

in Britain. Cramp and Simmons (1985) recorded rain-bathing by the Collared Dove (*S. decaocto*), "once communally", and by the Turtle Dove. Nelson (1968) also remarked that "A sudden shower immediately stimulated all the [Galapagos] doves to. . . keel over, raising one wing vertically so that the undersurface caught the rain. Our own feral pigeons (*Columba livia*) rain-bathe by spreading their wings so that the upper (!) surface catches the drops". Mick Clout recalls (*in litt.*) that he and Rod Hay saw single New Zealand Pigeons rain-bathing near Pelorus Bridge, Nelson, on a few occasions during hundreds of hours watching from 1984 to 1991. Do N.Z. Pigeons also bathe in shallow water on the ground; and if so, when?

Goodwin (1983) commenced that pigeons may also posture like this when sun-bathing - as seen by T.R.E. Southwood when a Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*) was sunning on the ground (Gibb 1947). N.Z. Pigeons often sun themselves in tall trees, but we have only one record of a bird raising its wings while doing this. People visiting the Orongorongo Valley Field Station are encouraged to record anything that attracts their attention: the 90-odd references to pigeons include one by Brian Gill who, on a fine day in December 1974, watched a pigeon drinking from a puddle on an upturned 44-gallon drum. Between drinks it "sun-bathed by extending its wings down towards and over its legs and feet, and by lifting its right wing high over its back so that the underparts were exposed to the sun".

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Natal down of the Silvereye

Having examined recent hatchlings of the Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*) at two nests, I am able to describe the natal down in this species. The first nest, at Kowhai Bush near Kaikoura on 13 January 1978, contained two nestlings; the second nest, at Pukekohe on 31 January 1994, contained three. One of the Kaikoura nestlings had damp down and was newly hatched; it weighed 1.2 g.

In recently hatched Silveryes the rictal flanges are bright yellow and the skin has a bright orange or yellow tinge. All nestlings were naked apart from a pair of down patches in the coronal position on the head. The down was off-white in colour. In the Pukekohe nestlings there were 2-4 individual down feathers on each side of the head, so the patches are very small. In addition, one of the Pukekohe nestlings had one down feather on the left-hand side at the back of the head in the occipital position.

Thus, only the coronal down patch is consistently present in Silvereyes. This is few compared with the eight major patches in Grey Warblers (*Gerygone igata*; Gill 1983) and Whiteheads (*Mohoua albicilla*; Gill 1993a), and 11 in Kokako (*Callaeas cinerea*; Gill 1993b).

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