

## EXCURSION TO MOOROOK

By R. SCHODDE and BRIAN GLOVER

An outing by members of the Association was held on Labor Day week-end (October 9-11, 1954) at Moorook on the River Murray. Those present were Mr. E. F. Boehm, of Sutherlands, Mr. and Mrs. B. Glover, Mr. and Mrs. S. Sanders, of Moorook, Mr. R. Schodde, Malcolm Wachtel, of Moorook, and Mr. and Mrs. I. Wilson. We are very grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Sanders for accommodating us so generously during our visit to Moorook.

On Saturday, October 9, we spent 2 hours in mallee and Black-oak scrub 6 miles north-east of Sutherlands in the early morning, 1 hour in the Mt. Mary Black-oak, 3 miles east of the town (mid-morning), 3 hours at midday on lagoons south of the river at Morgan, 1 hour at Hart and Ramco lagoons, Waikerie, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour on Waikerie mallee (mid-afternoon) and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours on lagoons about Moorook, late afternoon.

On Sunday we spent 2 hours on Moorook lagoons (early morning), 6 hours in mallee south-west of Moorook (mid-morning to early afternoon), and 2 hours on Moorook lagoons in the late afternoon.

On Monday we were on Moorook lagoons ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours early morning), and 2 hours about Moorook lagoons (mid-morning). Return journey was via Overland Corner, where an hour's stop was made at mid-day.

We have made rough estimates of the numbers and distribution of many species and an outline of the plant communities and associations, or types of habitats between Eudunda and Moorook is given below.

Except for a sparse ground flora, and the presence of much surface water, the plant community of the river valley is typically one of a savannah woodland. The upper storey is dominated by the Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and the rough-barked River Box (*E. largiflorens*) association. On

sand ridges in the river valley at Morgan are large numbers of bottle-brush (*Callistemon brachyandrus*). The ground flora is dominated by lignum (*Muehlenbeckia cunninghamii*), especially in frequently inundated areas. Most lagoons are margined with sedges.

Away from the river, a dry mallee community exists, although at Morgan, the mallee begins to merge into the shrub-steppe community of the inland. Three distinct associations are present. A *Eucalyptus oleosa*—*Myoporum platycarpum* association with *E. brachycalyx* and *E. gracilis*. West of Sutherlands, there is much Peppermint mallee (*E. odorata*). The middle tier dominant is Sheep-bush (*Geijera linearifolia*) and is numerous. The undergrowth is composed of xerophytic chenopods, particularly "Bindy-i" (*Bassia obliquicuspis*), Blue-bush (*Kochia sedifolia*), and *Zygophyllum* spp.

Black-oak (*Casuarina cristata*) association is found on the drier ridges near Bower, Mt. Mary, and Eba where it tends to replace the Eucalypt associations. Much False Sandalwood (*Myoporum platycarpum*) is found near Morgan. An extremely varied centre tier is represented by *Hakea leucoptera*, *Cassia sturtii*, *Exocarpus aphylla*, *Acacia colletioides*, *Heterodendron oleifolium*, *Eremophila* sp., and *Acacia* spp. A thick chenopodaceous ground flora is dominated by *Kochia sedifolia*, *Rhagodia spinescens*, and the genus *Atriplex*—saltbushes.

The mallee eucalypt association between Morgan and Moorook along the south side of the river is composed *E. pileata* (White mallee), *E. oleosa* (Red mallee), and *E. gracilis*. Centre tier dominants are scarce, but those noted were *Grevillea huegelii* and *Cassia eremophila*. *Acacia ligulata* and *Dodonaea attenuata* are common on sandy ridges. The under-storey, as usual, was chenopodaceous

but rather sparse, with *Kochia sedifolia* once more dominating. Near Morgan, small pockets of spinifex (*Triodia irritans*) were noted.

On the north side of the river, there exists a mixed association with all four mallees present.

Cleared lands are overwhelmingly dominated by "bindy-i" (*Bassia obliquicuspis*) and Spear-grass (*Stipa* spp.).

The following 135 species were noted on the excursion. Of these, 113 species were recorded on October 9.

