REVIEW.

A Study of the Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) in New Zealand. By B. J. Marples. *Trans. R. Soc. of New Zealand*, Vol. 72, Part 3, pages 237-252, December, 1942. MR. MARPLES undertook, in 1938, to make a thorough investigation of the Little Owl from every possible aspect and he read his conclusions before the Otago Branch of the Royal Society in December, 1942. This species of owl had been introduced into the South Island in successive years between 1906 and 1911. The object of the importation was to keep down, if possible, the numbers of other introduced birds. The Little Owl increased and spread and in the opinion of some people it became a menace to the native birds. An investigation of its food habits would naturally verify or refute this accusation if made on a large enough scale. Accordingly the stomach contents of 242 Little Owls were subjected to a microscopic examination. It was found that caterpillars, beetles and other invertebrates preponderated enormously in the food of the species. Twenty-two stomachs contained bird remains. Of these only one was possibly a native, namely the Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*). The rest were introduced Passerines. In 17 nests and pellets 82 birds were found, of which one, the White Eye (*Zosterops halmaturina*) is native. 7 recorded "larks or pipits" may have been the introduced *Alauda arvensis* or the native *Anthus novaseelandiae*. The remaining 74 were introduced birds, among which House-Sparrows greatly predominated. This interesting investigation proves that there has been very little change in the food habits of the Little Owl in its new environment. Rodents, however, are taken far less freely than in England and traces of only 25 mice and 9 rabbits were found in all the material examined. The results of the investigation run on parallel lines with those of that organized in 1936 by the British Trust for Ornithology and any differences in the food are of degree and not of kind. Mr. Marples also included in this treatise the results of his work on the endoparasites, and on the seasonal variations of weight both of the bird and of its gonads. A. H-W.