

## INTRODUCED BIRDS.

**Carduelis carduelis.** Goldfinch.—Seen several times in small flocks feeding on Scotch thistle or the seeds of garden plants and is increasing in numbers. This is a useful species on account of its feeding on the thistle seeds and should be protected.

**Sturnus vulgaris.** Starling.—Quite common and not a pest so far, keeping away from houses and feeding in the open paddocks all day on grasshoppers and other insects.

The Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) has not appeared here yet (June, 1934).

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## Occurrence of the Mediterranean Shearwater in New Zealand

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Among the most useful friends of the Museum are those who, on coming across specimens that appear to them unusual, bring them to the Museum for identification. In this way the Dominion Museum recently gained a valuable specimen, while a record for a species of bird new to New Zealand was established. In January, 1934, Major R. A. Wilson, of Bulls, who is keenly interested in our native animals and plants, was searching the beach near Foxton and picked up a Petrel which he noticed to differ in certain respects from the Grey Petrel. Suspecting it might be of interest he placed it in spirit, and about a fortnight afterwards brought it into the Dominion Museum and presented it to that institution. When time permitted a careful examination was made with such comparisons as the Museum collections permitted. There are very few foreign Petrels represented in the Dominion Museum, but luckily enough one of them is a mounted specimen of the Mediterranean Shearwater—*Puffinus kuhlii* (Boie)—from Sicily. With this specimen the Foxton bird agrees almost completely. It exhibits, however, the following differences: The crown and sides of the head are grey instead of brown—but obviously the light colour is due to the brown feathers having been recently moulted as a few of them still remain. There are fewer mottled feathers in the under tail coverts in the Foxton bird than in the Sicily specimen, while the white on the primaries is not well-defined as in the Mediterranean form, the inner web being mostly brown. The Foxton bird is also the larger as shown by the following measurements, which are in millimetres.

	Bill	Wing	Tail
Sicily .. .. .	53	360	125
Foxton .. .. .	55	370	132

The Foxton specimen was later shown to Mr. R. A. Falla, R.A.O.U., who emphasized the two feather stage of the head, and forwarded for comparison a specimen of the Mediterranean Shearwater from Cagliari. This was practically identical in colouration with the Sicily specimen in the Dominion Museum.

The next point to decide was to what subspecies the Foxton specimen belonged. A revision of the subspecies of *Puffinus kuhlii* has been published by Murphy and Chapin (*Am. Mus. Nov.*, No. 384, 1929), who recognise three subspecies: *kuhlii* from the Mediterranean, *borealis* from the Atlantic (breeding at Canaries and Azores), and *edwardsi* from further south in the Atlantic (breeding at Cape Verde Islands). In this classification no notice is taken of *P. flavirostris* of Gould (*Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 13, 365, 1844) collected off the Cape of Good Hope. Judging by Gould's description this form is either the same as *borealis* or is a distinct subspecies (as Alexander treats it, *Birds of the Ocean*, p. 60, 1928, giving Kerguelen as its breeding place). There are in the British Museum two specimens from Kerguelen Island and these Sharpe (*Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.*, 168, 122, 1879) states are similar to the Mediterranean form. In the absence of definite information of these specimens I accept Murphy and Chapin's account recognising but three subspecies for *P. kuhlii*. The absence of a definite white central band on the primaries of the Foxton bird places it in the subspecies *borealis*. The measurements also are compatible with this subspecies. Accordingly I regard this species as being *Puffinus kuhli borealis* Cory, and as establishing the first record of the species in New Zealand.

The type specimen of *Procellaria kuhlii* Boie, *Isis*, 1835, p. 257, came from Corsica; that of *Puffinus borealis* Cory, *Bull. Nuttall Orn. Club*, VI, p. 84, 1881, came from Cape Cod, Mass., U.S.A.

Apparently the subspecies *borealis* ranges occasionally to the seas around the Cape of Good Hope, and in the same latitude may occur as a straggler as far eastward as New Zealand. It is in consequence likely to be observed in Australian seas.

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A recent newspaper paragraph reports the bequest by a Manly (Sydney) resident of £10,000 to establish a sanctuary for birds. The income will be paid into the general funds of the "Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals."