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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

MONTHLY PROCEEDINGS.

—November, 1924.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 28th November, 1924, at 8 p.m.

The President (Mr. J. Neil McGilp) was in the chair.

It was proposed by Mr. Edwin Ashby, seconded by Captain S. A. White, and carried—"That a letter from this Association should be sent to the Commonwealth authorities, strongly advising them to purchase the ornithological reference collection of Mr. Gregory M. Mathews for Australia."

On the motion of the President; seconded by Mr. Edwin Ashby, it was decided to send a letter to Dr. J. A. Leach, congratulating him on the honour of his appointment as an Honorary Member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union—the highest honour that can be conferred in ornithology in Australia.

Exhibits.—The President exhibited two sets of the eggs of *Geobasileus hedleyi rosinae* taken by himself at St. Kilda, S.A., on 30th September, 1924.

Dr. A. M. Morgan exhibited the nests of the following birds:—*Acanthiza nana*, from Kinchina; *Acanthiza pusilla*, from Meadows; and *Pachycephala pectoralis*, from Willunga Hill.

On account of the Christmas holidays, it was decided to allow the meeting in December to lapse.

The subject for the evening was an account by Mr. Edwin Ashby of his recent trip to Tasmania. It was illustrated by a map, photographs, and specimens of the birds referred to. (It will be printed in our next number.)

—January, 1925.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday, 30th January, 1925, at 8 p.m.

The Vice-President (Dr. A. M. Morgan) was in the chair.

Correspondence.—A number of letters congratulating the Association for its special issue on "Private Collecting" were read and placed on the table.

Mr. Edwin Ashby reported that Swans were being ruthlessly destroyed in Tasmania, and it was decided to communicate the particulars to the police authorities in that State.

The subject for the evening was the completion of the account by Mr. Edwin Ashby of his trip to Tasmania. (To be printed later.)

—February, 1925.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday, 27th February, 1925, at 8 p.m.

Mr. Edwin Ashby, in the unavoidable absence of the President and Vice-President, was in the chair.

Exchanges.—It was decided, in response to their application, to send our Magazine to the Societe Nationale d'Acclimatation de France, 198 Boulevard St. Germain, Paris, and the Zoologisk Museum Trondhjemsveien 23, Oslo, Norway.

Correspondence.—Further congratulatory letters with regard to our special issue on "Private Collecting" were read to the members.

Exhibits.—Professor Cleland exhibited a specimen of *Pterodroma lessoni* (White-headed Fulmar, or Petrel), obtained at Encounter Bay on 17th December, 1924. (Full particulars elsewhere in this number.)

From the South Australian Museum was shown the skull and sternum of a bird of the same species (*P. lessoni*) picked up on the seashore at Bosuh's Point, Guichen Bay, by Master Mark Bonnin, on 26th December, 1924.

Mr. S. Sanders, of Warradale, Sturt, showed some stalks of *Setaria verticillata* (allied to Millet grass) and some feathers of the Boobook Owl (*N. boobook*). The flower has long bristles, which are furnished with very fine recurved barbs, making the whole of the flowering part very grasping. The Boobook Owl had gone into the grass where this grass was growing, pre-

sumably after mice, and was caught in the flowering part. All its exertions to get out made its situation worse, until it was hopelessly entangled. Finally it was released by a man, who had actually to pull out many feathers to free the bird.

Professor Cleland also exhibited some feathers, obtained at Oldea, on the East-West line, which were identified as those from the Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*).

The subject for the evening was "The *Strepera*, or Bell-Magpies." Forty-nine specimens were tabled. The species and sub-species represented were *arguta*, *fuliginosa*, *graculina*, *melanoptera*, *versicolor*, *fusca*, *plumbea*. After discussion, the members present did not consider that Mathews was justified in the matter of his genus "*Neostrepera*" for the reception of birds with a hooked upper mandible, for amongst the "*versicolor*, *plumbea*, and *intermedia* (*fusca*)" were birds with the notch and hooked upper mandible, but also some birds without that feature. They also found that in the typical *Strepera* some birds show similar notching, especially Mr. Ashby's Kangaroo Island skin (*melanoptera*), which has distinct evidence of a notch and hooking, also a "*melanoptera*" from Encounter Bay, which has a slightly notched hook. Thus the result of their investigation is that, in their opinion, the notch and hook near the apex of the upper mandible is a variable feature, and by no means justifies generic or sub-generic separations.

Mathews places "*intermedia*," Sharpe, as a sub-species of *versicolor*. An examination of the series before the meeting led those present to conclude that Mathews was mistaken in this. *Intermedia* seems nearer to *arguta* and *melanoptera*. It is a brown-black bird with a clean white speculum. The bird collected by Mr. Ashby near Cape Spencer in 1886, and named *fusca*, is identical with the Port Lincoln bird named by Sharpe in 1877 *intermedia*. This Association considers *intermedia* to be a good species, that it is not con-specific with *versicolor*, but is a small form, nearest to *arguta*, the Tasmanian bird.

Fuliginosa.—Mathews's description does not mention a definite white patch on the under side of the feathers of the wing of *fuliginosa*. That patch is more or less constant, and in one or two skins there are slight evidences on the upper side of the wing.