

Even with such a small number of bones present among the several thousand making up the entire Rothschild Collection, this identification is enough to verify Forbes' earlier published records (Dawson, 1957), and to show that a species of *Falco* was moderately abundant at one time in the Chatham Islands. In the collection are bones of a harrier of the genus *Circus* occurring with about the same frequency, but, unlike *Falco*, a species of *Circus* still lives in this region. The *Falco* bones, the skull and pelvis in particular, are sufficiently well-preserved to allow good comparisons to be made with the species occurring at present on the mainland of New Zealand, and this aspect will be considered later.

Another record of *Falco* in the Chathams exists, apart from those listed earlier (Dawson, 1957). Buller (1875) mentioned an egg of "*Falco ferox*" from the Chathams, reputedly collected by T. H. Potts, and in the collection of the Canterbury Museum. He gave a later reference to this egg (Buller, 1888), and, apart from the bones, this seems to be the only evidence of the living bird in this region.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Dr W. E. Swinton, Keeper of Fossil Reptiles and Birds, British Museum, for the facilities he provided and for the services of his two assistants, Mr B. H. Newman and Mr L. Port. I am greatly indebted to my wife for her constant help and advice in dealing with this collection.

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Status of Pacific Gull in South Australia.—At present, the Pacific Gull (*Larus pacificus*) could hardly be regarded as a very numerous species in South Australian waters. There are no records of Pacific Gulls having been observed in large numbers anywhere in the State during the past 50 years.

It is interesting, therefore, to note that Dr. Erhard Eylmann, in a paper on "Die Vogelwelt des südöstlichen Teiles vom Staate Südastralien" (*Journal für Ornithologie*, 62: 242, 1914) classes the species among the sea birds occurring in large numbers along the coastline of the State. There can be no question of confusion with the Silver Gull (*L. novae-hollandiae*) which, he states, occurred in considerable numbers.

It seems possible that European settlement has enabled the Silver Gull to multiply during the past half-century, and that this and other factors have caused a decline in the population of Pacific Gulls. — ERHARD F. BOEHM, Sutherlands, S.A., 7/4/61.