

### MYIAGRA FLYCATCHER NEAR INNAMINCKA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

During the afternoon of 1 April 1999, Elaine Heard and I visited Burke's grave (27°45'S, 140°46'E) near Innamincka, South Australia. While taking photographs of vegetation near the memorial I noticed a small bird fly to an upright fork of a river red gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*.

From its position on the perch c. 20 m away, the bird presented only a frontal view of the head, throat and breast, but was clearly identifiable as a *Myiagra* flycatcher, tentatively a female Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubicula*. I am familiar with the Leaden Flycatcher and Satin Flycatcher *M. cyanoleuca* in eastern New South Wales. I alerted other birdwatchers in the area who proceeded along the Cooper Creek, locating a *Myiagra* flycatcher about 350 m south of the original sighting. The time lapse between the sightings was approximately 15 minutes.

This bird was viewed through binoculars and a 20-60 mm zoom lens Kowa telescope which was placed about 12 m from the bird. I was surprised at the dark and detailed plumage shown through the telescope. My field notes recorded:

Head and upper back leaden grey, lower back and flight feathers grey brown, the flight feathers with narrow pale edging, wing coverts edged pale greyish white, throat and breast orange rufous.

The tail and wings appeared to finish together, suggesting that at least part of the tail was missing and giving a false impression of the size of the bird, which also appeared lethargic. It was not possible to say whether there may have been one or two birds observed that afternoon as the tail of the first bird had not been visible.

Michael Hunter commented (in litt.) on his view through the telescope, 'My impression was that the bird was too richly coloured to be a "Leaden". I think it was a Satin Flycatcher.'

Boles (1980) commented on the difficulties of differentiating female-plumaged Leaden and Satin Flycatchers, as previously discussed by Liddy (1977) and Reid and Cox (1978). After viewing skins in the Australian Museum, Sydney, and bearing in mind the narrow pale edging to the wing coverts of the second sighting at Innamincka, the possibility of an immature flycatcher could not be dismissed. Examination of the museum skins showed that both immature

Leaden and Satin Flycatchers have pale tips to the wing coverts, while Boles notes (loc. cit.) that the immature female Satin Flycatcher lacks the gloss on the crown.

Without prior knowledge of myiagrine flycatcher records in northern South Australia, the second bird observed on 1 April 1999 was considered at the time to be Leaden Flycatcher by a number of the party. This may have been influenced by the Satin Flycatcher's general association with gullies in high wet forests in south eastern Australia which contrast with the semi-arid landscape of NE South Australia.

The unexpected dark plumage of the Innamincka bird, the absence of gloss on the crown and the narrow pale edging to coverts and flight feathers, suggest an immature Satin Flycatcher of either sex. As noted, it was not possible to say whether one or two birds were present that afternoon.

The sightings on 1 April fall between the four previously published records of myiagrine flycatchers in northern South Australia and support the suggestion by Reid and Cox (1978) that some individual myiagrine flycatchers stray into South Australia in summer and migrate through northern South Australia in autumn. Myiagrine flycatchers were seen on 12 April 1977 by K.S. Shurcliff at Victory Well in the Everard Ranges (SAOA 1977) and 25 March 1979 at Purni Bore in the western Simpson Desert (Badman 1979). Female-plumaged Satin Flycatchers were seen on the same days, namely 18-19 February 1983, one in Marree (Eckert 1987) and the other at Billa Kalina Station c. 190 km ENE of Marree by P. Langdon (SAOA 1983). The bird seen by Eckert was lethargic, found dead the next day, and is now in the South Australian Museum, reg. no B37635 (Eckert 1987).

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the birdwatchers on the trip to Innamincka and Coongie Lakes who located the myiagrine flycatcher without a tail, and Walter Boles of the Australian Museum, Sydney for access to study skins and literature. Ian McAllen and an unknown referee commented on the draft of this note.

### REFERENCES

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Received: 10 April 2000

## CORRIGENDA

Please amend the following errors which occurred in recent editions of the *South Australian Ornithologist*:

- Vol. 32, Part 6, Supplement, 'List of English and scientific bird names...' (inserted between pp. 102 and 103), p. iv, col. 2, Cacatuidae: insert '-' between Black and Cockatoo, and change Tailed to tailed.
- Vol. 32, Part 7, p. 143, caption, line 1: change 199 to 1996.
- Vol. 33, Parts 1 & 2, p. 17, col. 2, last line, Received: 1999 not 1989.
- Vol. 33, Parts 3 & 4, p. 37: change Table 2 in the heading to Table 1; and for Welcome Swallow replace the dashes from left to right with the following sequence: C, Vb, Cb, Cb, Cb, U, U, Vb, U, U, U, U, Ub, U, -, Ub, Ub, -, R, R, -, -.

—Eds.