

To me a probable explanation of the 'black parrot' mystery is that in the Pascoe-Lockhart faunal 'island' there is a yet undiscovered parrot of the Black Lory (*Chalcopsitta ater*) affinity which, possibly well known in New Guinea, still eludes collection on Cape York Peninsula. *C. ater* is a uniform black, with a purple gloss. It has no red, but its upper and under tail coverts show dark purplish-blue. *C. insignis* has bright red wing coverts and red on its head and may be a possibility.

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4. Mathews, G. M. *List of the Birds of Australia*, Additions, p. xxv, 1913.
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Stray Feathers

A Parrot New for Australia.—In a recent issue of *The Emu* (vol. 46, pp. 1-2, July, 1946), Tom Iredale described a—what he called—'new species' of fig parrot (*Opopsitta marshalli*) from Cape York. Reference is made in the description to three other 'species' of fig parrots, *O. leadbeateri* [= *macleayana*], *coxeni*, and *diophthalma*. Not a word is said in this description of the fact that all progressive ornithologists consider these 'species' members of a widespread polytypic species, *Opopsitta diophthalma*, which extends from the New Guinea region and the Louisiade Islands south to northern New South Wales. It was to be expected that a population of this species would be found at Cape York, in the distributional gap between the area occupied by the New Guinea races of *O. diophthalma* and the North Queensland race, *macleayana*.

As Cape York birds are usually closely akin to south New Guinea birds—if not identical with them—one would expect that the Cape York population of *Opopsitta diophthalma* resembles *aruensis* Schlegel, a race that is widespread in south New Guinea and the Aru Islands, and was described as early as 1874. A comparison of the plate and description of *Opopsitta marshalli* Iredale with a series of *Opopsitta diophthalma aruensis* Schlegel fails to reveal a single difference. Absolute identity can, of course, not be proven until the Cape York material has been directly compared with specimens of *aruensis*. The wing measurements given by Iredale for Cape York birds (wing 82-84) are a little on the small side. Six adult males of *aruensis* in the American Museum of Natural History collections measure 86-93, females 82-84. The yellow band behind the

red forehead is variable in width and may be missing entirely. As *aruensis* is fully described in the *Catalogue of Birds of the British Museum* and all other standard works, it is curious that Mr. Iredale should have failed to make this obvious comparison. *Opopsitta marshalli* will have to be considered a synonym of *O. diophthalma aruensis* Schlegel, unless a valid distinction of the Cape York population can be pointed out.—E. MAYR, New York, U.S.A., 24/2/47.

Wood-Swallows and North Winds.—On October 12, 1946, Melbourne experienced its first hot north wind for the season. With the soaring temperatures and the wind came the first parties of wood-swallows. At Cheltenham, at 8.30 a.m., their familiar 'twittering' calls were heard overhead and a flock of about 60 birds passed over, flying directly into the strong wind. The White-browed species (*Artamus superciliosus*) predominated, as usual, over the Masked Wood-Swallows (*A. personatus*) by about ten to one. At 9.30 a.m. another flock, somewhat smaller than the first, passed over, these birds also flying directly into the wind.

That same day other observers around Melbourne also noted the wood-swallows for the first time for the season. At 8.40 a.m. Mr. W. Heathcote saw them over Pascoe Vale; during the morning Mr. Alan Bingham reported them over Heidelberg, and in the afternoon Mrs. C. E. Bryant saw them in the same area. Mr. A. G. Campbell reported them at Kilsyth and Mr. D. J. Dickison at Coimadai. Strange to relate, Mr. Anderson, the ranger at the You Yangs, told me that the Rainbow-birds (*Merops ornatus*) also reached there with that first northerly wind. No doubt migrating birds use strong northerlies to assist them on their journey southward. The wood-swallows did not stay as in other years; possibly the erratic temperatures during the spring prevented their remaining south for breeding.

My only other records of the White-browed or Masked species during the year were all made on hot north-wind days—at Eltham on November 3, temperature 86°; Toolern Vale on November 12, temperature 90°; and at Little River on November 22, temperature 86°. These birds, by all appearances, came in with the northerlies and left with the first southerlies.—ROY WHEELER, Windsor, Vic., 9/2/47.

Rufous Bristle-bird at Marlo.—Any observation covering an extension of range should be reported in full. The following is therefore published in amplification of Mr. F. E. Howe's note in *The Emu*, vol. 46, p. 392. On the evening of January 3, 1947, our party was greeted, immediately on arrival at Marlo, by two bird calls which Mr. W. Heathcote and I identified as those of the Rufous Bristle-bird (*Dasyornis broadbenti*). Judging the location of the calls,

we waited in the scrub, but no more calls were given that evening. Before daybreak the next morning, some of us were on the spot waiting, but this bird was evidently a late riser as one hour of daylight had passed before the bird called. The next moment the bird flew on to a small twig directly in front of us and Mr. Howe and I watched it give the next call—from a distance of about eight feet. It was undoubtedly the Rufous Bristle-bird, a bird I have observed during the last fifteen years in the Anglesea and Lorne districts. After breakfast Mr. Howe found the nest that he has referred to. Mr. D. J. Dickison was amongst the party who witnessed this find and saw the bird.—H. E. TARR, Middle Park, Vic., 6/6/47.

Migrating Honeyeaters.—Nomadic movements or seasonal migration of some species of honeyeaters are readily recognized by ornithologists, though evidently still little understood. As published records of field-observations augment our knowledge on the subject, however slightly, the following notes are submitted.

Whilst holidaying at Blackheath, 80 miles west of Sydney and the highest township on the Blue Mountains, during April-May 1946, I was interested in seeing daily numbers of honeyeaters passing along selected routes, following valleys and timbered ridges, flying above the tree-tops, resting momentarily before moving on again, but always travelling in a northerly direction. One morning, near the end of my stay, I decided to ascertain the species composition of the flocks and estimate their numbers. In a secluded convenient place under their apparently most-favoured migration route, and permitting a clear view of two prominent resting-places, I spent twenty minutes making identifications with the aid of a telescope and taking a census. In that time I saw clearly, as they perched for a few seconds on the two leafless tree-tops under view, the following: 48 Yellow-faced (*Meliphaga chrysops*), 39 White-naped (*Melithreptus lunatus*) and 3 Fuscous (*Meliphaga fusca*). There were possibly other species constituting the flock, but these three were the only ones identified. Assuming that I only recorded a tenth, at most, of those that actually passed by, one can safely estimate that approximately three thousand birds passed that spot every hour. For the two weeks I was in that district, I saw other well-used routes and the passage of birds appeared to be continuous along each of them during the hours of daylight. Just how long the movement continued before I arrived or after I left I cannot say, but it is safe to assume that the actual number of birds on migration would reach startling figures.

