

SOME BIRDS OF EASTERN EYRE PENINSULA

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SPOTLESS CRAKE *Porzana tabuensis*

Robert and Gwen Clothier and family have twice seen this species at their home 8 km north of Cowell. The first occasion was on Christmas Day 1976, when one of these birds came into the house through the chimney and was caught and later released. The second was on December 28, 1977, when a bird identical to the first was found caught in the wire netting of the fowl yard, but killed and eaten by a cat before it could be released.

Unable to identify either bird, and using their copy of Cayley's "What Bird is That?", they described the birds to my parents the next day (29th), and asked what they were. A small blackish bird with red legs and eyes, sharp straight beak and light barring under its tail could only be a Spotless Crane, and they confirmed this when asked to find the bird in Slater (1970) *A Field Guide to Australian Birds—Non Passerines*. These seem to be the first records of this species from Eyre Peninsula.

WESTERN YELLOW ROBIN

Eopsaltris griseogularis

While searching for Mallee Fowl *Leipoa ocellata* nests on February 11, 1978 (I saw four disused mounds and numerous recent footprints) I found these robins at two localities, 20 km ENE and 40 km NNE of Cowell in low mallee and tea-tree. These sightings and one of a pair which I found at Sinclair's Cap in the Middle-

back Range in April 1976, must be close to the eastern limit of this bird's distribution.

TURQUOISE WREN

Malurus splendens callainus

Robert Clothier described a fully coloured male of this species which he saw near his home in early 1977.

CORVIDS

In Cowell on February 11, 1978, I heard the unmistakable short nasal calls of the Little Crow *Corvus bennetti*, which I know well. The bird called often as it flew between, and perched on, several power poles and television antennae in the town. I also heard Little Ravens *C. mellori* near the town on this date, but could not see or hear Australian Ravens *C. coronoides* which I recorded in mangroves by the jetty in July, 1975, where Eckert (1972 *S.A. Orn.* 26: 47) had also heard them.

On February 12, 1978, I heard these three corvids 40 km NNE of Cowell and have also identified all three species previously near Whyalla. (Rowley, in CSIRO Wildlife Research 15: 64, shows the nearest specimen record of *C. bennetti* as about 80 km NW of Cowell. S. A. Parker, of the South Australian Museum, stresses the need for specimens of corvids recorded outside their recognised ranges, such as the ones above. — Editor.)

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