

Barune, and grass country near Brown River. At times associated with the Grey-headed Finch.

Mr. Edgar Whitbourn supplied these notes on a flock of finches near Bulolo: "A flock of 24 finches was observed feeding on the seeding heads of 'pit pit' growing along a roadside in a forestry area of pine plantations above Bulolo on October 18. These birds had face and throat black, crown of head pale grey, wings and back chestnut-brown, rump a brighter chestnut-brown, black band across upper chest, lower chest and abdomen white. These birds kept together while feeding and afforded excellent views as they fed in strong sunshine. Their calls were a soft double, tinkling bell-like note uttered while in flight. A pair of these finches was noted building in a tussock of kunai grass growing on a low hillside behind the Pine Lodge Hotel at Bulolo."

This description was sent to Dr. Ernst Mayr, who said it was the New Guinea race of *L. castaneothorax*.

Grasslands. Sea level to 2600 feet.

Anting by Mudlark.—Observations of anting by birds in freedom are still fairly rare, and many ornithologists have not been fortunate enough to see this behaviour even once. However, after observing a Grey Thrush anting on my front lawn, as reported in *The Emu* (61: 243), I was not altogether surprised when I recently saw a male Mudlark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) anting in the same area.

At 7.55 a.m. on February 6, 1962, I noticed the bird pick up something in its beak and apparently rub it beneath its right shoulder. It repeated the action under the left wing. Moving about, it picked something off the base of a tree (*Angophora*) and again "performed", after which it walked to the base of a rock and again acted in the same manner. When it flew away I investigated, and found that in each place small red-and-black ants were running about, so it was clear that the bird had been anting. Unlike the aftermath in the case of the Grey Thrush, there were no dead or injured ants on the ground, and this fact confirmed my early supposition, namely that the bird had swallowed the insects after rubbing them on itself. The ants were later identified as examples of *Froggattella kirbyi*.

Many observers of anting have reported that birds often fall on their sides and carry out other contortions, but in this case the bird stood on its feet the whole time. It anted for five minutes at first, returned about fifteen minutes later, anted again a couple of times, and then flew away.

Reference to A. H. Chisholm's "The History of Anting" (*Emu*, 59: 101-30) reveals a record of passive anting by a Mudlark, but no record of active anting in this species—HORACE A. SALMON, Beecroft, N.S.W., 16. 2/62.

[Since the above note was received, Mr. A. H. Chisholm has reported that Mrs. Alix Upton of Tamborine Mountain (Qld.) observed a male Mudlark anting, while standing on a lawn, on November 16, 1961. It stroked an ant three times under each wing and once along the back; none of the insects appeared to be eaten. Mrs. Upton also saw a Lewin Honey-eater anting while perched in a tree.—Editor]