

which they were cooked, and the comparative absence of any other inducement (wekas being the only other possible prey) for hunters to visit and camp on such an inhospitable spot, all point to these being moa-hunters' encampments, to which blocks of suitable stone have been brought from afar to serve as knives for the feast. The caves and shelters in the huge mass of mountains close at hand have furnished some of the best-preserved specimens of the moa yet found, and were, no doubt, a summer feeding-ground of the moa, to which yearly expeditions were made.

The forms of the stone implements are different from the majority of those found on the coastal encampments, and some approach the leaf-shape so closely as to preclude the suggestion of chance, and seem to indicate their use as points for spears or darts. The majority of the flakes were of the "turtle-backed" type, and probably used for cutting purposes. Their size, however, was very small compared with the monsters found at the Shag Point camp, an average specimen being about 75mm. long by about 30mm. wide, while the Shag Point ones are sometimes 220mm. long and 80mm. or 90mm. wide. I also found a thin disc of slate, sharpened at the edge, about 90mm. in diameter. These discs are not uncommon in the older middens along the coast-line.

ART. XXVII.—*Zoological Notes : (1.) Arboreal Nests of Bush-rat (Mus maorium); (2.) Paryphanta hochstetteri found at Low Levels at West Wanganui.*

By R. I. KINGSLEY.

[Read before the Nelson Philosophical Society, 12th March, 1894.]

SOME few weeks since Mr. H. V. Gully observed a nest of a rat in the branches of a small tree or large shrub at Awaroa, near Totaranui. On his mentioning the circumstance to me, at my request he sent for the nest, which I now exhibit. It was at a height of from 4ft. to 5ft. from the ground. His attention was drawn to it by observing a rat leaving it and descending the stem of the tree. On examination he found there were two or three other nests near by, and in one of these there were four young rats. From the appearance of the mature animal Mr. Gully believes it to be not of the common type (*Mus decumanus*), but rather of the same species as those which appeared in such swarms in the spring of

1884, referred to in vol. xvii., page 199, and spoken of there as *Mus maorium*.

The nest does not show any large amount of architectural skill, and is composed chiefly of the dead leaves of sedge and *Cordyline*, with a few dead leaves from trees.

I am informed that the flat whereon these nests were found is liable during floods to be submerged.

I am unaware that this arboreal nesting habit of the rat has been observed before.

ADDENDUM.—The foregoing paper elicited further information respecting the occurrence of nests in trees. From Motueka and Riwaka, Mr. F. Huffam and Mr. H. White give instances of finding nests in branches of trees and shrubs. Mr. J. Dall, of Collingwood, is also well acquainted with numerous instances, and several persons in Nelson have also observed the same, while Mr. Richmond Hursthouse assures me that years ago in Taranaki he used to find the nests of the small bush-rat at some considerable altitude from the ground, generally concealed among the foliage of kiekie (*Freycinetia banksii*).

I may add that all observers are unanimous in declaring the species with the arboreal habit as being identical with the small bush-rat of 1884, and this therefore tends to prove that there are still survivors among us of that great invasion.

PARYPHANTA HOCHSTETTERI.

The specimens of land mollusca exhibited were collected on my recent visit to West Wanganui. They were found at a place not more than 50ft. or 60ft. above sea-level, and where the bush had been partially cleared away. I took note of the surroundings, and found that on each occasion when success rewarded our search it was either more or less under the shade of hinau trees (*Elæocarpus dentatus*), the berries from which were strewn on the ground. The mollusca may very easily be overlooked, as they lie very close generally, in a small depression (self-made, I presume) in the ground, and underneath the dry leaves and rubbish. I did not think these were *hochstetteri*, as the usual habitat is at a considerable altitude, but Professor Hutton has kindly examined them, and has so identified them.