlled by men who know how.

**Subscription, 5/-; Children 1/-**

**(Membership open to all)**

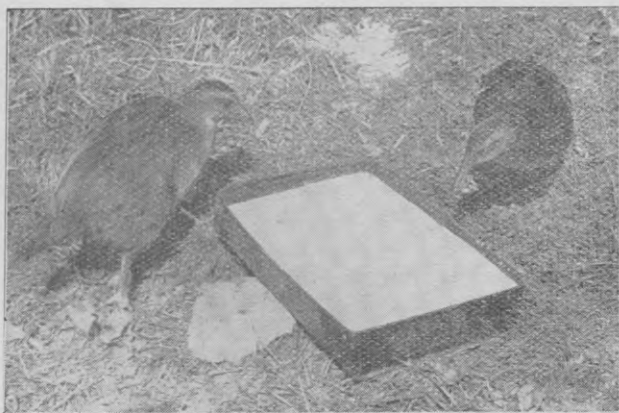
Bulletin No. 12

LARGE CRESTED PENGUIN.

[Looks Like a Sergeant-Major]



*Attention! Now, come along, send  
in your Contribution and help the  
Society in its work of conservation  
by education.*



Wekas like Skim Milk.

—Photo Wilkinson

## *The Heritage of every New Zealander* ---Our Forests and Birds.

**M**OST of us are fully occupied with our own immediate interests; and, unless a careful and intelligent study of the facts is made, the appalling results accruing to bird and forest destruction are not evident. No nation can be prosperous, or even long exist, without birds and forests. Their conservation is to the benefit of every citizen's interests, and it is every citizen's business to assist in avoiding the devastating effects of an insufficiency of forests and birds. Your own welfare and that of your children demands that you insist that their conservation be assured.

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### EXTERMINATION.

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The following remarks appearing in "Out of Doors" over the signature of Tom Horgan might well interest those concerned, both in game and other birds, lest, under our lax conservation system, our birds share a similar fate to many American species once extraordinarily numerous.

### OTHER VANISHING AMERICANS.

On the island of Nantucket, some thirty miles south of

Cape Cod, is a prophetic monument to American destructiveness.

There, making the island their last stand, may be found the last few survivors of what was half a century ago one of America's most valued game birds—the heath hen. As this is written the colony numbers scarcely a score—all that stands between the species and extinction. And if Massachusetts loses her long and costly fight to preserve the pathetic remnants, the heath hen, like the passenger pigeon, will be found only in museums.

The heath hen is not the only form of wild life occupying this perilous position. If statistics mean anything, dozens of other American song and game birds are being gradually swept from the face of the globe by the ruthless march of a commercial civilisation and a policy of conservation that fails in its purpose.

The English sparrow is the only wild creature, except the starling, that can be rightly said to be on the increase, without fear of contradiction, and they are foreigners.

Dr. William T. Hornaday, internationally known zoologist and a leading figure in the fight to preserve America's wild life, sounded the following warning upon his recent retirement as director of the New York Zoological Park:—

“The grinding march of civilisation is sweeping all forms of wild life out of existence at a frightful rate, and extinction will most certainly result if the injustices and harassment now in practice are continued.”

#### DOCTOR HORNADAY'S PRESCRIPTION.

Doctor Hornaday, now seventy-two, has spent fifty years studying and in close association with all forms of wild creatures. He is retiring to his home at Stamford, Connecticut, to continue his writing and his work of conservation.

“It was thought the supply of prairie chickens and wild turkeys could never be exhausted,” he said. “Now both birds are close to the vanishing point. Migratory birds are perhaps in the most immediate peril. They are under fire from the time they leave the North until they reach their winter destination in the far South. Because these birds assemble in comparatively large numbers during flights, the report is sent out that they are multiplying. Statistics absolutely refute this claim.”

Doctor Hornaday prescribes the establishment of additional bird and game sanctuaries, and has been instrumental in having more than a million acres set aside as refuges and

breeding grounds. He also advocates control of natural enemies of wild life, but the extermination of no species, and is one of the strongest supporters of legislation which would enforce a lower bag limit. This proposed measure is meeting weapons difficult to associate with true sportsmanship. Doctor Hornaday cannot explain why the sportsmen themselves rebel at preserving their own favourite recreation.

