

including the statement "I have a considerable number of skins from all parts of this country"

Although there are 5 only South Island snipe skins labelled as from Jacky Lee I and collected by Travers (Table 1), it is probable that he obtained at least 15 snipe skins from the island. There are another 5 South Island snipe skins labelled as Travers specimens but with incorrect or no locality S data...

A likely causative factor of incorrect labelling by Travers was the long time that elapsed between 1893 and 1927 (see above), and a further 25 snipe skins (including at least 7 with incorrect locality data) were sold to the Dominion...

and it was probably acquired as part of a bulk lot by the Dominion Museum in 1936 (Dell 1965). The Robert Falla (Director of the Dominion Museum) while researching this paper in May 2011: (vide dated catalogue card annotations made by Sandy Bartle, former Curator of Birds).

A specimen of c.1900 vintage in Canterbury Museum (AV1817) was originally in the collection of Dr Benjamin Moorhouse. The Moorhouse collection was loaned to the museum following the outbreak of World War I, then acquired by the museum following...

Stewart I region specimen labels undertaken by Trish Hemphill (Hemiphaga novaeselandiae), Jacky Lee I, 14 original label, although 2 have subsequently had his name added as the collector.

Travers or his collector apparently labelled most specimens with their date and sex at the time of collection or preparation, and so the dates should be more reliable than the localities, which in some cases appear to have been added years later. The accuracy of date data was checked with 2 South Island snipe that are labelled as having been collected on Jacky Lee I on 18 Mar 1897 and 24 Apr 1901. Based on snipe moult their primary feathers in Mar and Apr, soon after their chicks become independent: 20 of partially grown outer primaries, corroborating labels as collected in Jun and Jul have completed their primary moult. The specimens are too fragile for further moult analysis.

If the dates on snipe, fernbird and pigeon specimens supposedly collected on Jacky Lee I by Travers are correct, they represent at least 8 occasions between 1897 and 1905; 15 snipe specimens were collected, with apparently few collected on any 1 visit (8 specimens lack complete dates and 4 are undated).

Herbert Guthrie-Smith and John McLean on Jacky Lee Island, 1911

Guthrie-Smith and McLean (1911) were ornithologists who visited the islands around Stewart Island in 1911, 1914, 1925, 1936). These fascinating accounts make it clear that the islands were visited on several occasions. Guthrie-Smith (1911) wrote: "I had seen specimens of them during former visits to the islands, but I had not seen them for many years. I had seen specimens of them during former visits to the islands, but I had not seen them for many years. I had seen specimens of them during former visits to the islands, but I had not seen them for many years." (Note: The text in the image is highly garbled and repetitive, so I have summarized the key information.)

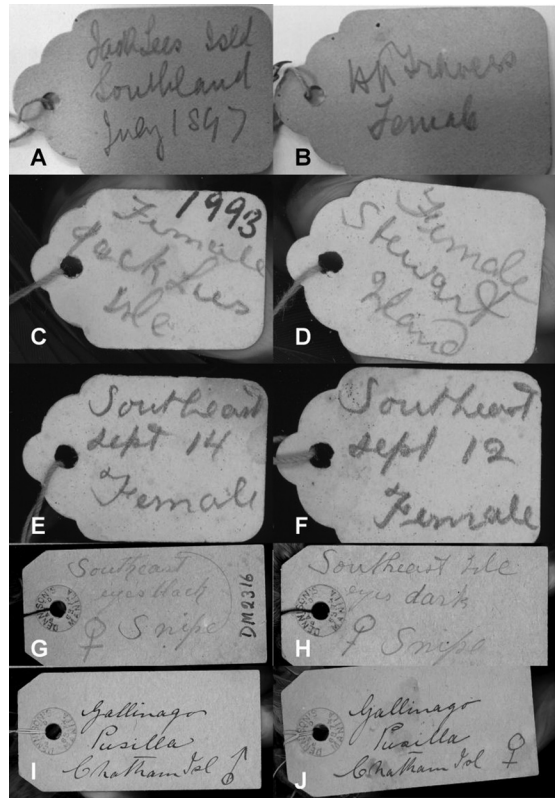


Fig. 1. Handwritten labels for bird specimens, showing dates and localities such as Southland, Stewart Island, and Southeast. The labels are arranged in a grid and include details like 'July 1897', '1993', 'Sept 14', and 'Sept 12'.

