

Notes on Birds to the East of the Murray.

By J. B. Cleland, M.D.

During August, 1924, a short visit was paid to the country to the east of the Murray comprising Karoonda, the Mantung district, and from the latter to Loxton.

The following birds were noted at Karoonda on 17th to 19th August:—Bronzewing Pigeon, *Zonifer tricolor*, *Polytelis anthopeplus* (a single bird seen flying round the township at dusk), *Cuculus pallidus*, *Cheramoeca leucosternum*, *Rhipidura leucophrys*, *Oreoica gutturalis*, *Colluricincla harmonica*, *Grauculus novae-hollandiae*, *Cinclosoma* sp., *Hylacola cauta* (the white spot on the wing was easily seen—the birds sometimes climbed into small trees and sang very sweetly), *Pomastomus superciliosus*, *Calamanthus* sp. (heard singing but not seen), *Epthianura albifrons*, *Acanthiza pusilla* (?), *Geobasileus chrysorrhous*, *Smicromis brevirostris*, *Malurus assimilis*, *Melithreptus brevirostris*, *Glyciphila melanops*, *Meliphaga virescens*, *Meliphaga leucotis* (♂, testes large, iris reddish-brown, bill and legs black, pharynx orange, total length $7\frac{3}{8}$ in., span of

wings $10\frac{7}{8}$ in.—the note resembling “Twitchy-grank, grank, grank, grank,” and also one resembling the rattling of dice in a box), *Meliphaga cratitia* (δ , testes large, iris dark-greyish brown, bill black, wattle near the gape lilac, pharynx orange, legs greyish-brown, total length $6\frac{3}{8}$ in., span of wing $9\frac{3}{8}$ in.), *Meliphaga ornata*, *Anthochaera carunculata*, *Acanthagenys rufogularis*, *Strepera melanopectera*, *Cracticus torquatus*, *Gymnorhina hypoleuca*, Starlings, Sparrows. A company of Wrens (*Malurus assimilis*) were watched for some while as they were engaged in a family scrimmage. Three cock birds, one not quite in full plumage, were chasing and fighting each other, their beaks clicking from time to time, whilst several hen birds (presumably) were similarly, but less vigorously, engaged in chasing each other. Neither sex interfered with the other.

The following birds were seen at Mantung (between Karoonda and Waikerie) on 19th August:—*Zonifer tricolor*, *Barnardius barnardi*, *Psephotus varius*, *Microeca fascians*, *Petroica goodenovii*, *Melanodryas cucullata*, *Rhipidura leucophrys*, *Seisura inquieta*, *Oreoica gutturalis*, *Colluricincla harmonica*, *Graucalus novae-hollandiae*, *Pomatostomus superciliosus*, *Smicrornis brevirostris*, *Malurus melanotus* (δ , testes large, iris, bill and legs black, pharynx greyish-black, total length $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins., span of wing $6\frac{1}{8}$ in.), *Artamus cyanopterus* (also at Mercunda), *Aphelocephala leucopsis*, *Pardalotus ornatus* (going into a hole in a tree), *Meliphaga ornata*, Crows, *Corcorax melanorhamphus*, *Cracticus torquatus*, Sparrows. A young *Leipoa*, caught in the district, was seen in captivity at Mrs. Stark's, some ten miles from Mantung. In this district, the distributions of the Black-backed and the White-backed Magpies inosculate. At Mantung, the latter were observed, but the Black-backed birds were seen 7 miles from Maggea and 32 miles from Loxton, and some were probably also present at Mantung. The Magpies at Loxton were Black-backed. About 10 miles west of Mantung a nest of *Epthianura albifrons* with three young was found.

Through the kindness of Mr. Kelly, of the Lands Department, I was able to accompany him in his car whilst visiting various holdings in the Mantung district and thence to Loxton. The distance so covered was 114 miles. I have divided this into three stages as follows:—(1) Mantung and west and north-west, bright and sunny morning, 20th August, 25 miles; (2) continuing further north and opposite Maggea, afternoon, 21 miles; (3) from 15 miles west of Maggea to Loxton, Thursday, 21st August, 68 miles. In the following list of birds seen the first figures refer respectively to these three stages:—

List of total birds seen between Mantung, Maggea, and Loxton (114 miles)—

1. Emus, 3, 0, 0; total, 3.
13. *Phaps chalcoptera*, 2, 0, 3; total, 5.
17. *Ocyphaps lophotes*, 2, 0, 2; total, 4.
66. Black-breasted Plovers, 0, 0, 2; total, 2.
136. Wedge-tailed Eagles, 0, 1, 0; total, 1.
- Large Hawkes, 2, 0, 1; total, 3.
150. Kestrels, 0, 0, 1; total, 1.
176. *Barnardias barnardi*, 2, 9, 19; total, 30.
179. *Psephotus varius*, 10, 7, 32; total, 49.
- Bronze cuckoos, 1, 0, 0; total 1.
209. Welcome Swallows, 2, 1, 4; total, 7.
213. *Microeca fascinans*, 2, 0, 3; total, 5.
216. *Petroica goodenovii*, 1, 0, 0; total, 1.
218. *Melanodryas cucullata*, 1, 0, 2; total, 3.
220. Willie-Wagtails, 1, 0, 2; total, 3.
231. *Colluricincla harmonica*, 1, 2, 1; total, 4.
234. *Graucalus novae-hollandiae*, 0, 0, 3; total, 3.
244. *Pomatostomus superciliosus*, 0, 14, 7; total, 21.
251. *Epthianura albifrons*, 6, 2, 6; total, 14.
261. *Acanthiza pusilla* (?) 0, 2, 0; total, 2.
- Tits, 0, 0, 3; total, 3.
269. *Geobasileus chrysorrhous*, 0, 2, 0; total, 2.
270. *Smicrornis brevirostris*, 2, 0, 0; total, 2.
277. *Malurus melanotus*, 5, 0, 1; total, 6.
291. *Artamus cyanopterus*, 1, 2, 0; total, 3.
293. *Aphelocephala leucopsis*, 11, 0, 2; total, 13.
- Ptilotis* sp., 11, 3, 24; total, 38.
338. *Anthus australis*, 8, 5, 14; total, 27.
- Crows, 1, 22, 20; total, 43.
350. *Corcorax melanorhamphus*, 18, 0, 34; total, 52.
351. *Strepera melanoptera*, 1, 2, 2; total, 5.
- 355, 356. *Gymnorhina tibicen* and *G. hypoleuca*, 25, 15, 41; total, 81.
- Unidentified native birds, 8, 6, 22; total, 36.
- Sparrows, 2, 18, 32; total, 52.
- Starlings, 2, 4, 10; total, 16.

Over the 114 miles traversed, 31 species, comprising 471 individuals of native birds were seen.

The following birds were noted at Loxton on 22nd August:—
Cuculus pallidus, *Grallina cyanoleuca*, *Meliphaga penicillata*,
Cracticus torquatus, *Gymnorhina tibicen*.