
KUSS—Birds of Lowbank District.

Birds of the Lowbank District, S.A.

By Max S. Kuss.

Lowbank is situated on the River Murray, six miles by road and ten miles by river upstream from Waikerie.

Emu (*Dromaius novae-hollandiae*).—Rarely seen near river except in times of drought, but still common on the outskirts of farm lands.

Mallee Fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*).—Rarely seen, but often heard at night. Fresh mounds, though not very common, can be found almost throughout the summer months.

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*Quail.—At least two species present, but not identified. Frequent crops and grassy plains. Numbers governed by rich or poor season.

Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*).—Very common. frequenting both river flats and mallee away from river.

Diamond Dove (*Geopelia cuneata*).—Not as common as *G. placida*.

Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*).—Common, both on river flats and in the mallee.

Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*).—Very common, river and mallee.

Black-tailed Native-Hen (*Tribonyx ventralis*).—Very common in flocks. Are present throughout the year, but no sign of a nest has been found.

Dusky Moorhen (*Gallinula tenebrosa*).—Common, but only so when the river is high and backwaters are filled. 1932 was a good season.

Eastern Swamphen (*Porphyrio melanotus*).—Only one pair noticed (November, 1932).

Coot (*Fulica atra*).—Very common during high river periods, otherwise not seen. The above three species depend upon lignums standing in water to build their nests. Reeds have not yet established themselves, owing to the uncertain level of the river, but have made progress since the locks have been completed.

Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias leucopareia*).—Do not frequent this district, but small flocks up to twelve in number are sometimes seen flying along the river a few feet above the surface of the water.

Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*).—Do not often remain in the district, but flocks (one estimated at 150) sometimes seen passing by, just skimming the water.

Red-kneed Dotterel (*Erythrogonys cinctus*).—Not uncommon. Adheres to margins of lagoons and backwaters. Nests with eggs found.

Black-fronted Dotterel (*Charadrius melanops*).—Common. Frequents edge of both river and lagoons.

* Probably Stubble Quail (*Coturnix pectoralis*) and Little Quail (*Turnix velox*).—Editors.

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Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*).—Very common, but seems partly migratory after the breeding season.

Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*).—Not common, frequenting plains away from river.

Red-necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novae-hollandiae*).—Rare. A few seen on margin of lagoon in December, 1932.

Australian Snipe (*Capella hardwicki*).—Uncommon.

Southern Stone Curlew (*Burhinus magnirostris*).—Not often seen, but cry often heard at night.

White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*).—Nomadic in habits, seems to visit here after breeding season.

Straw-necked Ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*).—Same remarks as *T. molucca*, but not so common.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*).—Fairly common; nests found.

Plumed Egret (*Egretta intermedia*).—Uncommon; present after breeding season.

White Egret (*Egretta alba*).—A bird was seen on 11th and 12th June, 1933, on the main lagoon of Lowbank.

White-fronted Heron (*Notophyx novae-hollandiae*).—Very common along river and lagoons. Many nests found.

Nankeen Night Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*).—Uncommon; sometimes seen roosting in a dense clump of lignums.

Brown Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*).—Uncommon; seen in dense clumps of lignums.

Black Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*).—Not common, but sometimes appear in pairs or flocks. Isolated pairs breed here.

Pied Goose (*Anseranas semipalmata*).—Rare; one pair only seen (1931).

Maned Goose (*Chenonetta jubata*).—Common, usually in flocks. Breed in hollow gums.

Chestnut-breasted Shelduck (*Casarca tadornoides*).—Rare; occasionally a pair visits the district.

Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*).—Very common; breed locally more than any other Duck, usually in hollow gums.

Grey Teal (*Querquedula gibberifrons*).—Most common of wild Duck, but nests not very numerous.

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Pink-eared Duck (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*).—Not common, but sometimes fairly large flocks seen. No nests found.

White-eyed Duck (*Nyroca australis*).—Very numerous when river high and all backwaters full, otherwise not common. No nests found.

Musk-Duck (*Biziura lobata*).—Very numerous when river high, otherwise not.

Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).—Not very common.

Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax ater*).—Very common, often in large flocks. Sometimes a flock is seen pursuing a school of fish. On one occasion a mob of 500/700 assembled on the river, arriving in small lots, the procession taking half-an-hour to finish.

Little Pied Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*).—Common, but not seen in such large flocks as the Little Black Cormorant.

Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*).—Very common, often in large flocks. No nests.

Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*).—Not common, but sometimes seen singly or in pairs.

Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*).—Fairly common.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*).—Uncommon. Breeds in cliffs towering above river. Very fierce and daring when nest approached.

Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*).—Common, both, along river and away from it.

Boobook Owl (*Ninox boobook*).—Very common, heard frequently.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*).—Common; frequents river cliffs as well as timber.

White Cockatoo (*Kakatoe galerita*).—Very common, often in large noisy flocks.

Galah (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*).—Very common, frequenting river gums, and mallee away from river.

Regent Parrot (*Polytelis anthopeplus*).—At one time common, often in large flocks, but now rarely seen.

Yellow Rosella (*Platycercus flaveolus*).—Fairly common along river bed.

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Ringneck Parrot (*Barnardius barnardi*).—Very common.

Mulga Parrot (*Psephotus varius*).—Uncommon, only recently noticed.

Red-backed Parrot (*Psephotus haematonotus*).—Very common, river bed and the mallee within a few miles of the river.

Shell Parrot (*Melopsittacus undulatus*).—Very common, often in large flocks.

Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*).—Common. Usually seen only when sitting on nest.

Owlet Nightjar (*Aegotheles cristata*).—Not often seen, and only when flushed from hollow.

Red-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon pyrrhopygius*).—Rare. Incessant single piping note sometimes tends to aggravate. The few that have been seen were near a dry creek away from river.

Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*).—Common, often in large flocks.

Rainbow Bird (*Merops ornatus*).—Very common, October to February inclusive.

Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).—Not common.

Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*).—Uncommon. One egg found in nest of a Hooded Robin.

Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).—Very common, frequenting houses and river cliffs, and dry trees bordering water. Many do not migrate.

White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosterna*).—Very common, frequenting banks of dry creeks. Often floating round at fair heights.

Tree Martin (*Hylochelidon nigricans*).—Common, frequenting gums bordering river and backwaters.

Fairy Martin (*Hylochelidon ariel*).—Very common; large colonies of nests built on face and under ledges of river cliffs. Many birds do not migrate.

Brown Flycatcher (*Microeca fascinans*).—Not common.

Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*).—Common; females seem more common than males.

Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*).—Not very common.

Black-and-White Fantail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—Common.

Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura inquieta*).—Not common.

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

White-winged Triller (*Lalage tricolor*).—Uncommon.

Chestnut-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus ruficeps*).—Very common in colonies or family groups. On 6th May, 1933, a family of these Babblers was noticed reconditioning an old nest with string, feathers, etc.—Their enthusiasm, however, was not permanent. On 5th June I noticed another band carrying nesting material, and they seem to be in earnest.

White-browed Babbler (*Pomatostomus superciliosus*).—Uncommon. Two family groups of six and eight noticed on 28th May, 1933, for first time.

Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhynchus cruralis*).—Fairly common in season (October to February).

White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*).—Common, but only in recent years. Seems to become more plentiful each year.

Australian Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus australis*).—Uncommon; first noticed in 1932 (high river); several nests, found in lignums and reeds.

Little Grassbird (*Megalurus gramineus*).—Common when river high and backwaters full. Many nests found, always in lignums.

Red-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza hamiltoni*).—Not uncommon.

Chestnut-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza uropygialis*).—Uncommon.

Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*).—Common. On 8th June, 1933, I noticed a pair of this species carrying nesting material, and discovered an almost completed nest built under the shelter of an old unused bough-shed.

Black-backed Blue Wren (*Malurus melanotus*).—Uncommon; seems nomadic.

Purple-backed Wren (*Malurus assimilis*).—Apparently nomadic; sometimes absent, at others met in parties.

White-breasted Wood-Swallow (*Artamus leucorhynchus*).—Uncommon; adheres to gums bordering river and backwaters. Migrates after nesting season.

White-browed Wood-Swallow (*Artamus superciliosus*).—Very common, October till end of January.

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Masked Wood-Swallow (*Artamus personatus*).—Uncommon.

Dusky Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*).—Very common; non-migratory.

Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*).—Common along river bed.

Grey Shrike-Thrush (*Colluricincla harmonica*).—Common.

Black-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*).—Very common.

White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*).—Uncommon.

Grey Butcher-Bird (*Cracticus torquatus*).—Common.

Eastern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*).—Very common; amongst the first in the district to begin nesting, the majority of nests being built in hollow fence-posts. On 8th June, 1933, I saw a pair of these birds carrying nesting material into a hollow post. A third individual of the species investigating the activity was promptly routed.

Black-capped Sittella (*Neositta pileata*).—Uncommon; usually in bands of about six.

Brown Tree-Creeper (*Climacteris picumnus*).—Very common.

Red-tipped Pardalote (*Pardalotus ornatus*).—Very common.

Yellow-tailed Pardalote (*Pardalotus xanthopygus*).—Uncommon.

Brown-headed Honeyeater (*Melithreptus brevirostris*).—Fairly common, but not nearly so plentiful as the Yellow-plumed or White-plumed Honeyeaters.

Yellow-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga ornata*).—Common.

White-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga penicillata*).—Most common of local Honeyeaters.

Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*).—Very common; usually adheres to box and gumtrees along river. Noticed away from river only once.

Yellow-throated Miner (*Myzantha flavigula*).—Uncommon; first noticed in 1932.

Red Wattle-Bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*).—Uncommon; noticed only in recent years.

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*).—Very common around fruit gardens.

Blue-faced Honeyeater (*Entomyzon cyanotis*).—Uncommon; but seems to be increasing in numbers. Adheres to gums and box trees along river.

Australian Pipit (*Anthus australis*).—Common.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).—Uncommon; occasionally a pair noticed in gardens.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).—Very common; breeds almost anywhere under shelter.

Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*).—Common; large flocks assemble in gardens, especially where boxthorn hedges are grown.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—Very common; frequents gardens in large flocks, and breeds chiefly in hollow gums along river.

Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*).—Very common.

White-winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*).—Very common.

Black-winged Currawong (*Strepera melanoptera*).—Uncommon, usually in pairs. Has been seen investigating nests of other birds for young.
