

seconded, that a sub-committee be formed, consisting of Messrs. E. B. Nicholls, D. Le Souëf, and T. H. Tregellas, to go into the whole question and submit a report at the next meeting of the club. Mr. L. G. Chandler, the hon. sec., read a paper on the White-browed Field-Wren (*Calamanthus albiloris*), which was discussed by several members. Mr. A. J. Campbell commented on the early opening of the Quail season, and moved that the hon. secretary write to the Minister of Agriculture asking him to receive a deputation which would protest against the early opening of the season. Mr. J. A. Leach, M.Sc., seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously. Mr. T. H. Tregellas read the balance-sheet of the Buckland fund lecture. After expenses had been paid a balance of £3 11s remained. This money was handed over to Mr. O. W. Rosenhain to pass on to Mr. Buckland. Mr. D. Le Souëf was congratulated by members on being elected a corresponding member of the American Ornithologists' Union. Mr. Leach drew the attention of members to the wholesale destruction of birds at the Sandringham Golf Links, where poison was being laid for rabbits. The exhibits were:—Skins of *Calamanthus albiloris*, *C. fuliginosus*, and *C. rubiginosus*, by A. J. Campbell; skins of *Calamanthus howei*, eggs of *Stipiturus malachurus*, with egg of Fan-tailed Cuckoo and eggs of *Calamanthus albiloris*, by F. E. Wilson; series of lantern slides of birds in their native haunts, by Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley; skins of *Calamanthus albiloris*, and photographs of young *C. albiloris* in nest, by Mr. L. G. Chandler. A vote of thanks was accorded the host and hostesses, and on behalf of the club the president wished Mr. Rosenhain and his son, who were leaving shortly for Europe, a pleasant voyage. The host suitably responded, and the meeting terminated.

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### Notes and Notices.

**Brisson.**—There has been discussion recently in scientific circles of the old world, and incidentally in the pages of *The Emu* between Mr. Mathews and Mr. Milligan, as to whether or not the genera of Brisson's "Ornithology" (1760) should be accepted under the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. According to "Opinion 37," just received, the International Commission has ruled (voting 9 to 1) that Brisson's generic names of birds are available under the code.

**Albinism.**—It is interesting to note, in phases of albinism among Parrots, the hue the feathers assume; for instance, in a Rosella (*Platycercus*), the green becomes yellow, the blue becomes white, but the red does not usually change. I have not known of a case of melanism among birds, but have of albinism among all our Australian birds except the Cranes.

I remember seeing a skin of the Blue Tahiti Lory in the Liverpool Museum which was white, following the same rule as is general among Australian Parrots.—D. LE SOUËF. Zoological Gardens, Melbourne.

**A Lesson from America.**—I see that New York State—the most important State in the union—has just passed two acts of great importance to its wild bird fauna generally. One, the Bayne law, makes it unlawful to sell or offer for sale, in New York, any wild game. At one stroke, therefore, the market for the ill-gotten

booty of the pot-hunter has been closed. There is an old saying that if there were no receivers there would be no thieves; and this applies admirably to the game and wild bird question. The other act, the Sullivan law, forbids anyone under 16 possessing any sort of gun, even an air-gun. Also all weapons have to be licensed. These are two admirable laws, and they are expected to work well. The Sullivan law, at any rate, should be the means of saving quite a quantity of human life during the year.—“F. R.,” *Australasian*, 27/1/12.

**Obituary.**—It is with great regret that we have to record that Mr. Eugene William Oates died at Edgbaston, Birmingham, on 16th November, 1911, at the age of 66. From 1867 to 1899 Mr. Oates was in the Public Works Department, India. As an ornithologist, he will be best known for his excellent volumes on the “Birds” in the well-known “Fauna of British India,” edited by the late W. T. Blanford. He also wrote “A Handbook to the Birds of British Burmah,” edited the second edition of Hume’s “Nests and Eggs of Indian Birds,” and wrote “A Manual of the Game Birds of India.” Mr. Oates was also the author of the first two volumes of the “Catalogue of the Collection of Birds’ Eggs in the British Museum,” and was joint author with Captain Lavile G. Reid of the third and fourth volumes of that work. Mr. Oates was Fellow of the Zoological Society, and was elected a member of the B.O.U. in 1882, but retired in 1903, and shortly afterwards, owing to ill-health, he ceased to do much active bird-work.—*British Birds*, vol. v., No. 7 (December, 1911).