Travers or his collector apparently labelled most specimens with their date and sex at the time of collection or preparation, and so the dates should be more reliable than the localities, which in some cases appear to have been added years later. The accuracy of date data was checked with 2 South Island snipe that are labelled as having been collected on Jacky Lee I on 18 Mar 1897 and 24 Apr 1901. Based on snipe moult their primary feathers in Mar and Apr, soon after their chicks become independent: 20 of partially grown outer primaries, corroborating labels as collected in Jun and Jul have completed their primary moult. The specimens are too fragile for further moult analysis.

about 3 hours each time. They were unaware of the presence of snipe on islands around Stewart I until but subsequently learnt more about the birds from Truill, and Mr Bragg (probably Tom Bragg; Cockayne (NZ Truth 26 Apr 1928, p.4). The chicks of sooty shearwater [#, ±, ♀^aµ♀, ♀ harvested for food] for the 1st time the previous weka being present (Vol. 1, p.24; Vol. 3, p.78).

Bill 2/4 slightly curved (sketch taken [Fig. 2^o ± 0 µ♀♂ 0 « ± ♀¹ ± ± ♀² ♀³ towards tip (lower 3rd) Legs heavy. Climbed careful walk or quick run of Rail, but a run like a plover. Did not appear frightened or try to hide but fed along dodging the shape and also a view of the head when note µ ♀♂

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±"µ¼«-²« .-§" ²²², . ² |²|® ³, -"§
the boat up on the same spot as before. We
¶. ² ©µ.«" .²³ " ± µ¼«±ª .«" ¶µ¼ ¥
-±" ° ° ¥"²² ²²², . ©µ¼±³" " ¥ªµ¼µ¼²±"
but we did not get a chance at it...We walked
over a good deal of scrub country but saw
no more snipe.

A thorough search of the David Macmillan archive in
Canterbury Museum located additional pages
¶² ° &"²§ ¶ §-µ¼±|, §±ª ±²."¶²± ¶±³"
²¹" µ²² © ¥¼½ ¶®-¼ §" Z±ª"

4th Dec...Took more side view of the Snipe
ª±ªª ¶¶ | ~»³²¶ µ¼ ² 1 ± µ±±
' «" ³"²"², ²± ° &" ¶ |²¹"µ¼ § |«-¼
by windswept Manuka, interspersed with
Dracophyllum longifolium. It is all peat,
with odd rocky outcrops; open places being
covered with lichens or moss. The Snipe nest
± ¶«² µ Z ±², ®µ ²± .«" "§ª" ²©.µ¶,
and the ones we have found were not in thick
cover. There are a good many weka, robins
[*Petroica australis* ±²§ z ²|®¶¶ ¥"¥¶§¶
Anthornis melanura , ³ .«"µ¼ ¶¶ ° "¶¶ µ
few Fernbirds [*Bowdleria punctata* ' «" µ.
varies from about 600 to 1000 feet.

7th " | ' «" ¶±³" µ¶¶ ±²§ ¼¼²², . ° "±¼
yards, if pursued, but, for the most part run
among the heavy scrub and stand watching
¼¼, ' «"µ ¶ª«" ¶¶¼-®. «²²© ²²§ |²|®
[*Scolopax rusticola* ²±¼±². ¶¶ ¶µ±ª .².«
sexes take their turn at incubating the eggs.

&"²§ ¶²¶¶ µ¼µ²±²©¶±³" ¼±ª ° «"±³, ¶¶, "§
° ¶¶³ µ²¥µ¼¼. «" ¥¶¶¶ ©µ/ , «µ¶ & ¶¶
p.186) footnote, referring to the South Island snipe:
"That *Gallinago aucklandica* |±± ¼¼ ¶¶¶¹"
the experience of a friend whose ornithological
abilities cannot be gainsaid. What, however, each
"§ ±², µ¶¶¶ «² ¶¶²²¶¶ µ¶¶ ¶¶ «" ¶¶², ±§
to declare. My particular cronies did not use their
wings and I leave it at that."

&"²§ ±²§ / , «µ¶ & ¶¶ ©±° "¶¶². «"µ
well, and were regarded as "old colleagues" even
before they travelled together to the Auckland Is
on the government steamship *Tutanekai* in 1929
fi"²§ ±²§ ¶±± %²¶¶, ±³, ¥-¶¶"§ ° ¶³²²¶¶
1500, folder 22, Alexander Turnbull Library). They
° µ¼ ¶¶, "± |²µ¶¶²²§±. ¶, ³, ±- / , «µ¶
& ¶¶ ¶¶¶ ±, µ¼-§ Z µ¼¶-± µ¶¶¶
Canterbury Museum, and note the photograph of
.«" ²©.«" ° .²ª. «"µ ± &"²§ ¶ªµ¶± ±
published in *Notornis* vol. 20, p.89, 1973).

