

ARTICLES OF GENERAL ORNITHOLOGICAL INTEREST.

- "A Note on the Structure of the Feather," by J. S. Gladstone. *Ibis*, vol. vi., part 2, p. 243.
- "The Birds of the Isle of May: a Migration Study," by Misses E. V. Baxter and L. J. Rintoul. *Ibis*, vol. vi., part 2, p. 247.
- A valuable contribution to the study of bird migration, especially with regard to the influence of weather conditions and winds on the movements of birds.
- "Development of Pattern in Birds," by A. G. Butler. *Avicultural Magazine*, vol. ix., part 6, p. 182.
- "Diseases of Birds and Their Treatment and Cure," by P. F. M. Galloway. *Avicultural Magazine*, vol. ix., part 6, p. 192, and part 7, p. 217.
- "Ancestral Characters in Nestlings," by A. G. Butler. *Avicultural Magazine*, vol. ix., part 7, p. 211, and part 8, p. 234.
- "Birds in the Valley of the Ancre during the Winter 1916-17," by Capt. J. N. Kennedy, M.C., Australian Corps Heavy Artillery. *Revue Francaise d'Ornithologie*, No. 109, p. 241.

The author records his observations on 56 species, and notes the effects on them of the fighting and of the unusually severe winter.

Correspondence.

To the Editors of "The Emu."

SIRS,—In *The Emu*, vol. xvii., part 4, page 177, Mr. A. J. Campbell makes the following remark respecting the Black-and-White Wren (*Malurus edouardi*) from Barrow Island:—"If so, I fear my friend, Mr. Carter's, claim to re-discovery has been anticipated." This refers to the paper by Mr. G. M. Mathews and myself in *The Ibis* for October, 1917, wherein (on page 593), under the heading of *Nesomalurus leucopterus leucopterus*, we stated:—"After an interval of nearly one hundred years the original *Malurus leucopterus* (Dumont), subsequently figured by Quoy and Gaimard, has again been obtained in the locality where the type specimen was got in 1818—namely, Dirk Hartog Island." Surely Mr. Campbell cannot deny that this claim has been fulfilled, and his remark in *The Emu* appears to be a contradiction to the letter that he wrote to me last year (1917), in which he congratulated me "on the re-discovery of the original Black-and-White *Malurus* and *Amytornis textilis*." As to whether *M. edouardi* is sub-specifically distinct from *M. (Nesomalurus) leucopterus* or not, all I can say at present is that Mr. G. M. Mathews and myself think that it is, and Mr. W. B. Alexander, of the Perth Museum, is of the same opinion, as he wrote to me, on receipt of the first two skins sent to him from Dirk Hartog, pointing out the differ-

ences between them and the Museum specimens from Barrow Island, which differences were subsequently confirmed by comparison with other specimens obtained (from Dirk Hartog).

Mr. Campbell also states in *The Emu* for April, 1918 (p. 178):—"There is no reason why a species on separate islands should change." Perhaps there is no known reason at present, but they certainly *do* change on islands comparatively close to one another, because, as stated in *The Ibis*, October, 1917 (p. 593), the Dirk Hartog form of *Malurus assimilis* distinctly differs from *Malurus bernieri* (Grant), of Bernier Island, the southern extremity of which is forty-five (45) miles from the northern end of Dirk Hartog.

As to Mr. A. J. Campbell's original description of *Malurus edouardi*, perhaps he is not aware (or has forgotten) that it was through my agency that he was able to make it, as on 14th February, 1901, when I was paying a visit to Perth from Point Cloates, I was shown in the Perth Museum the skins of this bird, then recently obtained by Mr. J. T. Tunney, and at once recognized that they were of great importance; and, as the late Mr. Bernard H. Woodward was absent at the time, I told the official to urge strongly upon Mr. Woodward the necessity of having the skins at once described, and advised that they should be sent to competent authorities in the Eastern States for comparison with their larger series of specimens there. I sailed for the North-West a day or two afterwards, without being able to see Mr. Woodward, and by first mail leaving Point Cloates after my return there—viz., on 12th March—I wrote to both Mr. A. J. Campbell and Mr. Woodward respecting the skins.—I remain, &c.,

TOM CARTER.

"Wensleydale," Mulgrave-road, Sutton, Surrey,
England, 19/6/18.

[There is no question that Mr. Carter, by his enterprise and bushcraft, re-discovered *Malurus leucopterus* in its original habitat. But if *M. edouardi* be a sub-species of *M. leucopterus* (Mathews has it so in his "1913 List," p. 229), then the discovery of *M. edouardi* was a re-discovery of the species.—EDS.]

To the Editors of "The Emu."

SIRS,—May I be allowed to add a slight tribute to those which have already appeared in *The Emu* to the memory of the late Colonel W. V. Legge. At the time when I first arrived in the island from Great Britain, and, having settled in the bush, was striving to attain to some knowledge of our avifauna without any literature on the subject, the Colonel very kindly sent me one of his few remaining copies of the "Systematic List of Tasmanian Birds," printed in 1886, and, some years later, his "Memorandum Relative to a Vernacular List," printed in 1895. Besides these,

I had at various times communications from the Colonel, giving information on obscure points connected with the life or classification of our bush birds.

The passing away of this distinguished ornithologist is a heavy loss, not only to our island, but to Australia generally.

H. STUART DOVE.

West Devonport, Tasmania, 5/8/18.

Reviews.

["The Food of Australian Birds." New South Wales Department of Agriculture Science Bulletin No. 15.]

THIS very important bulletin contains the results of investigations of the stomach and crop contents of birds carried out in New South Wales by Dr. J. B. Cleland, Mr. J. H. Maiden, Mr. W. W. Froggatt, Dr. E. W. Ferguson, and Mr. C. T. Musson. The main portion of the work has been written by Dr. Cleland, and consists of an introduction, "Broad Summary of Results," "Detail Summaries and Verdicts on Individual Birds," "Food of Birds from Botanical Aspect," and "List of Birds Feeding on Particular Foods." Following this are three appendices. The first of these consists of a tabulated summary of the contents of stomachs and crops of each species of Australian bird examined, whilst the two others give actual details of the contents found in the stomachs and crops of all the individual birds. Altogether, the contents of the stomach or crop of one or more individuals of 220 species of native birds and 4 species of introduced birds are tabulated. As Dr. Cleland truly remarks in the introduction, "the appendices should prove of great value to future workers in this interesting economic field, inasmuch as they form a basis showing the food of individual birds, which can be added to from time to time as further birds are examined." He adds:— Obviously, before any individual species of birds can be rightly assessed economically from the point of view of its food habits, a large number of individuals, preferably several hundreds, must be examined in detail." After this it must come as a surprise to readers to find that the author proceeds to give a verdict on almost all species of birds, even when only a few stomachs have been examined. For example, of the Dollar-Bird, of which four stomachs were examined, he writes:—"This is evidently a very useful species." Of the Laughing Kingfisher, of which three stomachs have been examined:—"It is obviously a very useful species." Whilst not denying the great value of the work accomplished, we think no judgments should have been pronounced until at least 50 specimens of the species from different localities and killed at different seasons had been examined. At present more than 50 specimens have been examined in only three species—the Silver-eye (*Zosterops caerulea*) and the introduced Sparrow