Other species of honeyeaters, common in that locality at the time, such as the White-eared (*Meliphaga leucotis*),

Yellow-winged (*Meliornis novæ-hollandiæ*), Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*) and Red Wattle-bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*) gave no indication of any desire to join their distant relatives passing through. — A. R. MCGILL, Arncliffe, N.S.W., 8/7/46.

Occurrence of the Red-tailed Tropic-bird in south-eastern Australia and Tasmania.—The Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaëton rubricaudus*) is a rare straggler to the south-eastern parts of the Australian continent and Tasmania. In the past, several writers have included New South Wales in the distribution of the species, generally without comment. In a list of the birds of the County of Cumberland (Sydney district, N.S.W.) A. J. North stated that the species could only be regarded as a straggler to that area, though no mention is made of any specimens recorded (*Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, vol. 3, 2nd ser., pt. 4, Mch. 22, 1889, p. 1780). Later North remarked (*Nests and Eggs*, vol. 3, pt. 5, Sep. 16, 1912, pp. 356-7)—“During the twenty-five years I have been connected with the institution [Australian Museum] no specimen has been received from New South Wales waters, and if it occurs at all, it can only be looked upon as a straggler. . . .”

A specimen from New South Wales, but otherwise without precise locality or date, is listed in the *Catalogue of Birds, British Museum*, 1898, vol. 26, p. 453, as having been received from the Australian Museum.

Recently I received from Alan Kimpton of Moor Creek, near Tamworth, New South Wales, parts (wing, central tail feather, and foot) of an adult Red-tailed Tropic-bird that he discovered on his father's property on June 17, 1945. Moor Creek is a small settlement five miles from Tamworth and is about 120 miles west of Port Macquarie on the coast. The locality is situated on the western slopes of the Great Dividing Range. The nearest breeding station of the Red-tailed Tropic-bird is Lord Howe Island, some 420 miles east of Moor Creek.

According to *The Northern Daily Leader*, a local newspaper, which recorded the incident on June 23, 1945—“It is considered likely that the bird reached the district as the result of the cyclonic winds which prevailed last week.”

A Red-tailed Tropic-bird was recorded from Guildford, Victoria, in January 1945 (*Wild Life*, vol. 7, no. 3, March 1945, p. 92). Guildford is 80 miles from the nearest coastline, which lies to the south. The only recorded Tasmanian occurrence seems to be that noted by Robert Hall from the Derwent Estuary, near Hobart, on February 25, 1917 (*Emu*, vol. 17, pt. 1, July 1917, p. 58).

The White-tailed Tropic-bird (*P. lepturus*) is also a rare straggler to eastern Australia. Records will be found in *The Emu* (vol. 38, 1938, pp. 12-14; and vol. 39, 1939, p. 32).

My thanks are accorded to K. H. McKnight for sending the newspaper cutting of the Moor Creek occurrence, and to Alan Kimpton for parts of the bird and details of its discovery.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 26/7/46.

Flight of the Ground Cuckoo-Shrike.—Descriptions of the flight of the Ground Cuckoo-Shrike (*Pteropodocys maxima*) by various ornithologists are not in agreement. Several observers have likened it to the undulating flight of the Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novæ-hollandiæ*), which, in my experience, is certainly a mistake. G. A. Keartland, quoted by A. J. North (*Rept. Horn Scient. Exped.*, p. 72, 1896) noted that *Pteropodocys* is easily distinguishable from *C. novæ-hollandiæ* by the "peculiar flight, which is generally in a straight line, accompanied by a short, rapid flutter of their wings and also by their shrill note." Warren B. Hitchcock (*S.A. Orn.*, vol. XVII, p. 15, 1944) describes the flight as "fast and even, with no undulations." John Gould (*Handbook, Birds of Australia*, vol. I, p. 78, 1865) stated that when the birds are flying "the white mark on the rump shows very conspicuously, and may be seen at a considerable distance." Edwin Ashby (*Trans. Royal Soc. South Austr.*, vol. XXV, p. 132, 1901) saw the species at Callion, W.A., and noted the calls uttered during flight as "most striking."

I cannot agree with North (*Nests and Eggs of Birds Found Breeding in Austr. and Tas.*, vol. I, p. 111, 1902) that the shrill notes "somewhat resemble" those of the Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*). Hitchcock describes that call as "chew-chew" or "chill-chill", not unlike a Greenshank's call." My own impressions of the flight of the Ground Cuckoo-Shrike are that it differs from that of the Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike in lacking the rising and falling motion, there being, instead, alternations of rapid flapping and periods of gliding with wings almost closed. The calls strike me as much like the plaintive notes given by month-old domestic chickens (*Gallus*) when they have been deserted by the mother hen.—ERHARD F. BOEHM, Sutherlands, S.A., 23/1/47.

The Knot on the Swan River Estuary.—The Knot (*Calidris canutus*) has not hitherto been recorded from the Swan River district, Western Australia, though it would be expected to occur, as G. C. Shortridge collected a specimen at Albany (*Ibis*, 1910, p. 156). Further, one might conclude from the rarity of skins in collections—the only other we know of being one in the National Museum, Melbourne, collected at Carnarvon on September 25, 1911—that the species is an uncommon one in Western Australia.

It was distinctly interesting, therefore, when, at Pelican Point on the Swan River estuary on December 22, 1946, we saw at least 50 individuals of a wader which we are

confident was this species. The birds were scattered about in small parties, of up to 20 birds, and mingled with Curlew-Sandpipers, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and Little Stints, only the last-named equalling them in numbers. The Knots could be compared in size with the Curlew-Sandpiper and the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, but were somewhat larger, of an upright carriage when on the alert, and rather shorter-legged than their companions. The rumps were wholly white, a slightly barred effect being noticeable in close view with binoculars. The breast had dark markings and there was a freckled effect on the neck and shoulders. A white eye-brow was evident. In flight the wings showed a white stripe. The beak was long and straight and of fairly robust form. The light was not good enough to see the colour of the legs, but they appeared to have a greenish tinge. We had the use of Zeiss x 12 and x 8 field-glasses in studying the birds at close range.

