



Canberra bird notes

No.7 April 1970

EDITORIAL

"The old order changeth...." Thus spoke the legendary King Arthur before his death. But what has this to do with us? This month I am handing over to Dr. G.F. Van Tets, A.C.T. Branch Chairman, to explain changes in the branches status and name. Dr. G.F. Van Tets writes:

In the new RAOU Articles of Association State and Territory branches are to be abolished. There is a provision for the formation of local RAOU groups, but under rules which do not meet our local conditions and procedures. While firmly supporting the adoption of the new articles as part of the reform of the Union, and in anticipation of these articles it is proposed that:-

"At its meeting of April 15, 1970, the A.C.T. branch of the RAOU changes its status and name with no change in aims, activities or administration, to the Canberra Ornithologists Group, which will then apply to the RAOU for affiliation

After all that, there is nothing the firm assurance that our journal's colour change purely coincidental.

A.C.T. Bird Report

Systematic notes - July 1, 1968 to June 30, 1969.
Compiled by S.J. Wilson.

The following notes have been compiled from the recorded observations of a number of people. Messrs B. Baker, J. McNaughton, M. Clayton and A. Stokes have been the most regular contributors. Mr S. Marchant provided valuable information, and other data were the by-product of regular bird-banding activity in the Brindabella Ranges. To acknowledge all contributions would be impossible; our thanks to all who assisted.

"Molonglo River Flats" has been used to indicate the swampy area to the east of Lake Burley Griffin bounded by the Molonglo River, the Fyshwick sewage ponds and Jerrabomberra Creek. "The Ranges" indicates the Brindabella and Tidbinbilla Ranges but especially the former from which most records are. Observations from the Black Mountain area are indicated by the letters "BM".

Records which at present must be regarded as doubtful by reason of unusualness or incompleteness have been bracketed. Brackets are also put around records of those species which possibly escaped from captivity.

As these records refer solely to the twelve months' period quoted above, the year is omitted throughout to save space. For the same reason common species, for which there were no unusual or significant records, are merely listed at the end. There were no records during the year in respect of other species on the A.C.T. list which are not mentioned.

CRESTED GREBE Podiceps cristatus One at Acacia Inlet, Sept. 15 to 30. Three at East Basin, Oct. 2, Two at West Lake, Oct. 30. One at Weston Park, Nov. 27. One at Sullivan's Creek, Feb. 19 Two off Black Mountain Peninsula, May 6.

LITTLE GREBE Podiceps ruficollis Regularly reported, Molonglo River flats and sewage-ponds.

HOARY-HEADED GREBE Podiceps poliocephalus Regularly reported, in small numbers, Molonglo River flats and sewage-ponds.

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT Phalacrocorax sulcirostris Common throughout the year, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 180.

PIED CORMORANT Phalacrocorax varius One on Oct. 6, two on Nov. 10, one on Nov. 13, Molonglo River flats.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT Phalacrocorax melanoleucos Regular reports of varying numbers, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 40.

DARTER Anhinga rufa One on Nov. 10, three on Nov. 30, one on Apr. 16, two on June 22, Molonglo River flats.

PELICAN Pelecanus conspicillatus Regularly reported in varying numbers, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 155.

WHITE-NECKED HERON Ardea pacifica Regularly reported between November and February, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 3.

NANKEEN NIGHT HERON Nycticorax caledonicus Three on Nov., 30 one on Apr. 16 and 28, Molonglo River flats.

LITTLE BITTERN Ixobrychus minutus One at the East end of Lake Burley Griffin, Jan.6. First A.C.T. record.

BROWN BITTERN Botaurus poiciloptilus One at Mulwaree Ponds (near Lake Bathurst), Apr. 28.

LITTLE EGRET Egretta garzetta Regularly reported between Nov. 10 and Apr. 5, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 20

PLUMED EGRET Egretta intermedia Regularly reported between Nov. 6 and June 8. Molonglo River flats and the Lake.

WHITE EGRET Egretta alba Regular in small numbers.

CATTLE EGRET Ardeola ibis Single birds at the Molonglo River flats Jan. 2, Feb. 2 and Mar. 9.

GLOSSY IBIS Plegadis falcinellus Regularly reported from Molonglo River flats between Nov. 10 and Mar.9. Highest count 27.

WHITE IBIS Threskiornis molucca Regular in small numbers, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 21.

