

Birds of the Morgan and the Cadell Districts, S.A.

By E. F. Boehm, Sutherlands, S.A.

The observations recorded in this contribution were largely made by the writer during numerous visits to the area over the past fifteen years. In order to give a complete list of the species of birds known to occur there, however, several species not observed by him, but which have been recorded by other observers, have been included. Notes in which birds of the area are referred to have been published by the writer in the "South Australian Ornithologist," Vol. IX, p. 267, and Vol. X, pp. 18, 72, and 217.

Papers and notes by other observers which have been consulted are by Edwin Ashby (*ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 7), J. Niel McGilp (*ibid.*, Vol. XII, p. 144), F. M. Angel (*ibid.*, Vol. XIII, p. 134), and D. W. Brummitt (*ibid.*, Vol. XIV, p. 41).

Early bird observers who passed through the area were Captain Charles Sturt (1830), John Gould (1839), and Dr. A. M. Morgan (1885).

The total number of native species listed in the present contribution is 130, and there are three introduced species.

Dromaius novae-hollandiae, Emu.—Scarce. Single birds and small flocks appear at times. Half-grown birds have been seen, and it appears that the species breeds in the pastoral country north of Morgan.

Leipoa ocellata, Mallee Fowl.—Appears to be extinct. Old mounds have been observed.

Coturnix pectoralis, Stubble Quail.—Numerous in cereal crops some years. Breeds.

Turnix velox, Little Quail.—Common in grassland and cereal crops some years. Breeds.

Geopelia placida, Peaceful Dove.—Frequently seen in the river valley. Breeds.

Geopelia cuneata, Diamond Dove.—Scarce. Only a few have been observed.

Phaps chalcoptera, Bronzewing Pigeon.—Occasionally seen in the scrub away from the river. Sometimes appears in the river valley. Breeds.

Phaps elegans, Brush Bronzewing.—A doubtful record by Ashby.

Ocyphaps lophotes, Crested Pigeon.—Frequently observed. Breeds.

Tribonyx ventralis, Black-tailed Native Hen.—Large flocks occur some years. Small flocks and single birds are frequently seen in lignum (*Muehlenbeckia Cunninghamii*) thickets of the river valley.

Gallinula tenebrosa, Dusky Moorhen.—Recorded by Ashby.

Podiceps ruficollis, Little Grebe.—Occasionally seen on the lagoons at flood time. Breeds.

Podiceps poliocephalus, Hoary-headed Grebe.—As for *P. ruficollis*.

Phalacrocorax carbo, Black Cormorant.—Frequently observed along the river, and at lagoons at flood time.

Phalacrocorax ater, Little Black Cormorant.—Not uncommon along the river and at lagoons at flood time.

Phalacrocorax varius, Pied Cormorant.—Frequently observed along the river, and at lagoons at flood time.

Microcarbo melanoleucus, Little Pied Cormorant.—Not uncommon along the river.

Pelecanus conspicillatus, Pelican.—Single birds and small flocks noted on the river, and on lagoons at flood time.

Larus novae-hollandiae, Silver Gull.—Small flocks and single birds on lagoons at flood time, and occasionally on the river.

Erythrogonyx cinctus, Red-kneed Dotterel.—At lagoons at flood time, and occasionally along the river.

Lobibyx novae-hollandiae, Spur-winged Plover.—Frequently observed along the river.

Zonifer tricolor, Banded Plover.—Not uncommon. Breeds.

Charadrius ruficapillus, Red-capped Dotterel.—Frequently seen along the water's edge at lagoons and occasionally along the river.

Charadrius melanops, Black-fronted Dotterel.—Abundant along the river and at lagoons.

Himantopus leucocephalus, White-headed Stilt.—Occasionally noted at lagoons at flood time. Rarely along the river when the water is low.

Erolia acuminata, Sharp-tailed Stint.—Small flocks at lagoons when these contain water. Rarely along the river.