No more irrefutable condemnation of the country's ineffectual policy of conservation can be found than in the tragedy of the passenger pigeon. A committee of the Ohio State Senate conducted an investigation in the year 1857, and rendered the following report:—

The passenger pigeon needs no protection. Wonderfully prolific, having the vast forests of the North as its breeding grounds, travelling hundreds of miles in search of food, it is here to-day and elsewhere to-morrow, and no ordinary destruction can lessen them, or cause them to be missed from the myriads that are yearly produced.

The last passenger pigeon died September 1, 1914.

The following inscriptions for gravestones to vanishing Americans are furnished by The National Committee of One Hundred, organised to prevent the extermination of wild life:—

The Eastern prairie chicken is now within a few birds of total extinction.

The butterball duck is predicted to go out in about two years.

Because of duck scarcity, twenty-four States have been compelled to reduce the bag limit below Federal regulations.

In twelve states quail disappearance has stopped all quail hunting.

In seven States sage-grouse disappearance has stopped all sage-grouse hunting.

In fourteen States wild turkey disappearance has stopped turkey hunting.

In six States ruffed-grouse hunting is now extinct.

In five States all grouse hunting is extinct.

In four States woodcock hunting is prohibited.

In nine States prairie-chicken hunting is extinct.

#### BESIEGED BY THE AUTOMOBILE.

The Eskimo curlew, which once darkened the sky and was slaughtered by wagonloads, has joined the passenger pigeon in the museum. The last of the species known to have existed was killed in the West in 1915. Edward Howe Forbush, state ornithologist for Massachusetts, is the autho-

rity for the statement that the upland plover, once known in countless thousands, is all but extinct.

"Our childrens' children," he says, "may never see the once abundant upland plover in the sky, or hear the rich note in the summer air." The country's destructive course is not by any means confined to birds and animals, according to Doctor Hornaday.

"A great many of what were formerly our finest trout streams are now hardly worth fishing," he said, "and hatcheries can hardly keep up in the uneven struggle to prevent ponds and streams from being entirely fished out."

He believes the popularity of the automobile one of the most important factors in the decrease of game of all varieties. Doctor Harnaday was himself, until about twenty-five years ago, an ardent sportsman, but "grew tired of seeing things killed and hearing talk about it."



PIPIT OR GROUND LARK. This bird often comes into the house for bread crumbs.

—Photo Wilkinsort

## A PLEA FOR OUR HAWKS.

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The following remarks appear in "Nature Magazine" (America) under the signature of Edward A. Preble, who deplores the threatened extinction of birds of prey, and points out that hawks are not what they are usually painted, but have their place in the balance of Nature, and that this place is largely of benefit to man, including sportsmen.

There are those, and they are many, who fail to see that birds of prey fill an important part in the great scheme of Nature. Does the hunter who shoots down the hawk at every opportunity, because some species occasionally captures what he is pleased to consider his special property, ever stop to ask himself what caused the quail and other non-migratory game birds to attain those powers of swift flight which alone make them desirable as objects of sport? It is the bird of prey, pursuing the other since the days of their creation, which has developed not only its own strength of wing, but that of its quarry. And just as surely as this is true, so truly will that power be lost if the contributing cause be removed. The Dodo, a pigeon, found himself on the island of Mauritius where enemies were unknown. He yielded to gluttony and inaction, developed a corpulence that forbade flight, and was eaten from the face of the earth within a short time after his discovery by man. His relative, the rock dove, who had to escape the pursuing hawk or perish, developed and still retains a power of wing which is famous the world over. In the same way several other species, notably some of the rails, by adopting a care-free life, have forfeited flight, and now face extermination whenever any active enemy invades their haunts. The very hawks which we are now exterminating have made our grouse and quail what they are. The great value of hawks in the removal of game birds suffering from contagious diseases is also recognised by close students of the subject.

A little thought should convince anyone of the fallacy of the argument that the lessening ranks of our game birds have been the result of depredation of hawks, a theory that has been the basis of most of the prejudice directed toward them. If this were well founded, then the decimation of the predators would have resulted in an increase in game birds. In truth both hawks and game have decreased simultaneously, and from the same primary cause.