ROYAL SPOONBILL Platalea regia Regularly reported between Nov. 16 and Mar. 23, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 3.

YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL Platalea flavipes Regularly report between Nov. 30 and Apr. 5, Molonglo River flat Highest count 3.

BLACK SWAN Cygnus atratus Regularly reported in small numbers Lake Burley Griffin and Jerrabomberra Creek. Highest count 42.

MOUNTAIN DUCK *Tadorna tadornoides*. Regularly reported between Nov. 10 and Mar. 23, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 14.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* One at the Molonglo River flats on Aug. 13, 1967 was the first A.C.T. record (not previously reported). Males at Sullivan's Creek on May 25 and 30. A female at Yarralumla on June 15.

CHESTNUT TEAL *Anas castanea* Regularly reported in small numbers throughout the year, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 40.

SHOVELER *Anas rhynchotis* Regularly reported in small numbers throughout the year. Molonglo River flat. Highest count 10.

PINKEARED DUCK *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* Eighteen on Nov. 24, two on Jan. 19, Molonglo River flats.

WHITE-EYED DUCK *Aythya australis* Regular in small numbers throughout the year. Highest count 9.

MUSK DUCK *Biziura lobata* Regular reports of single birds between Nov. 9 and Feb. 10. Molonglo River flats.

SPOTTED HARRIER *Circus assimilis* A pair at Collector in September.

SWAMP HARRIER *Circus approximans* Regular reports of single birds between Nov. 9 and May 11, Molonglo River flats.

BROWN GOSHAWK *Accipiter fasciatus* Regular reports of single birds throughout the year.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter cirrocephalus* One at Lake Bathurst on Sep. 29.

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE Aquila audax Regular reports of small numbers throughout the year. All areas.

LITTLE EAGLE Hieraetus morphnoides One at Molonglo River Gorge, Aug. 19, two at Lake George, Sept. 5 one at Wells Station, Sept. 9. Regular reports BM area, August to November.

SEA-EAGLE Haliaetus leucogaster One pair on Sept. 29 and two pairs on Aug. 6, Lake Bathurst.

WHISTLING KITE Haliastur sphenurua Regular at Lakes George and Bathurst. One at Royalla, Apr. 10.

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE Elanus notatus Regular in small numbers.

LETTERWINGED KITE Elanus scriptus (One at Deakin on Dec. 23, 1967. The first A.C.T. record, not previously reported.)

LITTLE FALCON Falco longipennis Regular in small numbers.

GREY FALCON Falco hypoleucus One on the Gundaroo road, Jan. 27.

PEREGRINE Falco peregrinus Two at Lake George, Sep. 5. One at Lake Bathurst, Oct. 6.

BLACK FALCON Falco subniger One at Wee Jasper on May 17.

BROWN FALCON Falco berigora Regular in small numbers.

KESTREL Falco cenchroides Regular in small numbers, at all seasons.

OSPREY Pandion haliaetus One at Lake George on Sept. 16.

BOOBOOK OWL Ninox novaeseelandiae Regular in small

numbers in all areas.

STUBBLE QUAIL Coturnix pectoralis Extremely common in wheat crops during the summer.

BROWN QUAIL Synoicus australis Single birds in November, December and January. Two on Nov. 15.

PAINTED QUAIL Turnix varia Regularly at Mount Pleasant in November, December and January. At Black Mountain from July to December.

LITTLE QUAIL Turnix velox Two on Jan. 29, four on Feb. 4 at Belconnen.

RED-CHESTED QUAIL Turnix pyrrhothorax Single birds at Gungahlin, Sept. 28, Braidwood, Nov. 14, Belconnen Jan. 29, Lyneham, Jan. 24 and Feb. 4 (the latter a juvenile). These are the first records of this species for many years.

BANDED LANDRAIL Rallus philippensis A pair nested successfully at Lake Burley Griffin in Nov/Dec.

SPOTTED CRAKE Porzana fluminea Regularly in small numbers at Molonglo River flats, Oct. 12 to Feb. 16.

MARSH CRAKE Porzana pusilla Regularly in small numbers between Oct/12 and Feb. 16, Molonglo River flats.

SPOTLESS CRAKE Porzana tabuensis Single birds at the Molonglo River flats on Nov. 21, Jan. 12, Feb. 16.

