
Silver Gulls feeding on Native Currants.

By Norman B. Tindale, B.Sc.

At Port MacDonnell late in January, 1938, a party of four witnessed the antics of some twenty Silver Gulls (*Larus novaehollandiae*) in the sandhills fifty yards from the beach. They were alighting on the tips of the branches of native currant shrubs (*Leucopogon parviflorus*) and partly supporting themselves with fluttering wings, were engaged in feeding on the snow-white berries of these bushes. Many twigs were broken under their weight and hung down or fell to the ground. In certain areas south of the township the shrubs had been entirely stripped of berries, and the abundance of broken and dead twigs pointed to the continued depredations of these birds.

Some years ago I drew attention to a similar habit of Silver Gulls at Coffin's Bay, on the West Coast ("S.A. Ornithologist," IX, 1928, page 217). On that occasion also the Silver Gulls were seen feeding upon the fruits of currant bushes. It is interesting to be able to confirm the observation from an entirely different part of the State. The native name on the Coorong for the Silver Gull is [to'rok:ori]. Mr. J. M. Black has confirmed the identification of the shrub upon which the birds were feeding.

According to Milerum, the last old man of the Tanganekald or Coorong tribe, Silver Gulls have always been known to feed on currants in the manner described above.
