

— THE —
South Australian Ornithologist.

VOL. VIII.]

1ST OCTOBER, 1926.

[PART 8.

The South Australian Ornithological Association.

MONTHLY PROCEEDINGS.

—June, 1926.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 25th June, 1926, at 8 p.m. The President (Mr. Alfred Crompton) was in the chair.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th May, 1926, were read and confirmed.

New Members.—The following, proposed at the last meeting, were duly elected:—Messrs. John C. Hawker, of "Anama," Clare, S.A., and C. H. Russell, of Lynwood Farm, Halidon, S.A.

Correspondence.—A letter was received from Captain S. A. White thanking the members for their kind message of sympathy in his bereavement. A letter was received from the General Secretary of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia, intimating that a preliminary report is expected shortly from the Honorary Curator of Ornithology (Dr. A. M. Morgan) on the bones of the Kangaroo Island Emu.

Reprints.—On the question of giving to authors of articles in the "S.A. Ornithologist" reprints up to 25 in number free, it was decided that such a request could not be agreed to, and that if authors required reprints it would be necessary for them to arrange with the printers at their own cost.

Cormorants.—Dr. A. M. Morgan and the Secretary referred to the wholesale slaughter of Cormorants and young at Shag Island, Port Broughton, about Easter, 1926. Unfortunately, the birds are on the unprotected list. The slaughtering took place on two occasions—Sunday, 28th March, and Good Friday, 2nd April, 1926, and was done by a party of men which included locals and visitors.

Bird Notes were handed in by Professor Cleland, Dr. Morgan, and Mr. J. W. Mellor.

Professor J. B. Cleland reported that in May the Double-banded Dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*) was present with Red-capped Dotterels on the beach at Encounter Bay, and only to be distinguished from the latter by their slightly larger size and more wary disposition. They occasionally gathered in flocks of their own, and in one of these 30 birds were counted. None appeared in breeding plumage. He also recorded the presence of the Beautiful Firetail (*Zonaeginthus bellus*) near Mount Compass in May.

Professor J. B. Cleland reported seeing Purple-crowned Lorikeets feeding on the male flowers of *Casuarina stricta*, the Sheoak, at Morialta on 20th June. These flowers did not taste of honey.

Dr. A. M. Morgan mentioned that he had seen numbers of those Lorikeets feeding on the blossom of the male carob-tree in the garden of the Memorial Hospital, North Adelaide.

The subject for the evening was the "Birds of the Grampians," by Mr. Edwin Ashby. Exhibits of the species referred to in the address were shown from the collections of Mr. Edwin Ashby and the S.A. Museum.

—July, 1926.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 30th July, 1926, at 8 p.m. The President (Mr. Alfred Crompton) was in the chair.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th June, 1926, were read and confirmed.

New Member.—Miss Josephine Heysen, of "The Cedars," Ambleside, S.A., was duly proposed and seconded as a member.

Exhibits.—Mr. Edwin Ashby exhibited a skin of *Tyto alba* (Barn Owl) and of a *Ninox boobook* (Boobook Owl), both of which birds had been picked up dead on Hindmarsh Island by Mr. H. H. Newell. He also exhibited a skin of *Meliornis novae-hollandiae* (Yellow-winged Honey-eater), and reported that a fair number of dead birds of this species had been picked up about Blackwood quite recently and brought to him.

Professor J. B. Cleland exhibited the skin of a "Cape Pigeon" (*Daption capense*), caught alive at Encounter Bay by Mr. J. Shannon, jun., on 16th July. This is the second occasion on which this species has been seen alive on the South Australian coast. The bird was greatly emaciated. The skin of the

abdominal walls from this cause was more or less adherent to the underlying parietes, as is customary from wasting. The stomach contained practically no food. The material in the stomach was submitted to Sir Joseph Verco, who has reported that there were the beaks of 10 small cuttlefish (*Sepia novae-hollandiae*), two lenses (probably of *Sepia*), and scraps of small crustaceans. *S. novae-hollandiae* is a small species, the body about three inches long, independently of the arms. It was noted that the bird's oesophagus was a wide one, capable of admitting a bolus of considerable size. The tongue also had a small, almost hook-like, projection at its tip, as if suitable for assisting in the ingestion of a substance like a cuttlefish's body. Mathews does not mention cuttlefish as being used by this species as food. The sex of the bird, probably as the result of the emaciation, could not be ascertained; bill black, pharynx brown, legs brownish-black, inner edges of inner phalanges pallid, total length $15\frac{3}{4}$ inches, span of outspread wings $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches, weight $10\frac{1}{2}$ oz. (emaciated). Three species of *Mallophaga* were present—a large species, a long, narrow species, and on the head a minute species. Cestodes were present in the intestine.