#### PEACEFUL DOVE

(*Geopelia placida*)

Sparsely distributed on Red gum and Box flats. Three at Morgan, and 12 at Moorook.

#### BRONZEWING

(*Phaps chalcoptera*)

Several in Black-oak scrub on the Mt. Mary plains. Three birds also recorded in Moorook mallee.

#### CRESTED PIGEON

(*Ocyphaps lophotes*)

Widely distributed but not in great numbers. Three at Morgan, 1 at Waikerie, and 10 at Moorook.

#### CRAKE

(*Porzana* sp.)

Two Crakes seen at a distance on a swamp 2 miles south-east of Moorook.

#### NATIVE HEN

(*Tribonyx ventralis*)

Found on sedge and lignum borders of lagoons. Eleven counted at Morgan; 12 at Moorook.

#### MOORHEN

(*Gallinula tenebrosa*)

In small numbers on sheltered lagoons. A few birds seen at Moorook, feeding on Murray Duck-weed (*Azolla*).

#### SWAMP HEN

(*Porphyrio melanotus*)

Not common—probably through lack of suitable grassy feeding areas. Eight at Moorook and 2 birds noted in Bull-rushes (*Typha angustifolia*) at Hart's Lagoon, Waikerie.

#### COOT

(*Fulica atra*)

Numerous on open waters. A flock of about 200 birds had collected on Ramco Lagoon, near Waikerie.

#### CRESTED GREBE

(*Podiceps cristatus*)

Two observed on a lagoon at Morgan in a mixed flock of Black Duck and Grey Teal. Large size and 2-eared crest distinguish this species.

#### LITTLE GREBE

(*Podiceps ruficollis*)

On sheltered waters, two birds in breeding plumage were noted at Morgan only.

#### HOARY-HEADED GREBE

(*Podiceps poliocephalus*)

More numerous than the preceding species, and it seems to prefer more open waters. 10 noted at Morgan; 4 at Ramco lagoon?

#### CORMORANTS

(*Phalacrocorax*)

The following four species were well represented along the river: Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*), Pied Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax varius*), Little Pied Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*).

#### DARTER

(*Anhinga novae-hollandiae*)

One male bird was recorded at the Morgan punt. Five or 6 birds were present at Moorook swamps; and a pair at the Kingston punt.

#### PELICAN

(*Pelecanus conspicillatus*)

Many birds counted all along the river—about 150 at Lake Bonney.

#### CASPIAN TERN

(*Hydroprogne caspia*)

Noted at all stops in small numbers. At Moorook, no less than 9 birds were seen following each other one evening to a roosting place upstream.

#### SILVER GULL

(*Larus novae-hollandiae*)

A more scattered distribution than the preceding species, but in greater numbers.

#### RED-KNEED DOTTEREL

(*Erythrogonys cinctus*)

Three birds were noted on rough, swampy ground bordering a shallow, lignum-sheltered swamp at Morgan. Another 5 pairs frequented a similar habitat 2 miles south-east of Moorook. Three juvenile birds at Moorook completely lacked the black pectoral band. The crown was mottled black and brown, giving only the outline of the adult black

cap. The birds showed slight mottling on the back also.

**SPUR-WING PLOVER**  
(*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*)

A few recorded on the borders of each lagoon visited.

**BANDED PLOVER**  
(*Zonifer tricolor*)

A pair in Mr. Boehm's homestead yard at Sutherlands was our only record of this species.

**RED-CAPPED DOTTEREL**  
(*Charadrius ruficapillus*)

Ten birds on the borders of a lagoon, one mile north of Moorook; 2 birds on the swamp two miles south-east of the town.

**BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL**  
(*Charadrius melanops*)

The common dotterel of the Murray. Noted in pairs or small parties all along the river, and lagoons.

**WHITE-HEADED STILT**  
(*Himantopus leucocephalus*)

Eight birds observed on Hart's lagoon, Waikerie, and 5 at Moorook. Both lagoons were open and bare, with much mud showing.

**AVOCET**  
(*Recurvirostra novae-hollandiae*)

A block of 20 birds at Hart's lagoon was our only record of this species.