Reference to the field notes of one of us (D.L.S.) shows that the species was met with, but not satisfactorily identified at the time, during the observations of 1936 at Pelican Point. On February 4 one bird was seen, three on February 20 and others on September 29, October 21 (a small party) and October 22.

Though no Great Knots (*Calidris tenuirostris*) were present on this occasion we feel that recognition of both should be reasonably certain on size differences. The Knot, as already stated, falls into the medium-sized group which includes the Curlew-Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, being the biggest of this group. The Great Knot is so much larger that it completely dwarfs and towers over the Curlew-Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.—D. L. SERVENTY, V. N. SERVENTY and S. R. WHITE, Perth, W.A., 22/12/46.

Probable Nesting Records of the Chestnut Quilled Rock-Pigeon.—During the period from July 1944 to October 1945, I was stationed with the R.A.A.F. in north-eastern Arnhem Land, Australia. During one of my many walks in that area, I disturbed from its nest on the ground, a pigeon, the outstanding feature of which was its large red wattles. I could not find any indication of the species in my books, and on my return to Sydney some months later, mentioned it to Mr. A. R. McGill, who suggested that it might be the Chestnut Quilled Rock-Pigeon (*Petrophassa rufipennis*). This interested me, and on further reference to my notes, I found the description compared well with *Petrophassa rufipennis*, except for the red lobes or wattles. Mr. McGill requested me to give further particulars, in view of the fact that no previous record apparently has been published of its nests and eggs.

I observed this species on three occasions, and, since each

instance was some distance from the others and at various periods, I will describe each individually. My notes refer to the bird's being an unusually large pigeon, rich chestnut-brown in plumage with no other outstanding colour pattern. In contradistinction from the description given in Leach's *An Australian Bird Book*, there was no indication of white on the throat, or above and below the eye. The main feature, as previously mentioned, were the wattles, which I estimated to be $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness towards the bottom, and red in colour: the bill and feet were black. On each occasion only the nesting bird was observed, there being no indication of its mate being present in the immediate vicinity.

Nest no. 1. (April 1, 1945). This was so well camouflaged that I almost stepped on the bird before it flew off. It flew some twenty yards and immediately adopted the 'broken wing' attitude. Before it lured me away I made a careful note of the position of the nest and after my following the bird for a time it eventually flew off beyond sight. I returned to the nest, which contained two fairly-large pure white eggs. The nest itself was very shallow, composed of a small amount of grass and deposited amidst loose stones, on the uppermost point of a small stony ridge in light open forest. These ridges are found frequently in this area, usually the trailers of slightly higher ground, and consist of small stones and only a limited growth of grass.

Nest no. 2. (May 10, 1945). A similarly-plumaged bird was found nesting about a mile west of nest no. 1. This time, however, it did not adopt the 'broken wing' ruse, but flew off to a very high tree. The nest and eggs were identical with the earlier record and were again situated on the uppermost point of a ridge, running from open forest and opening out on to a well-grassed open patch. As with the case of nest no. 1, the bird did not fly off until I had almost trodden on the nest.

Nest no. 3. (May 13, 1945). This was situated approximately ten miles north-west of nest no. 2, and again placed on the uppermost point of a stony outcrop, but in heavier forest country. The nest and eggs were similar to those seen earlier, and in each case were completely open with no covering or near protection whatever. On approach the bird flew off to a high tree, but not before I was able to discern its plumage and features for identification. On this occasion I was accompanied by two natives and had great difficulty in restraining them from taking the eggs. Finally, by holding the eggs towards the sun I convinced them that they would soon be hatched. Shortly afterwards, however, they did eventually rob the nest and consume the eggs of a Masked Finch (*Poëphila personata*).—C. F. HUMPHRIES, Tennants Creek, N.T., 10/9/46.

White Quilled Pygmy-Goose.—In view of Mr. Jack Jones' recent paper in *The Emu* (vol. 46, p. 128) drawing attention to the absence of reports of this bird (*Nettapus coromandelianus*), the following sight record may be of interest.

On May 5, 1947, by courtesy of Mr. Colin Hill, of Bellevue Station, Mr. George Mack, now of the Queensland Museum, and the writer visited the lagoon at the homestead. Bellevue is on the south bank of the Brisbane River about 50 miles from Brisbane. The lagoon, about half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, has been maintained almost as a sanctuary for years. A smaller adjacent lagoon and the Brisbane River provide ample alternative areas for water birds. There are other large lagoons in the district.

Armed with a good telescope on a tripod and binoculars, we made some observations of the abundant bird life. Coots predominated, but Eastern Swamp hens, Moorhens, Jacanas and other swamp birds were well represented. Both Black Swans and Black Ducks were observed with downy young. Other ducks seen were parties of Plumed Tree-Ducks with occasional Grey Teal and White-eyed Ducks.

A party of seven White Quilled Pygmy-Geese was watched for some time in the morning as they swam around in company feeding. In the afternoon two separate pairs, each of male and female, and two solitary birds, were observed. Possibly these six were of the party seen in the morning, but they may easily have been different birds, as we only watched portion of the lagoon.

The dark line from the bill over the forehead, crown and nape seemed to continue down the hindneck as a fine dark midline. Conditions permitted a clear view of the white neck and side face with the circular dark eyes of the males and the short dark longitudinal line through the eyes of the females. Afloat, out on the lagoon, this eye line seemed the readiest means of distinguishing the sexes, though the females seemed greyer of neck and the males clearer white. When birds facing the observer reared up in the water and flapped their wings, the dark neck collar of the males and the clear unbarred breast of the females could be seen.

On two occasions when single birds made short low flights the rear white band and white outer patches of the wings depicted in Mr. Jones' flight diagrams were clearly noted. Strangely enough the dark wing ends beyond the white patches were not observed, due possibly to their merging into the dark background on these brief flights.—J. S. ROBERTSON, East Brisbane, Queensland, 12/5/47.

Birds Sheltering from Heat.—On January 20, 1947, the official shade temperature at Mildura was 108.2 degrees—the fifth occasion in ten days on which more than a century had been recorded. It was 123 degrees in the open and conditions were very unpleasant. Unfortunately I had to

make a business trip to Robin Vale during the afternoon and, as I expected, the drive of approximately 60 miles yielded little of interest as birds were very scarce.

