

A Trip to the Diamantina.

By Dr. A. M. Morgan.

Some little time ago Mr. E. A. Brooks kindly invited me to accompany him when he next visited his cattle station, "Clifton Hills," on the Diamantina River, a trip I was very glad to have the opportunity of making. On 20th July, 1930, we left Adelaide by the East-West express, changing at Quorn into the Alice Springs train, which landed us at Marree (442 miles) at about 8 a.m. next morning. After breakfast a trip was made to "Lake Letty," a cattle depot of Mr. Brooks, about 12 miles north of Marree. The lake itself is a large waterhole in the River Frome, at present about half-full, but rapidly drying up. The banks are clothed with a good growth of a species of teatree (*Melaleuca*) and a large *Acacia*, which, I think, would repay a longer search than we were able to give it. Next morning we left for "Clifton Hills" in the car of Mr. Rowlands, the manager of Kanowana, another of Mr. Brooks's stations. The route was by Lake Harry (20 miles), Clayton Creek and Bore (15 miles), Dulkaninna (18 miles), Cannuwaukaninna (7 miles), Etadinna (10 miles), Mungeranie (38 miles), Mirra Mitta (33 miles), Mount Gason (30 miles), Clifton Hills (80 miles), the direction being approximately north-east from Marree. Cooper's Creek was crossed soon after leaving Etadinna. It was quite dry where we crossed it, except for the trickle of a bore-stream, which, however, made the bed so boggy that we had to make a considerable detour to avoid it. The bed is timbered by fair-sized coolabahs (*Eucalyptus microtheca*), looking half-dead after the five or six years' drought. We had the misfortune to bump into one of these, with no more serious result than a burst tyre. The track is mainly bad throughout, but after the Cooper becomes atrocious, and a little later, whilst trying to get over a sandhill, we stripped the crown wheel. Mr. Brooks and I camped on the sandhill whilst the driver set out on a 20-mile walk for assistance. We started next morning to walk on, and after about five miles were met by Mr. Scobie in his motor-truck. We spent that night at Mr. Scobie's house,

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Ooroowilanie, and next day he took us on to Kallabore, an outstation of Kanowana, to drop Mr. Rowlands, who had to return to his station. This necessitated a 56 miles' detour from Mirra Mitta. The night was spent at Kallabore, and a start made next morning for Clifton Hills, but was interrupted by a twenty-five minutes' stick-up in the bore drain. Bad tracks delayed us so much that finally we lost them in the dark, and had to camp in a dry "lignum" swamp. Next morning we got as close as the car would take us to Clifton Hills Head Station, and rode the last five miles, our baggage being carried on pack-horses. Clifton Hills H.S. is situated on a sandhill overlooking the Diamantina, which, at the time of our visit, was a fine river 120 yards wide, and still flowing slowly, it having recently been in flood. When full the river is about 180 yards wide. The banks are timbered by fine coolabahs, beantrees (*Bauhinia carronii*), and various species of acacias, growing amongst which were "marshmallows" (*Lavatera plebeja*), attaining as high as 12 feet, and many other flowering plants. A few miles below the Head Station the river splits up into many channels, and spreads over what is known as Goyder's Lagoon, a great irregular flat with no sharply-defined borders and having an expanse of about 750 square miles. All this country has recently been flooded, and at the time of our visit was covered by luxuriant vegetation. Apart from the flooded ground, the country between the Cooper and the Diamantina was in a deplorable condition, there having been no rain for about six years.

On 27th July Mr. Brooks and Mr. Gurr, manager of Clifton Hills, spent the day with the cattle, while I hunted about on the banks of the Diamantina, and on the 28th we set out on horseback with camp equipment, Mr. Brooks to inspect cattle and I to observe what birds I could. The first night was spent at a waterhole on a "pepper-grass" (*Panicum decompositum*) flat, and next day we visited Cooncherie Waterhole, a most interesting place; and then rode across part of the Lagoon, which was still wet, mostly boggy ground with or without a few inches of water over it, and intersected by channels up to about four feet deep. We camped that night on a dry patch on the Lagoon after visiting a Pelican rookery, of which the young birds were just able to fly. On the 30th we visited another waterhole, called Candoonie, thence back to the Head Station from the opposite side of the river, which we crossed in a "flying fox" which Mr. Gurr had put up, the horses having to swim. On 31st July I had another walk up the river with Mr.

