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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

MONTHLY PROCEEDINGS.

—September, 1927.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Rooms on Friday, 30th September, 1927, at 8 p.m. The Vice-President (Professor J. B. Cleland) was in the chair.

Shooting of Albatrosses.—The Hon. Secretary reported that he had received information that a captain of a French steamer recently arrived at Port Adelaide had been shooting Albatrosses near the Australian coast. He had written to the Secretary of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals on the matter.

Nomination.—Professor Cleland was duly nominated as delegate to represent our Association at the Congress of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science at Hobart on 16th January, 1928.

Bird Notes.—Mr. J. Neil McGilp stated he had received the following reports from Kangaroo Island:—Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*)—For four years in succession a nest had been built in the same fork in a branch of a tree overhanging a house at the Cygnet River. Mallee-Fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*)—A mound with six eggs therein was found last season near the house at Cygnet River, and an adult bird was running with the tame Turkeys at the place. Mr. McGilp also reported that Red-backed Parrots (*Psephotus haematonotus*) were found late in September nesting in the thatch of two sheds near Onetrec Hill. Dr. A. M. Morgan stated that a pair of Black-shouldered Kites (*Elanus axillaris*) were seen at Wood's Point, S.A., in August, feeding young out of the nest. The Hon. Secretary reported that for the first time he had seen an Olive-backed Oriole (*Oriolus sagittatus*) at Netherby. It arrived about 9.30 a.m. on 12th September, and was singing for some minutes. The Yellow-winged Honeyeaters (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*)

and a pair of White-plumed Honeyeaters (*Meliphaga penicillata*) were greatly excited by the strange calls. A Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*) also flew into the big gumtree, as if to inquire. After staying about fifteen minutes the Oriole flew away in a northerly direction. Mr. J. W. Mellor exhibited the following specimens of the Oriole taken at the Reedbeds:—February, 1901, imm. ♂; February, 1905, ♂, eating the fruit in a figtree; August, 1910, ♂, eating ivy-berries; April, 1912, ♀, eating the fruit in a figtree. Mr. Mellor also exhibited a Barn-Owl (*Tyto alba*), ♀, juv., found dead in July at the Reedbeds. Professor Cleland reported that a Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) had been picked up dead on the seashore at Encounter Bay. It was greatly emaciated, the intestines were heavily impacted by masses of cestodes, and the stomach contained many nematodes. Death was probably due to inanition from the intense parasitism.

Subjects.—Professor Cleland then gave an account of the species of birds he had noted on two trips recently—Mount Remarkable and at Pinnaroo. After that Dr. Morgan gave a short address on the species of *Meliphaga* found in South Australia—*virescens*, *fusca*, *chrysops*, *leucotis*, *cratitia*, *heartlandi*, *ornata*, *plumula*, and *penicillata*—specimens of each being shown from the S.A. Museum collection.

—October, 1927.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Rooms on Friday, 21st October, 1927, at 8 p.m. The Vice-President (Professor J. B. Cleland) was in the chair.

Shooting of Albatrosses.—The Hon. Secretary read letters received from the Secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals on this subject, as well as a letter from Mr. J. Edgar Young, a passenger on the M.M. S.S. *Commissaire Ramel*, to Mr. J. F. Bailey, Director of the Botanic Gardens, Adelaide. The Hon. Secretary reported that he had sent a copy of the latter letter to Mr. Edwin Ashby, R.A.O.U. Congress, Perth, and another copy to the Hon. R. W. Foster, M.H.R., Canberra. It was decided to await results.

Condolence.—The Hon. Secretary advised that he had sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the President and members of the Association to Mr. Simon Harvey on account of the death of the latter's father.

Bird Notes.—Bird Notes were received from Dr. C. Sullivan, of Ceduna, and Mr. W. H. Tubbs, of Cobdogla, River Murray. Professor Cleland noted the White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca*

leucosterna) at Lyndoch on 8th October. Mr. J. W. Mellor exhibited a nest of the Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*) from the Reedbeds.

Subject.—The subject for the evening was the Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*). Dr. Morgan, who was in charge, pointed out that the species increased in size as they came to the south of Australia, that the south coastal birds were darker than those from the interior, and that the female was smaller than the male. Specimens were shown from the collections of Professor Cleland, Mr. J. W. Mellor, and the S.A. Museum, and represented birds from Bathurst Island, Melville Island, and Roper River, Northern Territory; Derby, North-West Australia; Capel River and Bunbury, West Australia; McDouall Peak, Owieandana, Mount Rose (North Flinders Range), Mount Lyndhurst, Kallioota, Parachilna, Ooldea, near Kimba, Largs, Robe, Yorke's Peninsula, and Encounter Bay, South Australia; and Mildura and Glenelg River, Victoria.

—November, 1927.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Rooms on Friday, 25th November, 1927, at 8 p.m. The Vice-President (Professor Cleland) was in the chair.

Duck Season.—In "The Register" of 24th instant it was announced that the Minister of Agriculture had decided that the duck-shooting season would open on 15th February next. That date corresponds with the opening day in Victoria. It was decided to send a congratulatory message to the Minister on his decision. (The previous Minister had, during his regime, fixed the opening date for 21st December.)

Shooting of Albatrosses.—A letter was received from the State Secretary in Western Australia of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, stating that our letter on this subject had been placed before the Congress in Perth, and that it had been decided to send a letter to the captain concerned in the shooting. With regard to our letter to the Hon. R. W. Foster, M.H.R., Canberra, he forwarded the reply of the Hon. H. E. Pratten, Minister for Trade and Customs for the Commonwealth of Australia, dated 28th October, 1927, which read as follows:—
"Referring to the letters (two) received from you, and which are returned herewith, in which it is asked that some action may be taken to prevent the destruction of Albatrosses on the Australian coast, I desire to inform you that it is regretted that the matter is not one in which the Commonwealth can interfere, especially as it is more than probable that the shooting takes

place outside the three-mile limit, which would be beyond the jurisdiction of either the Commonwealth or the States." It was resolved that no further action be taken in the matter.

Bird Notes were received from Dr. C. Sullivan and Mr. H. H. Newell.

Exhibits.—Professor Cleland exhibited two specimens of the Fairy Prion (*Pachyptila turtur*) washed up dead on seabeaches—one at Middleton on 10/5/1927, bill grey, pharynx light yellow, feet steel grey above and dull grey below, total length 11 cm., span of wing 21 cm.; the other at Brighton, 26/5/1927, total length 11¼ cm., span of wings 21½ cm. In the Middleton specimen the bill is not so long as that in the Brighton bird, but it is slightly wider at the base, but is not nearly so wide as that of the specimens of *P. desolata* in the S.A. Museum. The Brighton bird has a long and narrow bill, slightly longer than any of the specimens in the S.A. Museum.

A Fox-earth.—In "The Register" of 11th October it was stated that at Mr. J. C. Marshall's farm at Nairne, in the bank of a creek, the shearers dug out a vixen and four young ones. The chamber was 10 feet from the surface, and there were two inward tunnels of 25 feet and another of 10 feet. It was a wet day, and the shearers and pickers-up spent from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. digging out the foxes. They finished the work by the aid of a lantern. Amongst the spoil were a Turkey, an old and a young Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*), a White-backed Magpie, two ringtail opossums, and a hare. Recently foxes killed 20 Turkeys in one night at the farm. They also ate 14 eggs on which a hen bird was sitting.

Subject.—Mr. Edwin Ashby then related to members the account of his journey to Dirk Hartog Island with Dr. A. Chenery, and exhibited specimens of the birds secured. Specimens from the S.A. Museum were also shown.
