

## THE BURMESE SPOTTED DOVE ON EYRE PENINSULA

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Two Burmese Spotted (Indian) Doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) were observed by the writer at the Agricultural Research Centre, Minnipa, inland on north-western Eyre Peninsula, on July 22, 1965, in a roadside plantation of trees in the residential area of the centre. This constitutes the first recorded occurrence of the species on Eyre Peninsula. It was not recorded during a brief subsequent visit to the site on July 1, 1966. However, Mr. D. B. Winn, manager of the Research Centre, has made a number of observations of this dove during the intervening period.

The establishment and spread of the Burmese Spotted Dove in South Australia since its liberation in Adelaide in 1881 and 1931 has been outlined by Condon (1962), who mentions a record at Clare, about 80 miles north of Adelaide and about 200 miles from Minnipa. C. E. Rix (pers. com.) considers that the birds at Clare may be descended from stock liberated by the late R. M. Hawker, of Bungaree Station.

The apparent isolation of Burmese Spotted Doves at Minnipa suggests that they may have been liberated locally. However, the birds were very wary and did not submit to close observation.

The presence of other isolated populations of the species both in South and Western Australia points to the possibility of the birds having the ability to travel long distances.

Recent records at Waikerie and Berri seem likely to be the result of the crossing of a rather unfavourable mallee habitat, and in this connection Boehm considers the occurrence of a male bird east of Sutherlands in 1960 as "accidental."

Assuming that the Minnipa birds may be derived from those east of Spencer Gulf, the route followed could have included the crossing of the waters of the gulf and the semi-arid pastoral country beyond, the latter extending over north-eastern Eyre Peninsula. Both are important north-south barriers to many native species.

The arrival of Burmese Spotted Doves on Kangaroo Island has involved the cross-

ing of at least ten miles of open sea across Backstairs Passage. Similarly in Western Australia they have reached Rottnest Island, and the isolated Kalgoorlie population may have traversed more than 150 miles of semi-arid country.

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