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Scobie. On 1st August we had a ride to Lake Uloowaranie, a fine sheet of water, which I was told lasted for two years, and thence back to where we had left our car on 26th July. On 2nd August we set out on the homeward trip, staying a day at Ooroowilanie, where I skinned birds in the morning and hunted for aboriginal stone implements in the afternoon. Marree was reached on 4th August without incident. The 5th August we spent in a vain hunt for the manager of Lake Letty Station, who was somewhere out on the run. On Wednesday, 6th August, Mr. Brooks and I walked over to the River Frome, and a few miles up the bed of the now dry stream. On Thursday, 7th August, I skinned birds, and in the afternoon we caught the train for Adelaide, which was reached on Friday night, 8th August.

Ninety-two species of birds were observed. Notable absentees were the Whitefaces (*Aphelocephalae*), no species of which was seen, and the Crested Bellbird (*Oreoica gutturalis*), which was neither seen nor heard throughout the trip.

1. *Dromaius novae-hollandiae*, Emu.—Only one bird seen, on Goyder's Lagoon. It seemed reluctant to leave the spot, so probably had a nest. The aboriginals brought in a number of eggs to the Head Station.

2. *Coturnix pectoralis*, Stubble-Quail.—Very common on the pepper-grass flats of Goyder's Lagoon. The grass was growing to a height of about 2 ft. 6 in. in the dried-off part of the Lagoon, and was mostly dry, though green at the roots. The call of "Churchy-wit" was heard throughout the night of 25th July.

3. *Turnix velox*, Button Quail.—Very common in similar situations to the last bird. The call is a single deep-toned "Oom," repeated at infrequent intervals.

4. *Geopelia cuneata*, Diamond Dove. — Very common wherever there was water, and often at considerable distance from it. The call is like "Whoo-who-who." I several times heard the familiar "Oodle-oo" of the Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*), but was never able to see the bird. I think it is an alternative call of the Diamond Dove. When courting, this bird at each call bows to his mate, at the same time elevating and spreading his tail widely. After each "Whoo" he sits up again and the tail is closed. A nest was found on 27th July, built in a beantree, about eight feet from the ground. It contained two fresh eggs.

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5. *Histiophaps histrionica*, Flock-Pigeon.—Two pigeons of a species unknown to me flew over us as we were crossing Goyder's Lagoon. Mr. Scobie told me that they were the above species, and that at one time there were thousands of them in the district.

6. *Ocyphaps lophotes*, Crested Bronzewing.—Seen in small numbers from Marree to Clifton Hills. A nest found in an acacia at Lake Uloowaranie contained two eggs.

7. *Tribonyx ventralis*, Black-tailed Native Hen.—Were present in small numbers in the wet part of Goyder's Lagoon. Their call is a harsh "Crark," which we heard all night at our camp on 29th July.

8. *Porphyrio melanotus*, Blue Bald Coot.—Seen only about our camp on Goyder's Lagoon on 29th July, where they were ealling all night. The commonest call is a sort of rumbling grunt.

9. *Fulica atra*, Coot.

10. *Podiceps poliocephalus*. } Seen only at Lake Letty.
Hoary-headed Grebe.

11. *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Big Black Cormorant.—A small flock flew over the car on 26th July, when we were nearing the flooded country, and a single bird was seen flying up the River on 31st July.

12. *Pelecanus conspicillatus*, Pelican.—Seen at intervals on the flooded ground and large waterholes. They had nested on a dry patch in Goyder's Lagoon.

13. *Anhinga novae-hollandiae*, Darter. — A single full-plumaged male bird seen flying up the River on 27th July.

14. *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Gull-billed Tern.—Three birds seen on Lake Uloowaranie.

15. *Larus novae-hollandiae*, Silver Gull.—Five, all adult birds, seen on Lake Uloowaranie.

16. *Erythrogonyx cinctus*, Red-kneed Dotterel.—Two seen at Cooncherie waterhole.

17. *Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*, Spur-winged Plover.—A pair or more were seen at most of the waterholes and bore-streams.

18. *Zonifer tricolor*, Banded Plover.—A single bird seen near Cannuwaukaninna bore-stream.

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19. *Charadrius ruficapillus*, Red-capped Dotterel.—A pair or more inhabited each bore-stream. Common at Lake Uloowaranie.