**LITTLE STINT**  
(*Erolia ruficollis*)

Four recorded on the sanctuary north-west of Moorook, feeding with Red-capped Dotterels.

**WHITE IBIS**  
(*Threskiornis molucca*)

Two seen on the Moorook sanctuary.

**STRAW-NECKED IBIS**  
(*Threskiornis spinicollis*)

Eight birds feeding in an orange grove, Waikerie; 10 birds on a swamp at Kingston; several were seen near Cobdogla.

**ROYAL SPOONBILL**  
(*Platalea regia*)

Seven birds seen separately about Moorook.

**YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL**  
(*Platalea flavipes*)

Seen at most swamps visited, in small flocks—10 were counted at Ramco lagoon, 3 at Morgan, 5 at Moorook, 1 at Waikerie.

**EGRET**

(*Egretta alba*)

A solitary but widely spread species—at most swamps and lagoons.

**LITTLE BITTERN**

(*Ixobrychus minutus*)

One bird was flushed from a sedge-lined border of a lagoon on the south side of the river at Morgan. The flight, though typically heron-like, seemed rather light and buoyant, with the wings pointed. It was later flushed again, and perched in a Red gum approximately 10 feet to 15 feet above the water. Here it "froze" in typical bittern fashion. The back, and particularly the upper tail coverts, appeared deep purplish blue. The wings were dark, but an extensive buff shoulder patch was clearly visible. The breast is yellowish, striped black.

Other records of the occurrence of this species in South Australia not stated by C. E. Rix and S. E. Terrill (S.A. Ornithologist, XIX (6-8); pp. 53-100; 1950) are from Paradise (specimen in S.A. Museum), Punyelroo, near Swan Reach (H. T. Condon, "S.A. Naturalist," 24 (3): p. 16; 1947), and the remains of a bird of this species were found on the Moorook bowling green by Mr. S. Sanders, jun., nearly 40 years ago. The remains were subsequently identified by Capt. S. A. White.

**MANED GOOSE**

(*Chenonetta jubata*)

Three birds seen on a lagoon at Morgan.

**BLACK SWAN**

(*Cygnus atratus*)

On all lagoons in large numbers; 200 adults and a brood of cygnets on Hart's lagoon.

**MOUNTAIN DUCK**

(*Casarca tadornoides*)

A pair at Morgan, and 3 birds at Moorook were our only records.

**BLACK DUCK**

(*Anas superciliosa*)

Well distributed along the river, but not in large numbers. At Morgan, 8 birds were counted; 19 at Moorook; 2 at Waikerie.

**CHESTNUT TEAL**

(*Anas castanea*)

A pair on a Morgan lagoon. The female is duller and lacks the white flank patches of the male.

**GREY TEAL***(Anas gibberifrons)*

Slightly more numerous than the Black Duck, with a wider distribution: 40 at Morgan; 21 at Hart's lagoon; 37 counted at Moorook; 2 at Waikerie.

**WHITE-EYED DUCK***(Aythya australis)*

We were surprised to find this species far exceeding other ducks in numbers along the river. Recorded at all stops: Moorook 1 bird, Hart's lagoon 30, and 2 were counted at Ramco lagoon near Waikerie. We noted a concentration, estimated at 550 birds, on a Morgan lagoon.

**MUSK DUCK***(Biziura lobata)*

Four birds seen at Morgan, and 2 at Moorook. One evening at Moorook, the shrill whistling call of this species was heard.

**SWAMP HARRIER***(Circus approximans)*

One flying over the river at Moorook. A single bird was observed over a wheat field, 5 or 6 miles inland, south of Moorook.

**LITTLE EAGLE***(Hieraetus morphnoides)*

One bird at Moorook, and another near Cobdogla—both were circling over the river.

**WHITE-BREASTED SEA EAGLE***(Haliaeetus leucogaster)*

A pair of these striking birds soared high over Ramco lagoon, Waikerie. One of them was an immature bird showing brown patches on the mantle, nape, and sides of the neck.

**WHISTLING KITE***(Haliastur sphenurus)*

Common. Noted at all places along the river, and exceptionally numerous at Morgan where a nest with 3 young was noted.