As an instance of the destruction of innocent hawks under mere suspicion, there may be cited an item just published in the report of progress of an investigation of methods for increasing quail. Upwards of thirty marsh hawks were frequenting roosting places in the game covers, and about half of these were shot. Then over a thousand of the castings of the birds were examined, each representing a meal, with the result that the remains of four quail were found, while more than nine hundred meals had included one or more cotton rats, which eat the eggs of the quail. Indeed, the statement is emphasised that most of the enemies of the quail are also the destroyers of its foes. This instance illustrates the complexity of a problem which many have the assurance to settle off-hand, even when their answer means the extermination of the species under suspicion.

Hawks and other birds of prey, as well as the song birds and the so-called game birds, are all a part of Nature's wealth of life, a wealth that belongs not alone to the student of song birds, nor to the sportsman, but to all the people for all time. The ancestors of our living birds of prey have joined the extinct faunas of the world, and their passing is a part of its history. So in time will our recent species leave their bones in the rocks, and should be succeeded by other forms. We owe it to those of our race who follow us that we refrain from destroying any of these links in the chain. Yet in our treatment of many beautiful and interesting forms of wild life, feathered and furred, we are pursuing a course unworthy of a race which prides itself on its scientific knowledge. On this continent there is still a wonderful supply of wild life that is ever increasingly dear to that growing class who wish to observe it in its daily life, rather than to destroy it for sport or gain. Still, in these interests, the killing of many of our most interesting species goes on, almost without restraint, until extermination threatens. Then, all at once, some magic power of restoration is invoked, and in this blind process other equally valuable forms are swept out of existence.

Man himself, for all we now know, may vanish from earth, and give place to other organisms, perhaps some which he now despises. The past is irrevocable; the future is beyond our power to hasten or to abate. But if man's search for knowledge is to justify itself, he will not destroy these beautiful forms of life wantonly, but will protect them for the good of all, considering his neighbour.



## THE MAORI AS A CONSERVATIONIST.

(By H. Hamilton.)

We have always referred to the Maori as being of a barbaric race—that is, a race not subject to our civilisation. True enough we have been trying to “civilise” him for the past hundred years, but is he the better off for our efforts? There are many who doubt it. After all, “civilisation” is a relative term, depending on one’s viewpoint.

In many ways the old-time Maori surpassed our efforts in a subject that will yet interest New Zealand most vitally—namely, “conservation.” By his very mode of living he was forced to become a conservator, especially of food resources; and I propose to deal with his efforts in the forest.

The Maori believed that man and all other forms of life originated from Tane, the fertiliser. Tane is the personified form of the sun, the father of all living things on mother Earth. When a Maori entered a forest he felt that he was among his own kindred; for had not trees and man a common origin? Therefore every tree, every bird, and every animal had a tapu life principle such as he had. Consequently the cutting down of a tree was, to the Maori, the slaying of one of the offspring of Tane.

The forest was specially tapu in the fowling season, and great care was displayed in former times to prevent that tapu condition being polluted. Thus persons engaged in snaring birds might not carry any cooked food into or about the forest. Many evils would result if the gods of the forest were belittled by such an act. All luck would desert the fowlers, and, indeed, the birds would desert the forest and migrate to another district. Holding such beliefs, it can be imagined that the art of bird-snaring was a serious undertaking.

Trespass on another man’s preserves during the snaring season was looked on as bad form, to put it mildly. Should a man, in wandering through the forest, chance upon a place set with another’s snares, he would just break off a branch, leave it in a conspicuous place, and pass on. The Maori not only set snares at places which the birds frequented, but he took water to the birds at their feeding places. Wooden troughs were set up filled with water, and snares were placed on both sides of the trough.

Fowlers concealed their catches, putting the birds into a hole, and covering them with brush lest the living birds should see their dead kin, and so become shy and perchance desert the forest. Again, feathers were never left lying about the forest, but were always buried, and young folk were trained never to scatter feathers about.

