

SCIENTIFIC

NAT/FAU/1 # 6

(Naturalist)

1922

C.S.

No. 294/22

Govt. Naturalist

SUBJECT.

192 2

4th April

Previous Paper.

Forwards Memorandum on the rarity of the Jack Rock.

MINUTES.

Memorandum from Govt Naturalist of 4th April Encl ①

*Chief Inspector of Stock,
For favour of your observations
2. A reward for the beaks of Johnny Rooks
seems just to have been made in 1909
(Vide p.9. Royal Gazette).*

ttttt 7/4/22

Hon Col Sec.

I would like to get the opinion of the farmers of the East and the West on this subject, and upon doing so will report further

B.A. Moore

Chief Inspector of Stock

25/4/22

Subsequent Paper.

Y.S. Submitted

ttttt 27/4/22

H.C.S.

Pending report by C. Inspector of Stock could
corroborate on subject of destruction of
birds to trace: on page 129 of gazette
1908 there is a note on symptoms showing
that at request of a majority of Farmers
provision was made for diminution of
turkey buzzards & other birds which were
becoming a pest to sheep in certain localities.
Minutes of Leg. Co: may also contain
some information on the subject.

2. Mr. Gov. Naturalist should examine the
history of whole subject & write a comprehensive
report: as he should also give information
as to numbers of birds killed & amount paid
for each of years 1909 to 1921 inclusive.

H.

27 April 1922

Gov. Naturalist,

Accordingly with the facts that can
be found here on the subject

~~ttttt~~ 29/4/22

Hon. Col. Sec.

I greatly regret delay, my report
is in progress, and will be completed
shortly, please.

J. Hamilton
26/10/22 Gov. Naturalist



Stanley

4th April 1922.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for consideration a memorandum on the subject of the rarity of the Jack Rook, a condition which leads me to fear the approach of the extinction of the species.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. E. Hamilton

(J. E. Hamilton)

Government Naturalist.

The Honourable Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

MEMORANDUM ON THE JONNY ROCK

This bird is peculiar to the Falkland Islands and was formerly one of the most conspicuous forms on account of its abundance and great tameness and curiosity. It is given to seizing and carrying off any object which attracts its attention, and which it can move; it has been found vast numbers to damage the sheep. As a result of these proclivities it has been subjected to a remorseless process of extermination, so that now it occurs on the main islands in numbers which are very small indeed. *On the main islands - East and West Falkland -* I have only seen two adult specimens in two and a half years, during which time I have been almost constantly travelling round the islands (with the exception of the summer of 1920-21 which I spent in South Shetland)

2/ The Jonny Rock is now only to be found in any numbers on the outlying islands and on those where sheep are kept every effort is made to exterminate it, and these efforts will almost certainly be successful since the bird has not yet learned that man is dangerous. There are however a number of islands where there is no stock and which form refuges for the species. In such places it acts as a scavenger, feeding also on eggs and young birds. The persistent plentifulness of the Upland Goose may, I believe, be attributed at least in part to the diminution of the Jonny Rock as well as to the senseless killing of hawks.

3/ Having regard to the points stated above I would now suggest that no further payment be made for the beaks of the Jonny Rock. This will not of course prevent persons from killing it in places where it appears to be necessary to do so, but it will not encourage destruction by casual visitors to its haunts, and I would most respectfully suggest that it would remove from the Government the liability to reproach from scientists that encouragement was given to the extermination of one of the ornaments of the local avifauna.

J. E. Hamilton.

Government Naturalist.

4th April 1922.