Lance Richdale on Big South Cape Island, 1945
The depredations of Stead, Wilson and weka
notwithstanding, snipe persisted in low numbers
on Big South Cape I for another 33 years. Lance

Richdale and William Denham visited Big South
"²³" fl ¶¶° ¶± %¶«§µ" ' «"¼
observed 4 snipe, including 1 pair (probably an adult
±²§ © ¼¼ªµ²° ± |«-¶ª ±" «" .² ° ¼¼µ

We saw only four individuals. After
spending a day on the tops we were
«²° ° ° µ¶³ ³²§§±ª², µ° "µ¼¼° µ¼±². µ
great distance above the bush, we observed
two birds feeding together in soft mud under
some Manuka about six feet high. Four days
later we found another on top of one of the
peaks. Returning that afternoon, and when
in the bush, Mr. Denham nearly trod on one,
|µ, ¶±ªª .² ¼¼²° " ©"±©. .«µ²,ª «. «"
trees and about two feet above the ground.

Richdale expressed concern at the presence of
weka on the island, stating "The gravest danger to
its existence is the Weka, which eats the eggs and
young...In 1945, we found few Wekas and few
Snipe; we also saw one Weka well above the bush
-±" ' «" ¶¶¶-¶¶ ¶±³" ¶¶-¶¶¶²± «¶¶±§
but obviously all the elements for the loss of the
valuable bird are present. Because the Wekas are
not plentiful and are largely in the bush, the Snipe
are experiencing a temporary respite only."

* -§-© & µ¶¶-¶¶ ¶¶ ²± ° ¶ &² .«" µ² ¶¶±§
.«" ±µ¶¶ «²³. µ
° µ±± ° "±² § ²± Z "µ²±²©. «" ! ° ° "µ±±§
Wildlife Service saw a single snipe only during
µ° ²±. «²±ª ¹¶¶ ± ³µ ¥. §-§ «"µµ.«"
hawaii (*Weekly news* 8 Aug 1962; Miskelly 1987).
Three years later they were shocked into action
¥¼µ³² µ¶¶ ¶¶° ° .²±¥¶¶¶¶¶. «µ. «" ¶¶±²§ ° ¶¶
²¹" µµ ± ¥¼µ¶¶ " " " µ±± | " ' «"
devastation caused by recently colonised ship rats
on the South Cape islands (Big South Cape, Solomon
±²§ #, ®° "®µ ° ¶¶²±²²©. «"ªµµ¶¶. µªª§-¶¶±
° ²§µ±! ° ° - "µ±± |²±¶¶ µ¼µ²± «¶¶µ¼ Z ²µ¶¶
& ¶¶ | «². µ, ², ±ª ° µ±± | "

Although South Island saddlebacks (*Philesturnus
carunculatus*) were saved, the last remaining
populations of 3 vertebrate species were wiped out:
ªµ²µ µ¶¶² µ. µ-§ ¥µ *Mysticina robusta*), bush
wren (*Xenicus longipes*), and South Island snipe.

A Wildlife Service team spent 5 weeks on Big
&². «" µ² fi ±,ª &³ µ ° ³. ±ª .² ¶¶¶
saddlebacks, snipe and wrens. Three snipe were
caught by the team beating in a line through scrubby
¹ª. µ. µ²±, ±-¶¶¶³" . ¶¶"§ . «"±¶¶, µ¶, ±²±ªª
±²§ |µ|«±ª ° ° ²© ¶¶¶ "µ±±. ¶¶ | " ±" ¥¶¶
escaped after capture; the 2 others (both male) were
placed in an aviary on 30 Aug (Fig. 3), but the team
was unable to supply them with enough live food
±²§ .«"¼¼². «§-§²± &³ µ¶¶ Z ²µ¶¶ & ¶¶
° µ±± | " ' «"µ¼ «µ¹" ¥"±±² |²± µ "§
sightings of South Island snipe since.



Fig. 3. A snipe bird with mottled brown and black feathers, standing in a field of green grass.

