

- STEADMAN, D.W. 1989a. Extinction of birds in eastern Polynesia: a review of the record, and comparisons with other Pacific island groups. *J. Archaeol. Soc.* 16: 177-205.
- STEADMAN, D.W. 1989b. New species and records of birds (Aves: Megapodiidae, Columbidae) from an archaeological site on Lifuka, Tonga. *Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash.* 102: 537-552.
- STEADMAN, D.W.; SCHUBEL, S.; PAHLAVAN, D. 1988. A new subspecies and new records of *Papasula abbotti* (Aves: Sulidae) from archaeological sites in the tropical Pacific. *Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash.* 101: 487-495.
- SYKES, W.R. 1981. The vegetation of Late Island, Tonga. *Allertonia* 2: 323-353.
- TODD, D. 1983. Pritchard's Megapode on Niuafu'ou Island, Kingdom of Tonga. *J. World Pheasant Assoc.* 8: 69-88.
- WATLING, D. 1982. Notes on the birds of Makogai Island, Fiji Islands. *Bull. Br. Ornith. Club.* 102: 123-127.
- WATLING, D. 1985. Notes on the birds of Gau Island, Fiji. *Bull. Br. Ornithol. Club* 105: 96-102.
- D.R. RINKE, *Brehm Fund South Seas Expedition, Private Bag 52, Nuku' alofa, Kingdom of Tonga*



## SHORT NOTE

### Spurwings retrieve their eggs

In late August - early September 1990, a pair of Spur-winged Plovers (*Vanellus miles novaehollandiae*) was nesting in an open paddock along with a big mob of ewes and lambs. Each morning as I passed the nest I checked the four eggs. One morning I saw that one of the eggs was about a metre from the nest. I decided to leave it there to see whether a predator would take it so near to the sitting bird. Next morning the egg was back in the nest. Two days later an egg was out of the nest again. I could see that lambs had been playing around the sitting bird; presumably they had frightened the bird off the nest, displacing the egg. Next morning the egg was back. A few days later two eggs had hatched and the next day all four had hatched.

On another occasion I saw a ewe lying very close to a sitting plover. I chased her away. Next morning she was lying beside the nest again. I had the impression she was 'mothering' the plover because this went on for several days. Twice I saw the ewe standing over the sitting bird and putting her head down as if to smell the bird. When I shifted the sheep to another paddock, the ewe made no effort to stay with the nest.

JACK LUTTRELL, *RD 1, Featherston*

On hearing this story from Mr Luttrell, during a weekend OSNZ camp near Matthews Lagoon, Wairarapa, Dr T.C. Dennison and I made a simple test at a nearby Spur-winged Plover nest. From the four-egg nest we moved an egg to about 30 cm away and watched from a car at close range. The bird returned to the nest, sat, and after about 3 minutes seemed to notice that an egg was missing. It looked around, saw the egg, walked to it, raked it back to the nest with its beak, and settled down again.

MALCOLM FALKNER, *40 Hennessey St, Foxton Beach*