

NOTES ON THE WHITE-BREASTED SEA-EAGLE

(By SAML. SANDERS, JUN.) (29/5/1957)

These observations were made on a pair of White-breasted Sea-Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) which have nested for a series of years in Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) along the Murray River, near Moorook, South Australia.

The nest consists of a platform of sticks 6 or 7 feet across.

The nesting period is early August.

Eggs (and young) are usually two in number.

Young, when hatched, are completely covered with white fluffy down.

When nearly full grown, the juveniles possess brown or rusty plumage; legs (=tarsus) yellow, claws horn-coloured. These latter characters persist in the adult.

In the sub-adult, white feathers appear in the neck and crown.

Adults are almost as large as the Wedge-

tailed Eagle. However, when perching, the two species differ in shape: the Sea-Eagle is inclined to be "roach-backed," the Wedge-tailed Eagle exhibits a flattened back. In flight these two species closely resemble each other.

The food of the Sea-Eagle consists mostly of fish: the only refuse found near the nest was fish-heads and skeletons of fish.