

## BIRD OBSERVATIONS IN THE SOUTH-EAST AND ELSEWHERE

By BRIAN GLOVER.

From January 16 to 24, 1954, in company with R. Schodde, J. Merry and F. Chapman, the writer travelled over 1,800 miles, through the South-East of South Australia, South-West Victoria and the Grampians, north to Echuca on the River Murray, west to the Hattah Lakes, south to Naracoorte, and back to Adelaide via Keith.

A notable day was spent on January 23 in the Naracoorte area. In the morning we visited Bool Lagoon, and in the afternoon toured the area with Mr. A. R. Attiwell, 113 species of birds being identified.

Of more than two hundred species recorded for the trip, the following are considered worthy of publication.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus* — Banded Stilt. Two flocks seen along the south-eastern end of the Coorong, the first of about 100, all in adult plumage, the second an enormous flock of several thousand birds. We considered 5,000 birds would not be an exaggeration.

*Stiltia isabella*—Australian Pratincole. One at Waltowa Swamp, this being the most southerly record of this species for South Australia. The black under-wing is very prominent in flight.

*Gruus rubicundus*—Brolga. Two parties of 11 and 19 birds at Bool Lagoon.

*Plegadis falcinellus*—Glossy Ibis. Two flocks, each of about 70 birds at Bool Lagoon.

*Egretta intermedia*—Plumed Egret. A single bird at Bool Lagoon. Size approximately that of the White-faced Heron (*Notophox novaehollandiae*); the bill was light and the legs dark.

*Tyto alba*—Barn Owl. One dead on road near Tailem Bend. One at Bool Lagoon.

*Glossopsitta pusilla*—Little Lorikeet. The least numerous of the four species of Lorikeet recorded at Naracoorte. Only two were seen, and the species was heard on one other occasion.

*Kakatoe tenuirostris*—Corella. A flock was seen coming in to water at Naracoorte.

*Hirundapus caudacutus*—Spine-tailed Swift. A flock of about 20 at Naracoorte. This species differs considerably from the Fork-tailed Swift (*Apus pacificus*). When viewed from below the wings appear thicker and not so backswept; the body appears shorter and thicker, and the general appearance, especially when gliding, is hawk-like (particularly like the Peregrine Falcon—*Falco peregrinus*), not swallow-like as is *Apus*. Also *Apus* is much darker (appearing black from below) and with a white rump.

*Apus pacificus*—Fork-tailed Swift. One near Callington; one at Naracoorte.

*Falcunculus frontatus*—Eastern Shrike-tit. Recorded at Naracoorte. There are few records of this species for the South-East.

*Coracina robusta*—Little Cuckoo-Shrike. Two birds seen at Naracoorte.

[*Oreocincla lunulata*—Ground Thrush. Not seen in S.A. this trip but one was seen by the writer at Clarke Park, Cape Northumberland in April 1949.]

*Acanthiza reguloides*—Buff-tailed Thornbill. A flock seen in scrub three miles east of Coonalpyn. As this is well outside the known range of this species a specimen was collected to confirm our identification, and later checked at the S.A. Museum.

*Hylacola* sp.—Ground Wren. A *Hylacola*, almost certainly *H. pyrrhopygia*, was seen in the teatrees over water at Bool Lagoon. A pair were also seen in Stringybark-Banksia scrub near the Naracoorte Caves (also considered to be *H. pyrrhopygia*).

*Malurus melanotus*—Black-backed Wren. Seen in scrub three miles east of Coonalpyn. This is a considerable southern extension of the known range of this species. At least one fully plumaged male seen.

*Melithreptus gularis*—Black-chinned Honeyeater. Recorded at Naracoorte. There are few records of this species for the South-East.

*Zanthoniza phrygia*—Regent Honeyeater. One seen at Naracoorte. Terrill and Rix in their "The Birds of South Australia, Their

Distribution and Habitat," *South Australian Ornithologist*, Vol. 19, pp. 53-100, 1950, do not include the South-East in the range of this species.