However, as the car passed over a low culvert some 20 miles from Mildura a White-eared Honeyeater (*Meliphaga leucotis*) was flushed from the roadside, and at the next culvert a Bellbird (*Oreoica gutturalis*) made for the scrub nearby. It then occurred to me that both birds had probably been sheltering from the excessive heat, on the shady side of the culverts, so I decided to keep a closer watch for the remainder of the journey.

At the next culvert I slowed down and flushed five Chestnut-tailed Tits (*Acanthiza uropygialis*). On the next occasion three Black-backed Magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) clustering around the small concrete opening were disturbed from their shady slumbers. A Bellbird rose from the next and two Galahs (*Kakatoë roseicapilla*) were resting under another further along the road. A few miles to the west of Euston five more Black-backed Magpies were grouped in the shade of the last culvert from which birds were flushed.

It was interesting to note that on each occasion the birds were at the northern or shady entrance to the small culverts and that, except for a few Ravens (*Corvus coronoides*) and a number of Galahs, no other birds were encountered en route.—NORMAN J. FAVALORO, Mildura, Vic., 30/1/47.

Association of Bird with Tree.—Mr. A. H. Chisholm's query—in his notes on 'Birds of the Gilbert Diary', part II, *Emu*, vol. 44, p. 198—regarding the association of the Grey Jumper or Apostle Bird (*Struthidea cinerea*) with the cypress pine, having evoked no comment, I would like to mention that over a period of six years, viz. 1938 to 1944, I had opportunity to observe these birds in the district lying between Jerilderie, N.S.W., and Cobram, on the Victorian side of the Murray. At no time did I find the bird away from native pine. The first group frequented a very dense pine belt, and several old nests were found. This was in August.

Some 20 miles south, at Lalaly, on a pine-covered knoll, nests containing eggs were found in November. In September of one year, a sizable flock was observed in a mixed brush—pine and eucalypt—but the Grey Jumpers showed a marked preference for the pines. Although the country was well explored during the period mentioned, no bird was seen within a dozen miles of the Murray in this locality—and there is a fine patch of pines on the river at Booma-noomana South pine reserve.

The writer left Cobram in October 1944—a time of extreme drought—and it is interesting to note that within a few weeks one of our members, Mr. N. K. Hallebone, then of Cobram, wrote to tell of a small flock of Apostle Birds

on the south side of the river, between Cobram and Tocumwal, on the Koonoomoo road. There are no pines just there, and the birds began a nest in a yellow box tree, but disappeared before it was completed. No doubt extreme drought conditions on the Riverina plains influenced the birds to visit our side. During their stay, Mr. Hallebone recorded his interest in seeing three gregarious birds foraging in company, namely, the Apostle Bird, the White-winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*) and the Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*).—GORDON BINNS, Ouyen, Victoria, 29/10/46.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters in a Heavily-forested Area.—This locality—Smith's Brook, which is about 12 miles south-east of Manjimup, Western Australia—is in an area of heavy karri, jarrah and marri forest, with some ring-barked and partly-cleared farms, but no heathland nearer than 23 or 24 miles due west. Therefore it was with great surprise that I noted an irruption of Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters (*Gliciphila melanops*) in March, 1945. Karri and marri trees were in bloom and other honeyeaters visited the area also. Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters appeared in increasing numbers in March and were very numerous during April and May. From June to July numbers decreased and few or none remained at the end of July. These birds fed in the flowering tops of the karri and marri trees, even in the topmost branches, and their notes were loud and incessant. No nesting activity came under notice. The birds roosted at night mostly in the karri re-growth saplings. A specimen was taken on May 5 to make absolutely sure of the identification.

How regular or general may be this habit of the Tawny-crowned Honeyeater of forsaking its usual open-country habitat and invading the forest at the time of eucalypt flowering, I do not know. It is of interest to add that another observation of a similar nature was made at the same time in another area. Dr. D. L. Serventy informs me that on April 8, 1945, he and Mr. C. F. H. Jenkins took Mr. A. H. Chisholm of Melbourne on an outing south of Perth, and near Pinjarra they were surprised to observe a Tawny-crowned Honeyeater in a flowering marri tree. Other honeyeaters present were Spinebills and Brown Honeyeaters, with Dusky Miners also in the vicinity. It was lightly-timbered country, but too wooded ordinarily to expect the Tawny-crowned species there. However, the open heath was not far away.—H. O. WEBSTER, Smith's Brook, W.A., 16/10/46.

Occurrence of the Crested Pigeon near Sydney, N.S.W.—While visiting Mr. Edward Hirst at Ingleburn, some twenty miles south-west of Sydney, in June 1940, I noticed several Crested Pigeons (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) about the homestead.

Mr. Hirst told me that these birds had been liberated from his aviaries. The captive birds bred so freely that he was in the habit of releasing numbers of them from time to time.

In recent years odd birds have been seen in the district by residents; also by P. A. Gilbert, and by E. Hosking who noted one on April 10, 1946. The species normally inhabits the inland parts of Australia, particularly so in New South Wales. An observer seeing the birds in the wild anywhere near Sydney (coastal) would naturally assume that they were stragglers from west of the Great Dividing Range. Superficially, such records would appear to be of great interest because the Crested Pigeon has never been listed as occurring in the County of Cumberland (Sydney district). However, it is highly probable that the birds observed are of the stock liberated by Mr. Hirst, or their progeny. The records, therefore, lose some of their significance. Perhaps, in the years to come the Crested Pigeon may become well established in the Sydney district. Possibly, like many exotic species introduced by the Acclimatisation Society towards the latter part of last century, principally between 1860 and 1880, it may die out, not finding conditions to its liking.

I have placed the above facts on record so that future workers will view the presence of the species in the County of Cumberland in true perspective. What actually prompted me to do so was the sight of a Crested Pigeon at Lane Cove on October 25, 1946. I was observing birds soon after sunrise when what I momentarily thought was an Indian Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*, subsp. *suratensis*) flew into a large dead tree. Something about its shape and flight did not agree with that species. A sight through field-glasses revealed a Crested Pigeon. The bird did not tarry, but soon flew off in an easterly direction, its wings making a loud whirring noise, which is characteristic of the species. Lane Cove is a suburb on the outskirts of Sydney and is some twenty-two miles north-east of Ingleburn.

Other birds liberated by Mr. Hirst about 1940 were English Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*): a pair of these bred under the verandah of his house in September 1940. He also freed some 'Cinnamon-winged Doves', the identity of which I did not check at the time, but which I think were Senegal or Little Brown Doves (*Streptopelia senegalensis*).—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 30/10/46.