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE***(Elanus notatus)*

Three birds between Eudunda and Gawler, on the return journey, were hunting in failing light. Like the European Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*), this species seems to be partly crepuscular.

**KESTREL***(Falco cenchroides)*

Odd birds seen between Eudunda and Moorook both in and out of the river valley.

**BOOBOOK OWL***(Ninox novae-seelandiae)*

A bird heard calling at night at Moorook from Red gums along the river.

**PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET***(Glossopsitta porphyrocephala)*

One or two small flocks in mallee surrounding Moorook.

**SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO***(Kakatoe galerita)*

One or two birds around Morgan. At Moorook, not less than 100 were seen camped on Red gums along the river. Rarely noted in the mallee.

**PINK COCKATOO***(Kakatoe leadbeateri)*

A pair seen on the Mt. Mary plains near Bower. In flight, the bird shows deep rose-pink underneath the wings.

**CORELLA***(Kakatoe sanguinea)*

Several birds in company with the "Sulphur-crests" at Moorook. A whitish bill distinguishes the species from black-billed *K. galerita*.

**GALAH***(Kakatoe roseicapilla)*

Noted in small parties in all habitats—more numerous in the mallee than in the big trees along the river.

**REGENT PARROT***(Polytelis anthopeplus)*

We saw altogether about 60 birds in the vicinity of Moorook and Kingston, but nowhere else. The fast direct flight, streamlined body, and back-swept, pointed wings of this species are falcon-like. At the time of the visit, the birds were feeding on pea crops.

**ADELAIDE ROSELLA***(Platycercus adelaidae)*

Seven seen near Eudunda, in semi-sclerophyll scrub, dominated by the Blue gum (*E. leucoxydon*).

**YELLOW ROSELLA***(Platycercus flaveolus)*

Numerous in the river valley between Morgan and Moorook. Widespread but not a common species. The call appears to be mellow than the call of *Platycercus adelaidae*.

## RINGNECK

*(Barnardius barnardi)*

Odd birds noted in mallee from Eudunda to Moorook. At Morgan, this species was observed in the big gums of the river valley.

## RED-RUMPED PARROT

*(Psephotus haematonotus)*

In small numbers, between Eudunda and Moorook. Seems to prefer semi-cleared land, or savannah woodland.

## MULGA PARROT

*(Psephotus varius)*

A common species in mallee and Black-oak associations between Eudunda and Moorook. Seen only in scrub country.

## BLUE BONNET

*(Psephotus haematogaster)*

Replaces *P. haematonotus* in the more arid lands. Noted only in dry mallee south-west of Moorook, where about 30 birds were seen.

## ELEGANT PARROT

*(Neophema elegans)*

Five birds in a Black-oak (*C. cristata*)—Bluebush (*K. sedifolia*) association north-east of Sutherlands. The birds were seen in perfect light with binoculars, and were distinguished by the yellowish green of the back and two shades of blue on the wing. In mid-September, Mr. E. F. Boehm had seen a flock of 14 Blue-winged Parrots (*Neophema chrysostoma*) in the same scrub and collected a male in moult for the S.A. Museum. The latter species shows a distinctive olive-green back in the field.

## BUDGERYGAR

*(Melopsittacus undulatus)*

One seen at Moorook, and a pair near Taylorville.

## OWLET-NIGHTJAR

*(Aegotheles cristata)*

Single birds were flushed in Black-oak, near Mt. Mary, and in mallee south of Moorook.

## KOOKABURRA

*(Dacelo gigas)*

Sparsely distributed along the river. At Morgan and Moorook.

## RED-BACKED KINGFISHER

*(Halcyon pyrrhopygius)*

Four birds in mallee around Moorook. Two birds were noted at Taylorville and one at Mt. Mary.

## SACRED KINGFISHER

*(Halcyon sanctus)*

Noted on each stop in the river valley.

## RAINBOW BIRD

*(Merops ornatus)*

A few had just appeared in the Moorook area. One pair was also recorded at Ramco lagoon, and a single bird at Overland Corner.

## PALLID CUCKOO

*(Cuculus pallidus)*

Two males heard calling at Moorook, and another seen at Overland Corner. All were in Red gums and Box.

