

The list of birds set out above is, it will be seen, very similar to that contained in *Oologists in the Mallee*, by F. E. Wilson, R.A.O.U., *The Emu*, Vol. XII, p. 30, an article dealing with the country a few miles to the north of the area where the camp was held, which shows that the bird life of the district is constant to a large degree. The above list contains 86 species; Wilson records 79, including only 15 not observed by the R.A.O.U. camp party, and probably there however, or 14 if the White-throated Nightjar listed by him (a bird usually found in the timber country) was actually referable to the Spotted Nightjar, the species generally encountered in the Mallee.

In *The Emu*, Vol. XXV, p. 179, J. A. Ross records the birds found near Murrayville, the site of the previous Union camp-out in the Mallee, and in that account also there are but 12 birds not recorded at Wyperfeld. Notes by Rev. Walter Walters appearing on page 293 of the same volume increase the number by three additional species, two of which are water-birds, which it would not be expected would be found at Wyperfeld except during wet seasons.

Another paper dealing with the avifauna of the vicinity of the camp-out appears in *The Victorian Naturalist*, Vol. XXVI, p. 64, under the title of *In the Heart of the Mallee*, by A. H. Mattingley.

Outings During Congress, 1931

By A. G. CAMPBELL, R.A.O.U., Kilsyth, Vic.

It is always a delightful occupation to stroll around the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, a noted sanctuary for birds. A small party visited there on the afternoon of September 23 and admired the Australian vegetation, especially the large-sized trees, probably over 70 years of age, planted by the original designer of the Gardens. Eucalypts were taking on a character each to its own species, although few reach the dignity of the mahogany gum near the nursery gates. Near the oak lawn is the protea border, and one grand butt of coastal honeysuckle is equal to the best seen down the coast. Large paperbarks occupy many nooks, and right through the year these native plants supply many native birds with food and sustenance. By the lake side Black Swans and Grey Ducks were incubating their eggs, and a Blue Wren betrayed its home in a shrub.

At 8 p.m. that evening a public entertainment was given, at which were exhibited, by courtesy of Herschells Pty. Ltd., several bird films. The Lyrebird, photographed by Mr. R. T. Littlejohns, R.A.O.U., was very fine, considering the

difficulties connected with exposures in deep forests during winter. The phases of its life history were well shown, especially the magnificent display of the male bird, a performance not every naturalist has seen in the bush. In particular the display of a young male, not yet possessed of his full nuptial feathers, was of unique interest. The producers of the film might take a hint from other producers of less fascinating subjects, and duplicate or lengthen some of the more important parts, for the film is very short, in spite of its having taken five years to produce. Two films of the domestic life of a Black Swan and a Grebe in the Botanic Gardens lake were then shown, after which two British films were exhibited, the equal of which has probably not been seen before by members. One was the Life History of the Cuckoo, by Edgar Chance, picturing with painstaking detail the parasitism of the Cuckoo on the Tit Lark in England. The bird was seen to take an egg in its mouth and then sit on the nest to lay its own egg in the ordinary manner, while the agitated Larks fluttered nearby. At a later stage the ejection of nestlings by the young Cuckoo was clearly depicted. The other film was taken among highland granite crags, showing the Golden Eagle brooding over its young or bringing them their food, with magnificent slow motion of the bird in flight.

On Show Day, September 24, members and friends took a motor run, conjointly with the Field Naturalists' Club, to the You Yangs, and ascended the granite peak, from where the first white man, Captain Flinders, surveyed the bay in May, 1801. The bronze tablets erected by the Historical Society are items of interest on the topmost rock, reached by a well-graded path. The outlook was superb, for a vast area of country lies like a giant relief map below. The level farming country, chequered in rectangular fields of tawny or green, the bay beyond, and Geelong, bright in the sunshine, the metropolis smoky in the distance, and the encircling hills, all made a scene that will long be remembered. The park, being a sanctuary, has many birds of interest, some of which are not found nearer to Melbourne.

In the evening, at 8 p.m., a public lecture was given by Rev. C. L. Lang, R.A.O.U., on "A Tour of the Grampians." By the aid of many excellent hand-coloured slides, the lecturer described the nature of the old red sandstones peculiar to this part of Victoria, and the unique scenery found there. The wild life is very interesting, and the wild flowers, in endless profusion, make the district famous. Mr. Lang's photographs of birds taken in the bush are of unusual merit, and a most enjoyable evening was concluded by an account of a visit to the caves containing aboriginal paintings recently discovered at Glen Isla.