

However, lack of streaking and low rainfall seem very definitely correlated.

It is interesting that the white head appears twice independently (Queensland, New Guinea) in otherwise rather dark races from humid areas.

The size of all subspecies is very much the same, as McGill pointed out correctly. However, in the *striata* group two subspecies can be recognized (*striata* and *rothschildi*) which differ in size alone.

SUMMARY

1. All Australian tree-runners (*Neositta*) replace each other geographically and intergrading populations have been found in all (except one) of the zones of contact. It seems inevitable in these circumstances that all forms will have to be treated as members of a single species.

2. The striking differences between these forms, as well as the narrowness of some of the subspecies' borders, indicate that the now contiguous ranges are of rather recent date. There apparently were a number of isolated populations of tree-runners during a more arid period in the recent past, which met and interbred in the ensuing more humid period.

LITERATURE CITED

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Stray Feathers

A Second Record of the Little Shearwater in eastern Australia.—The first definite record of the Little Shearwater (*Puffinus assimilis*) in eastern Australia was by D. L. Serventy (*The Emu*, vol. 42, pt. 1, July, 1942, pp. 49-50). It refers to a partly-decomposed bird collected on Cronulla Beach, a little to the south of Sydney, on April 10, 1942. I am now able to record a second specimen, also from Cronulla Beach, collected by Master A. Stuart on December 3, 1949. The bird had been dead two or three days; its wing feathers were very worn though the body plumage was normal. Fortunately it was in sufficiently good condition to be made into a study skin which has since been presented to the Australian Museum.

Relevant details are: Specimen no. 0.38711, ♀, Australian Museum, Sydney. Collected Cronulla Beach, December 3, 1949, by A. Stuart. Gonads small, weight 4 ozs.; culmen

25 mm.; tarsus 36; middle toe and claw 43; wing 180 mm. The colours of the soft parts, which have little significance as the bird had been dead a few days, were: bill, legs, toes and claws, black; webs blackish with lighter centres.

The nearest breeding place of the Little Shearwater to eastern Australia is Lord Howe Island. The species also breeds on Norfolk Island and in New Zealand waters. A number of breeding colonies are situate in south-western Australia from the Recherche Archipelago to the Houtman Abrolhos.—K. A. HINDWOOD, Sydney, N.S.W., 16/12/49.

Extension of Range of the Helmeted Honeyeater. This beautiful honeyeater (*Meliphaga cassidix*) has always been looked upon as an exclusively Victorian bird, and was only known from a comparatively few localities in the eastern portion of the State.

Recently when I was on an entomological collecting trip to Merimbula on the south coast of New South Wales, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Boehm kindly drove me out to a property of theirs some $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the township, which they thought would be a good collecting spot for me. When we arrived, we pulled up beside a little creek, and on alighting and looking around I remarked to them that it was a typical Helmeted Honeyeater locality, and if it had been in Gippsland I should expect to have a chance of finding the birds there.

I had not been collecting more than a few minutes when I was astonished to hear one of the birds call. Shortly afterwards I saw a young bird in a wattle tree, and shortly had an adult alight within a few feet of me, other birds being seen later. I estimated that there were about three pairs in the vicinity. The date when this observation was made was February 24 of this year (1950). Seeing them brought back happy memories of the many years I spent studying the species on the Cardinia Creek at Beaconsfield, when I was actively interested in ornithology and gathering details of their home life.

This new locality is very interesting for it increases their known range of distribution very considerably, and shows that the species is not confined to the State of Victoria as previously thought.—F. ERASMUS WILSON, Malvern, Vic., 2/3/50.

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is interesting to record that in August 1942, D. L. Serventy and J. A. Tubb collected two specimens of *Meliphaga melanops* at Timbillica, about fifty miles south of Merimbula.

Reviews

Identifying Hawks.—In the field—that is in the air—hawks are hard to identify, a task made more difficult by plumage phases of sex, locality and age. The Bird Observers Club of Melbourne has published a *Field Guide to the Hawks of Australia* which will be