## BLACK-EARED CUCKOO

*(Owenavis osculans)*

A good view was gained of this uncommon bird in Black-oak scrub, 3 miles east of Mt. Mary. An important field key to the species, not emphasised in any popular hand book, is the whitish rump, rather similar in color and form to that of the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater.

## NARROW-BILLED BRONZE CUCKOO

*(Chalcites basalis)*

Birds noted were 1 at Morgan and 3 at Moorook in timber along the river and lagoons.

## WELCOME SWALLOW

*(Hirundo neoxena)*

One of the common birds.

## WHITE-BACKED SWALLOW

*(Cheramoeca leucosterna)*

This attractive species was seen in small numbers along the river between Ramco and Moorook. Birds were found nesting in the bank of a dry creek bed at Overland Corner. All burrows sloped upwards—probably to prevent washing out in the event of rain.

## TREE MARTIN

*(Hylochelidon nigricans)*

Often seen in the river valley in small numbers. A pair had young in a hollow, 15 feet from the ground, in a Red gum at Overland Corner.

## FAIRY MARTIN

*(Hylochelidon ariel)*

Approximately 20 birds seen flying over a lagoon at Morgan; 7 at Moorook.

## WILLIE WAGTAIL

*(Rhipidura leucophrys)*

Observed singly or in pairs, both in the river valley and mallee lands.

## RESTLESS FLYCATCHER

*(Seisura inquieta)*

Noted singly at the Kingston punt, Wai-kerie, and Moorook.

**JACKY WINTER***(Microeca fascinans)*

In small numbers throughout the mallee lands.

**RED-CAPPED ROBIN***(Petroica goodenovii)*

Odd birds noted in the mallee.

**HOODED ROBIN***(Melanodryas cucullata)*

A common species between Eudunda and Morgan, and 3 in mallee south-west of Moorook.

**RUFOUS WHISTLER***(Pachycephala rufiventris)*

Single birds in Black-oak scrub, Mt. Mary; and in a Pine (*Callitris propinqua*) belt near Cadell.

**GILBERT WHISTLER***(Pachycephala inornata)*

A single male observed in Mt. Mary Black-oak.

**GREY THRUSH***(Colluricincla harmonica)*

Widespread but in small numbers both along the river and in mallee lands.

**MAGPIE-LARK***(Grallina cyanoleuca)*

Numerous along the river, but odd birds seen in mallee at Sutherlands and Moorook.

**CRESTED BELL-BIRD***(Oreoica gutturalis)*

Widespread, but not common, in the mallee.

**BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE***(Coracina novae-hollandiae)*

Odd birds throughout the river valley. Six at Moorook.

**WHITE-BROWED BABBLER***(Pomatostomus superciliosus)*

A common species in lignum flats on the river between Morgan and Waikerie. Thirteen noted in the Moorook mallee, and others in the Mt. Mary Black-oak.

**CHESTNUT-CROWNED BABBLER***(Pomatostomus ruficeps)*

In Black-oak scrub at Sutherlands and Mt. Mary. Also a large flock on the river bank at Moorook and Waikerie. At the Sutherlands Black-oak, we photographed a Babbler's playground, found by Mr. E. F. Boehm a month previously. It is a circular channel, 2-3 feet in diameter, and approximately 4-5 inches wide and 3 inches deep. This channel was underneath a large chenopod (*Rha-*

*godia spinescens*), and it seems that the birds derive enjoyment by running round and round it. On the return journey, once again in Black-oak, but at Mt. Mary, I. Wilson flushed a Babbler from one of these shrubs, and, on investigating, found another playground.

**WHITE-FRONTED CHAT***(Epthianura albifrons)*

A few seen throughout the mallee and river valley wherever suitable shrubby habitat existed.

**WEEBILL***(Smicrornis brevirostris)*

Confined to mallee eucalypt associations, but there it is one of the dominant species.

**WHITEFACE***(Aphelocephala leucopsis)*

A common species away from the river valley, especially in marginal scrub areas. Three observed at Morgan.

