

of these unique and famous birds abounded in the early days in the wooded areas of the country. The birds were hunted by the Maoris for mats, capes, muffs and meat and the eggs for food. It has been reported that in the time of 1870 one hunter had killed 2200 of two species. With the extensive clearing of the bush for domestic animals, the kiwi became doomed except in established preserves. Even there they are threatened by the introduction of stoats and weasels. Although the kiwi is the national emblem, few New Zealanders today have encountered this creature in the wild or have ever seen one. Through the efforts of one man, Mr. F. D. Robson of Napier, North Island, the birds may be seen and studied in captivity. National law has placed the bird on the protected list. The kiwi, as old in its lineage as the moa, however, has evaded extinction and we hope by protection may again claim its heritage in its native haunts.

Spectacular as the story of the moa and more than that of the kiwi, is that of the takahe (*Notornis*), the flightless rail of New Zealand. This is the bird concerning which a New Zealand legislator, when arguing for its protection, gravely demanded, "we must make it so this extinct bird will never become extinct again."

This bird, which lived with the moa and kiwi thousands of years ago, was first described from bones in 1848. The early Maoris were acquainted with the creatures, but in the time following only four specimens were preserved. Only one of those mounted animals was kept in the homeland. The others were sent to Europe. The species was gradually relegated to the list of extinct creatures.

The takahe is somewhat larger than the kiwi and is big-footed as that bird. It has a strong, large, orange-red bill and brilliant blue indigo and greenish coat of feathers. White man's advent, bringing with it dogs, cats, pigs, weasels and stoats, meant the knell of flightless birds. The takahe was driven into the high damp inaccessible bush of the mountains of the South Island. There it has survived, although listed in the catalog of extinct birds by the world at large along with the

moas, the Dodo and *Aepyornis* of Madagascar. A certain amateur naturalist of New Zealand held the belief that the takahe could still exist in the wooded wilds of the high mountains of southern New Zealand. The presence of this bird was rediscovered in 1948-49 through his ferreting around an unrecorded lake and valley of that region. Following the original find, naturalists and trained ornithologists of New Zealand captured birds, found nests and young, took pictures and made abundant notes as to the habitat and character of the bird. The scientists estimated that the area may have harbored 50 to 100 specimens. Following this spectacular news, through concerted efforts of naturalists and officials a 400,000 acre sanctuary has been proclaimed by the New Zealand government, so that this truly beautiful rare bird will "not become extinct again."

Letters

Mr. Breukelman:

. . . I like your magazine very much, especially the "Old Fossil."

Very truly yours,

J. H. SHULL,
210 W. Jefferson,
Columbia City, Indiana

. . . I like it immensely. Reading the last issue from cover to cover I found it all valuable and of great interest. It is a privilege to be represented on its advertising pages.

FREDERICK HAVEN PRATT, *Vice Pres.*,
The Harvard Apparatus Co., Inc.,
Dover, Massachusetts

Dear Mrs. Beuschlein:

I have enjoyed reading the October issue of *The American Biology Teacher*, and I should have written to you several weeks ago. I wish to offer you my belated but very sincere congratulations. You have made many worth-while improvements.

And many thanks for the "plug" on page 152.

Sincerely yours,

BLAIR COURSEN, *President*,
General Biological Supply House

Dear Mrs. Beuschlein:

. . . We have also received our copy of "The American Biology Teacher" and wish to say we

are very pleased with the improvement and nice printing. However, if we were in your shoes, we would advertise your publication with the people who are interested in the same type of activities. There are more persons interested than you may possibly guess. We feel you shouldn't be restricted to the members of your association. Of course, you will have to make the contents richer in text, but we have no doubt about the fact that your members would be happy to participate; and there would definitely *not* be a shortage of interesting material. Perhaps our suggestion will start something developing.

Please let us know when your next issue is to appear, as we would like to repeat the ad.

With best regards always, we are,

Very truly yours,

EXAKTA CAMERA COMPANY,
46 West 29th Street,
New York 1, N. Y.

. . . I think that the magazine is of the utmost interest. Particularly in this last semester, has this been true, while I have been preparing a course in nature study for elementary teachers. I've never taught in a public school, myself, and so many of your articles that would not be quite so interesting are attracting my attention now. I do think the articles are well written, and the general lay-out is well done.

Sincerely,

ALLEN L. LAKE,
Lees Junior College,
Jackson, Kentucky

Dear Dr. Breukelman:

The December issue was very pleasing in form and appearance. I like the narrow margins . . .

. . . I find that I have rather strong feelings about the proposal for the NABT to join with the larger national group. I think that Scientists who scorn High School Science teachers have a well grounded objection. It is we who can change this attitude only by becoming more scientific in our approach to our subject, to become more exact and more critical in our thinking and in our accomplishments in the classroom. I believe we could accomplish this in three ways: 1. By a critical evaluation of our professional achievements in terms of Science and research; 2. by providing opportunities for science teachers to work in Research Laboratories during summer vacations instead of constantly going to school and studying *about* Science.

DO RESEARCH IN SCIENCE, not read about it. 3. Get outstanding scientists to contribute articles to our Journal . . .

Yours sincerely,

ENID A. LARSON,
Carmel-By-The-Sea,
California

Mr. Richard F. Thaw,
Corvallis High School
Corvallis, Oregon

Dear Mr. Thaw:

I have just finished reading your very excellent account in *The American Biology Teacher* of the project entitled BIOLOGY II: BIOLOGY ADVENTURE HOUR.

You have indeed done a good job with your students in terms of indoctrination with the spirit of independent investigation, scientific method, and social integration.

If I had known of this a few months ago I should most certainly have drawn specific attention to it in my forthcoming text on secondary methods: *Secondary Science Education* (McGraw-Hill, 1952), and will do so at the first opportunity for additions in the second printing.

Your use of local materials and local references such as Gilkey, and doubtless you also make use of Elmo Stevenson's *Key to the Nests of Pacific Coast Birds*, developed at Oregon State, Corvallis, is to be commended.

Please accept congratulations on your progressive, dynamic attitude toward your field. Biology can use many more like you, sir.

Cordially,

HARRINGTON WELLS,
Santa Barbara College
California

REWARD!

Managing Editor Beuschlein offers a free 1953 or renewal NABT membership to that teacher or student who submits the most suitable name or heading for the Classified Advertising column. Send all entries directly to the Managing Editor.

Remind yourselves also that copies of current issues of this Journal may be obtained at the reduced rate of 15¢ per copy in quantities for use by student and in-service teachers, or for use in science teaching methods classes.