With these and many other peculiar customs the Maori of old showed his respect for forest conventions. He knew how dependent he was on the animals of the forest for his food supply, and he only took sufficient for his daily wants. He studied the flowering and fruiting of all the forest trees, and knew the habits of the animals that frequented the forest and stream.

The advent of "civilisation," however, brought death and destruction to the children of Tane, the trees and the animals. Settlers uprooted the forests and destroyed the home of the animals. Civilised man with his dog and gun ravaged the animal life, and killed much more than he needed for his wants. To complete the destruction he introduced vermin in the shape of deer, goats, rats, rabbits, and other destroying agents.

Would it not seem that we (civilised men) are the barbarians, and could we not adopt that beautiful conception that the trees and birds are our living relatives, imbued as we are with a life principle? We are all children of Tane, the father, and Papa, the mother, and life being beautiful, none of us want to die. Give some thought, then, to our speechless relatives dwelling in the forest and the stream.

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## **TUIS BRED IN CAPTIVITY.**

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During the late nesting season Tuis were successfully bred in captivity by Natives interested in bird preservation in Wellington district. The Tui is a difficult bird to keep in captivity, and an intimate knowledge of the bird's food habits and no small amount of careful attention and work were necessary to achieve success. Tuis invariably die in an aviary from fits. Having successfully demonstrated that these birds could be bred, they were released.

## OUR VERY OWN.

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The oak, the ash, and the weeping willow tree,  
They all grow green in the Old Countree.

Yes! but not solely in the Old Country, as the flora of Britain is found as a native generally throughout Europe. Contrast this with our own native flora, three parts of which is native to no other country, and is therefore entirely New Zealand. Such a fact, together with its great economic value, should be sufficient to encourage the keenest desire to preserve it whenever possible in its native condition.

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## HAWKS.

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Birds of prey, many really beneficial, but ignorantly supposed to be harmful, are being rapidly destroyed. The National Association of Audubon Societies, 1974, Broadway, New York City, calls attention in a special pamphlet to the need of an immediate, progressive campaign of education both in the schools and among farmers, sportsmen, and game breeders, in regard to the protection of these birds. In America the round winged bird of prey, such as our Harrier, has been proved to do more good than harm, as the outcome of careful scientific testing of its food habits. The Harrier is not equipped to capture strong, active birds, and has to confine his appetite to weak and maimed birds. This bird of prey is, however, death on rats, mice, weasels, and other ground vermin, including rabbits. The Hawk is, however, a very prominent worker, and much damage is thus attributed to him which is really the work of the silent and night-working ground vermin, including the cat. Those who control such matters would be well advised to have the food habits of Hawks properly scientifically tested before expending money on the destruction of Hawks, as undoubtedly better results would accrue were such money spent on holding down ground vermin, the numbers of which would astonish the merely casual observer.

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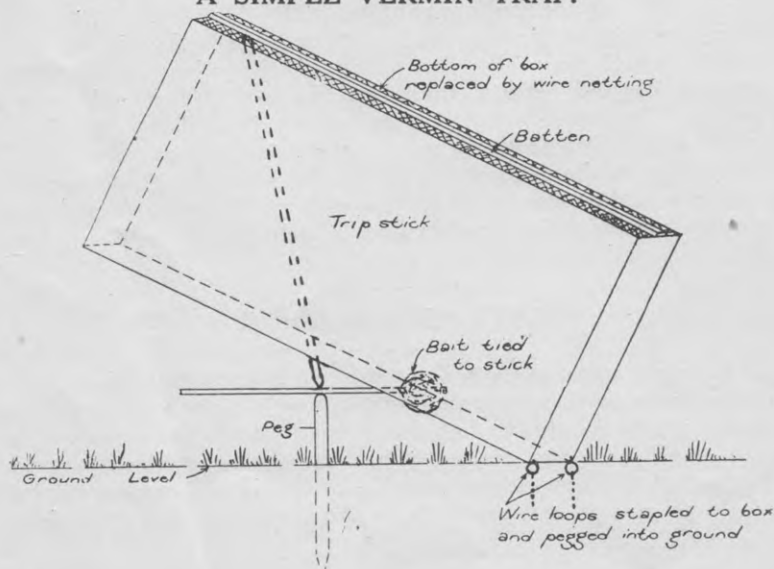
## CATS VERSUS BIRDS.

