

## A LIST OF THE BIRDS OF THE KONAMORE RESERVE

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Koonamore Vegetation Reserve is a 2 square-mile holding of the Botany Dept., University of Adelaide. It is situated 45 miles north of Yunta on the northern boundary of the Olary Spur. Its purpose is ecological—a yearly observation is made on the seasonal effects and regeneration of the arid flora (primarily the perennial Saltbushes: *Atriplex vesicaria* and *A. stipitata*).

The Reserve was visited by me between August 18 and 24, 1956. During this period, a list was made of birds seen on the Reserve and in surrounding areas, and a census taken of birds present on the Reserve in conjunction with World Bird Reports of the Bird Observers' Club of Victoria.

Koonamore has an average rainfall of 7 to 8 inches per annum, and the 1956 period had been appreciably better than normal prior to August.

The soil type of the region is a typical red Mallee solonized soil, with kunkar limestone formation in the upper B horizon. The vegetation is a typical arid scrub community, the upper tier dominants being Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) and Black-oak (*Casuarina cristata*), usually in belts. False Sandalwood (*Myoporum platycarpum*) is well distributed also. The centre tier is dominated mainly by *Acacia burkittii* and small groups of Bullock Bush (*Heterodendron oleifolium*) and *Cassia* spp. The understorey is prominently chenopodaceous, consisting mainly of Saltbush [viz: Bladder Saltbush (*Atriplex vesicaria*) and Bitter Saltbush (*A. stipitata*)], *Bassia* spp. [viz: Bindy-i (*Bassia obliquicuspis*) and *B. paradoxa*], and Blue and Black bush [*Kochia* spp.—a number of species widespread but not dominant.] Annuals (viz: *Zygophyllum* spp) and Ephemerals (*Compositae* spp.) were numerous owing to the wet season.

This is the first published bird list for Koonamore Vegetation Reserve:—

Emu (*Dromaius novae-hollandiae*).  
Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*).  
Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*).  
Australian Goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus*).—  
Not recorded on the Reserve. Observed  
in an adjacent alluvial Nitre bush flat.  
Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*).—

There appears to be a single resident pair.

Brown Hawk (*Falco berigora*).  
Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*).  
? Pink Cockatoo (*Kakatoe leadbeateri*).—  
Two white cockatoos were observed at a distance, 18/8/56. They possessed the rapid wing-beats typical of this species.  
Galah (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*).—Nesting; two pairs noted.  
Ringneck (*Barnardius barnardi*).  
Mulga Parrot (*Psephotus varius*).  
Blue-Bonnet (*Psephotus haematogaster*).  
Red-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon pyrrhopygius*).  
Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).  
Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*).  
Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).  
White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*).—Not recorded on the Reserve. Three pairs observed, nesting, in an adjacent alluvial Nitre bush flat.  
Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).  
Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*).—  
One nest with young found.  
Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*).  
—Four birds were observed. In habits the birds were extremely quiet.  
Bellbird (*Oreoica gutturalis*).  
Wedgebill (*Sphenostoma cristatum*). — A colony of approximately 14 birds was present in the north-west corner of the Reserve.

This species was found widely distributed in colonies from 10 to 30 birds in all shrubby alluvial flats throughout the Koonamore region. The vegetation of these flats consists of Nitre bush (*Nitraria schoberi*) and Native Boxthorn (*Lycium australe*), with no upper tier cover. It is probably that such a vegetation "facies" constitutes the typical habitat of the species throughout the central Australian region.

Ground Cuckoo-Shrike (*Pteropodocys maxima*).—Present in small groups of 3 to 7 birds. Thirteen were counted on the Reserve, 23/8/56.  
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*).  
White-winged Triller (*Lalage tricolor*).

- Chestnut-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus ruficeps*).
- White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*).
- Orange Chat (*Epthianura aurifrons*).—Not recorded on the Reserve. Small groups were observed in surrounding shrub steppes and Nitre-bush flats.
- Crimson Chat (*Epthianura tricolor*).—Extremely numerous on the Reserve, 86 being counted, 23/8/1956. Two nests, each with two eggs, were found, in bushes of the Koonamore Daisy (*Erodium phyllum elderi*).
- Gibber-bird (*Ashbyia lovensis*).—One bird observed 15 miles north of Yunta, on Blue-bush (*Kochia sedifolia*) steppe, 24/8/1956.
- Weebill (*Smicrornis brevirostris*).
- White-face (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*).
- Chestnut-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza uropygialis*).
- Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorhoa*).
- Red-throat (*Pyrholaemus brunneus*).
- Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus cruralis*).
- Rufous Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus mathewsi*).
- Blue and White Wren (*Malurus leuconotus*).
- Purple-backed Wren (*Malurus assimilis*).
- Masked Wood-swallow (*Artamus personatus*).—Not recorded on the Reserve. Ten birds at Koonamore Head Station, 24/8/1956.
- Black-faced Wood-swallow (*Artamus melanops*).
- Dusky Wood-swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*).
- White-browed Treecreeper (*Climacteris affinis*).—Two pairs were observed on the north boundary of the Reserve in False Sandalwood (*Myoporum platycarpum*) trees.
- Mistletoe-bird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*).
- Red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus ornatus*).
- Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*).
- Yellow-throated Miner (*Myzantha flavigula*).
- Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*).
- Pipit (*Anthus australis*).
- Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotum*).
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).
- Raven (*Corvus coronoides*).
- Little Crow (*Corvus bennetti*).—Nesting, 2 pairs noted in Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) on the south-west corner of the Reserve. In relative numbers, this species was estimated at 10% of the total *Corvus* population in the Koonamore region.
- Black-winged Currawong (*Strepera melanoptera*).—One individual heard calling only.
- Grey Butcherbird (*Cracticus torquatus*).
- Black-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*).
- White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Not seen on the Reserve, or in the surrounding region. A single male bird was identified 10 miles north of Yunta, 24/8/1956.