

A Trip to Mannum.

By J. Sutton.

On 25th April, 1927, Dr. Morgan and I were at Mannum. The speedometer indicated the distance from North Adelaide, via the Torrens Gorge, as 52 miles. At three miles north of Mannum we stopped at the southern end of Pellaring Flat, which is two miles in length and half a mile across at its greatest width. The Flat is lined with big redgums at the side of the road and also along the bank of the river. It does not appear to have been drained or cultivated, for when the River Murray is high it is covered in water. At the time of our visit there was shallow water collected in a few spots, and in these were many water birds. The following 37 species of birds were noted at Mannum. The figures after the names represent the individual numbers observed:—

Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*), 1; Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*), 4 (these were on the dried land near some "lignum" bushes near the River); Black-tailed Native Hen (*Tribonyx ventralis*), 1; Eastern Swampphen or Bald Coot (*Porphyrio melanotus*), 80; Coot (*Fulica atra*), 653; Hoary-headed Grebe (*Podiceps poliocephalus*), 240; Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax ater*), 1; Little Pied Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*), 28; Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*), 4; Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*), 150; Red-kneed Dotterel (*Erythrogonyx cinctus*), 1; Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*), 41; Black-fronted Dotterel (*Charadrius melanops*), 4; White-headed Stilt (*Himantopus*

leucocephalus), 8; Wood-Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), 1. This bird was flushed as we were walking along a causeway across the Flat and not far from the road. It was on a muddy part with very little water lying there. When the bird rose it gave a two-note call, and we could distinctly see that the upper tail coverts were white. After lunch we walked northwards and saw the bird again, this time feeding in some shallow water. We ventured out as far as the drying mud would permit and watched the bird through our field-glasses, noting the blackish beak, olive-brown legs, white eyebrow, white mark on face, and white spots on wings. It was continually bobbing its body. We watched it for some time, and I had to throw two pieces of hard mud to get the bird to rise. When it did it uttered the two-note call twice and the white upper tail-coverts were again noted. After looking at the specimens in the S.A. Museum we have no doubt that the bird was a Wood Sandpiper. White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*), 21; Straw-necked Ibis (*T. spinicollis*), 75; Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*), 8 (four of these birds flew on to a big redgum on the edge of the River and remained there for over half an hour); White Egret (*Egretta alba*), 6 (these birds were feeding on the Flat, at about 150 yards from the road); White-faced Heron (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*), 130 (111 of them were feeding in one spot where the water was very shallow); White-necked (Pacific) Heron (*Notophox pacifica*), 5; Black Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*), 1; Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*), 2; Grey Teal (*Querquedula gibberifrons*), 22; Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*), 4 (these birds were quartering over the Flat and called many times; one bird had a small fish about four inches long in its two talons and was feeding off it as it soared around; on first sighting the bird it was 60 feet up, and whilst eating it gradually got higher and higher until at last the fish appeared but an inch long); Red-backed Parrot (*Psephotus haematonotus*), 17; Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*), 5; Welcome-Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*), 21; Willie-Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*), 2; Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*), 65; Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*), 3 (these birds were at times down on the soft earth feeding, but when they flew up from that they were generally chased by a Magpie-Lark); White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*), 7; Superb Blue-Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*), 1; Red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus ornatus*), 3; White-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga penicillata*), 9; Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*), 5; White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*), 20.

On our journey there we saw a Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*), ♂, near the railway crossing at Birdwood.