*Entomyzon cyanotis*—Blue-faced Honey-eater. A pair with young at Naracoorte. One young bird was still in the nest (an old Magpie's nest) and at least one other was in the nest tree, a large Red Gum.

*Gymnorhina tibicen*—Black-backed Magpie. Odd birds between Tailem Bend and Ashville. One on the beach at Robe.

### VICTORIA

*Accipiter cirrocephalus*—Collared Sparrowhawk. One at Nelson.

*Hieraaetus morphnoides*—Little Eagle. Two between Ararat and Bendigo.

*Milvus migrans*—Fork-tailed Kite. Two at Lake Hattah.

*Elanus notatus*—Black-shouldered Kite. One at Portland.

*Callocephalon fimbriatum*—Gang-Gang Cockatoo. Seen frequently in the Grampians.

*Rhipidura rufifrons*—Rufous Fantail. One seen, another heard, in timber 15 miles east of Portland.

*Oreocincla lunulata*—Ground Thrush. Several seen in the Grampians (Hall's Gap area).

*Zanthoniza phrygia*—Regent Honeyeater. Two seen at Hall's Gap.

*Meliphaga fusca*—Fuscous Honeyeater. A pair with flying young at the Sister Rocks, Stawell. The species is almost devoid of field marks. The lores are black and there is an indistinct yellowish ear plume. The call is not unlike that of the Yellow-fronted Honeyeater (*M. plumula*).

*Meliphaga melanops*—Yellow-tufted Honeyeater. Seen at Hall's Gap and the Sister Rocks (numerous at the latter locality).

*Corvus bennetti*—Little Crow. Between Swan Hill and Hattah up to 50 per cent. of the "Crows" seen on two short stops were this species. During our one day spent at the site of the 1951 R.A.O.U. Camp-out at Lake Hattah, an estimated 20 to 30 per cent. of the "Crows" seen within a mile of our camp were *C. bennetti*, but two or three miles to the south-east a large flock consisted almost entirely of Ravens (*C. coronoides*). What the position was during the R.A.O.U.

Camp-out is uncertain, as neither the writer, nor anyone else at the Camp-out was aware of the field differences between the two species at that time. The only positive record was of a dead bird at Lenbrook Plain (south of Lake Hattah). (Jack Jones—"The Hattah Lakes Camp-out, October 1951," *The Emu*, Vol. 52, pp. 225-254, 1952.)

*Strepera melanoptera*—Black-winged Currawong. One of two birds seen at Hall's Gap had a white patch on each wing, and thus was a "White-winged Black-winged Currawong." The calls of both these birds differed from those of Mount Lofty Range birds, being more like those of Pied Currawongs (*S. graculina*) heard by the writer at Marysville in December 1953.

*Gymnorhina* spp.—Magpies. Apart from one Black-backed individual not far north of Ararat, all Magpies seen south of Bendigo were the White-backed (*G. hypoleuca*). From a few miles north of Bendigo all birds seen were the Black-backed (*G. tibicen*). On the road south from Hattah, the first White-backed Magpie was seen south of Warracknabeal.

*Passer montanus*—Tree Sparrow. Seen at Echuca.

### NEW SOUTH WALES

An afternoon, night and morning were spent on the banks of the Murray River at Moama—directly opposite Echuca.

*Platycercus* spp.—Rosellas. Both the Yellow (*P. yaveolus*) and Eastern (*P. eximius*) Rosellas were seen.

*Falcunculus frontatus*—Eastern Shrike-tit. One seen.

*Melithreptus gularis*—Black-chinned Honeyeater. Although not seen, the unmistakable call of this species was heard on several occasions.

*Philemon corniculatus*—Noisy Friar-bird. Although not as plentiful as the Little Friar-bird (*P. citreogularis*), this species was relatively numerous. A number of immature birds of both species were also present.

*Oriolus sagittatus*—Olive-backed Oriole. Two pairs seen.

*Passer montanus*—Tree Sparrow. Several on the banks of the Murray.