Burhinus magnirostris, Stone-Curlew.—Scarce. Frequently heard calling at night.

Platalea flavipes, Yellow-billed Spoonbill.—Not often observed. Small flocks observed at lagoons when these contain water.

Egretta alba, White Egret.—Scarce. Single birds and pairs occasionally occur along the river. Pairs at lagoons when these contain water.

Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae, White-fronted Heron.—Frequently seen. Breeds.

Notophoxyx pacifica, White-necked Heron.—Rarely observed.

Nycticorax caledonicus, Nankeen Night Heron.—Recorded by Brummitt.

Chenonetta jubata, Maned Goose.—Rarely observed.

Chenopsis atrata, Black Swan.—Single birds and small flocks on lagoons at flood time, and occasionally on the river.

Casarca tadornoides, Mountain Duck.—Rarely observed.

Anas superciliosa, Black Duck.—Flocks on the river and on lagoons when the latter contain water. Breeds.

Querquedula gibberifrons, Grey Teal.—More numerous than the Black Duck. Breeds.

Circus assimilis, Spotted Harrier.—Not often seen.

Circus approximans, Swamp Harrier.—Observed at the lignum thickets at flood time.

Astur novae-hollandiae, Grey Goshawk.—A bird seen near Morgan by the late Dr. Morgan, in 1885, was identified by him as this species.* One wonders whether the identification was correct. It appears that there is no authentic South Australian specimen of the Grey Goshawk in existence, and any sight record of the species must be treated cautiously.

Uroaetus aulax, Wedge-tailed Eagle.—Occasionally observed.

Accipiter cirrocephalus, Collared Sparrowhawk.—Not uncommon. Several male birds have been seen at no great distance. Appears to feed chiefly on small birds.†

Hieraetus morphnoides, Little Eagle.—Rarely observed; in the scrub away from the river.

Haliastur sphenurus, Whistling Eagle.—The common large bird of prey along the river valley. Breeds.

Falco longipennis, Little Falcon.—Occasionally seen throughout the area. Small birds fall victims to this species.

Falco berigora, Brown Hawk.—Frequently observed. Breeds.

Falco cenchroides, Nankeen Kestrel.—Not uncommon. Breeds.

Ninox boobook, Boobook Owl.—Most often seen in the river valley. Apparently breeds.

Tyto alba, Barn Owl.—Rarely observed.

Glossopsitta concinna, Musk Lorikeet.—Occasionally seen in the river valley.

Glossopsitta porphyrocephala, Purple-crowned Lorikeet.—Frequently observed in small flocks throughout the area. Apparently breeds.

Kakatoe galerita, White Cockatoo.—Small flocks and pairs frequently observed in the river valley. Breeds.

* [This record is open to doubt.—Eds.]

† [Sight records are doubtful.—Eds.]

Kakatoe leadbeateri, Pink Cockatoo.—Pairs and small flocks occasionally observed.

Kakatoe roseicapilla, Galah.—Abundant. Breeds.

Leptolophus hollandicus, Cockatiel.—Numerous some years. Breeds.

Polytelis anthopeplus, Regent Parrot.—Not uncommon in the irrigated area at Cadell when the peaches and certain other fruits ripen. Occasionally seen about Morgan. Flocks visit oat-crops in the river valley at times.

Platycercus flaveolus, Yellow Rosella.—Numerous in the river valley. Is fond of many kinds of cultivated fruit. Breeds. Most of the birds observed are of a dull colour.

Barnardius barnardi, Ringneck (Mallee) Parrot.—Not uncommon. Breeds.

Psephotus haematogaster, Blue Bonnet.—Rare. Inhabits the scrub away from the river valley.

Psephotus haemotonotus, Red-backed Parrot.—Numerous. Breeds throughout the area.

Psephotus varius, Mulga Parrot.—Frequently seen. Breeds.

Melopsittacus undulatus, Budgerigar.—Numerous some years. Breeds.