**BROWN THORNBILL***(Acanthiza pusilla)*

A pair of the mallee "red-rumped" race were nesting in a Blue bush (*K. sedifolia*) in Mt. Mary Black-oak scrub.

**CHESTNUT-TAILED THORNBILL***(Acanthiza uropygialis)*

Noted in small numbers in most mallee associations.

**YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILL***(Acanthiza chrysorrhoa)*

Often seen in small flocks in mallee between Eudunda and Moorook; also common along the river at Moorook.

**REDTHROAT***(Pyrrholaemus brunneus)*

Two miles of this shy species were observed in the Black-oak-Blue-bush-Saltbush association 3 miles east of Mt. Mary. The male is a sustained singer.

**BROWN SONGLARK***(Cinclorhampus cruralis)*

Odd birds noted in cleared lands between Eudunda and Moorook.

**RUFOUS SONGLARK***(Cinclorhampus mathewsi)*

Several seen at Morgan and Moorook in the savannah woodland of the river valley.

**LITTLE GRASSBIRD***(Megalurus gramineus)*

A few birds in lignum (*Muehlenbeckia*) swamps at Moorook.

**REED WARBLER***(Acrocephalus australis)*

A common species on the river where sufficient cover exists.

**BLUE WREN***(Malurus cyaneus)*

Along the river and bordering swamps at Moorook—numerous.

**PURPLE-BACKED WREN***(Malurus assimilis)*

In lignum flats at Morgan (where it replaces *M. cyaneus*). A party near Sutherlands, and 8 in lignum at Moorook.

**DUSKY WOODSWALLOW***(Artamus cyanopterus)*

Widely distributed, singly or in pairs, throughout the mallee and river valley.

**BLACK-CAPPED SITTELLA***(Neositta pileata)*

A small flock of birds seen in mallee at Sutherlands.

**BROWN TREECREEPER***(Climacteris picumnus)*

One of the common birds of the mallee lands. Though found in Black-oak scrubs near Sutherlands and Bower, it appears to be absent in the extensive Mt. Mary Black-oak area. Four seen along the river at Moorook.

**WHITE-BROWED TREECREEPER***(Climacteris affinis)*

A pair of this rarely recorded species, only recently discovered in this district by E. F. Boehm after many years of searching, was observed in the Mt. Mary Black-oak association. It seems that the bird prefers rough-barked trees, and appears to replace the Brown Treecreeper in this area. It is a very quiet bird, and this probably accounts for the paucity of South Australian records of this species. A distinguishing feature of this bird from *C. picumnus* is the grey back; both species have a light-colored eyebrow—white in *C. affinis*, buff in *C. picumnus*. This species also shows a strongly striated breast and abdomen; the wing bar is grey-fawn and not buff as in *C. picumnus*; and the species is smaller in size. The call, given rarely, is reminiscent of a frequently repeated Yellow-tailed Pardalote's piping note.

**MISTLETOE BIRD***(Dicaeum hirundinaceum)*

A single male seen in the river valley, Moorook.

**YELLOW-TAILED PARDALOTE***(Pardalotus xanthopygius)*

Several birds in mallee south-west of Moorook.

**RED-TIPPED PARDALOTE***(Pardalotus ornatus)*

Plentiful throughout the mallee and on the river.

**SILVER-EYE***(Zosterops lateralis)*

A few birds observed in reeds and lignum on the Moorook sanctuary.

**BROWN-HEADED HONEY-EATER***(Melithreptus brevirostris)*

One small group seen in mallee between Waikerie and Kingston.

**WHITE-FRONTED HONEY-EATER***(Gliciphila melanops)*

Odd birds in mallee south-west of Moorook.

**SINGING HONEY-EATER***(Meliphaga viriscens)*

Several birds along the river at Moorook, but a more plentiful species in the more arid mallee between Eudunda and Moorook.

**YELLOW-PLUMED HONEY-EATER***(Meliphaga ornatus)*

Apparently not uncommon in mallee with little under-storey south of Moorook.

**WHITE-PLUMED HONEY-EATER***(Meliphaga penicillata)*

Numerous in the big eucalypts on the river.

**NOISY MINER***(Myzantha melanocephala)*

As for previous species, but in fewer numbers.

