

The Birds of the Langhorne's Creek District.

By T. Brandon.

The following ninety-two species of birds were noted from 1933 to 1936, during the months of April, May, June, and July, within a radius of some ten miles from the township of Langhorne's Creek. That town is situated thirty-five miles in a direct line south-east of Adelaide, and is seven miles from the mouth of the Bremer River into Lake Alexandrina:—Mallee Fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*); Stubble Quail (*Coturnix pectoralis*); Little Quail (*Turnix velox*); Bronzewing (*Phaps* sp.); Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*); Black-tailed Native-Hen (*Tribonyx ventralis*); Blue Bald Coot (*Porphyrio melanotus*); Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis*); Hoary-headed Grebe (*Podiceps poliocephalus*); Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax ater*); Little Pied Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*); Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*); Red-kneed Dotterel (*Erythrogonys cinctus*); Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*); Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*); Red-capped Dotterel (*Charadrius ruficapillus*); Black-fronted Dotterel (*Charadrius melanops*); White-headed Stilt (*Himantopus leucocephalus*); Southern Stone-Curlew (*Burhinus magnirostris*); White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*); Straw-necked Ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*); Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*); White-faced Heron (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*); White-necked Heron (*Notophox pacifica*); Nankeen Night Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*); Cape Barren Goose (*Cereopsis novae-hollandiae*); Black Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*); Mountain Duck (*Casarca tadornoides*); Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*); Chest-

nut Teal (*Querquedula castanea*); Grey Teal (*Querquedula gibberifrons*); Blue-winged Shoveler (*Spatula rhynchotis*); Pink-eared Duck (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*); Freckled Duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*); Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*); Swamp-Harrier (*Circus approximans*); Australian Goshawk (*Astur fasciatus*); Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*); Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*); Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus axillaris*); Little Falcon (*Falco longipennis*); Black Falcon (*Falco subniger*); Brown Hawk (*Falco berigora*); Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*); Boobook Owl (*Ninox boobook*); Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*); Musk Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta concinna*); Purple-crowned Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*); Galah (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*); Cockatoo Parrot (*Leptolophus hollandicus*); Adelaide Rosella (*Platycercus adelaidae*); Ringneck Parrot (*Barnardius barnardi*); Red-backed Parrot (*Psephotus haematonotus*); Budgerygah (*Melopsittacus undulatus*); Owlet-Nightjar (*Aegotheles cristata*); Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*); Fork-tailed Swift (*Micropus pacificus*); Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*); Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*); Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*); White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*); Fairy Martin (*Hylochelidon ariel*); Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura flabellifera*); Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*); Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura inquieta*); Jacky Winter (*Microeca fascians*); Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*); Grey Shrike Thrush (*Colluricincla harmonica*); Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*); Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*); White-browed Babbler (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*); White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*); Crimson Chat (*Epthianura tricolor*); Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*); Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus cruralis*); Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus australis*); Superb Blue Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*); Masked Wood-Swallow (*Artamus personatus*); Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*); Red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus ornatus*); Grey-backed Silvereye (*Zosterops halmaturina*); Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*); White-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga penicillata*); Yellow-winged Honeyeater (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*); Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*); Red Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*); Pipit (*Anthus australis*); Diamond-Firetail (*Zonaegehinthus guttatus*); Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*); Raven (*Corvus coronoides*); Grey Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus torquatus*); White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).

Mallee-Fowl.—These birds can be found about six to eight miles north-east of Langhorne's Creek, out by Chance's Line. The main scrub starts about five miles north-east of Langhorne's Creek and runs unbroken for miles towards Murray Bridge, and the Mallee-Fowls are found right through this scrub. I have never seen this species myself, but have been told about the birds by a resident of the district who had seen them in the scrub quite recently*.

Southern Stone-Curlew.—Whilst I was at a vineyard at Langhorne's Creek a ganger told me, on or about 20th June, 1936, that he had heard a Curlew or Curlews calling near his house early in the morning. He added that it was the first-time he had heard them for years, but they used to be fairly plentiful there.

Cape Barren Goose.—I have only seen these Geese in this district on one occasion in May, 1935, about half-way between Point Sturt and Milang along the main road. There were about twenty or thirty birds feeding in the stubble paddocks near the road as I went past, and when I approached they flew across to the samphire bordering the waterfront of the Lake†.

Chestnut Teal.—A duck-shooter brought home one of this species with some Grey Teal whilst I was at Langhorne's Creek this year.

Black Falcon.—At the vineyard I was told that a pair of these birds nested in the district in 1935, and I saw a pair fly over whilst we were at work early in June, 1936. I could not find a nest.

Fork-tailed Swift.—Early in April, 1934, these birds were seen one evening flying around in great numbers at about 300 feet, and on the following day they were still flying about, but not in such numbers, and this time only about fifty feet up, so Mr. Natt shot one for identification purposes. On reference to the bird book I could see that it was the Fork-tailed Swift. The birds gradually disappeared, until by night-time there was none left. The weather was very thundery whilst the birds were about. Mr. Natt said that he had only seen them there once before, and on that occasion they acted similarly to this time.

(* Last month representations were made to the S.A. Government to dedicate 1,602 acres of this scrub as a National Fauna and Flora Reserve for the especial benefit of the Mallee-Fowls.—Editors.)

† Most probably about the sanctuary at Reedy Point, Lake Alexandrina.—Editors.

Pallid Cuckoo.—These birds suddenly appeared about the middle of June, 1936, and there were a few flying about when I left, towards the end of July. On calm, cloudy days these birds appear to be very noisy.

Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo.—This bird is known to some of the local people as the Rain-bird. On or about 15th July, 1936, I heard this species calling, and on drawing attention to it I was told it was their "Rain-bird." I have not heard this species calling before this visit.

Crimson Chat.—In March, 1933, I saw several of this species in the company of White-fronted Chats. I have not seen them since that year, although I have visited the district at the same period of the year.

Black-shouldered Kite.—These birds were first seen by me in this district in 1936. On 16th May, 1936, a pair was found building a nest in a redgum out in an open paddock; on 30th May there were two eggs in the nest; these eggs were taken on 7th June. The birds then left that nest and began building another nest about 13th June in one of some thick redgums growing in a dry swamp. Two eggs were in this nest on 4th July, and on 11th July I took three eggs from the nest. Both nests were made of sticks, lined with gum-leaves, and were rather shallow. They were built on very thin limbs and were difficult to get to.