DISCUSSION

Who collected snipe on Jacky Lee Island?

It is assumed that all specimens bearing his name were personally collected by him. Based on Jacky Lee Island snipe specimens, it appears to have visited the Stewart I region at least 14 times between 1895 and 1905, with Jacky Lee I visited on at least 7 of these trips. This is unlikely, as Travers was based in Wellington and was a man of insubstantial means: he was declared bankrupt in 1888 (*Evening Post* 23 Sep 1888) and he often (and unsuccessfully) sought

Travers signalled his intention to travel to Stewart I in Dec 1895 and 13 May 1896 (Tring archive), however, other than bird specimen labels, there is no evidence Travers in the *Southland Times* viewed 27 May 2011), but this absence of evidence

Stewart I at least 6 times between 1910 and 1923 mention in the *Southland Times* (*op. cit.*).

There is some evidence that Travers already had a collector active around Stewart I before he told shortly to proceed to Stewart's island, for the purpose of Island shag *Leucocarbo chalconotus* only locality where there is a chance of obtaining Travers referred to "a man who is collecting for me on the Southern west coast", and there is a

McLean was convinced that they had made a new discovery. Stewart I then as now had a small community, and it seems unlikely that anyone

... author, unpubl.) and has a more yellow tone than the Don Merton photograph of possibly the same bird reproduced here (Fig. 3), where the legs appear grey.

The bird in Fig. 3 is an adult, based on the deeply grooved upper mandible (see Barker et al. 2005). It is very unlikely that snipe could have bred ... arrived on Big South Cape I in Mar 1964 (Bell 1978), supporting the supposition that the 2 birds captured 4 months later were adult. The leg colour in other *Coenocorypha* snipe varies with locality (taxon), sex and individual, ranging from rich yellow in some adult males of Chatham Island snipe and Snares Island snipe (though typically paler yellow), through pale yellow (female Chatham Island snipe, both sexes of Auckland Island snipe and Campbell Island snipe *C. aucklandica perseverance* ... yellow (female Snares Island snipe), olive green (immature Snares Island and Chatham Island snipes) to grey (Antipodes Island snipe, immature Auckland Island and Campbell Island snipes) ... description of leg colour from Jacky Lee I does not conform with the leg colour of the adult bird photographed 53 years later on Big South Cape I.

... Lee and Big South Cape Is, as he presented a paper entitled "A new race of island snipe" to the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Society on 5 Jun 1940 (Anon. 1942); unfortunately the paper was never published, and no such text has been found among the Stead papers in the David Macmillan archive in Canterbury Museum. Stead in the 1930s had no way of knowing that most of the Jacky Lee I snipe ... were the bulk of them labelled as from the Snares Is (Table 2), but due to the Dominion Museum shifting premises and the intervention of World War II, the 546 bird skins (including 25 snipe) purchased from ... the 1950s (Sandy Bartle, pers. comm.).

... between snipe from Jacky Lee I and those from Big ... window for the introduction of weka to Jacky Lee I. They were not there in 1911, and are likely to ... c.1929. These same dates tragically bookend the extinction of snipe on Jacky Lee I.

Scarcity of snipe on Jacky Lee and Big South Cape Islands

Snipe were apparently uncommon on both Jacky ...

evident both from the multiple visits (at least 8) needed to collect 15 specimens between 1897 and ... only during 3 visits in 1911, despite looking for ... encounter rate was apparent on Big South Cape ... 1987). The obvious explanation for low encounter rates on Big South Cape I was the presence of ... Richdale 1945; Miskelly 1987; this paper). Weka ... kept in check by regular harvest for consumption, meaning that weka on Big South Cape were never likely to reach the densities considered responsible for eradicating snipe on Jacky Lee I (Wilson 1959). The low encounter rate for snipe on Jacky Lee I is likely to have been largely due to the notoriously impenetrable vegetation of supplejack (*Ripogonum scandens*) and *Muehlenbeckia* ... another factor in the apparently low density of snipe on Jacky Lee I may have been the presence of banded rails (McLean diary 1911), as the rails ... islands (Wilson 1959). As for the snipe, banded rails have not been recorded from Jacky Lee I since weka were introduced.