Feeding Territory in the Singing Honeyeater.—I have always considered this species rare in this locality. Except for one pair, which could generally be found in a restricted area some 200 yards from the house, there are no other residents on my farm: therefore I was rather surprised to hear one singing in the garden during the first week of

September, 1946. This bird was to be heard every day from morning till night—generally from a rose which was flowering prolifically. Whether or not it roosted elsewhere I do not know.

I often found the bird eating the aphides which were very thick on some of the young shoots of the rose. It took strong exception to a Brown Honeyeater which started singing in the garden. On September 17 it spent considerable time trying to drive off two strange Singing Honeyeaters which must have been attracted by its own notes. However, by the end of the day it appeared to be in undisputed possession of the garden and I did not see the other birds again.

The garden bird stayed with or visited us regularly every day until the second week in October, when it disappeared. This disappearance coincided with the arrival of Wattle-birds in the garden, looking for figs, and was possibly a direct result of their appearance. In past years there has always been a pair of Wattle-birds nesting in pine trees close to the house, but these trees had been cut down last summer and the birds had been forced to seek a new nesting ground.

The Singing Honeyeater has been back a few times since, and was even heard singing for a short time on November 11, in the rose-bush—which was no longer blooming—but generally it came for a short period, in the evening, into the wattles some fifty yards away, and did not sing continuously as it had done when in possession of the garden. Whether or not the bird had a mate I do not know, but from its behaviour it would appear to have been defending the garden only for its food value. If that be so, it might explain the behaviour of some other Australian honeyeaters which sing in a virile manner while feeding during the breeding season. — ANGUS ROBINSON, Coolup, W.A., 11/12/46.

Nankeen Night-Herons 'come to town'.—Not more than 200 yards from the Maitland railway station is a fine old home known as 'The Hermitage'—the home of the Scobie family for a long time. Last December (1945), in response to a telephone call from Mr. W. J. Enright I went there to investigate the presence of some 'unusual birds' which had taken up residence in two very large old Moreton Bay figs fronting the house.

They turned out to be Nankeen Night-Herons (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and there were about seven birds. Miss Scobie informed me that the birds made a great noise in the trees just at evening, when they apparently flew off to swampy ground at the back of the South Maitland railway yards to obtain their food. This area extends for some miles out through East Greta and Kurri Kurri and is known as Wentworth Swamps.

During the next few weeks the birds increased in numbers until in early March there were about 100 birds there. I have seen Night-Herons on the Paterson River, north-east of Maitland, but have never before seen them come right into the town in such large numbers.

The large colony which has been living on what is known by some people as inner Cabbage Tree island, situate well up in the upper reaches of Port Stephens, was disturbed during the war by smoke bombs landing on the island. This may have caused the birds temporarily to desert the place and seek new localities. It is problematical if the Maitland birds are some from Port Stephens, or some of the Paterson River colony, as extensive bush fires swept through the Paterson River area, completely devastating the birds' accustomed haunts.

They all departed from 'The Hermitage' early in April, 1946, and to all accounts there were well over 100 birds. I have just been informed by Miss Scobie that early in December this year (1946) the birds have started to take up residence again. It will be interesting to note if they reach the same numbers and remain a similar length of time. They apparently do not fear closely-settled areas, as I remember a pair that camped all day in a pine tree in that famous old home 'The Rangers' right next to the Cremorne tram-line. The tree was a rather weather-worn and open Norfolk Island pine and the birds could be seen easily, by passers-by, from the footpath. Even at that time—back in 1914—there were many houses around and few large trees close at hand. It is certainly curious why some birds prefer inhabited areas when they could without much difficulty live among bushland.—A. F. D'OMBRAIN, Newcastle, N.S.W., 19/12/46.

Nesting of the Banded Stilt in 1946.—The Banded Stilt (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) again attempted to breed this year (1946) at Lake Grace. About the beginning of August, the birds were observed to take to the small island (mentioned in my article in *The Emu*, vol. 46, 1946, p. 156) early in the morning. They were present on the island only one day and then left. On account of the wet season, which had in many respects been similar to that of 1945, I thought it very likely that the Stilts would again breed. Mrs. B. E. Cannon had written to me earlier, saying—"The scouts arrived, later followed by a large flock of birds, but they are not nesting yet. Will write again when they do."

It appears from later observations that the morning the Stilts were on the island they *had* commenced to lay, as, on August 15, I visited the island and found that the birds had scooped out about 500 nests and had laid a fair number of eggs, of which only three remained unbroken. These were in the water a foot deep. The remainder had been

broken and eaten, presumably by crows. The birds were still on the lake feeding. They were noticed each day, at least a mile out. They did not, however, go near the former rookery. No water samples were taken from the lake, but the water was very salty.—I. C. CARNABY, Nedlands, W.A., 2/12/46.

The Orange-bellied Parrakeet.—On November 2, 1918, I discovered eight pairs of this bird, *Neophema chrysogaster*, nesting in the main stems of gum trees, at the south end of Macquarie Harbour, Tasmania. The trees were all green and had small holes in the trunks that were just suited to the birds. I examined one nest site and found, inside the entrance, in an indentation in the rotten wood on the 'floor', six moderately-round white eggs. I lived about three miles from this nesting place and was therefore able to keep it under observation. The birds nested there for six years to my knowledge—from 1918 to 1923.

The note of this species, when the bird is flushed and rises, is 'zeet', repeated a number of times—not less than six at a time—and is continued until the birds have attained a good height. Then they fly off at a fast rate, as they are strong on the wing. As an aid to identification, it is to be noted that the whole upper surface is deep green. The centre of the abdomen has a large spot of rich orange. The forehead band is not conspicuous.

These birds are gregarious and move about in small flocks of from 10 to 50 birds. Their principal habitat is the coastal areas of this State, but where such areas are subject to fires, the birds do not remain. All the headlands and islets that are clothed in grasses of the *Poa* type, especially *Poa Billardieri*, are favoured by the birds. A great attraction is *Deyeuxia*, and berries, such as those of *Coprosma*, and in fact most other fruits and seeds, attract them. I have flushed the species from the bull kelp, which the birds eat at a certain stage of its decomposition and when it is evidently palatable to them. Incidentally, the White Cockatoo (*Kakatoë galerita*) also eats this bull kelp at the same stage of decomposition.

