Dr Olson has replied as follows:

In response to Mr Scarlett's letter I would point out that the lengths he gives for the two new elements attributed to "Gallirallus hartreei" fall well within the range of variation of Gallinula (Tribonyx) hodgeni (see Olson, Nat. Mus. N.Z. Recs. 1 (3): 66, table 1). Beyond this we are told that only certain unspecified "subtle differences" distinguish these two species. Yet Mr Scarlett places them in different genera! To accept Gallirallus hartreei as a valid species would appear to require faith; in this instance I do not count myself among the faithful.

STORRS L. OLSON

Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
12 March 1976