DUSKY MOORHEN Gallinula tenebrosa Regularly reported, Molonglo River flats.

BLACK-TAILED NATIVE HEN Tribonyx ventralis (Two on Jan. 5, one on Jan. 12, Molonglo River flats. First A.C.T. record).

EASTERN SWAMPHEN Porphyrio melanotus. Regularly reported, Molonglo River flats.

COOT Fulica atra Regularly reported in varying numbers, Molonglo River flats.

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL Charadrius cinctus Present at the Molonglo River flats between Jan. 5 and Feb. 2. Highest count 5.

RED-CAPPED DOTTEREL Charadrius alexandrinus Small numbers at Lake George throughout the year.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL Charadrius melanops Regularly reported in small numbers, Molonglo River-flats and Murrumbidgee River.

BANDED PLOVER Vanellus tricolor Single birds at Canberra Airport on Sept. 28 and 29 Oct. 6.

WHITE-HEADED STILT Himantopus leucocephalus Regularly reported between Oct. 9 and Feb. 23, Molonglo River flats and Lake Bathurst.

GREENSHANK Tringa nebularia Two on Nov. 2U, two on Jan. 5 at Fyshwick sewage ponds.

SHARPTAILED SANDPIPER Calidris acuminata Twelve on Nov. 24 45 on Nov. 26, two on Nov. 3, sewage ponds.

BROADBILLED SANDPIPER Limicola falcinellus (One on Jan. 12, two on Feb. 2. First A.C.T. records).

JAPANESE SNIPE Gallinago hardwickii Single birds in

October, November and January, six on Nov. 26 four on Nov. 26, Fyshwick sewage ponds.

SOUTHERN STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus magnirostris* Two near O'Connor on Aug. 7.

WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybrida* Present at the Molonglo River flats between Oct. 23 and Dec. 10, highest count 16.

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia* (One at Yarralumla Bay on June 1. First A.C.T. record).

DIAMOND DOVE *Geopelia cuneata* (One present at Lyneham from Dec. 2 to 5).

COMMON BRONZEWING *Phaps chaleoptera* Regular in small numbers. Chiefly about BM and the Ranges.

BRUSH BRONZEWING *Phaps elegans* One record from the Ranges in June 1969.

CRESTED PIGEON *Ocyphaps lophotes* Single birds at O'Connor on Oct. 31, Ginninderra on Nov. 9, Mt. Tinderry on Dec. 15. Two at O'Connor, Nov. 1.

WONGA PIGEON *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* Regularly in small numbers in the Ranges.

LITTLE LORIKEET *Glossopsitta pusilla* Two at Lee's Creek on Mar. 1.

Y/T BLACK COCKATOO *Calyptorhynchus funereus* Regularly reported in small numbers at the Ranges, July 1 to Nov. 23. Highest count 9.

WHITE COCKATOO *Cacatua galerita* Regular reports of flocks in open country. Widespread in the Ranges over the breeding season.

COCKATIEL Nymphicus hollandicus Four males and three females at Weetangera on Oct. 22. One at Deakin on Feb. 5.

SUPERB PARROT Polytelis swainsoni Two on Sept 19, four on Sept. 28, Lyneham. Three on Nov. 1, Ginninderra.

KING PARROT Aprosmictus scapularis Regular reports, except for the summer.

BUDGERYGAH Melopsittacus undulatus Fifteen on the Gundaroo road on Jan. 27.

PALLID CUCKOO Cuculus pallidus Regular reports from August 5.

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO Cacomantis pyrrhophanus Fairly common.

BLACK-EARED CUCKOO Chrysolococcyx osculans (Heard calling in BM area in Sept/Oct. First recent record for the A.C.T.)

HORSFIELD BRONZE CUCKOO Chrysococcyx basalis Regular from Aug. 17.

GOLDEN BRONZE CUCKOO Chrysococcyx lucidus Regular from Sept. 6.

CHANNEL-BILLED CUCKOO Scythrops novaehollandiae One at Black Mountain on Feb. 17.

TAWNY FROGMOUTH Podargus strigoides Regular reports of pairs and single birds.

OWLET NIGHTJAR Aegotheles cristatus Single birds at New Chum's Rd, Apr. 5, BM, Oct. 1, Royalla May 3.

DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis* Regularly reported from Oct. 8 to Feb. 20.