20. *Charadrius melanops*, Black-fronted Dotterel.—Usually seen in company with the above.

21. *Peltohyas australis*, Australian Dotterel.—Locally called the "Gibber-Bird." Seen at intervals from near Marree to near Clifton Hills, always out on the bare gibbers. This bird is almost invisible against the gibber surface, unless it moves; many must have been passed in the car without being seen.

22. *Recurvirostra novae-hollandiae*, Red-necked Avocet.—Seen only on the bore-streams, where they were common.

23. *Himantopus leucocephalus*, White-headed Stilt.—Seen usually in company with the last bird. On Kallabore bore-stream an adult pair were accompanied by two full-grown young.

24. *Stiltia isabella*, Pratincole.—Common on a large recently-flooded plain at Lake Uloowaranie. They were mostly in pairs and were evidently breeding, but we had no time to search for nests. The call when on the wing is a high-pitched "Whit-whit."

25. *Grus rubicundus*, Native Companion (Brolga).—Nine seen altogether at Goyder's Lagoon and Lake Uloowaranie.

26. *Platalea regia*, Black-legged Spoonbill.—Seen on the Diamantina and Candoonie waterhole. I was told that they had nested earlier in the year in the lignums in Goyder's Lagoon. Mr. Brooks shot a bird of the year on 28/7/1930. Iris dark brown; bill, legs, and feet black; length, 74.5 cm.; spread, 135.5 cm.; weight, 4 lb. Stomach contents: remains of shrimps, water-beetles, and a small fish.

27. *Platalea flavipes*, Yellow-legged Spoonbill.—A flock of twenty seen at Cooncherie waterhole, and another of about the same number at Candoonie.

28. *Egretta alba*, White Egret.—Four seen on the bank of the Diamantina, at Clifton Hills H.S.

29. *Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae*, White-faced Heron.—Seen, in pairs or singly at Lake Letty, Goyder's Lagoon, and most of the waterholes and some of the bore-streams.

30. *Notophoxyx pacifica*, White-necked Heron.—A single bird seen on the bank of the Diamantina, and a large flock feeding over the wet part of Goyder's Lagoon.

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31. *Nycticorax caledonicus*, Nankeen Night-Heron.—A single bird in immature plumage seen at Candoonie waterhole.

32. *Chenonetta jubata*, Wood-Duck (Maned Goose).—Very common; seen in flocks on the Diamantina and on all the large waterholes. They were very wary. The aborigines brought on 31st July into the station six of a clutch of eight eggs taken from a hollow coolabah.

33. *Chenopsis atrata*, Black Swan.—A small flock seen at Lake Letty, and four on the Clayton bore-stream.

34. *Dendrocygna eytoni*, Plumed Tree-Duck.—Locally called the "Whistling Duck." A flock of about 50 seen at Cooncherie waterhole. They were very wary, and on flushing from the water rose at once well out of gunshot. The flight is more like that of a Goose than a Duck, with slow wing-beats and the head lower than the body. The call is a soft low-toned double whistle. On the night of 1st August a flock was heard calling over our camp for about an hour, probably attracted by our camp-fire.

35. *Casarca tadornoides*, Mountain Duck.—A pair seen at Lake Letty, and a single bird on Goyder's Lagoon.

36. *Anas superciliosa*, Black Duck.—Seen at Cooncherie and Candoonie waterholes in small numbers.

37. *Querquedula gibberifrons*, Grey Teal.—Very common. Present in large flocks on all the large waterholes and on the wet part of Goyder's Lagoon. Two nests were found, each on the ground at the base of a "lignum" on Goyder's Lagoon; the first with six fresh eggs and the second with nine apparently incubated eggs. Each nest was made of the birds' own down mixed with a little dry herbage. Three birds were shot; they weighed respectively 1 lb. 1 oz., 1 lb. 8 oz., and 1 lb. 2 oz. Iris bright brownish red; bill—maxilla leaden blue, mandible brown at base, the rest dull yellow except for two black marks under the tip; legs leaden grey; feet—toes dark leaden grey, webs dull black, nails black; inside mouth dusky yellow.

38. *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*, Pink-eared Duck, Zebra Teal.—Very numerous, usually in company with the Grey Teal. The call is like "Whoi-tup," uttered both when on the wing and on the water.