Of the inland areas frequented by the Orange-bellied Parrakeet very few are more than 40 miles from the coast and most are much less. In some cases the *Poa* grasses reach from the coast to these areas; in others, like the Hampshire Hills and Guildford Junction and Middlesex Plains districts, they are hemmed in with forests.

The species nests in the coastal areas, chiefly, where the trees have sufficient hollows to accommodate them near their feeding places, but, failing to find these in the coastal tracts, they move inland to breed. When the breeding season is over they return to the coastal areas for the winter.

Tasmania has just as mild a climate as Victoria in winter, and I cannot see that the birds are compelled to migrate to Victoria on account of shortage of food, as is sometimes alleged, for there is ample to supply their needs in Tasmania. I have walked down 25 miles or more of the west coast of Tasmania on several occasions in winter and have flushed *Neophema chrysogaster* on every occasion. I have come to the conclusion that there, at least, they winter in the southern State.—K. B. HINSBY, Hobart, Tas., 7/3/47.

Feeding of Butcher-birds.—On August 25, 1946, at Bilbarin, Western Australia, I was attracted by the scolding of a Brown Honeyeater (*Gliciphila indistincta*) and saw a young Grey Butcher-bird (*Cracticus torquatus*) eating something which I could not at first identify. The Butcher-bird persisted in wedging its prey into forks and crevices and tearing at it, and would not drop it even when hard pressed. When, at a third attempt, I drove the Butcher-bird off, nothing remained but a few feathers and a little skin of a fledgeling wedged tightly into the jagged end of a small dead branch which was lying on the ground. Apparently the Butcher-bird had captured and eaten a young Brown Honeyeater. I was amazed at the speed with which the Butcher-bird found suitable forks into which it could wedge its prey. The Honeyeater ignored my attempts to alarm the Butcher-bird and scolded until, separated from the remains of its prey, the Butcher-bird flew right away.

This incident called to mind an observation which I had made some years previously (November 20, 1938) on the Peel Estate when I saw a Grey Butcher-bird carrying a large insect which proved to be a phasmid (*Podacanthus* sp.). The bird wedged the insect into the splintered end of a broken branch and tore off the wings, and probably the legs. One of three young birds which were in attendance was then offered the abdomen, anterior end first, which it took and quickly swallowed. The thorax was then fed to the young bird, posterior end first.

The first of these incidents was discussed at a meeting of Western Australian ornithologists in Perth and Dr. D. L. Serventy pointed out that the utilization of a jagged branch or a fork of a tree as a vice placed *Cracticus* among the avian tool users. The Satin Bower-bird (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*), which uses a wad as a brush in bower painting, and the Galapagos Finch (*Cactospiza pallida*), which uses a small twig or *Opuntia* spine for extracting insects from crevices, are primary tool users, whilst the Butcher-bird, like the Pacific Gull (*Gabianus pacificus*), which breaks shells by dropping them on hard surfaces, is a secondary tool user.

While the subject of the feeding habits of *Cracticus* was under discussion, I asked whether any of the observers

present had ever observed a Butcher-bird's larder. None had, so I ventured a further query as to whether the larder-forming habit of Butcher-birds had ever been properly authenticated.

Investigating this second query, I found that the writers of *The Handbook of British Birds*—Witherby, Jourdain, Ticehurst and Tucker—regard the larder-forming habit as fairly general among the British Laniidae. Of the Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*), for instance, after mentioning that prey is frequently impaled on thorns or barbed wire, they write—"Sometimes particular bushes or parts of a hedge are used repeatedly, forming so-called 'larders' where surplus food is placed and often left uneaten, but this habit is inconstant: apparently most frequent in the breeding season prior to incubation and formed chiefly if not exclusively by the male, but autumn larders are recorded".

Whistler (*Popular Handbook of Indian Birds*), discussing the Rufous-backed Shrike (*Lanius schach*), describes the larder habit in some detail, whilst Evans (*Cambridge Natural History*) records the habit in a sub-family of the Laniidae, but of *Cracticus* says only that it impales its prey after the fashion of a shrike.

General references to the larder habit are fairly frequent in Australian literature on *Cracticus*, but definite cases are also recorded. F. E. Howe (*vide Mathews' Birds of Australia*, vol. 10, p. 389), for instance, makes reference to a 'storehouse' containing the remains of two birds, and Frank Littler (*loc. cit.*, p. 392) records a very similar case, adding—"He does not kill them, but impales them alive." Such references, however, are not commonplace and more detailed records of larder formation in the Australian butcher-birds would be of interest.—E. H. SEDGWICK, Caron, W.A., 20/2/47.

Little Pied Cormorants nesting at Moonee Ponds, Vic.—When Mr. Jack Jones telephoned me one morning in early September, 1946, and told me that a small colony of Little Pied Cormorants (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*) was nesting at Moonee Ponds, I searched through notes I have been making of records around Melbourne and found that the Little Pied Cormorant was apparently nesting in Melbourne for the first time. Colonies that nested on Mud Island and in Western Port Bay, many years ago, were the only previous records of cormorants nesting anywhere near the city. Cormorants are usually very shy birds and nest in isolated areas far from the haunts of man. It seems a coincidence that in early September, 1945, this same species nested in the Brisbane Botanic Gardens (*Emma*, vol. 45, page 298). The nesting birds in both cases had overcome their trait of suspicion and nested in full view of hundreds that

passed daily through the Gardens at Brisbane and the park at Moonee Ponds. Whereas the birds at Brisbane built in a weeping willow tree, the cormorants at Moonee Ponds built in a large clump of bamboo.

Moonee Ponds is a northern suburb about four miles from the city. It was on one of the islands in the lake at Queens Park that the birds nested. Cormorant nesting, no doubt, is governed by the abundance of their food supply, and the lake seemed to provide ample for the needs of the breeding birds. They just 'flopped', rather than flew, from their nests into the lake, and after two or three quick dives were back to their nests again. The bamboos were leaning out over the water in a thick clump and provided ample cover and formed an ideal situation for nesting. Twelve nests could be seen in occupation, some low in the clump and others near the top of the leaning bamboos. Through friends visiting the park from time to time I learnt that nesting had continued all through the following four months and was still in progress at the time of writing.