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### Far North-West Exploration.

THE Kimberley exploration expedition, led by Mr. C. P. Conigrave, F.R.G.S., member of the R.A.O.U., after an absence of twelve months, returned safely to Perth on the 6th March.

At the Town Hall, on the afternoon of the 8th, a civic reception was given to Mr. Conigrave and his companions, Messrs. L. M. Burns and R. N. Collison. Besides the Mayor (Mr. T. G. Molloy) and councillors, there were present Bishop Riley, Rev. W. T. Kench, Sir John Forrest, K.C.M.G., Mr. E. Allen, M.L.A., Mr. Conigrave, sen., Mr. F. S. Brockman, and many others.

The following account of Mr. Conigrave’s adventurous journey is abridged from an interview published in the *West Australian*, 8/3/12:—

The party made Wyndham their starting point, and there they were joined by two local white men and two aborigines. Before actually commencing the journey which they had set out to take, a couple of months was spent in exploring the country between Wyndham and the South Australian border. There were found large belts of pine forests, the commercial value of which was deemed to be very high. Much of the timber was exceedingly well grown, and fit for the market at once. It was in June that a start was made upon what was called “the big trip.” In order to

cross the head waters of the Gulf, it was necessary to make a detour round the south of the Cockburn Range, and then circle to the north through the ranges which flank the western side of the Cambridge Gulf. Forrest River was reached at a spot about 20 miles from the mouth, where it had been arranged that a supply boat should call about the middle of August. The boat duly put in an appearance, and, re-stocked with provisions, the party set out from the river at the end of August. It was with great difficulty that a crossing of the river was effected, on account of the precipitous banks. As a matter of fact, three days' travelling sufficed only to take the party a distance of three miles on their way as the crow flies. They were equipped with 18 horses, most of which were used as pack animals. On the way to the head a fine stream, which was named the Berkley River, was met with and followed a distance of some 70 miles. Along its course were many magnificent pools or reaches, bordered with palms and other luxuriant vegetation. It wound for the most part between flat-topped hills, and discharged into the sea near Mt. Casuarina. This mount, the most outstanding feature along that part of the coast, was some 1,000 feet in height, and was used by mariners in taking their bearings. The mountain had never yet been ascended by whites. Upon climbing its thickly-wooded slopes the party found at the summit species of birds which were not found anywhere else throughout the trip. A fortnight was spent in the vicinity of Mt. Casuarina, and an investigation conducted of the wonderfully deep ravines and gorges, in which was found tropical vegetation in profusion. A course was then laid for Drysdale River, and on the way another fine stream was met with and named King George River. This was found to empty itself into the sea near Cape Rulhieres. After passing this river there was an exceedingly rough stage as far as the Napier Broome Mission Station, which was reached on 22nd October. This was the turning point, at which it was expected there would be a vessel containing supplies for the march back.

Whilst waiting for supplies the party explored the country 100 miles to the west of Admiralty Gulf, following more or less the course of the King Edward River. In this locality they came across a good deal of basaltic country, richly grassed. The scenery inland was magnificent, while the littoral scenery was of the wildest description. So tremendous were the cliffs and bluffs of the gulf that it was impossible to reach the sea from inland without going a long way round. The outstanding feature about here was Mt. Connor, which is 1,000 feet high. The seaward slope was covered with tropical scrub which very much resembled that of Queensland. It was expected that the collections made here would yield several entirely new specimens of birds. As a district it was perhaps the most promising that they saw. If it had not been for the heavy tropical rains, the party would have made a longer stay about the gulf, but as there were now five big rivers dividing them from Wyndham, it was imperative that a start should be made for home.

