
By L. R. Reese, Minnie Downs, via Marree, S.A.

18th April, 1936.—The Diamantina River is in flood, and though within its banks will, I think, reach Lake Eyre. Birds noted nesting are:—Stubble Quail (*Coturnix pectoralis*); Little Quail (*Turnix velox*); Australian Dotterel (*Peltohyas australis*); Pratincole (*Stiltia isabella*); Bustard (*Eupodotis australis*); Brolga (*Grus rubicundus*); Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*); Fork-tailed Kite (*Milvus migrans*); Bare-eyed Cockatoo (*Kakatoe sanguinea*); Galah (*K. roseicapilla*); Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*); Gibber-Bird (*Ashbyia lovensis*); Brown Songlark (*Cinclorhamphus cruralis*); Rufous Songlark (*C. mathewsi*); Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*); Crow (*Corvus ceciliae*); Black-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*).

17th July, 1936.—I received your first letter* when en route to Boullia, Q., and the second at "Pandie Pandie," S.A. The newspaper's correspondent was the victim of our mail-driver's humour. The Turkeys were Ibis and the Bittern was a Turkey. Messrs. Crabb ("Pandie Pandie") and Gurr ("Clifton Hills") estimated the flock of Ibis at about 5,000. In 1915 the Turkeys were in thousands on the Goyder Lagoon plain. This year (1936) the Ibis (the Straw-necked, *Threskiornis spinicollis*) are in thousands in several places. I saw some hundreds in two flocks about 200 miles apart on my Boullia trip, and reports from Cadelga, S.A., state they are very numerous there. In a day's ride when working among our stock two or four Turkeys (*Eupodotis australis*) are seen nearly every day.

30th August, 1936.—I think the bird-life in the interior is controlled by the amount of rain that falls. On the northern edge of Goyder's Lagoon hundreds of aquatic birds are nesting, but I have not been there this year. I have seen the following species nesting:—Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*); Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*); Australian Dotterel; Pratincole; Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*); Fork-tailed Kite; Bare-eyed Cockatoo; Galah; Budgerygah (*Melopsittacus unchulatus*); Fairy Martin (*Hylochelidon ariel*); Magpie-Lark; Zebra Finch; Black-backed Magpie. We have been most fortunate with regard to rain this year, as it has fallen every month, excepting April. It is wonderful how quickly the birds return when the rain falls. Summer has set in with us, and the blowflies are more numerous than I have ever seen them.

[* In an Adelaide newspaper of 17th June there appeared an article on a trip from Marree to Birdsville, in which the statements were made that "wild turkeys were seen flying in thousands in their characteristic crescent formation," also that "a Bittern had been seen standing motionless and looking like a piece of the surrounding vegetation." These remarks were doubted here, and a cutting was sent to Mr. Reese at once, asking for his opinion. However, a letter from Mr. E. A. Brooks, who has a station property on the River Diamantina, was published in the same newspaper on 20th June. Mr. Brooks considered that probably the turkeys were ibises, and the bittern a turkey—a cutting of this was sent to Mr. Reese.—Editors.]