I was very interested to note, on a recent visit, that most of the breeding birds had a rich chestnut plumage on the throat and under-parts that are normally white. This variant has been mentioned twice in recent numbers of *The Emu*—one, an adult bird, at Brisbane (vol. 45, page 298) and one noted in Safety Bay, Western Australia, by Mr. Angus Robinson (vol. 45, page 152). On a visit to Queens Park on February 9, 1946, I took particular notice of the plumage of the breeding birds. Only five nests, all on the top part of the bamboos, were in occupation and on four of them the breeding bird had the chestnut plumage. The other bird was the usual black and white of the Little Pied Cormorant. The mate of this bird had the chestnut plumage, for it flew to the edge of the nest during the time I was there and after about an hour took over the brooding from the normal plumaged bird.

Two other birds, apparently mates of two of the other breeding birds, were fishing part of the time in the lake. On two occasions these birds were noted returning to their mates with sticks up to 18 inches long, which, by all appearances, they had procured from the bottom of the lake. Each stick was accepted after much neck stretching by the sitting bird and added to the nest. Other cormorants in normal plumage were resting in the trees nearby. One was definitely a young bird, as large as the adult, and the neck and throat feathers were black and the chest and abdomen were a dark grey colour.

On February 2, 1947, I noticed a chestnut-plumaged bird feed two young birds on a low bough on a neighbouring island. The bright lustre of the black plumage of the young birds showed up the dull reddish-black plumage of the

parent bird, just as much as their glistening white underparts showed up against the chestnut plumage of the adult bird's under-parts.

Having been unmolested this season, it was hoped that these birds will nest again at Queens Park, but this possibility has been rather lessened by the news that the lake is to be drained for a clean-out and that some of the trees on the islands are to be replaced by more ornamental shrubs.—ROY WHEELER, Windsor, Vic., 14/2/47.

A Record of the Short-tailed Shearwater from Western Australia.—Though *Puffinus tenuirostris* has been recorded for Western Australian waters in some early lists, W. B. Alexander has shown (in *The Emu*, vol. 17, 1917, p. 42) that this was due to an early misconception by Gould as to the identity of the bird he subsequently described as *Puffinus carneipes*. *P. tenuirostris* is a south-eastern Australian species, breeding in Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia, and previously has not been identified from Western Australia. I am now in a position, however, to report its occurrence in our waters.

Early in November, 1946, I happened to be in the Hoptoun district and, on November 5, whilst walking along the ocean beach east of Mason's Point, I picked up the remains of a mutton-bird which to my surprise I found to be the common eastern States *P. tenuirostris*. This beach is about five miles south-west, in a direct line, from Starvation Boat Harbour, marked Bedford Harbour on some maps, the southern terminal of the no. 1 rabbit-proof fence. Unfortunately the remains were incomplete, though comparatively recent, and consisted of the tail and legs, with some of the back plumage. The measurements were as follows: tail, 83 mm.; tarsus, 51.9 mm.; middle toe and claw, 65.5 mm. The tarsus was dark-brown with a purple tone. Though scanty, the details given allow of confusion with no other Australian species.

That *P. tenuirostris* should be found at times in these waters must occasion little surprise, as birds from the South Australian breeding islands no doubt forage widely westwards over the Great Australian Bight in the same manner as does *P. carneipes* in an eastward direction from its own breeding area in the Archipelago of the Recherche. The south-east coast of Western Australia has been comparatively little investigated in the past and further records may be expected in the future. There is a specimen of *P. tenuirostris* in the Western Australian Museum, the locality of which is given as 'At Sea, Great Australian Bight'. It was received on March 23, 1922, from Mr. Harold Kershaw, but, other than that it was taken on the s.s. *Karoola*, I have been unable to ascertain the exact date or locality.—D. L. SERVENTY, Perth, W.A., 2/12/46.

Notes on Penguins.—Studies on the Yellow-eyed Penguin (*Megadyptes antipodes*) have now extended over eleven years. That sustained observations for a long period are worth continuing may be illustrated by the following records.

The first concerns a case of inbreeding. As young birds rarely returned to their colony of hatching, the possibility of finding such a case seemed remote. This was rendered even more unlikely when it was discovered that only a small percentage of fledgelings which were seen again reached breeding age in the observational area. More rarely still were two young from the same clutch noted in separate places. That two should appear in one place and be of opposite sex was still more remote. That such a pair should mate would seem most unlikely. In spite of all this the seemingly impossible has happened.

In the eleventh year of study a brother and sister, from the same clutch four years earlier, have mated. Two eggs were laid: one produced a chick which was eventually reared.

Cases of inbreeding in the wild state are rare in birds. Nice (Nice, M. M., 1937, 'Studies in the Life History of the Song Sparrow', *Trans. Linn. Soc. of New York*, vol. 4, I-VI, 1-247, New York) records two of brother and sister—Downy Woodpeckers (*Dryobates pubescens*) and Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*), and one of father and daughter—Clobes' Swallows (*Hirundo r. rustica*). Kendeigh's evidence (Kendeigh, S. C., 1941, 'Territorial and Mating Behavior of the House Wren', III, *Biol. Mon.*, vol. 18, 1-120, Illinois) of failure to find a single case of inbreeding among House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) after 26 years' detailed observation is of considerable interest in view of the foregoing. Inbreeding, therefore, is not an important factor in the mating relationships of *Megadyptes*.

The second record concerns the length of time the retention of mates has been maintained. To date one pair has been mated for eight consecutive years and another for seven years. As against this some birds have had a different matrimonial status each year. From 166 cases the 'divorce' rate in *Megadyptes* is 18 per cent., so that some factor other than mere chance has been the cause of the continuation of the afore-mentioned bonds. It may be personal attachment.

Finally, of 16 birds with which I commenced work eleven years ago, only one is left. Of 38 others brought into the study a year later, 10 are left. As *Megadyptes* normally breeds when three years old, it means that the two groups mentioned are at least 14 and 13 years old respectively. Without going into details, it also signifies that *Megadyptes*, as far as is known at present, may live to between 20 and 30 years.—L. E. RICHDALÉ, Kew, Dunedin, N.Z., 6/3/47.

Bower Painting by the Regent Bower-bird.—On October 24, 1946, whilst I was traversing dense brush, my attention was arrested by a peculiar low chattering, which was entirely new to my 'vocabulary' of bird voices. Investigation revealed a beautiful male Regent Bower-bird (*Sericulus chrysocephalus*), in fully adult plumage, attending to his bower. He permitted open observation from a distance of eight feet without showing undue alarm.

