

Notes on Birds Observed at Myrtle Springs Station, S.A.

By Chris. Cain.

I met with the following species during the four months I spent at Myrtle Springs Station, sixteen miles north-west of Copley. Copley is 305 miles in a direct line north from Adelaide.

Emu, *Dromaius novæ-hollandiæ*.—Uncommon. Only four birds were noted—drinking at the station well.

Button (Little) Quail, *Turnix velox*.—I have flushed several while riding through the grass; they are not common.

Peaceful Dove, *Geopelia placida*.—Seen mostly at troughs and waterholes. Not so plentiful as the Diamond Dove.

Diamond Dove, *Geopelia cuneata*.—Plentiful all over the run, and especially at Tea-Tree Swamp.

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Common Bronzewing, *Phaps chalcoptera*.—Not plentiful. I have flushed them during the day while riding along, but the majority I have seen going to or coming from water at dusk.

Crested Pigeon, *Ocyphaps lophotes*.—These birds are to be found almost anywhere, especially on the open plains.

Little Grebe, *Podiceps ruficollis*.—They were fairly plentiful on Tea-Tree Swamp, where, I think, they nested, as there were young ones swimming on the swamp.

Gull-billed Tern, *Gelochelidon nilotica*.—Several pairs nested on an island in Half and Half Swamp. It might have been the remains of a colony, but I could not determine whether it had been so, as I could not visit the island. Several broods were swimming on the swamp.

Caspian Tern, *Hydroprogne caspia*.—On my first trip to Lake Weatherstone in March, 1932, these birds had nested on this lake, as there were young ones everywhere.

Silver Gull, *Larus novae-hollandiae*.—These birds were numerous on Lake Weatherstone. The overseer, Mr. V. MacIntosh, told me they nested freely there last November (1933).

Red-kneed Dotterel, *Erythrogonys cinctus*.—There were three birds, which I took for this species, at Playfair Dam.

Banded Plover, *Zonifer tricolor*.—Very plentiful after a big rain, but as soon as the surface water starts to dry up most of them leave.

Australian Dotterel, *Peltohyas australis*.—These birds are very common on the gibber plains, where they nest freely in a good season.

White-headed Stilt, *Himantopus leucocephalus*.—This species is to be seen in pairs on dams and swamps on this station.

Red-necked Avocet, *Recurvirostra novae-hollandiae*.—This species is to be found on Lake Weatherstone, Tea-Tree and Half and Half Swamps.

Wedge-tailed Eagle, *Uroaetus audax*.—Only isolated birds are to be seen, excepting at the lambing periods, when they pay us a visit from the cattle country.

Whistling Eagle, *Haliastur sphenurus*.—Noted in several instances. One nest contained two young.

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Little Falcon, *Falco longipennis*.—Observed chasing their prey, small birds, down the creeks.

Black Falcon, *Falco subniger*.—Noted in the creek at the homestead well. Another bird I found dead, evidently poisoned.

Nankeen Kestrel, *Falco cenchroides*.—Rather plentiful.

Boobook Owl, *Ninox boobook*.—Not common. I have flushed this species on several occasions.

Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*.—Only one bird observed, and it was flushed from a large hollow in a gumtree in the creek at the Myrtle Springs woolshed.

Little Corella (Bare-eyed Cockatoo), *Kakatoe sanguinea*.—This species is in large numbers at the station creek, where they drink at the troughs. These birds, when in large numbers, make a terrible mess of the water at troughs, and render it undrinkable for stock.

Galah, *Kakatoe roseicapilla*.—These birds are also plentiful, and along with the Little Corellas cause damage to the waters,

Mallee (Ringneck) Parrot, *Barnardius barnardi*.—Not common. Sometimes a pair is noted in the creeks.

Mulga-Parrot, *Psephotus varius*.—This beautiful Parrot is sometimes to be seen at the troughs. It is by no means common.

Blue Bonnet, *Psephotus haematogaster*.—Not common. At intervals I have seen this species in threes or fours.

Budgerygah (Shell Parrot), *Melopsittacus undulatus*.—Rather common.

Owlet Nightjar, *Aegotheles cristata*.—I have noted this bird in the sandhill country.

Magpie-Lark, *Grallina cyanoleuca*.—There is a pair about the homestead well. They nested in a gumtree in the creek and reared three young.

Crested Bellbird, *Oreoica gutturalis*.—I have seen only two birds, although I have heard this species calling on many occasions.

Wedgebill, *Sphenostoma cristatum*.—Plentiful, especially in the sandhill country.

Chestnut Quail-Thrush, *Cinclosoma castanotum*.—This species is to be found in the stony hills surrounding the homestead.

Cinnamon Quail-Thrush, *Cinclosoma cinnamomeum*.—Rather plentiful all over the run. I have seen in several instances

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amongst the remains of a fox's meal, the feathers belonging to this species.

White-browed Babbler, *Pomatostomus superciliosus*.—Common. They are sometimes seen in company with the Wedgebill.

White-fronted Chat, *Epthianura albifrons*, Crimson Chat (*E. tricolor*), and Orange Chat (*E. aurifrons*).—Plentiful in winter time.

Gibber-Bird, *Ashbyia lovensis*.—Rare. I have seen this species on several occasions on the gibber plains.

White-browed Wood-Swallow, *Artamus superciliosus*.—Exceedingly common.

Singing Honeyeater, *Meliphaga virescens*.—Plentiful.

White-plumed Honeyeater, *Meliphaga penicillata*.—Plentiful.

Crow, *Corvus ceciliae*.—This species is plentiful all over the station.

Black-backed Magpie, *Gymnorhina tibicen*.

White-backed Magpie, *Gymnorhina hypoleuca*.

These two species are found, but they are very scarce.

The following species have also been observed:—Cockatoo Parrot (*Leptolophus hollandicus*); Red-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon pyrrhopygius*); Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*); White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoecca leucosterna*); Tree Martin (*Hylochelidon nigricans*); Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*); Rusty Field-Wren (*Calamanthus isabellinus*); Rufous Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus mathewsi*); Turquoise Wren (*Malurus callainus*); Blue-and-White Wren (*Malurus cyanotus*); Dusky Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*); Brown Treecreeper (*Chimacteris picumnus*); Yellow-throated Miner (*Myzantha flavigula*); Pipit (*Anthus australis*).
