

Order Passeriformes, Family Dicaeidae, Genus
Pardalotinus.

Pardalotinus striatus subaffinis—Striped Diamond bird.

Description—Upper Surface.—Forehead and crown of the head deep black, nape black, each feather with a narrow stripe of white down the centre; lores black bordered above by a broad stripe of orange yellow passing to the centre of the brow followed by a broad streak of white; ear coverts black stippled with white; back, grey gradually changing to buff on the rump and upper tail coverts.

Under Surface—Chin, throat and upper breast bright yellow, bordered on the sides of the neck by white; breast and abdomen white; flanks greenish yellow fading upwards and backwards to buff; thighs buff; under tail coverts pale buff.

Wing—Primaries black, all except the second with the outer webs margined with white, the white margins becoming broader and shorter towards the carpus, all are lightly tipped with white, the inner webs of all are broadly margined with greyish white. Secondaries black broadly tipped with

white; and the outer webs near the base margined with reddish brown; upper wing coverts black, stippled on the carpus with dull yellow, spurious wing, black tipped with bright vermillion.

Tail—Black, the inner webs tipped with white, the spots becoming larger from the centre outwards.

Iris—Brown.

Bill—Black.

Legs and feet—Greyish Brown.

Total length (of skin) 92 m.m.

Wing—65 m.m.

Tail—32 m.m.

Culmen—7 m.m.

The measurements are the average of seven specimens, four males, and three females. The female differs from the male only in the colour of the bill, which has the base of the lower mandible light horn colour, and the rest of the bill of a less deep black than in the male. Specimens from various parts of South Australia do not differ in colour, except one from Glen Ferdinand, Musgrave Ranges, which is lighter coloured in all its markings.

Distribution—The whole of South Australia.

Habits—This bird is an inhabitant of the gum trees, it is never found in parts of the country where these do not grow.

The larger gums are perhaps preferred, but they are not uncommon in quite small mallee scrub. Formerly they were common in the park lands about the city, and even now an occasional bird may be heard in the Botanic Park. As a rule they go about singly, but sometimes in the breeding season a pair may be seen together searching the leaves for food. They are not easily frightened, and if one keeps still, will go on feeding within a few feet of one's hand, hence their disappearance about the city, for their confiding nature makes them an easy prey to the boy with a shanghai.

Flight—Straight and rapid..

Food—Consists entirely of insects, which they gather from the leaves of the gum trees, they assist greatly in keeping the gum leaves free of scale.

Song—Two or three notes, monotonously repeated resembling the words Whit-i-chute, by which name they are known in some parts of Australia.

Nest—An open, cup-shaped structure usually placed in the hollow of a gum tree, the hollow chosen is usually in a thick limb, with a very small opening. The nest is built of dried grass stems with occasionally a strip or two of bark. They sometimes drill a hole for themselves in the bank, or dig out the mortar between the stones of an old building, and occasionally take possession of the old nests of the fairy martin. In the courting season they have a peculiar habit of sitting in pairs on a bare twig, and sway the body from side to side, with the wings half extended calling all the time. The nesting season extends from September to December.

Eggs—Three or four, pure white, the thick end very rounded, and the thin end coming to a blunt point.

A clutch of four eggs taken from a hole in a gum tree at the R. Finniss measured in c.m. 1. 1.80 x 1.40 2. 1.80 x 1.50 3. 1.80 x 1.50. 4. 1.75 x 1.40.

.. A nest taken at Kallioota in the banks of the Willochra creek in August 22nd, 1912, had a tunnel 18 inches long sloping slightly upwards to the nest chamber which was circular, 5 inches in diameter and 4 inches high. The outside measurement of the nest was 5 x 5 inches x 3 inches high. The egg cavity was 2½ inches x 1 inch deep. It contained three slightly incubated eggs.
