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[PART I.

The South Australian Ornithological Association.

SEPTEMBER 26th, 1919.

The monthly meeting was held in the Royal Society's Rooms on 26th September, 1919, when Mr. Edwin Ashby presided.

Mr. E. A. Brooks of Buckland Park was duly elected a member.

Mr. J. Sutton noted a young White-naped Honey-eater at Netherby on 27th August, and during September several Scarlet-breasted Robins and 7 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes were about the same locality. ... A flock of about 50 Wood Swallows flew over at a great height on 15th September; the same member heard a great commotion among the Laughing-jacks in a gum-tree, and upon investigating saw one of these birds perched upon a limb, and another hanging underneath, attached to something about two feet long. The object resembled a small snake, but it was impossible to get near enough to positively identify same. The suspended bird was slowly twisting around as if dead, but finally, after several unsuccessful attempts to fly on to the limb, relinquished his hold, whereupon the sitting bird swallowed the whole affair.

Mr. R. Beck recorded a nest of the Stubble Quail, containing 8 eggs, at Seaton, which was subsequently cleared out by a fox.

Mr. J. W. Mellor reported a number of Fairy-martins at Fulham and Lockleys on 6th and 8th September, and, during the month, recorded the following nests close around his house at Lockleys, i.e., 3 Black and White Fantails, 2 White-plumed Honey-eaters, 2 Welcome Swallows, 1 Harmonious Shrike-thrush, and 1 Frontal Shrike-tit.

Native hens (*Microtribonyx*) have appeared in great numbers around Adelaide this year. Mr. Mellor stated that they were very numerous near the swamps at Fulham, running about

the grass lands in bands of 50 to 100. Mr. E. Ashby recorded a pair for the first time at Blackwood. Dr. Morgan stated that these birds nested in great numbers last year at Robe, where they were considered as new to the district. Mr. McGilp said there is none at Lake Frome this year.

Mr. J. N. McGilp exhibited a clutch of eggs of the Australian Dotterel from Moolooatana, and described interesting habits of the bird. An open nest is made in the claypans, and when leaving the nest the bird covers the eggs with loose earth, sticks and other debris. Mr. F. E. Parsons exhibited a specimen of the beautiful Scarlet-breasted Grass Parrot (*Neophema splendida*,) received from Moolooatana Station. This exceedingly rare bird has not been recorded for very many years.

An interesting account of a trip to a belt of mallee country between Woodchester and Wellington was given by Mr. Edwin Ashby, and a number of birds collected were exhibited. A specimen of the rare Blue-winged Grass Parrot (*Neonanodes chrysostomus*) was secured. The speaker pointed out the desirability of making a reserve of several miles of this country in order to preserve some of the natural mallee country near to Adelaide. With this object in view, Messrs. Parsons and McGilp were appointed a sub-committee to ascertain how the country is held.

November 28, 1919.

Capt. S. A. White presided over a large attendance. A letter was read from the Minister for Industry, asking for two representatives of the association to attend a conference which is to be held shortly in regard to the new Animals and Birds Protection Act. The President and Mr. E. Ashby were deputed to attend the conference. A motion of sympathy was accorded Mr. J. W. Mellor in the loss of his mother (Mrs. J. F. Mellor). The Chairman spoke of the great interest Mrs. Mellor had taken in nature study, and especially with the doings of the field naturalists. Mr. E. Ashby and Mr. A. G. Edquist supported. Sympathy was also expressed with Mr. C. H. Lienau upon the loss of his father.

Mr. W. D. Bruce (Chief Inspector of Fisheries) was present as a visitor, and was asked to speak upon the new Act, which comes under his jurisdiction. The Chief Inspector said that 162 copies of instructions to accompany the new Act were being prepared, and would be sent out to every police

station in the State, this to coincide with the numbers attached to each bird in the Schedules of the Act, and arranged so by the President of the Association from Dr. Leach's "Australian Bird Book." One of these books would be supplied to each station, and in this way no mistake could be made. Mr. Bruce also referred to the coming conference, when he hoped finality would be reached in reference to the issuing of permits, which was now very unsatisfactory. The Chairman complimented the Chief Inspector upon his energy and zeal, and said that he was sure that the new Act was going to be administered as no previous one had been. The Chairman went on to say that he had had an interview with the Minister (Mr. Barwell); and there was little doubt that blunders made in the past would now be remedied as far as possible.

Mr. F. Parsons exhibited emu wrens, which he had discovered on Kangaroo Island lately, and which was a new subspecies. Mr. Parsons was congratulated upon his success.

The Chairman reported upon the work accomplished by the Royal Australasian Ornithologist's Union during the session in Brisbane this year. Members were pleased to learn that the vexed question of nomenclature was at last settled in Australia, and that the council would proceed as soon as possible with the preparation and publishing of a second edition of the "Official Check-list of Australian Birds," on the lines of the international code, and British list.

Mr. G. M. Mathews had received congratulations upon his being able to continue his great work, "The Birds of Australia," thanks to a private donor of £100 per year for three years, and £200 each year from the Commonwealth Government. This resolution received the hearty endorsement of the Association, and Mr. E. Ashby asked the members to join him in congratulations to the Chairman for his having been the means of obtaining the assistance mentioned for such a fine work. It was stated by the Chairman that a strongly worded resolution had been passed by the Royal Australasian Ornithologist's Union to the effect that Macquarie Island be proclaimed a sanctuary for the fauna of Antarctica, and that he would like the Association to do likewise. A motion was therefore unanimously carried urging the Tasmanian Government to lose no time in proclaiming Macquarie Island a sanctuary.

The Chairman brought Mr. Neville W. Cayley's work before the meeting, and said he was publishing a very fine book on the birds of Australia, with beautiful hand-painted plates. The work demanded the support of Australians.

"Flinders Chase" was now touched upon by the Chairman, who pointed out that it was at last a reality, and that he was glad to say the Minister (Mr. Barwell) was alive to the importance of this reserve; and would visit it in the near future. The Chairman was congratulated upon his fight for "the Chase."

Mr. W. C. Skipper wrote suggesting all parks and gardens in and around Adelaide should be proclaimed sanctuaries for native birds. Some members expressed the opinion that these were already sanctuaries under the City Corporation. The hon. secretary said he would make enquiries.

Mr. Ashby stated that Spiny-cheeked Honey-eater had been seen at Blackwood. This was unusual, and was no doubt due to the dryness of the season having driven the bird to the ranges. Mr. Mellor reported that Shell Parrots had visited Lockleys and the Reedbeds in numbers this season. He also gave interesting notes upon the visit and nesting habits of the Wood Swallows. Several Rose-breasted Cockatoos had also been seen at Lockleys. Master Allen Lendon gave interesting bird notes, and stated that he had seen a number of Little Water Crakes on the upper reaches of the Torrens. Mr. A. G. Edquist (Director of Science and Nature Study) showed cicada nymphs, and said that the imported starlings had been seen waiting for these to emerge from the ground, when the bird pronounced upon it and devoured it. The beautiful colourations of the insects as they harden into the mature state were described. Mr. Ashby tabled a few specimens of the Victorian and New South Wales forms of Mountain thrush, to compare with specimens obtained by the Chairman in Queensland. The Chairman stated that Shell Parrots had visited Fulham after a lapse of many years. The White-shouldered Caterpillar-eater had also returned this year after many years absence. A great number of Black-tailed Native Hens had been in the district, and had caused damage, but one should be as patient as possible, for the drought was driving these birds, like many others, into restricted areas, and they would go when rain fell in the interior.