

C.S.

SCIENTIFIC

NAT/FAU/1 # 6

(Naturalist)

1922

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 tracks 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. Brown

Chief Inspector of Stock

25/4/22

Subsequent Paper.

Yr. Submitted

ttttt 27/4/22

H.C.S.

Pending report by C. Inspector of Stock could
Correspondence on subject of destruction of
birds be traced: on page 129 of gazette
1908 there is a note on mammals 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. Govt. Naturalist should examine the
history of whole subject & write a comprehensive
report: on he should also give information
as to numbers of birds killed & amount paid
for each of years 1909 to 1921 inclusive.

M.

27 April 1922

Govt. Naturalist,

Accordingly with the H. that can
be found here on the subject

~~with~~ 29/4/22

Hon. Col. Sec.

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

J. Hamilton
Govt. Naturalist
25/10/22



1

Stanley

4th April 1922.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for consideration a memorandum on the subject of the carrying of the Jack Rabbit, a country in which there is no fear the approach of the extermination of the species.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

J. R. Hamilton

(Colonial Secretary)

Government House, Stanley.

The Honorable Colonial Secretary,

Stanley

MEMORANDUM ON THE JOHNNY 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 docility and voracity. It is given to seizing and carrying off any object which attracts its attention, and which it can move; it has been found when numerous to cause the sheep to leave a field. These proclivities it has been subjected to a remorseless process of extermination, so that now it occurs on the main islands in flocks which are very small indeed. *On the main islands - East and West Falkland -* I have only seen two North specimens in 4 or 5 years, during which time I have been almost constantly travelling round the islands (with the exception of the winter of 1920-21 in which I spent in South Georgia).

2/ The Johnny 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 become scarce and is dangerous. There are however a number of islands where there is no stock and which are a refuge for the species. In such places it acts as a scavenger, feeding upon eggs and young birds. The persistent pertinacity of the Island Government, I believe, as ascribed at least in part to the extermination of the Johnny Rock as well as to the wholesale killing of seals.

3/ Having regard to the points stated above I would now suggest that no further payment be made for the skins of the Johnny Rock. This will not of course prevent persons from killing in places where it appears to be necessary to do so, but it will not encourage destruction by casual visitors to the islands. I would most respectfully suggest that it would remove from the Government the liability to reimburse from seal-skins the encouragement given to the extermination of one of the remnants of the local avifauna.

J. E. Hamilton

Government Naturalist.

4th April 1922.