

## BIRD NOTES

SOOTY TERN IN COFFIN BAY—On December 22, 1972, I found a Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* on the ground among a breeding colony of Crested Terns *Sterna bergii* on Brothers Island, Coffin Bay (S.-W. Eyre Peninsula). The Crested Terns were relatively tame, as many of them were incubating. The Sooty Tern was as tame as its neighbours, with which it was found squabbling and fighting. It was easily netted and photographed (see p. 136). The hollow which it was occupying was searched without success for an egg or chick. On another visit nine days later, the bird could not be found.

This is the first record of a Sooty Tern in these circumstances in S.A., although several of the regular colonial, nesting sites of Crested Terns (including two off Eyre Peninsula) have been visited during many breeding seasons. This record of the species seems remarkable, because its normal range is allegedly no nearer than the area of the Abrolhos Rocks, off central Western Australia, and because it is a colonial breeder (see Serventy, Serventy and Warham, *Handbook of Australian Seabirds*, pp. 225-227). The few birds previously recorded in S.A. (one each in November, March, and April respectively) have been conjectured to be "outliers of the main oceanic body" of the non-breeding population of this essentially pelagic species (Serventy and Whittell, *Birds of Western Australia*, p. 236).

—COLIN GILL.



*Sooty Tern on Brothers Island, Coffin Bay.  
From colour slides by W. C. Millard (above)  
and C. L. Gill (below).*