On return to the mission station it was found that the vessel had not put in an appearance, and as supplies at the station were running short it was decided to push on as fast as possible. So, after a week's spell for the horses, the party set their faces for Wyndham, a distance of 350 miles, with only a week's full provisions in their packs. They left the mission station on 7th December, and, setting out for the Drysdale River, reached Brockman's camp, "F.B. 85." The river was followed for several days, and at last the point was reached where Mr. Brockman could get no further and was obliged to turn back. It was here that great difficulties were encountered. It was necessary for them to force a passage through the range on to a high sandstone table-land, which took them two days to accomplish. This was part of a table-land which stretched from Cape Londonderry to the head waters of the Forrest River. The table-land here was estimated at about 2,800 feet above sea-level. In the course of

their scramble up the sides of the ravines three of the horses fell and rolled down, smashing the packs, but doing little damage to themselves. Subsequently, however, three of the horses died. On arrival at the summit of the ranges the going was found to be comparatively easy. They struck the head waters of the Pentecost River, and from that point bore away in a south-easterly direction, cutting the head waters of the King George River, and crossing the table-land country at a height of 2,000 feet. They then crossed the high ranges near the head waters of the Berkley River. The average length of a day's stage was about 15 miles. They next crossed the two branches of the Forrest River, 40 miles to the westward, just where they had crossed on the outward journey. Owing to the heavy rains and the flooded state of the river this part of the journey was undertaken with much anxiety for all concerned. The river was in flood, and was only crossed with the greatest difficulty. The river was fully 300 yards wide, and the waters so deep in places as to necessitate swimming. Even where the horses could obtain a foothold, this, because of the pebbly nature of the bottom, gave but poor fording ground. All, however, got through safely, and finally camped on the first camp which they had left in July, thus completing the round trip.

Dealing generally with the trip, Mr. Conigrave said that the country was of all types. The ranges were generally poor and useless for stock purposes, but the table-lands and the flats between the ranges were all of the highest class of pastoral lands, and he would estimate the acreage at between four millions and five millions. Some of the country, notably that between Napier Broome Bay and Mt. Casuarina, was covered with large timber. Pandanus palms were found wherever there was water. The cabbage-tree palm, however, strangely enough, grew only at the summit of the hills, in company with a smaller though very similar palm. Ferns were found in abundance. One particularly magnificent fern, 12 feet in height, had been found by a large creek which ran into the King Edward River. None other of the same variety had been seen. A feature of the rich flats was the growth of cabbage-gums, whose bright green foliage and white trunks presented a most picturesque sight. The party had come into touch with the natives along the Forrest and the Berkley Rivers. The only show of hostility was on the Berkley River, but this came to nothing. The natives were numerous, and were scattered about all over the country. Scarcely any water-fowl were to be seen on the creeks or rivers, probably because these were swarming with crocodiles, but on some of the salt-marshes by the Pentecost and Forrest Rivers game of every description abounded. Mr. Conigrave regretted that the destruction of the White Cranes (Egrets) was being permitted. He understood that thousands of the plumes of these birds were being sent away annually to Europe, notwithstanding regulations prohibiting this wholesale slaughter.

Mr. Conigrave was particularly grateful to the Government which had helped the party, to the departments which had lent them so many requisites, and to the settlers and Messrs. Connor, Doherty, and Durack, of Wyndham, who had been so good to them in many ways. All the records of the trip would be handed to the Government as arranged.

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### R.A.O.U.—Publications Received.

- Abbott, C. G.*, Home Life of the Osprey.  
*Agricultural Journal of New South Wales*, *The*, April to December, 1911, and January and February, 1912.  
*Annotaciones Concilii Bibliographici*, Vol. VI., 1910.  
*Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute*, 1910.  
*Arbor and Bird Day*: Supplement to *Education Gazette*.