

REPORTS AND GENERAL NOTES

PATRON.

His Excellency Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George, K.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.B., M.C., Governor of South Australia.

MEMBERSHIP.

At the Annual Meeting, March, 1957, the Hon. Secretary reported that there were 110 members, including five honorary and eight junior members.

HONORARY MEMBER.

Mr. Frank E. Parsons was elected at the Annual Meeting, 1957. Mr. Parsons, whose meticulous methods and extensive collecting have earned him a permanent place amongst the most able in Australian ornithology, has been a member of the Association for about 45 years. We extend to him our congratulations and very best wishes.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Association has recently gained the support of the following, who are well-known in avicultural circles:—E. W. Milne and I. J. Boaden, of Richmond; E. Baxter, 17 Benjamin Road, Hampstead; C. P. Bell, 40 Charles Street, Forestville; C. C. Burfield, 12 Forest Avenue, Black Forest; G. Hogg, 49 Wallis Street, Parkside; T. Jolly, 182 Burnside Road, Burnside; F. Lewitzka, 12 Ian Street, Broadview; A. Philips, 2 Burns Avenue, Hazelwood Park; B. Thomas, Bardier Street, Findon. Other new names are: L. Schulze, Warrambo, West Coast; D. Kraehenbuehl, Black Forest; C. L. McPherson, 579 Inkerman Road, Caulfield, Victoria; B. C. Newland, 6 Magdalen Street, College Park. Junior members: Rex Ellis, Field Street, McLaren Vale; David Churches, Box 113, Keith; R. Savage, Frewville.

NATURAL HISTORY MEDALLION.

Dr. A. Lendon was chosen as the nominee of the Association for 1957 (April meeting).
BOY SCOUTS MOVEMENT.

Following a suggestion by Dr. Lendon in November, 1956, the Hon. Secretary wrote to the Boy Scouts' Association stating that some members of the Association would be willing to conduct bird-watching outings for interested Scouts. A reply was received from the Boy Scouts' Association in March, 1957, stating that our Association would be informed when "instruction leaders" were required.

INDIAN MYNA.

Several flocks of the Common (Indian) Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) of anything up to 20 birds have been reported in the Prospect and Kilburn districts, north of Adelaide. At the April meeting it was moved that a letter be sent to the Minister for Agriculture suggesting that steps be taken for the elimination of the species before it becomes established. Around Melbourne this perky, sociable and noisy species is a familiar bird and very numerous. It is dark brown in colour, with bill, legs and bare skin around the eyes bright yellow. In flight a large white wing-patch is prominent. The Myna, which is about 9 inches long, nests in hollows in trees and walls, and lays 4 or 5 blue eggs. Reports have been received at the South Australian Museum of breeding pairs.

The birds have communal roosts in trees, to which they return each night—several score may foregather in a large tree. The species is omnivorous and aggressive towards native birds: its establishment in Adelaide would be most undesirable.

BIRD CONSERVATION.

The Hon. Secretary reports: "Concerning an enquiry of the Association into the possible increase in the numbers of avian exports, and the number of applications for export licences in this State, following the publicised ban imposed on the export of wild-caught avi-fauna by the Victorian Government in Victoria, August, 1956, a communication had been received from the Fisheries and Game Department of South Australia. It informed that since August-September, 1956, the export of birds from this State had been normal, and the import of Victorian birds negligible;

one new dealer had been issued with an export licence. The communication added that, according to information received, exports of birds from Victoria were still being made."

ALLEGED NETTING OF BIRDS.

Dr. Brummitt reported that he had been told of netting of native birds by migrants in gullies in the hills close to Adelaide. (May meeting. Mr. G. Ragless, at the June meeting, stated that he had "investigated the density of bird populations in several local gullies" (e.g. at Black Hill). From his observations, Mr. Ragless concluded that "the density of bird-life appeared normal and unaffected by any possible netting." This question was also discussed at the August meeting, after Mr. D. A. G. Thomas had mentioned that he had heard of trapping (or netting) of birds in the Adelaide parklands.

LIBRARY.

The library of the Association, which has been housed in the South Australian Museum since 1936, has increased to such proportions that the Director of the Museum (Mr. Hale) has decided that it can no longer be accommodated as before. Arrangements have been completed, therefore, to place the books in a room in the Director's residence at the Zoological Gardens. There will be a small charge (rental) for use of room, and the library will be available to members during office hours each week. Removal of books from the Museum will commence shortly.