The bower was well concealed amongst a thick growth of fern and lawyer vines and was considerably less than half the size of that constructed by the Satin Bower-bird (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*). It consisted of two parallel, triangular-shaped walls of fine sticks and twigs, placed $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart. One wall was 6 inches in height, whilst the opposing one was but half that size. There was no arching effect of the walls and the platform of sticks and twigs upon which adornments are deposited (as seen in bowers of the Satin species) was lacking. The avenue created by the two walls faced east to west. The adornments consisted of twelve black, glossy berries, about twice the size of a pea, together with a single broken shell of a land snail. These were deposited in the avenue between the bower walls.

I observed the brilliant male for quite some time, during which he moved through the avenue of the bower and toyed with the adornments. Occasionally, he would pick up a twig and place it in one of the walls or re-arrange some of the others. Whilst at the bower, he uttered a characteristic low chattering, which reminded me strongly of that emitted by the acclimatized Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) whilst 'reminiscing'. Later, he flew off into the surrounding brush.

A careful examination of the walls of the bower revealed a dry, yellowish substance, which adhered to the sticks and twigs and which looked like dried 'paint'.

Next morning at 9 o'clock the male was again in attendance at the bower. As I approached, a female flew off, but the male was just as trustful as previously. I particularly noticed that he pecked at the sticks of the larger wall, or, rather, that he wiped the extremity of his bill all over the sticks with a pecking action. I could clearly distinguish a small piece of greenish material held between the mandibles towards the extremity of the bill. Later, he picked up a fresh supply of the material from the floor of the avenue and continued operations as previously. Next he turned his attentions to the less robust wall and applied a little of the material. A little later he flew off, apparently to procure a fresh supply of material for further painting.

Close scrutiny of the walls disclosed that the upper ends of the sticks and twigs were coated with a wet mixture of saliva and a macerated, pea-green vegetable matter.

Several days later the bird unfortunately deserted the bower before further important facts and observations could be determined. Apparently it resented interference.

It has been quite a well-known fact for some years that the Satin Bower-bird performs this unique art of bower-painting. Quite recently, bower-painting was also recorded for the Spotted Bower-bird (*Chlamydera maculata*). My observation definitely proves that a third member of the family of bower-building birds of Australia performs bower-painting. I venture to state that if adequate observations were carried out with all of our bower-birds, we would reveal that each species indulges in this practice.—M. T. GODDARD, Dorrigo, N.S.W., 23/12/46.

Prolific Breeding around Melbourne.—Following on the nesting of Little Pied Cormorants (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*) at Moonee Ponds and Red-necked Avocets (*Recurvirostra novæ-hollandiæ*) breeding at Little River and at Altona (*Emu*, vol. 46, p. 243), both new records for around Melbourne, other records of interest occurred also. Mr. H. E. Tarr noted Nankeen Night-Herons (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) nesting in Queens Park, Moonee Ponds, early in 1947. Although the Nankeen Night-Heron has always been found in numbers about Melbourne, this is apparently the first actual record of the birds breeding there. On page 962 of Campbell's *Nests and Eggs* is a vague reference to one other nesting record which reads—"Overhanging a creek about seven miles from Melbourne, it is stated that a solitary nest and eggs of this nocturnal species were taken not many seasons ago."

Favourite roosting haunts of this bird about Melbourne are at the Botanic Gardens, Zoological Gardens, Queens Park, and along the River Yarra at Kew and Heidelberg. With the coming of spring most of these birds leave for their rookeries up north, to breed, and the autumn and winter finds them back again in their usual numbers with the birds of the year in their speckled plumage. But this year, no doubt attracted by the cormorants' breeding, as water-birds often nest in company, three pairs of Night-Herons nested at Queens Park. Two nests were on the island in a tree almost overhanging the small cormorant rookery, and the third nest was in a large elm near the south edge of the lake. Three young were hatched in this last nest on about February 7.

White-headed Stilts (*Himantopus leucocephalus*) nested in the Altona, Werribee and Little River districts. These birds have previously bred in those districts, but not in the numbers of this season.

Amongst the ducks, grebes and other water-fowl the season was a very prolific one. Grey Teal (*Querquedula*

gibberifrons) and Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*) nested in the Little River district and at Fishermen's Bend. Hardheads (*Nyroca australis*) and Black Duck reared several clutches. Mr. C. E. Bryant told me that several Hoary-headed Grebes (*Podiceps poliocephalus*) nested at the latter place, although many eggs were destroyed, apparently by wavelets washing them from the nests.

On the 'Pit' at Fishermen's Bend on November 10, 1946, a pair of Hardheads was noted with a large brood of 19 ducklings. On December 14 the ducks were still there and a careful count revealed 18 well-grown young. On January 25, 1947, no Hardheads were seen on the 'Pit', although a number was noted on the Butts Pond a few hundred yards away. Other clutches at the Bend were two of Hardheads and one of Black Duck, each with a clutch of 9. Mr. Bryant had under observation at the Bend the nest of a Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis*) containing the abnormal number of 10 eggs. At Little River a nest of the Little Grassbird (*Megalurus gramineus*) was found containing 5 eggs. This bird is noticeably on the increase at Fishermen's Bend for, although no nests were found, their numbers indicated a splendid breeding season.

Although the Banded Stilts (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) were in large numbers at Altona and a small flock was at Little River throughout the season, no attempt by these birds was made to breed, although we did have hopes. The main body of birds left Altona in middle December, much earlier than they left the previous season. Silver Gulls (*Larus novæ-hollandiæ*) nested again at Altona, in September, 1946. Approximately 300 pairs were nesting, but removal of the piles of gypsum on which they nested cut the numbers down considerably as the season went on. Breeding was still going on during my last visit last month, as many as three nests to a pile of gypsum.—ROY WHEELER, Windsor, 14/2/47.

Correction: In my 'Northern Territory Bird Notes' (*The Emu*, vol. 46, pp. 369 and 370) notes on two species, *Pardalotus melanocephalus* and *P. rubricatus*, appeared, through a misunderstanding, under the heading of *P. melanocephalus*.

P. melanocephalus was observed only at Larrimah (twice), Batchelor and Darwin. This was the species recorded as appearing at Batchelor in force on March 12, 1945, and which was noted shortly afterwards at Darwin.

P. rubricatus was observed only at Larrimah, Strange-ways River and Elsey Reach. This was the species recorded as nesting at Larrimah, where Red-browed Pardalotes are frequent.—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Caron, W.A., 12/5/47.