

## RECENT LITERATURE

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### Food studies

Impact of food abundance, diet and food quality on the breeding of the fruit pigeon, parea *Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae chathamensis*, on Chatham Island, New Zealand. R.G. Powlesland, P.J. Dilks, I.A. Flux, A.D. Grant, C.J. Tisdall. (*Sci.Res.Div., Dept. Conservation, P.O. Box 10-420, Wellington, New Zealand.*) *Ibis* 139: 353-365. 1997.

Pairs bred in all months, but predominantly June-November (Winter-Spring). Timing of the breeding season, proportion of pairs breeding and their success varied, e.g., 1992-93 and 1994-95 were productive seasons whereas 1993-94 was not. Heavy fruiting of matipo *Myrsine chathamica* and hoho *Pseudopanax chathamicus* (fruits rich in lipids and available carbohydrates) was responsible for the good seasons.

How can a pelagic seabird provision its chick when relying on a distant food resource? Cyclic attendance at the colony, foraging decision and body condition in sooty shearwaters. H. Weimerskirch. (*CEBC, CNRS, 79360 Beauvoir, France. Email: henri.w@cebc.cnrs.fr*) *Journal of animal ecology* 67: 99-109. 1998.

Long foraging trips (probably to 1550 km), averaging 11 days, absorb 84% of foraging time during chick-rearing. Interspersed short foraging trips, which double the chicks' energy intake, take only 16% of foraging time but are at the expense of adult body condition. Possibly there is a threshold body mass around 750 g at which individuals switch from short to long foraging trips. [During the latter they gain body condition.] There is a cyclicity of 14 days in the returns of distant-foraging parents. This system reduces near-colony competition, and may partly explain the huge populations of sooty and short-tailed shearwaters that rely on distant (Antarctic Polar Front) food resources.

### Palaeontology

A mid-Pleistocene rail from New Zealand. T.H. Worthy. (*Palaeofaunal Surveys, 43 The Ridgeway, Nelson, New Zealand.*) *Alcheringa* 21: 71-78. 1997.

A new genus and species: *Pleistorallus flemingi*.

The identification of fossil *Eudyptes* and *Megadyptes* bones at Marfell's Beach, Marlborough, South Island. T.H. Worthy. (*Palaeofaunal Surveys, 43 The Ridgeway, Nelson, New Zealand.*) *New Zealand natural sciences* 23: 71-85. 1997.

Only *E. pachyrhynchus* and *M. antipodes* bones present at the site. The latter were significantly smaller than those of extant southern populations (a similar trend to that shown in *Eudyptula minor*). Present range of *M. antipodes* is relict; its decline evidently caused by human disturbance.

### Distribution

Spatial distribution of seabirds in coastal waters off Otago, New Zealand. R.L. O'Driscoll, M. Renner, F.J. Austin, H.G. Spencer. (*Dept. Marine Science, Univ. Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand.*) *New Zealand journal of marine and freshwater research* 32: 203-213. 1998.

Sooty shearwaters, and red-billed, black-billed and black-backed gulls were the most numerous species among the 20 recorded. Strongest associations were among the three gull species. Counts were highly positively skewed. This, plus variability in the distribution of flocks, would make abundance estimation at sea difficult.

### Identification

Identification of juvenile long-tailed skua in active flight. J.A. Leclercq. (*rue de la Solidarite 88/4, B-7700 Mouscron, Belgium.*) *Ornithos* 3: 118-129. 1996.

Colour illustrations. In French with English summary.