AZURE KINGFISHER *Alcyon azurea* Two on Mar. 9, Molonglo River, Duntroon.

RED-BACKED KINGFISHER *Halcyon pyrrhopygia* One at the Tidbinbilla Fauna Reserve on Dec. 22.

SACRED KINGFISHER *Halcyon sancta* Regular in small numbers in suitable habitat after mid-September.

RAINBOWBIRD *Merops ornatus* Regular along the Murrumbidgee River. First noted on Oct. 6.

SPINETAILED SWIFT *Hirundapus caudacutus* Occasional reports. First reported on Sept. 8. Large flocks on Jan. 25 and Mar. 1 and 8.

TREE MARTIN *Petrochelidon nigricans* First report, Aug. 17.

FAIRY MARTIN *Petrochelidon ariel* First report Sept. 9.

RUFIOUS FANTAIL *Rhipidura rufifrons* First report, Nov. 5.

LEADEN FLYCATCHER *Myiagra rubecula* First report, Sept. 9.

SATIN FLYCATCHER *Myiagra cyanoleuca* First report, Oct. 19.

RESTLESS FLYCATCHER *Seisura inquieta* Regular in small numbers.

BROWN FLYCATCHER *Microeoa leucophaea* Regular reports of small numbers between July 8 and Sept. 9.

SCARLET ROBIN Petroica multicolor Regular reports of single birds and pairs.

RED-CAPPED ROBIN Petroica goodenovii Regular reports of single birds or pairs from Sept. 1 to Dec. 3.

FLAME ROBIN Petroica phoenicea Fairly common.

ROSE ROBIN Petroica rosea First report Sept. 3.

HOODED ROBIN Petroica cucullata Regular reports of single birds or pairs.

YELLOW ROBIN Eopsaltria australis Regularly reported, but not common.

RUFIOUS WHISTLER Pachycephala rufiventris Single birds July 1 to Sept. 1. then common.

OLIVE WHISTLER Pachycephala olivacea Regular reports of small numbers in the ranges.

EASTERN SHRIKE-TIT Falcunculus frontatus Regular in the Ranges at all seasons.

EASTERN WHIPBIRD Psophodes olivaceus Regular in the Ranges in all months.

B/F CUCKOO SHRIKE Coracina novaehollandiae Regular in small numbers in the cooler months. Common from September.

CICADA-BIRD Edoliisoma tenuirostre Regularly reported in the Ranges from Nov. 2 to Feb. 15. Highest count 3.

WHITE-WINGED TRILLER Lalage sueurii Very common about Canberra from Sept 28, in areas where not recorded previously.

SPOTTED QUAIL-THRUSH *Cinnclosoma punctatum* One at Mt. Tidbinbilla in May.

GREY-CROWNED BABBLER *Pomatostomus temporalis* One at Ginninderra on Nov. 1.

MOUNTAIN THRUSH *Zoothera dauma* Regular in small numbers in the Ranges, all months.

WHITE-FRONTED CHAT *Epthianura albifrons* Two at Scrivener Dam on July 23, three at Yowani Golf Club, Sept. 9.

WHITE-THROATED WARBLER *Gerygone olivacea* A few birds present all year. Common from October to April.

WESTERN WARBLER *Gerygone fusea* Present at Russell Hill throughout the 1969 winter.

BROWN WEEBILL *Smicrornis brevirostris* Very common about Canberra.

EASTERN WHITEFACE *Aphelocephala leucopsis* Regular reports from isolated areas throughout the year.

LITTLE THORNBILL *Acanthiza nana* Two on Sept. 1, Botanic Gardens. Several seen occasionally at Royalla from April to June.

BUFF-TAILED THORNBILL *Acanthiza reguloides* Regular reports from near Canberra.

SPECKLED WARBLER *Chthonicola sagittata* Regular in small numbers about Canberra.

PILOT-BIRD *Pycnoptilus floccosus* Fairly common in the Ranges, at all seasons.

BROWN SONGLARK Cinclorhampus cruralis Regular in small numbers from Nov. 9 to Jan. 19, Molonglo River flats. Highest count 4.

RUFOUS SONGLARK Cinclorhampus mathewsi First report Oct. 6.

LITTLE GRASSBIRD Megalurus gramineus Regular in small numbers, Oct. 12 to Nov. 30, Molonglo River flats.