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Leading naturalists tell us that cats keep most desirable birds away from our homes and towns. Cats are supposed to keep rats in check, but do they? Very few cats catch rats at all, and one generally has to rely on other means to dispose of the unwelcome rodent, while the cat waxes fat on what we give it and on birds. Thus, such birds as the fan-

tail, pipit, and silver eye and other confiding native birds fall an easy prey, while the sparrow, having through long association become alive to the danger, is not so easily caught. Now there are 280,000 families in New Zealand. There must be many more than an average of one cat per family. As many as 27, 19, and lesser numbers have been counted belonging to single families. Each cat is estimated to average 50 insect-eating or game bird chickens a year when procurable. Suppose we cut it down to only ten a year and say nothing about the young birds which die in the nest owing to the mother having been killed. Surely a very conservative estimate, as there are lots of wild cats also. The result is 2,800,000 desirable birds destroyed every year. What an even more stupendous total must accrue from all ground vermin, rats, weasels, stoats, etc., etc., to say nothing of Mr. Hedgehog, whom gamekeepers credit with the habit of backing on to sitting hen pheasants and pushing them off their nests with their sharp spines in order to get the eggs or chicks. Try him in your poultry house. Now add to the ground vermin or night-attacking contingent the activities of the poacher, pot hunter, collector, opossums, and the trappers' traps, etc., etc., and estimate what a stupendous uphill fight most desirable birds have. They are, with very few exceptions, our friends, and we could not exist without their enormous activities in destroying hordes of extremely prolific insect life. The proof is the nearer we get to habitation the more insect pests there are, and fewer birds.

### A SIMPLE VERMIN TRAP.



The top of trap is covered with wire netting of a mesh small enough to confine a rat. A batten is run along the top longitudinally to support trip stick. The ground under trap is covered with a strip of small mesh wire netting to prevent burrowing out. Bait with raw meat tied on to bait stick and tally the number of vermin caught.

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### THE GREY WARBLER OR RIRORIRO.

The following is one of the Maori legends relating to the reason why the name Riroriro, which means "gone away," was given to the grey warbler.

"Ha-tupatu lived at Horohoro, Rotorua district. He was carried off to the forest by an ogress, but managed to escape one day when she was in the forest spearing birds. These birds she speared by means of transfixing them on her long finger nails. On her return from the forest, a small bird informed her of Ha-tupatu's escape by calling out "Riro! Riro! Riro!" which means "absent—gone away." Hence that bird has since been known as the Riroriro."

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### IF YOU

Throw rubbish about at home, chop the furniture about, carve your name on the mantelshelf, kill every living thing that comes around, and sometimes burn the house down? Then do these things when in the forest! It is nice to feel at home!

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### THE NECESSITY OF BIRDS.

By far the most efficient aids to man in controlling the codlin moth are the birds."—Year Book (1911) of U.S. Department of Agriculture.

It has been shown that the codlin moth in America does more damage to apples and pears than all other insects combined. Here in New Zealand we are fortunate in having such birds as the fantail, the warbler, and white eye, which take a heavy toll of such insects.

I never have to spray the fruit trees at my place here, and I attribute this altogether to the protection my birds give to my trees, says Joseph H. Dobson, of Illinois, U.S.A., who is a noted conservationist, and attracts desirable birds with the aid of nesting houses, suitable food and water. He believes in destroying all cats and sparrows. This is done with specially constructed traps.

One of the reports of the Biological Survey, U.S.A.,

records finding 60 grasshoppers in the crop of one night hawk and 500 mosquitoes in another; 30 cut worms in the crop of a black bird; 70 canker worms in the crop of a cedar bird. A female martin's crop contained nearly 2000 mosquitoes. Our own fantail, however, would probably easily beat some of these figures. Watch one carefully for ten minutes and count the number of its catches.

Captain Scott, when at the point of death, in his last letter to his wife, wrote:—"Make the boy interested in natural history: it is better than games; they encourage it at the schools."