Contents of Birds' Stomachs.—Professor Cleland stated that the Royal Society of South Australia had decided to print the reports of Mr. A. M. Lea, F.E.S., on the contents of birds' stomachs, at the rate of 100 pages per year, and it was thought that it would take about three years to publish those reports already prepared. Mr. Lea then addressed the members on the subject. He said that he already had examined the stomachs of 1,500 birds, and had those reports ready for printing. He stated that he had obtained up to the present the stomach of only one Emu, one Wedge-tailed Eagle, two Bustards, one Crow, and, in fact, he was deficient in stomachs of the larger birds. He did not suggest that such birds should expressly be killed to supply stomachs, but he would be glad if members would forward such to him in cases where any of the larger birds had been destroyed as pests or found dead. If the crop and stomach were placed in spirits or in salt they would keep for some time. After discussion the following resolution was carried unanimously:—“This Association, having heard that it is likely that the Royal Society of South Australia will be able to undertake the publication of the contents of birds' stomachs examined by Mr. A. M. Lea, would like to express their satisfaction at this valuable information being thus made readily available in the interests of science generally and economic biology in particular.” The Secretary was directed to convey that resolution to the Royal Society of South Australia.

The subjects for the evening were the following species:—*Chthonicola sagittata* (Speckled Warbler), *Cisticola exilis* (Golden-headed Fantail-Warbler), *Pyrrhuloemus brunneus* (Redthroat). Dr. A. M. Morgan was in charge, and dilated on the habitats, colorations, nests, and eggs of the different species. Specimens of the birds were exhibited, and were supplied from the collections of Messrs. Edwin Ashby, J. W. Mellor, and the S.A. Museum.

—August, 1926.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 27th August, 1926, at 8 p.m. The President (Mr. Alfred Crompton) was in the chair.

New Member.—Miss Josephine Heysen, who was nominated at the July meeting, was duly elected as a member.

Coorong Licence No. 662.—The Secretary reported that he had paid the annual fee and had lodged the Association's copy of the licence for the deletion of Cattle Island.

Correspondence.—A letter was received from the chief of staff of "The News," asking that the reports of the meetings of the Association be supplied to them in future. This was agreed to.

R.A.O.U. Congress and Camp-out.—A draft of the proposed business paper of the annual Congress of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, to be held in Sydney on 18th October next, was read. On the 22nd of that month the members will leave by train to Dungog, thence by motor to the Williams River, about six miles from Barrington Tops, where the camp will be pitched for eight to ten days.

Bird Notes were handed in by Messrs. J. W. Mellor, H. A. Stevens, and F. G. Souter.

Exhibits.—From the S.A. Museum collection the following were exhibited:—*Diomedea chlororhyncha* (Yellow-nosed Albatross) and *Catharacta lonnbergi* (Dark Southern Skua), taken in the Gulf of St. Vincent on 14th August.

The subject for the evening—"The Amytornes (Grass-Wrens)"—was in charge of Mr. F. E. Parsons, who pointed out the salient differences and referred to their habitats and peculiarities. The specimens exhibited were as follows:—*Amytornis textilis* (Western Grass-Wren), from Nonning and Mt. Ive (Gawler Ranges); *A. purnelli* (Dusky Grass-Wren), Musgrave and Everard Ranges, S.A.; *A. modestus* (Thick-billed Grass-Wren), Oodnadatta, Fountain Springs, Marree, S.A.; *A. striatus* (Striated Grass-Wren), Loxton, Karoonda, Nadda (mallee), Lake Torrens, and Kelly, Eyre Peninsula; *A. goyderi*, Lake Eyre (two specimens in British Museum).