RINGING OF CORMORANTS.

At the April meeting Mr. R. Schodde proposed a scheme for the ringing of the Pied Cormorants (*P. varius*) which nest in the mangrove swamps near Port Gawler. Messrs. Glover and Schodde tried banding some juveniles and sub-adults at the colony on 4th May, 1957, and sent information to the C.S.I.R.O., Wildlife Section, Canberra. This last-named organisation is examining the problem of shape and size in connection with rings for this species, and the project, which has received the support of members, has been deferred until next breeding season.

SOME COMMON AUSTRALIAN BIRDS.

The above is the title of a book by Alan and Shirley Bell, published by Oxford University Press (224 pp. 102 full colour lithographs; price, 35/-). It is the latest in a minor deluge of mid-century productions

dealing with Australian birds—and a disappointing one. Very few of the claims made by the publishers are met. The text is wanting in particularity and we deplore the tendency, common amongst popular writers when it suits their purpose, to decry the scientific method. It would be tiresome to list the shortcomings of the coloured drawings, some of which are quite repulsive.

WHAT IS ORNITHOLOGY?

Dictionaries define ornithology as a science which teaches the natural history and classification of birds. For those who are inclined to question the restricted nature of the definition, and for those who need reminding, there is an excellent publication from the British Ornithologists' Union called "The Ornithologists' Guide," with an explanatory sub-title "Especially for Overseas," edited by Maj.-Gen. H. P. W. Hutson. A compendious work of 275 pages, the book can be considered in two parts. The first, comprising seven 'Sections,' is a valuable symposium of the problems and methods of ornithology by 46 distinguished specialists, mainly British, but including one Australian, M. S. R. Sharland. The various chapters are brief, perspicuous and of uniformly high standard. The remaining two sections, which comprise the "directory" portion of the book, are less satisfactory owing to the omission of data on Europe and North America, although other parts of the world, including Australia, are fairly well-covered. Definitely a book to be read and digested by all amateur ornithologists and would-be ornithologists; beginners should look elsewhere.

REQUEST.

At the Botanisches Museum, University of Zurich, a student is preparing a monograph of the sub-family Anthobolae of the Santalaceae. This sub-family includes the genus *Exocarpus*, of which the Native Cherry (*Exocarpus cupressiformis*) is a member.

The student is interested in having biological data which cannot be obtained from Herbarium specimens, and reports of field observations are required. It is not known whether the fleshy pedicels of the fruit are eaten by birds, which could be agents in seed dispersal.

Would any members having information on the fruit of the Native Cherry, and/or any other species of *Exocarpus* serving as food for birds please communicate with the

Hon. Secretary, Mr. R. Schodde, 23 French Street, Netherby ('phone UA 8647). Details required are species of bird, date and place of observation, and any other relevant notes.

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

(Note: For many years the present Editor has retyped nearly all matter submitted for publication, except when the writing was so bad that it could only be deciphered by a linotype operator! Retyping in a form ready for the printer was done partly for personal convenience; it was also done to "encourage" contributors, but the dividends have been small. The following instructions are minimum requirements.)

Articles should be neatly type-written in double-space (to allow for editing) and on one side of the paper only. There should be at least one inch of margin on the left-hand side of each sheet, and similar margins top and bottom. Before commencing to write, authors should consider the following:

(1) Special care should be devoted to the spelling of all proper names, including the names of localities. As a first step procure reliable books of reference before getting entangled in grammatical constructions and syntax.

(2) If you are a bad speller consult the dictionary frequently; do the same every time you are tempted to use an unfamiliar word.

(3) Consult previous relevant literature to avoid repetition of well-known facts.

(4) It is recommended that scientific names follow the R.A.O.U. Checklist (1926) and amendments, except in papers on taxonomic questions. Remember to underline the Latin names (to indicate italics).

(5) Common or vernacular names should be written with a capital letter, and in bird lists should precede the scientific name which is placed in brackets, e.g., Silver Gull (*Larus novaehollandiae*). Note that the second half of the scientific name is *always* written with a small letter, the first always with a capital.

(6) Endeavour to be precise. Avoid awkward qualifying phrases and constructions. If in doubt leave plenty of space for editing.

(7) In all lists follow the Checklist sequence.