

In the Australian Museum Collection (*ex* E. P. Ramsay's 'Dobroyde' collection) are three specimens of the Yellow-tailed Pardalote with the following data—

No. 0.23414, adult male, 'Murray River, Victoria, 1866', and, in Ramsay's handwriting, 'Received from McCoy. One of his types = *P. leadbeateri* of Ramsay. The name *P. leadbeateri* withdrawn, E.P.R.'

No. 0.22873, adult male, 'Junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers, 1866'.

No. 0.17477, male, juv., 'Murray River, January, 1866'.

These specimens may be considered syntypes of *Pardalotus xanthopygus* McCoy. The type locality can be more precisely stated as 'near Swan Hill, junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers, northwest Victoria', instead of 'northwest Victoria', as in the *R.A.O.U. Checklist*, 2nd. ed., 1926, p. 92, and *Systema Avium Australasianarum*, pt. 2, July, 1930, p. 723.

My thanks to J.S.P. Ramsay of Woolwich, Sydney, for making his father's diaries available, and for permission to publish the foregoing extracts.

A Note on William Swainson

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General news, shipping lists, and advertisements in early newspapers contain much of historical interest in the field of ornithology, but the task of locating such items is so tedious and exacting as to deter all except the most enthusiastic historian. The technical descriptions of quite a number of new Australian birds first appeared in the newspapers of the day. (See Gilbert P. Whitley, 'New Species in Newspapers,' *The Emu*, vol. 38, pt. 1, July, 1938, pp. 63-4.) Recently, while referring to the *Sydney Gazette* of February 24, 1831, I noticed the following advertisement, inserted by W.[illiam] Swainson—

Birdskins, Shells, etc., wanted.

The undersigned wishes to establish correspondence with Persons in different parts of the Colony, for the regular supply of well preserved Native Birdskins, Quadrupeds, Insects, and Shells. He will either undertake their sale, or purchase them at a fair valuation made by two parties, the money immediately paid, as may be desired; goods sent out, or any other remuneration adopted. The following Birds are immediately wanted, in half dozens or more:—Native Turkey, Green Pigeon, Green Dove, Wonga-wonga, Bronze Pigeon, Emu Bird, White Hawk, Laughing Jackall, Blue-bill, Butcher Bird, Diamond Bird, Thunder Bird, Red-start, Fan-tail, Dish-washer, Red Diamond Bird, Magpie, Satin, Black, and White Cockatoos, Ground

Parrots, all sorts, Rosehill, King, and Blue Mountain Parrots. Letters or parcels, with an invoice, addressed to W. Swainson, Esq., care of Messrs Brown, Danson, Willis & Co., King's Arms Yard, London, will be safely delivered and immediately acknowledged.

The same advertisement also appeared in the three following issues of the *Sydney Gazette*—numbers 1938, 1939, 1940.

Some comments on the common, popular, or vernacular (vulgar would have been the term in Swainson's day) names used in the advertisement are expedient.

The 'Native Turkey' is the Brush Turkey (*Alectura lathamii*). The 'Green Pigeon' probably refers to the fruit-pigeon (*Ptilinopus*); Swainson described, as a variety, the species *regina* of that genus in 1825. The 'Green Dove' is most likely the Green-winged Pigeon (*Chalcophaps chrysoclora*). 'Wonga-wonga' is the Wonga Pigeon (*Leucosarcia melanoleuca*). 'Bronze Pigeon' is no doubt one of the bronzewing pigeons (*Phaps* sp.). The 'Emu Bird' is the tiny Emu-Wren (*Stipiturus malachurus*) and not the Emu (*Dromaius novæ-hollandiæ*) as might be supposed. Emus in lots of 'half dozens or more' would be somewhat of an embarrassment to all concerned. When speaking of the Emu-Wren, George Caley* remarks—'This bird is called *Emu Bird* by the Colonists' (Vigors and Horsfield, *op. cit.*, p. 224). The 'White Hawk' is the white phase of the Grey Goshawk (*Astur novæ-hollandiæ*). The 'Laughing Jackall' is either a mistake in type-setting for the Kookaburra or Laughing Jackass (*Dacelo gigas*), or an example of 'Swainson's curse'—errors and misprints. 'Blue-bill' may refer to one of the wood-swallows (*Artamus*), certainly not the Blue-billed Duck (*Oxyura australis*) which was not described until 1837. 'Diamond Bird' is perhaps the Spotted Diamond-bird (*Pardalotus punctatus*). The 'Thunder Bird' is the Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*); it is still widely known as the thunder bird because of its habit of breaking into song immediately after a sudden loud noise. The 'Red-start' seems to be the Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura rufifrons*). The name 'Fan-tail' is rather indefinite. Perhaps the Grey Fantail (*R. flabellifera*) is meant, or, maybe, the Willie Wagtail (*R. leucophrys*). The 'Dish-washer' is the Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura inquieta*). The