REED WARBLER Acrocephalus stentoreus Common, near water Sept. 16 to May 11.

FAN-TAILED WARBLER Cisticola exilis Small numbers present; at Molonglo River flats Nov. 10 to Jan. 25.

MASKED WOODSWALLOW Artamus personatus One at Black Mountain, Oct. 26.

WHITE-BROWED WOODSWALLOW Artamus superciliosus Eight at BM, Oct. 11 to 26. Five at BM, Dec. 7, six (inc. fledgling) at Gundaroo, Jan. 27.

DUSKY WOODSWALLOW Artamus cyanopterus Common from Sept. 5.

ORANGE-WINGED SITTELLA Neositta chrysoptera Fairly common around Canberra in all months.

BROWN TREECREEPER Climacteris picumnus Locally resident in restricted localities.

RED-BROWED TREECREEPER Climacteris erythroptera Resident in small numbers in the Ranges.

MISTLETOE BIRD Dicaeum hirundinaceum Regular from October to March, particularly about Canberra.

YELLOW-TIPPED PARDALOTE Pardalotus striatus Two at Russell Hill on June 8 and Aug. 15.

STRIATED PARDALOTE Pardalotus substriatus Several seen in June at Royalla.

WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER Melithreptus lunatus Common. Present in the Ranges from April to June.

BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER Melithreptus brevirostris Regular reports of small flocks in all areas.

TAWNY-CROWNED HONEYEATER Gliciphila melanops One at Narrabundah on Sept. 6 and 7.

REGENT HONEYEATER Zanthomiza phrygia Two at O'Connor on Oct. 27.

FUSCOUS HONEYEATER Meliphaga fusca 50-100 at the Botanic Gardens, Oct. 14. Otherwise in smaller numbers in winter/spring.

WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER Meliphaga leucotis Fairly common in the Ranges. Regular about Canberra in the colder months.

YELLOW-TUFTED HONEYEATER Meliphaga melanops Present in the Botanic Gardens in small numbers during May. Also along the Gudgenby River in Sept. Oct.

CRESCENT HONEYEATER Philidonyris pyrrhoptera Regular in the Ranges and the Botanic Gardens in the winter. Bred in the Gardens.

NOISY MINER Myzantha melanocephala Common in restricted areas.

YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATER Meliornis novaehollandiae Regular reports from the Botanic Gardens and along the Murrumbidgee, occasionally from the Ranges.

SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER Acanthagonys rufogularis One at O'Connor on Oct. 31, 1967 (not previously reported).

LITTLE WATTLEBIRD Anthochaera chrysoptera Five at Yarralumla Nursery on Oct. 27.

NOISY FRIARBIRD Philemon corniculatus Present in July August and September, then common till April.

LITTLE FRIARBIRD Philemon citreogularis Single birds at Russell Hill on Oct. 17, Botanic Gardens on Jan. 26.

HORSFIELD BUSHLARK Mirafra javanica One at Lyneham on Jan. 22. Mostly recorded in summer at Lake George and Gungahlin.

DIAMOND FIRETAIL Zonaeginthus guttatus Regular reports of small numbers. Appears to be locally resident.

ZEBRA FINCH Taeniopygia castanotis Small flocks seen occasionally including one breeding colony.

DOUBLEBAR FINCH Poephila bichenovii Common in restricted areas particularly near Canberra.

RED-BROWED FINCH Estrilda temporalis Fairly regularly reported but appeared to be declining.

OLIVE-BACKED ORIOLE *Oriolus sagittatus* Two at Ginninderra on Nov. 6, one at BM area, Nov. 10, one at Royalla, Apr. 1.

SATIN BOWERBIRD *Ptilorhynchus violaceus* Regular reports from the ranges and in winter about the edges of forest country.

LITTLE RAVEN *Corvus mellori* The status of this species needs determination. There are occasional definite records from the A.C.T. Bred at Lake George.

WHITE-WINGED CHOUGH *Corcorax melanorhamphus* Locally common.

PIED GURRAWONG *Strepera graculina* Appeared less common in Canberra in April, May and June.

GREY CURRAWONG *Strepera versicolor* Regular reports of single birds from all areas.

GREY BUTCHERBIRD *Cracticus torquatus* Present in small numbers in restricted areas including the Ranges.

