

HOW TO TAME WILD BIRDS.

The following article by E. W. Hendy, author of "The Lure of Bird Watching," describes how so-called wild English birds can be tamed. Our own birds, such as bell-birds, are all amenable to similar treatment, including sea birds, numbers of which may be seen following one lady bather into the sea at Paraparaumu. This lady feeds the sea-birds every morning.

"The best way to tame birds is to keep a bird table or tables. It is unnecessary, so far as the bodily welfare of the birds is concerned, to feed them except in cold weather. But if you supply food for them all the year round they become accustomed to human presence, and, as Lord Grey has pointed out, realise that in a certain area—that is, on and near the bird-table—they are safe.



**"WILD" BELLBIRDS MAKE FRIENDS
WITH MAN.**

"Tame robins have become proverbial. I have known many; but during the summer of 1930 they mysteriously deserted our board and our garden. It was the chaffinches that were tamest. Whenever the weather allowed we took our meals on a flagged space bounding the south side of our house, and, as we ate, the chaffinches walked round our feet, under the table, and devoured the morsels we gave them; occasionally they perched on the table. Pied

wagtails and greenfinches sometimes came with the chaffinches, but they never ventured so near.

"It was an interesting experience to look down from above upon a 'wild' bird at a distance of only a foot or two. From this vantage you can see every separate feather on the blue head and russet mantle of a cock chaffinch; you can watch him turning the hemp seed with his tongue as he holds it between his horny mandibles, and hear it crack. You may note, too, that his long middle toe is slightly turned inwards, to get a good grip.

"Soon we began to recognise the differences in the individualities of our guests. The most trustful was a cock whose white wingbar was almost obscured by the greyish wing-coverts.