

Murat Bay, West Coast.

By C. Sullivan, M.B., B.S.

*Phalacrocorax* sp. (*P. fuscescens* vel. *P. varius*).—Very common and very wary. I have not yet been able to approach sufficiently close to identify the species.

Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*).—Very common in Ceduna township, perching on housetops, and scavenging in the street and in back yards. Often observed paddling or rather "puddling" in small pools on the beach. As the mud was stirred up, the denizens thereof darted out and were snapped up as they emerged into the clearer water surrounding.

Pacific Gull (*Gabianus pacificus*).—Fairly common, specially the younger mottled-brown phase. These fight for scraps in the back yards, with Silver Gulls as their opponents. On the 10th April an immature specimen was perched on a pole on the jetty. The bird was between eight and nine feet from the ground, but allowed us to walk directly underneath without showing any sign of fear. The local name for the immature phase is "Mollyhawk."

Pied Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*).—Seen occasionally in flocks of 10 to 15. Very shy.

Sooty Oystercatcher (*Haematopus unicolor*).—Less common than the former species and in smaller flocks.

Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*).—Heard occasionally in the township. Observed a few miles inland in numbers, feeding within 20 yards of a farmhouse.

White-faced Heron (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*).—Observed occasionally on quiet stretches of beach.

Black Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*).—A few small flocks observed near Denial Bay township.

Grey (Black) Duck (*Anas superciliosa*).—One was observed in a pool of rainwater, diameter five feet, on the East-West Road (the old telegraph route). The first rain for months had fallen the night before. The bird allowed a car to whiz past within four yards, and did not take flight.

Port Lincoln Parrot (*Barnardius zonarius*).—Fairly common, but rather shy. Small flocks of three or four.

Mulga Parrot (*Psephotus varius*).—Not so common as the Port Lincoln Parrot. A pair observed on 24th April allowed an approach to within five yards, and continuous observation for about eight minutes, until the observer withdrew. They were both very quiet, especially the female. The red patch on the back of the head was duller in the female.

A *Neophema* was observed in Denial Bay township on the 29th April, but was not identified.

Sacred Kingfisher (*Halycon sanctus*).—On 24th April a pair were observed in some mangroves near the beach.

Welcome-Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).—Very common. On Ceduna jetty they are very quiet, and allow an approach within three feet.

Willie-Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—Very common.

Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura inquieta*).—Seen occasionally. On 20th April one was seen in the township, hovering and "grinding" a foot above a Grey Butcher-Bird which was perched on a telegraph-pole.

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*).—Rather uncommon.

*Cinlosoma* sp.—These have been seen on three or four occasions, but are very shy and have not yet been clearly identified; I think they are Chestnut Quail-Thrushes (*C. castanotum*).

Southern Scrub-Robin (*Drymòdes brunneopygia*).—Heard several times. One specimen seen. Very shy, compared with the same species as observed in the Victorian mallee (Turriff West district).

White-browed Babbler (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*).—Fairly common.

Grey-backed Silvereye (*Zosterops halmaturina*).—Seen occasionally.

Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*).—Very common.

Yellow-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga ornata*).—Commoner than *M. virescens*, especially in the scrub. Not so common about the township.

*Myzantha* sp.—Observed three on 21st April, but did not identify them.

Red Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*).—Heard and seen several times.

*Corvus* sp.—Very common. No opportunity yet for close examination.

White-winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*).—Two small flocks seen on the East-West Road just north of Mural Bay.

Grey Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus torquatus*).—Very common. As elsewhere, is the autumn singer *par excellence*. Here is an attempt to syllabize one of the most characteristic calls:—

Wockety-kewockety-kewockety-ke-toyee-toyee-toyee-toyee-toyee-toyee, etc.

White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Quite common.

About 20 other species have been seen since 7th April, but not clearly identified, many of them having just vouchsafed a glimpse of themselves as one passed in the car along the scrubby roads.