PIED BUTCHERBIRD *Cracticus nigrogularis* One at Gungahlin on Apr. 10.

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE *Gymnorhina tibicen hypoleuca* Regular reports of small numbers of probable hybrids as well as "White-backs".

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* Increasing as gardens develop in Canberra.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* Regularly reported from the damper grasslands.

INDIAN MYNA *Acridotheres tristis* Regular reports of small numbers from all parts of the old suburbs. Appears to be increasing.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* (Two at Dickson on Mar. 18).

COMMON SPECIES:-

Black Cormorant, Straw-necked Ibis, White-faced Heron, Silver Gull, Spurwinged Plover, Black Duck, Wood Duck, Grey Teal, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Galah, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Red-rumped Parrot, Kookaburra, Lyrebird, Welcome Swallow, Grey Fantail, Willy Wagtail, Golden Whistler, Grey Shrike-Thrush, Magpie Lark, Striated Thornbill, Brown Thornbill, Yellowtailed Thornbill, White-browed Scrubwren, Superb Blue Wren, White throated Treecreeper, Spotted Pardalote, Eastern Striated Pardalote, Eastern Silvereye, Yellow-faced Honey eater. White-plumed Honey eater, Eastern Spinebill, Red Wattlebird, Pipit, Raven, Black-backed Magpie, Rock Dove, House Sparrow, Goldfinch and Starling.

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Cut-Price Special The hardback book "Penguins" by John Sparks and Tony Soper (263 pp. Profuse illustrations) is on special at Angus and Robertson's Civic, at the special price of \$2.95, a reduction of more than 50%. The book is an entertaining and comprehensive treatise on the penguin order, and well worth buying.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Population Study of Silver gull

During the 1968 breeding season, the Mawson Institute for Antarctic Research, University of Adelaide, banded over 13,000 Silver Gull chicks at 15 colonies. More than half were in colonies on the south-eastern coast the rest in the Adelaide area. A total of 150 breeding adults were banded in two south-eastern colonies, these have individual tricolor bands, while the chicks have a colour band indicating hatching site.

Our own observations at Beachport, S.A., show that the autumn and early winter population there numbers only about one-tenth of the local breeding population. We have seen about a fifth of the banded at the nearest colony (Penguin Island) but only one of the adults banded 20 miles away. Most of the banded young (first year birds) seen there were born locally; few young birds from the Adelaide area have been seen at Beachport, and these only in summer.

We have also received, through the Australian Bird Banding Scheme, records of live sightings of 124 young and seven adults. It appears that Adelaide-bred gulls rarely go far from home, only two having been seen in Victoria but many gulls from south-eastern S.A. move east during the summer, as far as Sydney, Canberra and Devonport. Some stop in western Victoria, and many in Port Phillip and Westernport Bays. Three adults and 28 young have been seen more than once; the adults and of the young ones seem to be resident in particular

places, e.g. two adults at Port Fairy, one adult at Rosebud, Port Phillip, and young at Sorrento, Brighton and Cowes, but other young may be more mobile in the Port Phillip area.

During May and June we have been catching gulls from the beach flocks at Beachport and Grey (ten miles apart). A total of 525 birds have been given numbered and colour bands white/green on the right leg for adults and yellow/green on the left for immatures. Of this total, 228, and 32 birds banded in 1968, also have on each wing a yellow plastic tag 1 ½" square, held by a pin through the wing membrane, and bearing two black letters. All have yellow dye under both wings.

Most of these birds have remained locally, but a few have moved away - to Robe and Adelaide, S.A., and to Portland, Warrnambool, Geelong, Brighton and Mildura, Victoria. Perhaps the latter were on the move to a breeding colony.

Early in the 1969 breeding season we intend to mark, with tricolor bands and pink dye, a number of adults breeding near Beachport, and to band chicks in the local colonies. During 1969 and 1970 we shall look for marked birds in S.A. from Adelaide along the southeast coast. Information on those seen farther afield will be much appreciated. The questions to be answered include:

Do gulls spending the non-breeding season at Beachport breed nearby or at a distance?

How widely do breeding birds from Penguin Island disperse?

Do adults spend successive non-breeding seasons in the same place?

Do second-year birds go to the same place as they did in their first year?

