

RAOU FIELD-OUTING, CAMPBELL TOWN, TASMANIA, 1969

Activities at the Field-Outing at Campbell Town, 65 km south of Launceston, from 28 October to 4 November, were divided between general bird observation and a census of sclerophyll woodland. The results are reported separately below.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

L. E. WALL

Many habitats were visited briefly during the period so that visitors might see as many as possible of Tasmania's endemic birds.

Round Campbell Town there is no forest, but it is one of the earliest settled areas of the State with many old homes surrounded by English trees, and eucalypts are scattered through the grazing land. The common birds were typical of those found in this habitat—Spur-winged Plover, Banded Plover, White-backed Magpie, Noisy Miner, Superb Blue Wren, Welcome Swallow, Brown Falcon, Swamp Harrier, Green Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Blue-winged Parrot, Swift Parrot, Pallid Cuckoo, Golden Bronze Cuckoo, Dusky Woodswallow, Yellow-tipped Pardalote, Pipit, Tasmanian Raven, Swamp Quail, Yellow-tailed Thornbill, Tasmanian Native Hen, White-faced Heron, Chestnut-breasted Shelduck and White-fronted Chat occurred at waterholes and creeks. Introduced species were Goldfinch, House Sparrow, European Starling, Blackbird, Greenfinch, Skylark and Laughing Kookaburra.

Two afternoons were spent around large lagoons—one west of Cleveland, and Grimes Lagoon about six km south of Ross. The first had a heavy growth of reeds and the only waterfowl were a few Chestnut-breasted Shelducks; along the shore were a few Little Grassbirds, not seen elsewhere during the Field-Outing. The surrounding pastures and savanna woodland held little of interest.

Grimes Lagoon was also covered with reeds except for several areas of open water which held many Chestnut-breasted Shelducks, Chestnut Teal, Musk Ducks and Black Swans. Waders were Spur-winged Plover, Banded Plover, and a solitary Black-fronted Dotterel. In the reedbeds round the artificial lake at Mona Vale Homestead there were Reed Warblers.

On the southern shore of the lagoon a flock of about a hundred Silver Gulls contained many that were very young. Some years ago Mr R. H. Green found a colony breeding in a small lagoon about one and a half kilometres south-east (Emu 56: 141). This was visited and many nests were found, most empty but a few still in use. One brood of three and one of one, 1 x C/3, 6 x C/2, 4 x C/1 (one probably deserted) were noted. As far as is known this is the only inland breeding colony at present in Tasmania, though many years ago there was a breeding colony at the northern end of Great Lake in the Central Highlands.

One day was spent touring through the South Esk Valley to St. Marys and northwards to St. Helens. Pied Oystercatcher, Spur-winged Plover, Golden Plover, Red-capped Dotterel, Greenshank, Curlew Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint were recorded on samphire flats at the northern side of George's Bay, and Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Pelican, Crested Tern, Pacific Gull and Silver Gull on the bay. Chestnut Teal, Musk

Duck and Hoary-headed Grebes occurred on a lagoon behind sand-dunes near the south head of the bay. An occupied nest of the Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, of limited distribution in Tasmania, was found, and a Striated Field Wren recorded. Near St. Helens a Clinking Currawong was seen.

Another day was spent in the area of Moulting Lagoon and Coles Bay. On the east side of the lagoon a large flock of Curlew Sandpipers, fewer Red-necked Stints and some Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were noted. None of the Tasmanian members had seen migratory waders at the lagoon before. Nests of the Pied Oystercatcher and Pipit were found. In a marshy area surrounded by heathland near Coles Bay, Striated Field Wrens were recorded, but no Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters, which had been found there during the last Field-Outing in Tasmania.

On the afternoon of 3 November, an area near Liffey Falls, about 65 km north-west of Campbell Town, was visited. The endemic Scrub Tit was glimpsed in a thicket on the hillside, and a pair seen among the man-ferns on the floor of the valley. The Olive Whistler, Pink Robin, Tasmanian Thornbill and all the honeyeaters of Tasmania, except the Little Wattlebird and the Tawny-crowned Honeyeater, were seen.

A complete list of species seen during the Field-Outing is:

