

But still evidence accumulates. Out of many cases recorded in our files we cite the following instances taken at random.

#### ATTACKS ON SHEEP

WANGANUI: "While working at the sheep yards one day my attention was called to an unusual commotion among the magpies, which were out of sight over a rise. I sent one of my boys to the spot to investigate, and after a time he returned to say that he had found all the magpies attacking an unfortunate ewe that had rolled over on her back against a log. The birds had destroyed the eyes of the sheep before he could reach it, and, of course, he had to kill the sheep."

W. S. SUTHERLAND, Kawhia: "Here are a few more instances of the pugnacity of magpies in South Wairarapa: (1) A full-grown sheep that could not run away being pecked until there was a wound about six inches across in the back and reaching through to the intestines; sheep still alive. (2) A native pigeon killed and practically plucked. (3) A harrier hawk trying to defend itself by lying on its back and fighting with its feet. (4) Two magpies trying to catch a sparrow hawk. (5) Myself with an inch-long wound in my scalp."

#### DANGEROUS TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Two magpies attacked and so severely injured a man walking near a belt of macropus trees at Mangateretere, 11 miles south-west from Napier in November, 1948, that he had to be taken to hospital for medical treatment. The assault lasted for several minutes, and was concentrated on the man's face and head, each magpie taking it in turn to dive down and screaming.

BAINESSE SCHOOL, Palmerston North: Children viciously attacked by magpies while at play.

WANGANUI: Cases quoted when three men on separate occasions were attacked by magpies.

Many other instances of attacks on adults and children have been reported from various parts of the country.

#### ENEMIES OF SMALL BIRDS

NORTH AUCKLAND: "A boy gave a tui to me which had been attacked by five magpies. They had taken one eye out and left the bird in such a condition I thought it best to kill it."

BURWOOD: "Only last spring I saw a magpie taking young sparrows straight from the nest and placing them direct into the mouth of a young magpie perched beside its parent."

CAPTAIN E. V. SANDERSON: "The magpie appears to be especially down on the Pipit, which is entirely insectivorous, and certainly decreasing round the Wellington district."

MAHIA, H.B.: "A pair of magpies nested in a tree close to the house. I actually saw them raiding a thrush's nest, as I was attracted by the agitation of the mother thrush. The magpie threw the young thrushes on to the lawn, then pecked them to death, and carried the bodies back to the young magpies."

KOPANE, Palmerston North: "Our pet budgie . . . flew out on to the lawn. Three magpies that were on the lawn killed him and flew away, taking the budgie with them. Also some magpies took a nest of thrushes and wax-eyes."

NORTH CANTERBURY: "I've seen many small birds being chased by magpies, who, of course, are a real nuisance to human beings on golf courses."

CANTERBURY: "Although Canterbury has a very large magpie population, mobs of up to forty being seen in some districts, they are mostly in areas where there are no small native birds."

PALMERSTON NORTH: "I witnessed the slaughter of a large young thrush by a magpie the other day. After killing the bird it carried it about 50 yards and proceeded to peck its head off. . . . I found another thrush not far off without its head. My brother found a fantail on his property without its head."