

Silver-crowned Friarbird—extension of range.—On a brief visit to the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area, north-east of Rockhampton, Queensland, in July 1966, I observed what I thought to be the Silver-crowned Friarbird, *Philemon argenticeps*. The birds were very numerous, particularly in the flowering *Melaleucas* on the clay flatlands of the area. On return home I then realized that Rockhampton is well out of the "official" range of the bird and that I did not fully appreciate the diagnostic points of the species and its close relatives, *P. corniculatus* and *P. yorki*.

Returning to Shoalwater Bay on October 15, 1966, for a six weeks stay, I came prepared to confirm identity. The species seen in July was, in fact, *P. argenticeps*. The identity was later checked by the study of specimens and a coloured slide of a live bird. It was extremely numerous in the western part of the training area, which is low-lying and very dry. The birds were in small groups feeding on the many flowering eucalypts. They appeared to be absent from the eastern portion of the training area, towards the Clinton Peninsula, where the country is better watered, hilly and somewhat more thickly forested. Here, in the eucalypts which were flowering profusely, the Noisy Friarbird, *P. corniculatus*, and Little Friarbird, *P. citreogularis*, were even more abundant, but were absent from the flat country to the west.

The present limit of the range of the Silver-crowned Friarbird is given as Townsville, some 350 miles to the north (Cayley, 1959, *What bird is that?*). It would seem that, like so many other tropical species, *P. argenticeps* probably ranges much further south than was formerly thought. The possibility of the Helmeted Friarbird, *P. yorki*, also doing so cannot be overlooked. Its range is given as Mackay, half-way between Rockhampton and Townsville. I feel sure that Helmeted Friarbirds were among the flocks of *P. corniculatus* that occurred in the more dense forests of Shoalwater Bay, but was unable to satisfy myself of the identification.

Also of interest was a flock of Spice Finches, *Lonchura punctulata*, on the outskirts of Rockhampton itself.—H. L. BELL, 1st Battalion Pacific Islands Regiment, Taurama Barracks, Port Moresby, Papua.