## NEW ZEALAND'S ENDEMIC SPECIES OF BIRDS.

The following seventy-eight species of native birds are found indigenous in no other part of the earth. It will surely be the desire of every true New Zealander to cherish and safeguard such a heritage:—

White-flipped Penguin	Laughing Owl
Yellow-crowned Penguin	Kakapo
Pied Shag	Red-fronted Parakeet
Rough-faced Shag	Yellow-fronted Parakeet
Campbell Island Shag	Orange-fronted Parakeet
Bronze Shag	Chatham Island Parakeet
Spotted Shag	Antipodes Island Parakeet
Chatham Island Shag	Kaka
Black-fronted Tern	Kea
Black-billed Gull	Rifleman
Sub-Antarctic Snipe	Stephen Island Wren (extinct)
Black Stilt	Green Wren
N.Z. Dotterel	Rock Wren
Wrybill	South Island Tomtit
Sandplover	North Island Tomtit
Auckland Island Rail	Chatham Island Robin
Mangere Rail	Snares Island Robin
Dieffenbach's Rail (extinct)	South Island Robin
North Island Woodhen	North Island Robin
South Island Woodhen	Grey Warbler
Black Woodhen	Chatham Island Warbler
Brown Woodhen	Pied Fantail
Notornis	Black Fantail
Dabchick	North Island Thrush
Brown Kiwi	South Island Thrush
Little Grey Kiwi	Fernbird
Great Grey Kiwi	Chatham Island Fernbird
N.Z. Quail (extinct)	Chatham Island Bellbird
N.Z. Pigeon	Yellowhead
Chatham Island Pigeon	Whitehead
Paradise Duck	Brown Creeper
Brown Duck	Bellbird
Auckland Island Duck (flightless)	Stitchbird
Blue Duck	Tui
Scaup	Pipit
Auckland Island Merganser	Huia
Quail Hawk	Saddleback
Sparrow Hawk or Bush Hawk	Orange-wattled Crow
Morepork	Blue-wattled Crow

## PRESERVE YOUR BIRDS AND ENRICH YOUR COUNTRY.

(Extract from lecture by Prof. Fitzsimons, Port Elizabeth Museum, S.A.)

In our struggle for food and life we have Nature's helpers. Birds stand in the front rank as our allies, and cannibal insects and lizards come second in usefulness. We cannot stem the assaults of our enemies with poison sprays and other artificial appliances supplemented by useful carnivorous and parasitic insects. The birds alone can turn the scale in our favour.

Man cannot exist upon this world without the active help of wild birds. The only obstacle to his complete conquest of Mother Earth is the insect hordes which effectively bar his way. It is now an even fight between insect and man for victory. Dwellers in cities do not realise the intensity of this struggle for the survival of the fittest.

If we are going to continue resting in fancied security, we shall, for a surety, be upon the rocks. Before the advent of man the balance of nature was quickly readjusted when it, for some reason, was upset. Insects in those days had a hard struggle to live with wild plant life only for food, and active watchful birds on all sides. On the advent of man the lands were tilled and the face of the world was covered with tender succulent crops. In the presence of such a food supply, insect life increased enormously.

Now that is the point. When we increased the food supply of the insect armies did we put the same energy into correspondingly increasing the chief enemies of insects—viz., the wild birds? No! On the contrary, we did most illogical things. We made war on the birds; with gun, catapult, and trap we mowed them down. We burnt or otherwise destroyed their leafy shelters, and their breeding places.

Yea, truly, we are reaping the harvest of ignorance, brutality, and cruelty sown by our ancestors. "As ye sow, that also shall ye reap."

### BIRD PESTS.

What about these bird pests? Yes, what about them? The bird pests could be counted on the fingers of one's hands.

Would that I could burn this into your minds—viz.: "It is an urgent necessity for us to take every possible means to not only safeguard our wild bird life, but also to do our utmost to increase the bird population to prey on the countless numbers of insects which breed and multiply in our cultivated lands." Surely it is obvious that if an army doubles its numbers it becomes essential for the opposing



army to be reinforced. Then let us set about it, and double the army of birds which war incessantly on our implacable enemies the insects.

### CROPS, FRUIT, FORESTS.

Insects breed on pasture lands and invade the crops, hence the urgent necessity to preserve the birds which frequent those lands. With the succulent food provided by the farmers, insects multiply many millions of times, and, but for the birds, farming would become impossible.

