

Notes on the Birds of Ooldea.

By J. B. CLELAND, M.D.

On a visit for a few days to Ooldea, at the end of August, 1922, in company with Professor Osborn and Messrs. Adamson, Samuel, and Birks, the opportunity was taken of studying the birds of the district. Captain White had previously paid several visits to this interesting spot, and has recorded his observations ("The Emu," XVIII, Pt. 3, 1919, p. 189). Le Souef ("The Emu," XXI, Pt. 2, 1921, p. 125) has also given us an account of the birds.

On our visit, 41 species of birds were noted as being in the district. Those additional to the lists of White and Le Souef consist of Bronze-wing Pigeon, Black-breasted (?) Plover, Southern Stone-Plover, Nankeen Kestrel, *Pachycephala gilberti* (?), *Graucalus*, *Acanthiza uropygialis*, *Artamus melanops* (?), *A. sordidus* (?), *Climacteris superciliosa*, and *Pardalotus*—11 species in all.

Twenty-three species in addition are down in either White's or Le Souef's lists, so that the total now for the district is 64.

It is interesting to note that in two specimens of *Malurus callainus* secured the male appeared to have only one testis, and in the female the ovary seemed to be on the right side. Has any member ever noted in dissecting members of this genus any similar abnormalities of the sexual organs?

Dromiceius novae-hollandiae (Emu).—Natives of Ooldea had an Emu's feather in their possession, so the birds still probably exist in this neighbourhood. None was seen.

A Bronze-wing Pigeon was noted, also Plovers, probably the Black-breasted. The Southern Stone-Curlew was heard.

Teracideia berigora (Brown Hawk, dark form).—In a specimen (a female) secured the iris was dark brown; the bill, bluish horn, darker at the tip above; pharynx flesh-coloured; legs, pale sage-greenish horn; food, a young rabbit. Mallophaga present; no entozoa.

Cerchneis cenchroides (Nankeen Kestrel).

C. leadbeateri (Pink Cockatoo, Major Mitchell).—A flock of these frequented the Soak.

Barnardius zonarius (Yellow-banded Parrot).—Several pairs were seen. A specimen shot by a resident had mallophaga, but no entozoa.

Psephotus varius (Many-coloured Parrot).—Male; iris dark brown; bill horn-coloured, the tip blackish; legs dark grey. No ectozoa or entozoa detected.

Hirundo neoxena (Welcome Swallow).—Round the houses at Ooldea.

Cheramoeca leucosternum (Black-and-White Swallow).

Melanodryas cucullata (Southern Hooded Swallow).

Petroica goodenovi (Red-capped Robin).

Smicrorhynchus brevirostris (Tree-Tit).

Oreoica gutturalis (Crested Bell-Bird).—Male (?); iris dark brown; bill dark brown; pharynx yellowish; legs greyish black. No ectozoa or entozoa detected.

Pachycephala rufogularis (Red-throated Whistler).—A male *Pachycephala*, with large testes, but in immature

plumage and with a powerful, fluty note, was secured. It is presumably Gilbert's Thickhead, but there is no immature male in the collection in the South Australian Museum with which to compare it. Iris brown, tinged with crimson-lake; bill black inside and outside; pharynx flesh-coloured; legs black. Mallophaga present; entozoa not detected.

Rhipidura notacilloides (Black-and-White Fantail).

Graucalus, probably *melanops*, (Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike).

Cinclosoma sp.—A pair of Ground-Birds was flushed near the "Oak Forest" at the foot of the sandhills. The species was not identified. Le Souef records *Cinclosoma* and believes that he saw both *C. Castanotum* and *C. cinnamomeum* near Ooldea. Captain White only records the former.

Pomatostomus superciliosus (White-browed Babbler).—Numerous in places.

Cinloramphus cruralis (Brown Song-Lark).—Several of these birds, hens or immature males, were running amongst the clumps of saltbush on the edge of the plain. A hen bird secured had the iris brown; bill dark brown above, pallid fleshy-brown below; throat dark greyish-brown; gape yellow; legs pallid fleshy-brown. Mallophaga present. No entozoa detected.

Epthianura tricolor (Tricoloured Chat) was seen. Captain White and Le Souef both record also *E. aurifrons* and the latter *E. albifrons*.