Hoary-headed Grebe *Podiceps poliocephalus*
Muttonbird *Puffinus tenuirostris*
Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*
Gannet *Sula bassana*
Black Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Little Pied Cormorant *P. melanoleucos*
White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae*
Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*
Chestnut-breasted Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides*
Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*
Chestnut Teal *A. castanea*
Musk Duck *Biziura lobata*
Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*
Collared Sparrowhawk *A. cirrhocephalus*
Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*
White-breasted Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*
Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*
Swamp Quail *Coturnix ypsilophorus*
Tasmanian Native Hen *Tribonyx mortierii*
Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*
Coot *Fulica atra*
Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus m. novaehollandiae*
Banded Plover *V. tricolor*
American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*
Red-capped Dotterel *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Black-fronted Dotterel *C. bicinctus*
Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
 Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
 Red-necked Stint *C. ruficollis*
 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata*
 Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*
 Pacific Gull *L. pacificus*
 Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne tschegrava*
 Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*
 Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* (introduced)
 Common Bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera*
 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo *Calyptrorhynchus
funereus*
 Musk Lorikeet *Glossopsitta concinna*
 Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius*
 Green Rosella *P. caledonicus*
 Blue-winged Parrot *Neophema chrysostomus*
 Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor*
 Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus*
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo *Cacomantis pyrrhophanus*
 Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalus*
 Golden Bronze Cuckoo *C. l. plagosus*
 Boobook Owl *Ninox novaeseelandiae*
 Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguinae* (introduced)
 Skylark *Alauda arvensis* (introduced)
 Welcome Swallow *Hirundo t. neoxena*
 Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans*
 Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*
 Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*
 Blackbird *Turdus merula* (introduced)
 Spotted Quail-Thrush *Cinclosoma punctatum*
 Little Grassbird *Megalurus gramineus*
 Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus*
 White-fronted Chat *Ephthianura albigrons*
 Yellow-tailed Thornbill *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*
 Brown Thornbill *A. pusilla*
 Tasmanian Thornbill *A. ewingii*

Scrub Tit *Acanthornis magnus*
 Brown Scrub Wren *Sericornis humilis*
 Striated Field Wren *Calamanthus fuliginosus*
 Superb Blue Wren *Malurus cyaneus*
 Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*
 Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca*
 Scarlet Robin *Petroica multicolor*
 Flame Robin *P. phoenicea*
 Pink Robin *P. rodinogaster*
 Dusky Robin *P. vittata*
 Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*
 Olive Whistler *P. olivacea*
 Grey Shrike-Thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*
 Spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus*
 Yellow-tipped Pardalote *P. striatus*
 Silveryeye *Zosterops lateralis*
 Crescent Honeyeater *Phylidonyris pyrrhoptera*
 Yellow-winged Honeyeater *P. novaehollandiae*
 Tawny-crowned Honeyeater *P. melanops*
 Eastern Spinebill *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*
 Noisy Miner *Myzantha melanocephala*
 Little Wattlebird *Anthochaera chrysoptera*
 Yellow Wattlebird *A. paradoxa*
 Strong-billed Honeyeater *Melithreptus validirostris*
 Black-headed Honeyeater *M. affinis*
 Yellow-throated Honeyeater *Meliphaga flavicollis*
 Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (introduced)
 Greenfinch *C. chloris* (introduced)
 Dusky Woodswallow *Artamus cyanopterus*
 House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (introduced)
 Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (introduced)
 Black Currawong *Strepera fuliginosa*
 Clinking Currawong *S. arguta*
 Grey Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus*
 White-backed Magpie *Gymnorhina hypoleuca*
 Tasmanian Raven *Corvus mellori*

CENSUS OF DRY SCLEROPHYLL

H. F. RECHER, D. G. THOMAS and D. R. MILLEDGE

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the principal activity of the annual Field-outing of the RAOU has been the compilation of a bird-list for the area visited. It has been thought that, with only a slight change in emphasis, the Field-outing could contribute more valuably to our knowledge of the Australian avifauna. Accordingly, the programme of the 1969 Field-Outing in Tasmania was to make a detailed survey of the avifauna of dry sclerophyll forest that will be affected by the woodchip industry. The censuses of four x 20,250 m² plots made during the Field-outing are reported in this paper and are discussed with respect to possible effects of woodchip operations on wildlife.

Until recently the dry sclerophyll forests along the coast of south-eastern Australia had limited commercial value. Most logging was selective and did not seriously alter the environment. Now, techniques and markets are available that allow more intensive use. The new methods completely clear extensive areas and will result in conversion to stands of timber of the same age. The wood itself will be 'chipped' and the woodchips exported. Tasmania and the southern coast of New South Wales will be the first areas affected by this new industry, and fears have been expressed as to possible effects on wildlife. Complete clearance for woodchips will certainly have a more obvious effect on habitats than do traditional forestry methods, but without greater knowledge of the ecology of wildlife in dry sclerophyll forests it

is difficult to predict, or even guess, what these effects will be.

METHODS

The four 20,250 m² plots were set out along the Lake Leake Highway, about 16 km east of Campbell Town, from 0.8 to 1.6 km apart and situated on the edge of the Eastern Tiers, which are included in the woodchip concession and close to the site of the first processing plant. The area is at an altitude between 300 and 600 m with an annual rainfall of about 760 mm. Vegetation, apart from cleared land, is dry sclerophyll forest with eucalypts as dominants, the species varying with aspect, soil, drainage and altitude. The plots were typical of the area, and all had been altered by logging and light sheep-grazing. Each was surrounded by large areas of similar habitat, and each appeared to be uniform. Although they were close together, plots differed in appearance and were selected to represent the range of habitat in the area.

Plot 1. An area of open forest with one corner bordered by a grassy field. It has been logged within the last two years, and most of the trees are fairly small (< 20 m) *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* with a few mature *E. dalrympleana* and *E. aggregata*. There is a sparse understorey of young eucalypts, but little bushy vegetation. The low shrub-layer is continuous but open, primarily small wattles *Acacia* sp., sedges and bracken.

Plot 2. This area has been logged within the last twelve months, but many over-mature trees have been left.