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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

30th March, 1917.

The annual meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held on Friday evening, 30th March, 1917, in the Royal Society's rooms. Dr. A. M. Morgan took the chair. He congratulated the acting Hon. Secretary (Mr. F. M. Angel) upon the effective manner in which he had performed his duties during the year.

The election of office-bearers resulted as follows:— President, Mr. A. G. Edquist; Vice-President, Capt. S. A. White; Hon. Secretary, Mr. R. Crompton (absent on active service); Acting Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. M. Angel; Publishing committee to the "South Australian Ornithologist", Dr. A. M. Morgan, the Hon. and Acting Hon. Secretaries, Capt. S. A. White, Mr. F. R. Zietz.

Dr. Morgan vacated the chair in favour of Mr. Edquist, who welcomed a distinguished visitor, Mr. W. B. Alexander, M.A. (Keeper of Biology in the Western Australian Museum). Mr. Alexander, in replying, stated that he had not been very long in Australia, and consequently was working hard to get a thorough knowledge of the fauna of the country. He took a keen interest in the birds. Mr. Alexander went on to say that he had been doing some work in Melbourne recently in connection with the Commonwealth Advisory Council of Science and Industry, and that he was now on his way back to Perth. He wished to tell the members that the Council was

glad to get the voluntary assistance of Capt. White to try and combat the possibility of the imported sparrows entering Western Australia by means of the East-West Railway. The Council now looked to Capt. White for advice in this important question. Capt. White, in reply, said he had taken this work upon himself, first, to try and save the western State from a scourge under which South Australia had suffered for a long time, and secondly to save our native birds that may be destroyed in ignorance for the imported pests. A member asked Mr. Alexander if the English starling had found its way into the west, and he replied that recently a starling had been sent to Perth for identification from the Albany district. This was in a fruit-growing area. Upon an official being sent down to investigate, he was told by a resident that a pair of birds had appeared, and had been under observation for some time, until they nested, when they were both shot, and one of them sent to Perth to be identified. Upon the tree being felled with the nest, it was found to contain without doubt the eggs of starlings.

Mr. Mellor read some interesting notes upon the colouration of the young of the robin, and pointed out that it took only 14 days after three spots of colour appeared upon the young male robin's breast for the colour to spread all over the under surface. He also drew attention to the number of ants eaten by the white-throated tree-creeper, and to several species of birds nesting very late this year at Lockleys. He had seen many young in March.

Mr. Frank Parsons reported having seen several brush bronzewing pigeons (*Cosmopelia elegans affinis*) in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Mr. E. Ashby exhibited a chestnut-breasted teal (*Virago castanea*), and drew attention to Mr. Alexander's paper in The Emu upon this bird.

Mr. T. P. Belchambers handed in a paper upon the incubation of the mallee fowl eggs. It was agreed that this paper should stand over until next meeting.

The remainder of the evening was taken up by an account by Capt. White of his trip to Ooldea by way of the East-West Railway. A description of the country was given, and a small collection of birdskins was shown from this district. It was pointed out that most of the birds were somewhat small in comparison with eastern specimens.

27th April, 1917.

The monthly meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held on Friday evening, 27th April, 1917, in the Royal Society's rooms. Mr. A. G. Edquist presided.

Several letters in reference to bird protection were discussed.

Dr. A. Chénery, of Wentworth, the well-known ornithologist, was nominated for membership.

Dr. A. M. Morgan exhibited a small collection of bird skins which he had collected during a recent trip up the River Murray. Among them were black-tailed parrot (*Polytelis anthopeplus*), southern yellow-throated friar bird (*Microphilemon orientalis didimus*), white-fronted honey eater (*Gliciphila albifrons*), white-rumped wood swallow (*Artamus leucorhynchus leucopygialis*), white-browed babbler (*Morganornis superciliosus*), white-browed treecreeper (*Climacteris superciliosa*), southern yellow-plumed honey eater (*Lichenostomus ornatus taileni*), purple-backed wren (*Leggèornis lamberti assimilis*), white-face (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*), mallee brown-headed honey eater (*Melithreptus atricapillus mallee*), red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotinus ornatus*), yellow-rumped pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus wanthopygus*). The doctor gave an interesting description of the birds that had been met with during his trip.