Podargus strigoides, Tawny Frogmouth.—Rare. Generally seen in scrub away from the river valley.

Dacelo gigas, Kookaburra.—Frequently observed in the river valley. Breeds.

Halcyon pyrrhopygius, Red-backed Kingfisher.—Rarely observed.

Halcyon sanctus, Sacred Kingfisher.—More often seen than the Red-backed Kingfisher.

Merops ornatus, Bee-eater.—Numerous at times. Apparently breeds.

Micropus pacificus, Forked-tailed Swift.—Flocks appear during the summer at times when the weather is thundery. The birds have been observed flying to and fro over a recently irrigated lucerne paddock.

Cuculus pallidus, Pallid Cuckoo.—Familiar bird in spring, when it is often heard calling.

Hirundo neoxena, Welcome Swallow.—Common. Breeds throughout the area.

Cheramoeca leucosterna, White-backed Swallow.—Frequently observed. Breeds.

Hylochelidon nigricans, Tree Martin.—Observed in the river valley and among tall timber away from the river. Breeds.

Hylochelidon ariel, Fairy Martin.—Numerous in the river valley. Many nesting colonies have been seen at suitable cliffs.

Rhipidura flabellifera, Grey Fantail.—Only single birds have been observed.

Rhipidura leucophrys, Willic Wagtail.—Common throughout the area. Breeds.

Seisura inquieta, Restless Flycatcher.—Not numerous. Breeds.

Microeca fascinans, Jacky Winter.—Frequently observed. Most often seen in scrub away from the river valley. Breeds.

Petroica goodenovii, Red-capped Robin.—Not numerous.

Melanodryas cucullata, Hooded Robin.—Uncommon. Seen in scrub away from the river valley. Breeds.

Pachycephala rufiventris, Rufous Whistler.—Occasionally observed.

Pachycephala inornata, Gilbert Whistler.—Rare. Breeds in the scrub away from the river valley.

Colluricincla harmonica, Grey Shrike Thrush.—Familiar bird throughout the area. Breeds.

Grallina cyanoleuca, Magpie Lark.—Numerous in the river valley. Occasionally seen away from the river. Breeds.

Oreoica gutturalis, Crested Bell-Bird.—Rare. Observed in scrub away from the river valley.

Pteropodocys maxima, Ground Cuckoo Shrike.—Very rare visitor.

Coracina novae-hollandiae, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike.—Frequently observed throughout the area. Breeds.

Lalage tricolor, White-winged Triller.—Not uncommon some years.

Pomatostomus superciliosus, White-browed Babbler.—Common. Small flocks seen near houses at times. Breeds.

Epthianura albifrons, White-fronted Chat.—Numerous some years. Breeds.

Epthianura aurifrons, Orange Chat.—Rare. Occasionally seen in the river valley.

Smicrornis brevirostris, Brown Weebill.—Very numerous throughout the area.

Aphelocephala leucopsis, Eastern Whiteface. — Not uncommon. Breeds.

Acanthiza uropygialis, Chestnut-tailed Thornbill. — Not uncommon. Observed in the river valley as well as in the dry scrub away from the river.

Acanthiza chrysorrhoa, Yellow-tailed Thornbill. — Common. Noted breeding in the river valley. Frequently seen in orchards and gardens.

Malurus assimilis, Purple-backed Wren. — Rather numerous in the lignum thickets of the river valley, and occasionally seen in the dry scrub away from the river. Apparently breeds.

Artamus leucorhynchus, White-breasted Wood Swallow. — Occasionally observed along the river valley only.

Artamus melanops, Black-faced Wood Swallow. — Not uncommon in the scrub away from the river. Occasionally seen in the river valley.

Artamus personatus, Masked Wood Swallow. — Common in some years. Breeds.

Artamus cyanopterus, Dusky Wood Swallow. — Frequently observed throughout the area. Breeds.

Neositta plicata, Black-capped Sittella. — Occasionally seen in the dry scrub away from the river.