Obviously, we cannot hope to cover more than a limited area ourselves. In view of the interest shown by birdwatchers and the public in 1968-69, we are circulating this information so that observers will know that their information, especially repeated observations of the tag-letters or band numbers of the same bird, will contribute materially to the results. Records of yellow-tagged or dyed birds at or near the breeding colonies, and of three colour banded birds (if successful early breeders they may be away by November), also of both tagged and banded birds during next autumn and early winter are needed. We are particularly interested in whether birds are seen repeatedly in the same locality, how restricted are their daily movements, and how long they stay. Two adults and four first year birds, seen in Victoria, were back near their breeding colonies in August.

Could you oblige us by passing on this information and request to anyone who may be interested and able to help? We can supply copies of this article on request. Please send sight records to Miss S.E. Ingham, Mawson Institute for Antarctic Research, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, S.A., 5001. When the birds have no wing-tags it is important to record not only band number and colour, but also which legs they are on. Records of dead tagged gulls, or any caught and handled, go to the Australian Bird Banding Scheme as usual.

Yours, etc.,

Adelaide, S.A

R. CARRICK

BOOK REVIEW

Common City BirdsPeriwinkle. \$1.50

Graeme Chapman's book "Common City Birds" is one of the Periwinkle series of paperbacks on various aspects of Australian flora and fauna. The book fills a large gap in the literature about Australian birds, as it attempts to show birdwatching on a popular plane without it descending to sentimental or sensational half-truths, and at a price the average person is prepared to pay.

The presentation and format are excellent, the book being roughly in three parts - firstly information about birds in general, secondly identification details and colour photographs of 57 species of birds occurring in cities, and thirdly the techniques of birdwatching, with a bibliography of helpful books.

The colour reproduction of the photographs in all the Periwinkle series is not of outstanding quality and this book is similar in that respect. However all the birds are quite recognisable, more so than in the guides commonly in use. The text is of the very high standard one expects of Graeme Chapman.

All in all this book is ideally suited for people who are just interested in birds without being completely sold on birdwatching. This is the book that could sell it to them or at least awaken them to it. Even if you think you know it all, the book can teach most people something new about some bird or birds and at the low price is unhesitatingly recommended to everyone as a handy reference book.

REGENT MEETINGS

February 11

Dr. R.E. Berwick, of the Zoology Department, A.N.U. gave a very enlightening talk on telemetry - the transmission of information at a distance - as applied to animal study. The speaker described techniques used in radio telemetry, and passed around various devices, a cross-section of many kinds which have been used on sheep eagles, goannas, tortoises and even the lowly cockroach. The animal subjects' view was aptly summed up by a doodling listener, whose sketch of a bird bristling with harnesses and radio antennae carried the captions "This chap Barwick really bugs me!"

Before the main lecture, Steve Wilson gave a short "Bird of the month" talk on the Golden Whistler, "the most variable species on earth". Slides of plates drawn by Betty Temple Watts were an invaluable aid in showing the bewildering range of plumages in this bird.

March 11

The lecture theatre was filled to capacity for the annual film night. Films shown were loaned by the German Embassy. All were good, but, "Village of the White Storks" was outstanding. Other subjects included woodpeckers, woodgrouse and falconry. Although the birds were European the commentaries were in English, and many parallels could be drawn with related species in Australia.

March 15

About ten members turned up for a birdwatching tour Fyshwick sewage ponds. The waterfowl here were obligingly tame, and many species could be studied at close quarters.

COMING MEETINGS

April 15

Dr I. McTaggart Cowan, Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of British Columbia, will speak on "Wildlife Research in Canada". Birds of the month will be the Bronze Cuckoos, by Mark Clayton.

April 26

A birdwatching excursion to Lake George (as far as Silver Wattle Point) will be led by Mark Clayton, who has been co-opted into the Committee as Excursions Officer. Participants are asked to meet in Bungendore (opposite the Shell garage) at 9 a.m., and to bring along refreshments.

May 13

"Birds of the Brindabella Ranges" - lecture by Gerald Horey.

June 10

Peter Fullagar will speak on "Gould Petrels".

July 8

The Annual General Meeting and Brains Trust will be held.

All the above indoor meetings will be held at the CSIRO Lecture Theatre, Black Mountain, starting at 8 p.m. Tea and biscuits afterwards.

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EDITOR A.H. D'Andria, CSIRO Division of Wildlife
Research.