**YELLOW-THROATED MINER***(Myzantha flavigula)*

A fairly numerous bird throughout the mallee lands.

**RED WATTLE-BIRD***(Anthochaera carunculata)*

Odd birds in mallee scrubs at Waikerie and Moorook.

**SPINY-CHEEKED HONEY-EATER***(Acanthogenys rufogularis)*

Widely distributed in fair numbers through the mallee lands, and often noted in the river valley.

**LITTLE FRIAR-BIRD***(Philemon citreogularis)*

A single bird was collected at Moorook in a Red gum-Box flat. The bird was in its

last stages of immaturity with a slight yellowish wash on the gular region. In the field, the species is approximately the same size as a Miner (*Myzantha*), but has a shape rather like that of a Wattle-bird (*Anthochaera*). However, it has a square tail, not noticeably tipped white. Mr. S. Sanders had known this species in the Moorook areas for many years, and once had observed a pair nesting. Skins in the Museum, collected in this State, are from Ball Rock, Murtho, and Renmark, between the years 1913 and 1918. It is also believed that J. W. Mellor obtained a pair at Mallion's Bend. All records are from the river, east of Morgan.

#### PIPIT

(*Anthus australis*)

Frequently observed in cleared land throughout the mallee.

#### ZEBRA FINCH

(*Taeniopygia castanotum*)

Two small parties observed: one in open mallee near Kingston, the other on a mallee border at Moorook. The white rump is helpful in identifying this species.

#### RAVEN

(*Corvus coronoides*)

Ravens were seen in large numbers everywhere. Details of a skin in the Boehm Collection, which was obtained at Moorook, are as follows: "No. 207; male; 16/8/1942. Iris white, inner ring pale blue. Pharynx black. Culmen, 53 mm x 22 mm. Tarsus, 67 mm. Hackles, 34 mm. Feather bases on the neck rather pale, being whitish grey. Stomach contents, 'offal and blow-fly larvae.' Collector: S. Sanders."

#### LITTLE CROW

(*Corvus bennetti*)

Three separate individuals: 1 at Sutherlands, 1 at Mt. Mary (both of these birds were in Black-oak associations), and 1 in Moorook mallee.

#### CHOUGH

(*Corcorax melanorhampus*)

A flock near Kingston. Appears to be a common bird in mallee south of Moorook—37 being noted; one pair nesting.

#### CURRAWONG

(*Strepera melanoptera*)

A pair apparently nesting in a mallee association with little undergrowth at Waikerie. One bird also in mallee near Bower.

#### PIED BUTCHER-BIRD

(*Cracticus nigrogularis*)

Two immature birds with only a light-brown breast and throat were observed on the river near Cadell. Heard calling at Moorook sanctuary. A fine adult pair with young at Overland Corner, in the river valley.

#### GREY BUTCHER-BIRD

(*Cracticus torquatus*)

Odd birds noted in mallee: 1 near Mt. Mary; 1 at Waikerie; 2 at Moorook, where a bird was seen feeding on what appeared to be the remains of a smaller species of bird.

#### BLACK-BACKED MAGPIE

(*Gymnorhina tibicen*)

One bird at Sutherland, and about 50% of the *Gymnorhina* population north of the river between Morgan and Overland Corner. South of the river, between Morgan and Moorook, and around Cobdogla, only this species was recorded, and in good numbers. A wire nest of this species seen at Moorook.

#### WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE

(*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*)

Numerous between Eudunda and Morgan, and north of the river as stated above.

#### ROCK DOVE

(*Columba livia*)

Noted around all towns visited, especially along the river.

#### BLACKBIRD

(*Turdus merula*)

At Waikerie and Moorook, this species is well established and will possibly increase in numbers in the future in the irrigated orchards, where it may become a pest among the soft fruits.

#### GOLDFINCH

(*Carduelis carduelis*)

Seen at Kingston and Moorook on the river in small numbers, and several birds were observed in mallee south of Moorook.

#### SPARROW

(*Passer domesticus*)

This bird has spread right through the mallee and the river valley—a common bird near human habitation.

#### STARLING

(*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Common throughout all areas visited.