Collection of specimens of the South Island snipe in 1931

... makes it clear that all 5 clutches of eggs found on ... although only 4 of these are known to exist (all ... 2006). The clutch not accounted for was the 2nd clutch found on 2 Dec, which was "just hatching" ... (2006) presumed (or hoped) that these 2 eggs were left to hatch; their whereabouts is unknown, and it is plausible that they were unable to be blown ... diary is abhorrent to modern conservationist ... private collectors of bird eggs and skins in the ... (and publicly) concerned by increasing restrictions on their activities imposed by the Department of ... *Dominion* ... *The Press*, 14

Jun 1938; *New Zealand Herald*, 15 Jun 1938). It is unlikely that Wilson intended the quoted sections of his diary to be published; his 1959 book (p.49) made no reference to collection of snipe or their role to bird preservation. Stead, in contrast, apparently expected or intended his unedited diary to be read by others; he chose to make no reference to the 7 snipe specimens collected, and his references to collection of their eggs were concealed by the use of a code (Stead 2006).

Stead was issued 40 bird collecting permits by the Department of Conservation, including one to collect "Jacques Island snipe" (author, *unpubl.*). Technically this permit was ultra vires, as by a quirk of legislation, the South Island Wildlife Act, 1953, was passed.

The real villains in the extinction of the South Island snipe were the introduced weka and rats, or, more precisely, the people who chose or allowed them to be introduced. Were it not for the specimens collected by (or for) Travers, Stead and Wilson, the only physical evidence that would remain of the snipe specimens that he collected on Big South Cape I. in 1931 were evidently intended to be used as the basis for describing a new taxon (Anon. 1942), although the paper was never published.

The snipe specimens that he collected on Big South Cape I. in 1931 were evidently intended to be used as the basis for describing a new taxon (Anon. 1942), although the paper was never published.

Consequences of snipe extinction, and restorative actions

Seven specimens were collected there in 1931. Seven specimens were collected there in 1931.

The struggle to name more than 3 (author, *pers. obs.*). The ecological role of snipe is poorly known (Miskelly *et al.* 2012), but their alter ego, the hakawai, remains poorly known (Miskelly 1987). The extinction of tutukiwi (snipe) and hakawai (nocturnal aerial displaying by snipe) from islands around Stewart Island was not irreversibly. Thirty Snares were set along Big South Cape I, in Apr 2005 (Miskelly *et al.* 2012). Two of the birds released had the broken tail feathers characteristic of birds that had been performing hakawai aerial displaying (Miskelly 2005), thereby restoring the potential for hakawai to the west of Stewart I.

CONCLUSIONS

The South Island snipe was discovered on Jacky Lee I. three study skins, 1 mounted skin and 1 alcohol specimen (24 birds), and 4 clutches of this species were found. The person who collected at least 15 snipe specimens from Jacky Lee I between 1897 and 1905 (including the type series for what is now known as *Coenocorypha iredalei*) is unknown, although it is now known that he also probably collected birds on Rangatira I in the Chatham Is in 1899 and 1900. The specimens were apparently all collected by (or for) Travers, Stead and Wilson, the only physical evidence that would remain of the snipe specimens that he collected on Big South Cape I. in 1931 were evidently intended to be used as the basis for describing a new taxon (Anon. 1942), although the paper was never published.

here, is the only known account of a South Island snipe being observed at the type locality. They were extirpated there by introduced weka between 1911 and 1929.

Snipe were 1st recorded on Big South Cape I in 1913. Seven specimens were collected there in 1931.

The taxon became extinct in, or soon after, 1964 due to predation by accidentally introduced ship rats

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Stone for discussions and suggestions on the history of ¶°¶°¶° ±¶° ¶° «°¶° #°m° ¶°2°¶°-¶°±° ±°±° ¶°¶° 3¶°1°S°S° ¶°a°±°-¶°±° ±°¶° ¶° m°±° ±°±° ¶°!° °° -°¶°±°S° #°2°-¶° °°3°¶°S° ¶°-¶°±° 2°© .2±° ž° µ°±° ¶° ¶°2° .µ°3°2°2°a°µ°±° °° ¶°¶° ¶°2°¶°µ°S° ¥/4° «° 1°µ° ±°m° ¶°2°1° ¶°4!° °° -°¶°±°S° ¶°¶°µ°¶° .µ° ¶° ¶° «°¶° manuscript was improved by comments received from

I acknowledge with respect and sadness the passing of Don Merton on 10 Apr 2011. Don provided much assistance when I started research on snipe in the early 1980s, and remained passionately interested in progress with their conservation. I am grateful to Margaret Merton

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