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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

JUNE 29th, 1917.

The monthly meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held on Friday evening, June 29th, 1917, in the Royal Society's Rooms. Capt. S. A. White presided. Mr. Ashby reported that the swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*), had been seen at Blackwood during the last week, and remarked upon the unusually quick return of these birds, for they appeared in numbers in 1914. The first record of this bird having been seen in South Australia is in 1862, and this again appeared in 1882. Mr. Ashby also stated that great numbers of wood swallows (*Pseudartamus cyanopterus*) had appeared on the ploughed ground at Blackwood, and that it was a very fine sight to see dozens of these birds in the furrows after the plough had passed along, hunting for grubs and insect life. Mr. Ashby further remarked upon the numbers of grass parrots (*Psephotus haematonotus*) in his district this year. Dr. A. M. Morgan reported the appearance of the fantailed cuckoo (*Cacomantis rubricatus*), and the narrow-billed cuckoo (*Neochalcites basalis mellori*), and stated that he had seen great numbers of wood swallows (*Pseudartamus cyanopterus*) swarming at dusk upon a *Grevillea robusta* tree growing in the park lands. This is a strange custom common to these birds. The swarming takes place at dusk, or on a dark cloudy day, when they hang to one another like bees. Mr. A. Crompton stated he had seen many Blue Mountain Parrots (*Trichoglossus novae-hollandiae*)

flying high, and always in the same direction. Mr. J. W. Mellor reported that the spiny-cheeked honey eater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*), the pallid cuckoo (*Heteroscenes pallidus*), and the landrail (*Hypotaenidia philippensis*) were all seen at Lockleys lately. Capt. White reported having seen and heard the pallid cuckoo on June 12th, at the Reed Beds, the fan-tailed cuckoo for some time past, and the narrow-billed cuckoo quite recently, and the landrail on June 19th and 20th, the last mentioned bird not having been seen for several years past, also the white-shafted flycatcher (*Rhipidura flabellifera whitei*), the scarlet-breasted robin (*Petroica multicolor*). All these birds having been under observation during the last month. The Adelaide parrakeet (*Platycercus adelaidae*), one of two of which are often seen at the Reed Beds during the winter months. The flame-breasted robin had been migrating for some time. The Hon. Sec. (Mr. F. M. Angel), read a copy of Capt. White's report to the Advisory Committee for Science and Industry, upon his recent trip of investigation concerning sparrows, following the East-west Railway line. Mr. Frank Parsons exhibited a small collection of bird skins procured in the lower Murray River. Among them were the crested-bell bird (*Oreoica cristata*), red-capped babbler (*Pomatostomus ruficeps*), mallee parrot (*Barnardius barnardi*), bluebonnet (*Northiella haematogaster*), and Bennett's crow (*Corvus bennetti*). The following birds were discussed during the evening:—Caterpillar catcher (*Metagraucalus tenuirostris*), white-shouldered caterpillar eater (*Lalage tricolor*), pied caterpillar eater (*Karua leucomela*), spine-tailed logrunner (*Orthonyx maculatus*), black-headed logrunner (*Macrorhonyx spaldingi*), spotted ground bird (*Cinclosoma punctatum*), also the Tasmanian form, chestnut-backed ground bird (*C. castaneothorax*), and the chestnut-breasted ground bird (*C. castaneothorax*). Numerous specimens of these birds were exhibited from the museum collection by Mr. F. R. Zietz, and by Messrs. Ashby and Mellor and Capt. White from their private collections.

JULY 27th, 1917.

The monthly meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held on Friday evening, July 27th, in the Royal Society Rooms. Mr. A. G. Edquist presided. Mr. Shields (late of Renmark and now at Mount Remarkable) was elected a member. Mr. Mellor reported that the white-backed magpie was busy nesting at Lockleys, and that the

pallid cuckoo had been calling loudly lately. The white-browed babblers (*Morganornis superciliosus*) had nested at the Reed Beds, and that large fully fledged young were about with the parent birds; he also reported the landrail. Mr. Edquist recorded the nesting of the silver-eye (*Zosterops lateralis westernensis*), and stated that the bird roosted in the nest every-night during the time of construction. Dr. A. M. Morgan stated that he had found that the warty-faced honey eater had left the foot-hills, and gone further into the ranges. Mr. F. R. Zietz stated that two female plain wanderers (*Pedionomus torquatus*) had been handed into the museum during the last quail season. The same member added that the introduced English skylark was fairly numerous at Gilles Plains this winter. Capt. White stated that owing to the heavy rains, and prospects of a fine season, several birds which have been absent from the Adelaide plains for several years have again appeared. The pallid cuckoos have returned in numbers, and several landrails (*Hypotaenidia philippensis*) have been seen and heard. He also drew attention to the great good the white-browed babblers did in the orchards, they being always on the search for codlin larvae and insects. The birds under discussion for the evening were scrub robins (*Drymodes*), not sufficient specimens were forthcoming to decide upon the various sub-species. Ground wrens (*Hylacola*), a series of these birds was exhibited, and it was thought that the New South Wales and Victorian birds differ from those from South Australia. The coachwhip bird (*Psophodes*) was discussed, and there seemed to be a diversity of opinion if the male and the female shared in producing the wonderful swish and crack of the whip. Specimens were shown from the museum collection by the ornithologist (Mr. F. R. Zietz), and from the private collections of Mr. F. Parsons, Mr. Mellor, and Capt. White.

AUGUST 31st, 1917.

The monthly meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held on Friday evening, August 31st, in the Royal Society's Rooms. Mr. A. G. Edquist presided. The Chairman read a letter from the Head Teacher, Prospect Hill Public School, saying how pleased and honoured the school was having won the silver cup presented by the Association for the best essay on a bird and tree. Capt. White referred to the many water birds which had revisited the Reed Beds this

year, and stated that it was a record for so many white cranes to have been seen together in the district. Mr. J. W. Mellor mentioned having seen the white crane and the ibis at Lockleys; he also reported the white-fronted heron having young in the same district, and communicated upon the tameness of all these birds. Mr. E. Ashby reported having seen the white crane, also a bittern at Blackwood. He also reported that the swift parrot was still about in the ranges. Mr. F. R. Zietz exhibited the skin of the grey-faced petrel, which is a record for South Australian waters, it having been recorded breeding off the Western Australian Coast. The bird had been evidently driven in by stress of weather, for it was captured on the beach near Brighton after the recent storms. Mr. Ashby showed a nest and eggs of the restless flycatcher, which had been taken this season. The discussions of the evening comprised the family of birds commonly known as babbblers (*Pomatostomus*). The following birds came under notice:—Australian babbler (*P. temporalis*), from Queensland, N.S.W., Victoria, and South Australia; the chestnut-crowned babbler (*P. ruficeps*), white-browed babbler (*Morganornis superciliaris*). Specimens of the genus were shown from many parts of the State. Specimens of all the above species were shown by Mr. F. R. Zietz from the Museum collection, and by Messrs. E. Ashby, F. Parsons, J. W. Mellor, and Capt. White's private collections.
