

A Week-End at Victor Harbour.

By J. Neil McGilp.

On the 17th May I journeyed *via* The Meadows and Goolwa to Victor Harbour. During the trip from Mylor to Currency Creek quite a number of Bronzewing Pigeons (*P. chalcoptera*) were disturbed from the roadway. After arriving at Victor Harbour I visited the Bowling-green, and was surprised to see a handsome male Flame-breasted Robin (*P. phoenicea*) down upon the rinks. Upon inquiry I was told that it had been present daily for eight or ten days, and that it spent most of the day about the lawns. This I proved was the case until I left on the 21st. On the following day we motored out to Inman Valley, and during a ramble in a nice piece of bush I was delighted to observe a Black-cheeked Falcon (*F. peregrinus*). When I first sighted the bird I thought it a Brown Hawk, but upon watching it at a little distance I was amused to see its head bobbing up and down. As I walked towards the tree the nodding continued, and I was then close enough to identify this beautiful Falcon. I got quite close to it before it took flight. In flight it differs from all the other Falcons, it appearing to have a very powerful wing beat that carried it straight ahead further than a beat of any of the other species. It gave forth a shrill screech, much resembling the noise caused when brakes are applied and slip on a motor-car. Just before the Falcon alighted in another Gumtree, it planed down close to the ground and then rose upwards on to the branch. In this patch of sapling Gums I noted almost a swarm of Tits, and identified the Striated (*A. lineata*), Yellow-rumped (*G. chrysorrhoa*), Brown (*A. pusilla*), Buff-rumped (*G. reguloides*), and a few Tree-Tits (*Smicrornis brevirostris*). Upon entering open country a pair of Spur-winged Plover was seen and heard calling, and further along the road a fine Sparrow-Hawk was seen. It was from its size a male bird. In the afternoon we went to the Bluff and noted Crested Terns, Seagulls, Pacific Gulls, and in a few

hundred yards of shore between the Bluff and Waitpinga the three small Dotterels (Black-fronted, Red-capped, and Hooded) were observed. A pair of Black Oyster-catchers flew overhead close to the Bluff. Several seabirds were seen well out from land, but identity was impossible, though they appeared very like Gannets.

During our motor trips close to Victor Harbour I was struck with the very handsome Rosella Parrots, they being very much darker than those seen throughout our trip from Adelaide to Goolwa. They appeared to be crimson and black invariably; seldom was a greenish-coloured bird seen. They approached closely in colour the birds of Kangaroo Island.

Goolwa and Goolwa Beach were visited. Many Ground-larks were noted and a pair of White-fronted Herons was disturbed from a swamp-like flat. A handsome Brush Bronzewing Pigeon (*P. elegans*) was observed in a large patch of Mallee scrub, by the roadside. Several White-fronted Terns were seen on the beach front, and also a Grebe that appeared in some difficulty—it had got in between the shore and the breakers, and the undertow there was very strong. The Grebe dived every time a breaker came on to it, but did not make any headway, remaining close at hand for the hour or so we spent on the beach. I was unable satisfactorily to determine if it were the Hoary-headed or Black-throated species.

We came back to the city *via* Yankalilla, and during the journey noted Crows (three), several Noisy Miners (Yankalilla), the Spotted-sided Finch, Wattle-birds of both species, Brown and White Throated Tree-creepers, and close to Myponga a female Goshawk in immature plumage. This identification was of short duration, but from the size of the bird it could not well be any other species. Between Inman Valley and Yankalilla a party of eleven Black Cockatoos (*C. funereus*) was seen flying over open country making to the south. They were making their usual hideous call all the time when passing along. Close at hand a Wedge-tailed Eagle was seen soaring very high up in the sky.

Throughout the trip I was pleased to find that bird life was so plentiful and interesting.

Mention should perhaps be made of a small Bronze Cuckoo seen near Inman Valley on the 18th. I have much difficulty in identifying the two small Cuckoos, so will not attempt to do so with this one. Sordid Wood-Swallows were plentiful.