39. *Nyroca australis*, White-eyed Duck.—Very common, usually in company with the last two birds. The white patch on the wings is very conspicuous in flight.

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40. *Circus assimilis*, Spotted Harrier.—Very common at Clifton Hills and over Goyder's Lagoon.

41. *Circus approximans*, Swamp Hawk.—Only identified once with certainty on Goyder's Lagoon, but many Harriers were seen in the distance, which might have been either species.

42. *Uroaetus audax*, Wedge-tailed Eagle.—Not common. Single birds seen near Marree, near Mungeranie, near Clifton Hills H.S., Goyder's Lagoon, and Lake Uloowaranie.

43. *Haliastur sphenurus*, Whistling Eagle.—Common along the banks of the Diamantina; also in company with the Kites around camps. A pair was seen at a nest in a tall coolabah on the river bank, but it was not examined.

44. *Milvus migrans*, Fork-tailed Kite.—Very common, especially around camps if anything like permanent; though familiar enough, as a rule, directly a gun was brought out they kept well out of range. A nest was found at Cooncherie water-hole, about 20 feet up. It contained a single fresh egg.

45. *Falco longipennis*, Little Falcon.—A single bird seen and secured sitting beside a nest near the river on 27th July. Iris dark brown; legs and feet mealy yellow; bill light horn colour at base, black at tip; cere dull greenish yellow; length, 31 cm.; spread, 72 cm.; weight, 9 oz. Stomach contents: a Chestnut-eared Finch, including beak and claws. Sex, ♀. The nest was empty.

46. *Falco subniger*, Black Falcon.—Seen at intervals throughout the trip, always solitary. They were very wary, and none was collected.

47. *Falco berigora*, Brown Hawk.—Not common. Seen only near Clifton Hills and on Goyder's Lagoon. All the birds seen were of the dark form; and in the distance could not be distinguished with certainty from Black Falcons.

48. *Falco cenchroides*, Nankeen Kestrel.—Common. Always solitary. Those seen near Lake Letty appeared to me to have abnormally light under-surfaces.

49. *Ninox boobook*, Boobook Owl.—A single bird flushed from the teatree at Lake Letty. Another bird was flushed from a beantree on the bank of the Diamantina, which was probably this species.

50. *Kakatoe sanguinea*, Bare-eyed Cockatoo.—A large flock seen near Clifton Hills H.S., and another smaller one at Cannuwaukaninna. A single bird was seen at Etadinna.

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51. *Kakatoe roseicapilla*, Galah.—Very common, but mostly in pairs and nesting in the hollow coolabahs. Two nests examined contained respectively three and four eggs.

52. *Leptolophus hollandicus*, Cockatoo Parrot.—Several flocks were seen at Kallabore, Clifton Hills, and Candoonie waterhole.

53. *Psephotus haematogaster* (?), Blue Bonnet.—A pair of parrots flew across the front of the car when we were crossing the Cooper, which were almost certainly of this species.

54. *Melopsittacus undulatus*, Budgerygah.—Seen in thousands wherever there was water in the vicinity. They were nesting freely in the hollow coolabahs on the banks of the river. Eggs were seen in one nest, but none was chopped out. The scarcity of species of Parrots was rather remarkable, considering the large area abounding in grass-seeds and the number of flowering shrubs and other plants. It is also rather remarkable that only three species of Honeyeaters were identified throughout the trip.

55. *Halcyon pyrrhopygius*, Red-backed Kingfisher.—A single bird was seen on the banks of the river, and another near Lake Uloowaranie; the latter bird was near a sandcliff in which many holes had been drilled, but several which were dug out were empty.

56. *Cuculus pallidus*, Pallid Cuckoo.—A single bird seen near Cooncherie waterhole.

57. *Hirundo neoxena*, Welcome Swallow.—Seen around every homestead.

58. *Cheramoeca leucosterna*, White-backed Swallow.—Seen at Kallabore, and in numbers near Lake Uloowaranie.

59. *Hylochelidon ariel*, Fairy Martin.—Seen in numbers at Clayton bore-stream, Diamantina River, and Goyder's Lagoon. Several nesting sites were seen; in each case on the underside of a coolabah overhanging the water.

60. *Rhipidura flabellifera*, Grey Fantail.—A pair was seen in the teatree at Lake Letty.