Mr. Arthur M. Lea, F.E.S., outlined some of his work in the examination of bird stomachs, and stated that there would be issued soon a publication containing the results of much of his research work. The Chairman and members expressed their great admiration for the extremely useful services Mr. Lea had rendered in this direction. Mr. Lea tabled a number of the bird stomachs he had already examined, and solicited further help from members in the way of material.

Mr. T. P. Bellchambers read further notes upon the mallee fowl and its nesting habits. He stated that incubation had been much retarded this season owing to the uncertain weather conditions. The longest period of incubation had been recorded, an egg having taken 99 days to hatch. Mr. Bellchambers was complimented upon the valuable character of his research work, and his notes were accepted with pleasure for publication in the next number of the association's journal.

Mr. F. R. Zietz directed attention to a statement in The Agricultural Gazette advising the killing of native birds to use for baits as a means of poisoning foxes. The Hon. Secretary was requested to point out that the killing of certain birds mentioned would be a breach of the law.

24th May, 1917.

The ordinary monthly meeting was held in the Royal Society's Rooms, on 24th May, 1917. The President, Mr. A. G. Edquist presided. Mr. Frank Hall, of Teatree Gully, tendered his resignation as a member on account of his inability to attend meetings or do any field work. The members expressed their deep regret at the loss of such a keen observer. Dr. A. Chenery, the well-known ornithologist of Wentworth, N.S.W., was elected a member. Mr. T. P. Bell-chambers forwarded some interesting bird notes from Humbug Scrub. Several nests of white-plumed honey eater (*Ptilotula penicillata whitei*) were observed, containing eggs and young. A nest containing young of brown hawk (*Ieracidea berigora*) was noted, situated on top of mistletoe on Blue Gum. Several black-throated grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis novae-hollandiae*), and eight wood duck (*Chenonetta jubata*) were seen on the dam. The latter bird is getting very rare. Mr. F. R. Zietz reported the first flame-breasted robin (*Littlera chrysoptera phoenicia*) seen at Kingswood this season. On 7th May, Mr. J. W. Mellor recorded the same species at Reedbeds. At the end of April, 1917, Mr. W. Weidenbach reported having observed blue mountain parrots (*Trichoglossus novae-hollandiae*) in great numbers passing over Glen Osmond daily, and it was noticed that the birds were always flying in a south-westerly direction. Mr. Edwin Ashby noted a similar occurrence at Blackwood.

Sympathetic reference was made to the recent announcement of the death of Mr. A. J. North, C.M.Z.S., the renowned ornithologist of the Australian Museum, Sydney.

Messrs. Edwin Ashby and F. E. Parsons exhibited a small, but interesting collection of birdskins recently secured by them at Buckland Park, about ten miles north of Adelaide. A fine specimen of white-throated nightjar (♂) was shown, and attention drawn to the curious serrated toenail on each foot. Gilberts red-throated thickhead (*Pachycephala rufogularis gilberti*) was fairly numerous, but hard to detect. It is interesting to record this bird so near to Adelaide. Spec-

mens of the Lesser bush lark (*Mirafra javanica secunda*) were exhibited, and all were of the dark form. Red-rumped tit (*Acanthiza pusilla*) was taken from this locality, and Mr. Ashby showed for comparison skins recently collected by him at Cape Jervis—probably the same as the Victorian form—and also *Acanthiza pusilla hamiltoni* from Karoonda. It was noted that this bird from these three localities represented three distinct forms.

The birds for the evening's discussion were Cuckoo Shrikes (Mathews' List, Nos. 503 to 509). Specimens were exhibited from the South Australian Museum by Mr. F. R. Zietz, and from the private collections of Messrs. E. Ashby and J. W. Mellor. All the species in Mathews' list were represented, and skins from the different localities compared and discussed. From the material available the members were of the opinion that there was not sufficient variation to warrant the division of sub-species.