Climacteris picumnus, Brown Tree-Creeper. — Common in timber throughout the area. Breeds.

Dicaeum hirundinaceum, Mistle-toe Bird. — Referred to by Brummitt. The writer has searched for the species where *Loranthus* is common, but without success.

Pardalotus ornatus, Red-tipped Pardalote. — Common throughout the area. Breeds.

Zosterops halmaturina, Grey-backed Silvercye. — Not uncommon in orchards in the river valley.

Melithreptus brevirostris, Brown-headed Honeyeater. — Frequently observed.

Gliciphila albifrons, White-fronted Honeyeater. — Common. Most often seen in the river valley.

Meliphaga virescens, Singing Honeyeater. — Frequently observed. Breeds.

Meliphaga ornata, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater. — Not uncommon in the dry scrub away from the river. Occasionally seen in the river valley. Breeds.

Meliphaga cratitia, Purple-gaped Honeyeater.—Gould, who explored the scrub bordering the western bank of the River Murray nearly to Morgan, in 1839, saw this species during his journey. It does not appear to have been recorded for the Morgan and Cadell area as yet.

Meliphaga penicillata, White-plumed Honeyeater.—Exceedingly numerous in the river valley. Rarely seen in the dry scrub away from the river. Breeds.

Myzantha melanocephala, Noisy Miner.—Common in the river valley. Breeds.

Myzantha flavigula, Yellow-throated Miner.—Not uncommon in certain spots in the scrub away from the river valley. On rare occasions a few birds have been seen in the river valley among the Noisy Miners. Similarly, a few Noisy Miners sometimes invade the territory of the yellow-throated species.

Anthochaera carunculata, Red Wattle-bird.—Frequently seen in the orchards in the river valley. Destructive to fruit. Rare in the scrub away from the river. Breeds.

Acanthagenys rufogularis, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater.—Numerous throughout the area. Breeds.

Entomyzon cyanotis, Blue-faced Honeyeater.—Recorded by Brummitt.

Philemon citreogularis, Little Friar Bird.—Recorded by Brummitt.

Anthus australis, Pipit.—Frequently seen throughout the area. Breeds.

Mirafra javanica, Horsfield Bushlark.—Rarely observed. Generally seen over cereal crops in the spring.

Zonaeginthus guttatus, Diamond Firetail.—Not uncommon in the river valley. Breeds.

Taeniopygia castanotis, Zebra Finch.—Flocks appear in some years. A few pairs are generally seen throughout the area. Breeds.

Corvus coronoides, Raven.—Common. Destructive to fruit. Breeds.

Corvus bennetti, Little Crow.—Rarc. Has been observed in the towns of Morgan and Cadell. Some birds are remarkably tame.*

Corcorax melanorhamphus, White-winged Chough.—Occasionally seen in tall timber. Apparently breeds.

[* ? Young birds.—Eds.]

Strepera melanoptera.—Black-winged Currawong. — Rarely observed. Not seen in the river valley.

Cracticus nigrogularis, Pied Butcher-Bird. — Occasionally observed and heard calling in the river valley only.

Cracticus torquatus, Grey Butcher-Bird.—Observed throughout the area and often heard calling in late summer and in autumn.

Gymnorhina tibicen, Black-backed Magpie.—Common south and east of the river and in the river valley. A few among the white-backed species north and west of the river. Breeds.

Gymnorhina hypoleuca, White-backed Magpie.—Common west and north of the river. Occasionally seen in the territory of the Black-backed Magpie. Breeds.

Introduced Species.

Carduelis carduelis, Goldfinch.—Rarely observed in the orchards and gardens of the river valley.

Passer domesticus, House Sparrow.—Common in the towns and at homesteads. Breeds.

Sturnus vulgaris, Starling.—Large flocks appear in the river valley and damage various kinds of fruit during the summer months. A useful species in the agricultural and pastoral areas. Breeds.