61. *Rhipidura leucophrys*, Willie Wagtail.—Seen at intervals throughout the trip. The widespread antipathy of the aboriginals to this bird is as evident on the Diamantina as elsewhere in Australia. They think that it hangs about their camps for the purpose of learning their secrets and telling later on them.

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62. *Petroica goodenovii*, Red-capped Robin.—Found nesting at Lake Letty, also one seen near Marree.

63. *Pachycephala rufiventris*, Rufous Whistler.—A pair seen in the teatrees at Lake Letty.

64. *Colluricincla harmonica*, Grey Shrike-Thrush.—This bird was heard calling on the Diamantina, and after some trouble a specimen shot proved to be indistinguishable from specimens from the Adelaide Hills.

65. *Grallina cyanoleuca*, Magpie-Lark.—A pair or more were seen on almost every bore-stream and waterhole and on the river. A pair was feeding young at Clayton Creek.

66. *Sphenostoma cristatum*, Wedgebill.—Three birds flew out of a bush in a watercourse on the way to Kallabore. A ♀ of a pair was shot in the bed of the River Frome on 6th August. Iris brown; legs and feet mealy black; bill black; length, 19 cm.; spread, 24.5 cm.; weight, 45.5 grammes. Stomach contents: remains of a bug and other insects. None was heard calling.

67. *Coracina novae-hollandiae*, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike.—Seen at Lake Letty, on the Diamantina, and Goyder's Lagoon.

68. *Lalage tricolor*, White-winged Caterpillar-eater.—A male was seen on the sandhills just north of the Cooper, and two pairs afterwards on a channel off Goyder's Lagoon. The latter birds were calling. A ♀ was shot in the bed of the River Frome on 8th August. Iris very dark brown; legs and feet mealy black; bill—maxilla black, mandible light brownish base, black tip; inside mouth whitish; length, 18 cm.; spread, 30.5 cm.; weight, 31.5 grammes. Stomach contents: large berry seeds and two small black seeds.

69. *Cinlosoma cinnamomeum*, Cinnamon Quail-Thrush.—Not seen till north of the Cooper, but common between the Cooper and the Diamantina. A number was seen between Mirra Mitta and Kallabore. They were very wary. In the early morning the ♂ sits on top of a small bush and calls repeatedly. The call is like "Chip-chip-chip chip chip."

70. *Pomatostomus* sp.—Two flocks of some birds of this genus were seen on the sandhills where we broke down on 22nd July. They were very wild, and I could not get near enough to identify the species.

71. *Epthianura albifrons*, White-fronted Chat.—Only seen once, between Mirra Mitta and Kallabore.

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72. *Epthianura tricolor*, Crimson Chat.—A few pairs were seen on the flooded country of Goyder's Lagoon, and others at Lake Uloowaranie. A nest containing three young birds was seen on 30th July. They were nowhere plentiful.

73. *Epthianura aurifrons*, Orange Chat.—More plentiful than the last. Several birds were flushed from nests in Goyder's Lagoon, but the nests were not examined. They were seen at intervals all the way from Clifton Hills to Marree. At Marree on 6th August a ♀ was shot in mistake for an *Ashbyia lovensis*. Iris bright brown; legs and feet brownish black; bill horn-colour, inside bill brown, throat yellow; length, 11.3 cm.; spread, 19.3 cm.; weight, 13.5 grammes. Stomach contents: green "hopper flies," caterpillars, and insect remains.

74. *Ashbyia lovensis*, Gibber-Bird.—The local Gibber-Bird is the Australian Dotterel, a much more appropriate name for it than for the present bird, which does not frequent the bare gibber plains as does the Dotterel. They were first seen about 40 miles north-east of Marree and as far north as Goyder's Lagoon Station. They were nowhere common, but many more than we supposed may have been seen, as in the field it is almost indistinguishable from the ♀ *Epthianura aurifrons*. Both birds walk and wag the tail up and down like a Pipit (*Anthus*). The chief distinguishing mark is the yellow rump of the Chat, which is only visible when the back is turned in flight. When on the ground with the back turned *Ashbyia* is almost indistinguishable from its surroundings, unless it moves.

75. *Cinclorhamphus cruralis*, Brown Songlark. — Very common on the flooded ground.

