

A Rare Bird

The Alfred Honey Eater.

At the February meeting of the S.A. Ornithological. Association, Mr. J. W. Mellor exhibited, amongst other birds he had procured in the Murchison district during the R.A.O.U. 1920 Congress expedition to W. A., a specimen of the rare Alfred honey eater (*Certhionyx whitei*) Mathews, 1913), This was taken in the dry scrub country north of Ajana, W.A., in November, 1920. This bird, Mr. Mellor considered, was the best "find" of the expedition, as it was the desideratum of so many " collectors. The species was first procured by Mr. F. Lawson Whitlock while collecting for Mr. H. L. White, of Belltrees, Scone, N.S.W at Lake Way in the East Murchison district

19th September, 1909, when a male was secured. From the size, colour, and habits, Mr. Whitlock thought it to be a *Pseudogerygone* but Mr. A. J. North of the Sydney museum, to whom the skin was shown, pronounced it to be a honeyeater and asked for more material. Several others were taken in Mr. Whitlock's company the same year, and Mr. North described it as a new genus and species viz:-*Lacustroica whitei*, after Mr. White's son Alfred. A full account appeared in the January issue of the Victorian Naturalist, vol. XXVI., p 138, and in the Emu, vol IX., a coloured plate forming the frontispiece, but in the process of printing in more than one colour, the birds here depicted showed a slight yellowish tinge, especially the wings, which is not correct and somewhat misleading. It is interesting to note that the first bird shot by Mr. Whitlock was exhibited in Adelaide at a meeting of the ninth congress, session on September 30th, during 1909, and that a second specimen had not been exhibited here until Mr. Mellor's bird was shown on February 25th, 1921, more than eleven years later. The little bird is very sombre in appearance for a honeyeater, the predominating colour being that of a mouse grey, and lighter grey beneath.