*George Caley was a natural history collector, with a sound knowledge of botany and zoology, in the employ of Sir Joseph Banks. He came to Australia in 1800 and lived at Parramatta, near Sydney, until 1810, when he returned to England. His private collection of bird specimens was acquired by the Linnean Society of London and was partly catalogued by Vigors and Horsfield in 1827 (*Trans. Linn. Soc. (London)*, vol. 25, 1827, pp. 170-331). Full use of Caley's field notes was made by Vigors and Horsfield. An exhaustive and important paper on Caley's activities appeared in the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society*—'George Caley: His Life and Work,' by R. Else Mitchell (vol. 26, pt. 6, pp. 437-542).

name 'Red Diamond Bird' is obscure: it may refer to the Spotted-sided Finch or Diamond Sparrow (*Zonæginthus guttatus*), or even the male Mistletoe-bird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*). 'Magpie' is perhaps the Black-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*). The name 'Satin,' used in association with Cockatoos, is puzzling: it may refer to either the Glossy Black, or the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, whilst the name 'Black' as used by Swainson, may be the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo. All three species belong to the genus *Calyptorhynchus*, according to the R.A.O.U. *Official Checklist* (1926). It may be suggested that 'Satin' denotes the male Satin Bower-bird (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*). 'Rose-hill' of course, is the Eastern Rosella (*Platycercus eximius*). Caley (Vigors and Horsfield, *op. cit.*, p. 281) says of this species—"So called from the name of the settlement afterwards known by the name of Parramatta . . . The King's and Rosehill Parrots are the most valuable for selling to ships to take to England." The final bird listed, the 'Blue Mountain' Parrot, is the Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*). Caley's remarks (Vigors and Horsfield, *loc. cit.*, p. 289) on the origin of the name 'Blue Mountain' are interesting—"The young birds of this species are taken by the natives, who sell them to the settlers inhabiting the banks of the Hawkesbury, and the neighbourhood of Richmond Hill; which latter settlement, being at the foot of the mountains, the above name has been given to the bird. The name, however, is misapplied, for this species does not frequent the mountains; at least I have never met with it there during the various times and the different seasons that I visited those parts."

William Swainson (born October 8, 1789, died December 5, 1855) was one of the greatest English naturalists of the nineteenth century. He was also a gifted artist, or delineator of natural history objects, chiefly interested in ornithology, entomology and conchology. Many of his finely-drawn text figures were later used by Alfred Newton in *A Dictionary of Birds*, London (1893-6), 1896. Swainson emigrated to New Zealand, leaving London in 1840. His autobiography was published in the *Cabinet Cyclopaedia* (Lardner), in the volume dealing with taxidermy (1840). An extended obituary notice appears in the *Proceedings of the Linnean Society* (London), (1), 1855-6, pp. 49-53. Details of Swainson's published works are given in G. M. Mathews' *Bibliography of the Birds of Australia*, 1925, pp. 130-133. William Swainson, the naturalist-artist, is not to be confused with his namesake, William Swainson, who seems to have reached New Zealand, from England, by way of Tasmania, about the same time, and who later became Attorney-General in New Zealand.