Hosts of birds safeguard our orchards both directly and indirectly, and others police our forests. It is idle and a waste of time to stop to argue and criticise and pretend to examine into the question of the importance or otherwise of bird life.

The bitter experience of other countries is sufficient for us. The Governments are spending money like water to bring back the vanishing bird life to save the people from the results of the inroads of insects, which bring poverty, sickness, and premature death to the human race.

### RESULT OF BIRD DESTRUCTION.

There is much spade work and great battles to be fought by the human race against the adverse forces of Nature, which retard the spread of the human race over earth's fair surface. Our most formidable and ruthless opponents are the insects. It is now almost an even fight for supremacy, and unless we combine and utilise our forces more effectively and efficiently we shall find it very difficult to secure a livelihood. A few more wars, with the inevitable disorganising of the forces employed against the insect hosts, will result in these enemies getting a strangle-hold upon us. Our race may recover, but many millions will perish of starvation and insect-borne diseases. The fecundity of the insect is tremendous, and a little weakening in our offensive will bring disaster, sure and certain, upon our race. The insects are fighting for possession of the earth. It is now a case of insect versus man. All other forms of life have been subdued, but the insect still holds its ground, and ever and anon gains considerable advantages over us. The present production of food is not sufficient for the needs of our race. Millions live in a condition of semi-starvation; hosts actually die of hunger. With the increase of the world's population we must have a corresponding increase in food production. By subduing the insects and keeping them in subjection we can provide food in plenty for every human being. At present a large percentage of the world's food supply is devoured by hungry insects. We cannot stem the assaults of our

enemies with poison sprays and other artificial appliances, supplemented by useful carnivorous and parasitic insects. Again I say it, and I challenge contradiction—the birds alone can turn the scale in our favour.

### ENCOURAGE BIRDS TO BREED.

With the increase of insects owing to the ever-increasing cultivation of the soil and planting of orchards and plantations, we must see to it that the wild birds increase in proportion. This we can do by ceasing to persecute the birds, with, of course, the few exceptions which sometimes are apt to become a pest to individual farmers. We can do much more. We ought to have laws with drastic penalties on any one killing birds or robbing their nests. To encourage birds to breed and stay around our homesteads and on our farms, we should provide them with surface water to drink and bathe in, and we can with advantage put up nesting boxes in trees, on poles, against the walls of outhouses, etc. Any sort of little box will do, with an entrance hole in the side, or tin cans, jam tins, and other little shelters of various kinds and designs to suit the different species of birds.

### PROTECT THE BIRDS.

I would ask you, one and all, to register a vow here and now never to kill or persecute a bird unless you possess overwhelming proof that it is doing you more harm than good. Because one or two species happen to be a pest to you don't allow your anger and indignation to find a vent by murdering other birds. Some people hate all hawks, for instance, because now and then one becomes a chicken thief. Kill the thief, certainly, but leave the others alone to carry on their useful work of waging war on rats and mice.

### THE FEATHERED FRIENDS OF MAN.

"The service that birds perform in protecting woodland trees," writes E. H. Forbush, State Entomologist of Massachusetts, "is more nearly indispensable to man than any other benefit they confer on him. . . . Were the natural enemies of forest insects annihilated, every tree in our woods would be threatened with destruction, and man would be powerless to prevent the calamity.

"He might make shift to save some orchard or shade trees; he might find means to raise some garden crops; but the protection of all the trees in all the woods would be beyond his powers. Yet this herculean task is ordinarily accomplished as a matter of course by birds and other insectivorous creatures, without trouble or expense to man."

