

TELEPHONE:

44 435

## Nature Conservation Council

BOX 8003, WELLINGTON C.1, NEW ZEALAND

5 October 1970

Mr Peter Child,  
10 Royal Terrace,  
ALEXANDRA

Dear Peter,

I am glad to hear of your bird survey project for Mt Aspiring National Park, and wish you luck with the rarer ones. I have had very little experience personally with orange-wattled kokako, though I have seen and heard them at Stewart Island. If their habits are similar to blue-wattled it is not surprising that they are hard to find. They not only have a very limited home range per pair, but they spend hours lurking in dense shade (like moreporks diurnally), and do not flush readily. Furthermore their seasons and times of calling are intermittent and few. Against that, they sometimes emerge briefly, apparently out of curiosity.

Details of my second-hand records are:-

- (a) Blanshard's Slide. This transparency is quite definitely identifiable, even to the wattles. I saw it when Roger was still at Little Barrier Island. He has since resigned to manage a farm at Tuakau. I asked him recently for details and he replied that he is now out of touch with his itinerant friend who was last heard of in Pakistan (His letter, with the name, I have temporarily mislaid). Anyway the man was staying at the time, about 1965, at Wanaka, and Blanshard thought from memory that he mentioned the Wilkins as the locality. I have already hinted to Roger that I would like to copy the slide, and will try again.
- (b) Eyre Mountains. My informant here is a Wellington dentist, Ian Garvie, well acquainted with Southland, and an observant outdoor man in his spare time. He saw the bird last summer while he was resting, at the bush edge in open scrub, on one of the southern foothill spurs a few miles from Five Rivers. I have not checked with him on a large scale map, but have arranged to do so before making a short excursion to the area myself, probably in November. He had not known the bird but guessed what it was. It was on the ground, moving with characteristic springy bounds, and at one stage inspected his boot! It is interesting that his bird, like Ann Chapman's, was on the ground, in very scruffy semi-clearing and generally much modified habitat.

The North Island bird is tough adaptable and persistent over a great deal of its former range, but it does seem to be a matter of luck to locate them, because of their habits. There seem to be a good many birds

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The North Island bird is tough adaptable and persistent over a great deal of its former range, but it does seem to be a matter of luck to locate them, because of their habits. There seem to be a good many likely spots at the heads of Wanaka, Hawea, and Ohau, and I recall Alan Wright three years ago discussing possible sightings on the Coast side of Haast Pass. I should think that they are still somewhere between Monowai and Manapouri also, with more chance near Monowai. Nor would I rule out the Hokinuis where the cut-over forest seems to have a very rich bird



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If I manage to get South later in the year I shall let you know.

Yours sincerely,

*R.A. Falla*

R.A. Falla

*Other refs*  
*①*