76. *Cinclorhamphus mathewsi*, Rufous Songlark.—Common in the timber surrounding the flooded ground.

77. *Megalurus gramineus*, Little Grassbird.—Heard calling on the still-wet flooded ground.

78. *Malurus cyanotus*, Blue-and-White Wren.—Seen only in the bed of the River Frome, where they were very common. A ♂ collected had the iris dark brown; legs and feet black; bill black, inside of bill black, throat light horn; length, 12.5 cm.; spread, 14.8 cm.; weight, 7.5 grammes. Stomach contents: insect remains.

79. *Malurus assimilis*, Purple-backed Wren.—Seen at Lake Letty, Lake Uloowaranie, and in the bed of the River Frome, where they were common. A ♂ had the iris very dark brown; legs and feet dark brown; bill black; inside of mouth whitish;

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length, 13.6 cm.; spread, 15 cm.; weight, 10 grammes. Stomach contents: insect remains.

80. *Pardalotus rubricatus*, Red-lore'd Pardalote.—Seen only on or near the banks of the Diamantina in the coolabahs. A nest found was in a low sandcliff, and had two entrances. The tunnel was tortuous and about four feet long. The nest was cup-shaped, built of bark, horsehair, and a few pieces of dry grass, and lined with fine bark. The cavity measured 6.3 cm. in diameter and was 5.8 cm. deep. It contained two fresh eggs. The call is two short slow whistles, followed by five quick ones higher pitched. It is locally called the Bellbird.

81. *Artamus melanops*, Black-faced Wood-Swallow. — Common everywhere except on the bare gibber plains. They were usually in pairs or family groups of four or five, apparently not nesting.

82. *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*, Mistletoe-Bird. — Only seen once, at Lake Letty, though mistletoes of three species are common on the Diamantina and were in fruit. I saw no signs of them having been visited.

83. *Meliphaga virescens* (?), Singing Honeyeater.—I caught a glimpse of a Honeyeater at Lake Uloowaranie and also in the bed of the Frome, which may have been this bird. The bird on the Frome, however, had an unfamiliar call, and I am not at all sure about it.

84. *Meliphaga penicillata (leilavalensis)*, White-plumed Honeyeater.—Seen wherever there were coolabahs. Very common on the Diamantina. Two were collected. (1) A ♂, on the Diamantina on 31st July, had the iris dark brown; legs light brown, feet darker; bill black; inside mouth yellow; length, 16.5 cm.; spread, 25 cm.; weight, 17.5 grammes. Stomach contents: remains of small insects. (2) A young ♂ had the iris dark brown; legs and feet pale yellowish grey; bill yellow at the base, the rest light brown; inside mouth yellow; length, 15.7 cm.; spread, 24 cm.; weight, 22.5 grammes. Stomach contents: berry seeds and insect remains.

85. *Myzantha flavigula*, Yellow-throated Miner.—Common where there were coolabahs. A ♀ collected had the iris dark brown; legs and feet dull yellow; bare skin behind the eye yellow; small patch under the eye dull blue; inside mouth yellow; length, 23 cm.; spread, 38 cm.; weight, 57 grammes. Stomach contents: remains of beetles.

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86. *Acanthagenys rufogularis*, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater.—Seen at Lake Letty and at Mungeranie. Not numerous.

87. *Anthus australis*, Pipit.—Seen at intervals throughout the trip. Very common about Marree. Two nests found on 6th August, one with an egg and the other with three chicks about four days old.

88. *Mirafra javanica*, Bushlark.—A single bird seen on Goyder's Lagoon.

89. *Taeniopygia castanotis*, Chestnut-eared Finch.—Seen in thousands wherever water was anywhere near at hand. They were nesting under the veranda at Clifton Hills H.S., and in all sorts of situations along the Diamantina and on Goyder's Lagoon. They were the commonest birds in the district.

90. *Corvus bennetti*, Short-billed Crow.—Only identified twice with certainty, once at Kallabore and once near Clifton Hills. They are difficult to identify unless in company with their larger relative.

91. *Corvus ceciliae*, the Crow.—Very common, but not in large flocks. They were breeding in the coolabahs on the Diamantina and Goyder's Lagoon.

92. *Gymnorhina tibicen*, Black-backed Magpie.—Quite rare. Only about a dozen individuals were seen throughout the trip, mostly along the Diamantina.