## CHILDREN'S PAGE.

### THE DAINTY LANDRAIL.

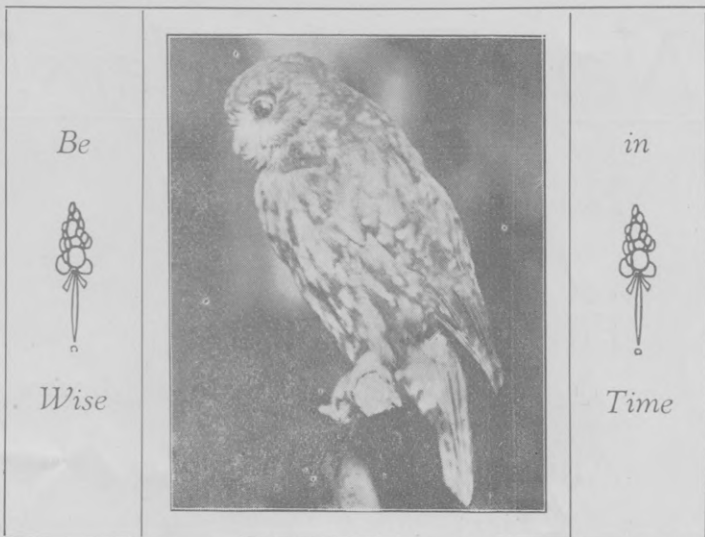
(By A. H. Messenger.)

One of the daintiest of our swamp birds is certainly the little striped rail. It is rarely seen because it is a shy, quiet bird, and as it lives among thick rushes and the tall grass and weeds that grow along the edges of soft and marshy ground, it is generally hidden from sight. This beautiful bird, with its soft slaty-blue breast feathers, barred with rich brown, and its warm, brown back and sides spotted with white dots, does not fly much, but generally runs swiftly from place to place, or steals cautiously along through the dark tunnels it makes among the tall raupo reeds. Its nest is usually made on some tussock or mound raised slightly above the wet ground of the swamp. The chicks when hatched are tiny black balls of fluff.

Little Harry Palmer's home was in one of the suburbs of Auckland city; and at the foot of the back garden a narrow strip of swamp came just through their wire fence. Harry used to play near here on fine days, digging holes in the bank with a small spade; and as he was a great lover of bird life, he always brought back some interesting story of his feathered friends to his father and mother.

For some days Harry had been busy making a tunnel under a low overhanging bank, and, just before he could finish it, he was taken to the seaside for a week. It was several days after his return before he was able to visit his favourite playground; and at the first stroke of his spade near the entrance to his tunnel he was astonished to see a beautiful, brown, spotted bird dart from the hole and vanish among the reeds of the swamp. He was greatly excited to find, just inside the tunnel, a cosy nest containing four eggs.

His father and mother were quite as much surprised as Harry when shown the nest; and, taking care not to frighten the parent bird, they were presently rewarded by seeing four dainty chicks hatched out, each as black as a sloe. As if she knew that they were friends, the mother bird would let Harry and his parents come quite close, but if a dog or a cat happened to appear she would utter a warning cry, and in a flash mother and chicks would disappear among the thick rushes. In due course the little birds grew up and were often seen at the foot of the garden; and the last time I saw Harry, who is now quite a big boy, he told me that each year the landrails make their nests close to their old home in the tunnel which he dug out several years ago.



MOREPORK. Photo Newtown Museum.

THE New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society invites all those who have respect for our wonderful and unique native birds, all those who realise the great economic and aesthetic value of birds, all those who wish to preserve our unrivalled scenic beauties, to band together with the Society in an earnest endeavour to fully awaken public interest and secure efficient preservation, conservation, and intelligent utilisation of our great heritage.

With the co-operation, appreciation, and assistance of the general public New Zealand can stand unrivalled. Without such our forests will be hopelessly marred and destroyed by fire, animals and wasteful exploitation—our birds a memory of the past.

Our subscription is merely 5/-, Children 1/-. A 10/- note will pay for two years. Besides this, we ask for your co-operation in assisting to conserve your own heritage. Is it worth while?

We aim at issuing only accurate information, all of which is checked by leading authorities. No remuneration is asked by any of our officers. Your contribution goes solely towards better informing others.

# *New Zealanders!*

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No Insect-eating Birds

means no crops.

Fire in our Forests

means sudden death to our forests,

Animals in our Forests

means slow but certain death to our forests.

No Native Birds

means no native forests.

No Forests

means decreased production, desolation and poverty,

*Will YOU help to  
avoid these results?*

Please pass this Booklet on to a friend if of no further use.

Extra copies will be forwarded on request.