Acanthiza uropygialis (Chestnut-rumped Tit-Warbler).—Male; iris white with a slight yellow tinge; bill black; pharynx blackish; legs black. Mites under the wings, no entozoa detected.

Pyrholaemus brunneus (Redthroat).—Hopping about in the upper branches of low shrubs, uttering a very sweet warble. Male; iris dark reddish-brown; bill dark brown; pharynx blackish; legs blackish. No ectozoa or entozoa detected.

Malurus callainus (Turquoise Wren-Warbler).—These birds were met with amongst the low bushes at the foot of the sandhills at Ooldea. Hen bird; iris dark brown; bill reddish-brown; pharynx greyish-flesh-coloured; legs black. Male bird; iris blackish; bill black; pharynx greyish-flesh-coloured; legs black. No ectozoa or entozoa detected on either.

Malurus assimilis (Purple-backed Wren-Warbler).—This species was seen amongst the *Leptospermum* bushes at Ooldea Soak. Male; iris dark brown; bill black; pharynx whitish; legs black. No mallophaga detected. Nematoids in pleuro-peritoneal cavity.

Both *Artamus melanops* (Black-faced Wood-Swallow) and *A. sordidus* were believed to have been seen.

Colluricincla ruiventris (Buff-bellied Shrike-Thrush).—A Thrush was heard, and as Captain White records this species it was probably this.

Aphelocephala leucopsis (Whiteface).—Fairly numerous.

Climacteris superciliosa (White-browed Tree-Creeper).—A specimen was secured at the Oak Forest about six miles from Ooldea. Male; iris very dark brown, nearly black; bill black, inside blackish; pharynx flesh-coloured; legs blackish. Mallophaga and mites on wings; no entozoa detected.

Pardalotus sp.

Meliphaga virescens (Singing Honey-eater).—Amongst the bushes on the edge of the plain. Beltana and Ooldea birds are much smaller and have more slender bills and the head and back paler than the large form found near the coast at Encounter Bay. The latter has also a yellower throat and darker chest. Ooldea bird; sex (?); iris dark, rather reddish brown; bill black; pharynx yellowish-orange; legs greyish-brown. Mallophaga present; also mites on the wings.

Meliphaga ornata (Yellow-plumed Honey-eater).—With *P. sonora* amongst bushes on the edge of the plain. Male; iris dark brown; bill black; pharynx orange; legs greyish-brown. No entozoa or ectozoa detected.

Meliphaga plumula (Yellow-fronted Honey-eater).—Amongst mallee and small trees in the sandhills at Ooldea. Male (?); iris dark brown; bill black; pharynx yellowish-orange; legs brown. Mallophaga present; no entozoa detected.

Myzantha flavigula (Yellow-throated Miner).—Female; iris dark brown; bill orangey-yellow; pharynx orangey-yellow; gape and round eye canary yellow; above eye greenish-yellow; legs yellowish-brown. Mallophaga present; larval Echinorhynchus pomatostomi subcutaneously; cestodes in intestine.

Anthus australis (Ground-Lark).—The upper surface is much more rusty than southern birds, but this is partly due to red dust. Male (testes large); iris dark brown; bill dark greyish-brown above, pallid below; pharynx yellowish; legs light brown. Warty areas round bill and eyes; no ectozoa detected; cestodes in intestine.

Corvus sp.—Captain White records *C. bennetti*.

Strepera sp.—Several birds were seen round the township.

Cracticus Destructor (Collared Butcher Bird).—A Butcher Bird was heard. White records this species.

The following additional birds are recorded by Captain White:—Stubble Quail, Australian Bustard, Straw-necked Ibis, Masked Owl, Shell Parrots, Red-backed Kingfisher, Bee-eater, Brown Flycatcher, White-shouldered Caterpillar-eater, *Acanthiza pusilla* and *A. morgani*, Mistletoe Bird, *Melithreptus brevirostris*, *Glyciophila albifrons*, Spiny-cheeked Honey-eater and Chestnut-eared Finch.

Further additional species noted by Le Souef are:—Australian Pratincoles, Pallid Cuckoo, *Calamanthus campestris* (on the plain) and *Chthonicola sagittata* (sic).
