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Nankeen kestrel: p 109.

Nankeen Kestrel *Falco cenchroides cenchroides* Vigors & Horsfield 1827, Coloniser
1889 Waimate, Canterbury
June 1969 Norfolk Island

A female was shot by E.C. Studholme at Waimate, 40 km south of Timaru, about 1889. In a letter dated 13/11/1894, the writer stated it was “shot about five years ago” (Buller 1895).

“In November last I received a note from Professor Hutton informing me that a specimen of the Nankeen Kestrel had been shot in New Zealand, and advising me to write to Mr. Cuthbert Studholme for particulars. I accordingly did so, and promptly received the following letter in reply:— ‘On behalf of my brother I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter about the Australian Kestrel. I shot the bird about five years ago close to the house; it was amusing itself by chasing the common hawks away from the carcase of a dead sheep. My two youngest brothers had seen the bird flying about here for fully a week before it was shot ... Professor Hutton informs me that it is a female’.

More recently a specimen has been shot on Portland Island. It was sent on the 16th April by Mr. J. R. Dickson, the lighthouse-keeper, to the Colonial Museum, and was handed to me by Sir James Hector for identification. Mr. Dickson, in forwarding the specimen, says: ‘The body of the bird was very fat; its crop contained crickets and grasshoppers. It was very shy when perched, but not so on the wing. Its flight was much like that of the Quail-hawk. It was shot on the 6th April, 1895’.

This bird, too, was a female and, judging by the blueness of the upper tail-coverts, an old one” (Buller 1895).

There were notable influxes in 1969 of at least nine birds, and then again in 1990, of 13-15 birds. On Norfolk Island the 1969 invasion resulted in it becoming a resident breeder.