

Fork-tailed (White-rumped) Swifts,

Micropus pacificus.

C. E. Rix reports:—On 18th February, 1938, a large number of these birds was noted at the Grange at about 8 a.m. The weather was humid and threatening, with a slight northerly wind. The birds were flying towards the north as they hawked for insects. I walked from the Grange to Henley Beach and

saw the Swifts over the whole distance. When I left Henley for Adelaide at 8.30 a.m. the birds were still flying over from the south. No Swifts were noted over the sea nor east of the tramway viaduct. No estimate of the numbers could be made as the birds were rather scattered. Occasionally between twenty and thirty could be seen at one time, while at other times only five or six were visible.

On 20th February, 1938, about fifty of these Swifts were noticed flying about over the Grange jetty between 5.30 and 6 a.m. At the time it was raining with a very strong north-easterly wind blowing.

On 4th March, 1938, at about 7 p.m., eleven Fork-tailed Swifts were noted near the Grange jetty. The birds appeared from over the sea and disappeared towards the east, hawking for insects as they passed. There was no wind at the time. The call of the species can be best likened to the twanging of a slightly stretched piece of elastic.

S. Sanders, of Moorook, River Murray, writes:—On 25th October, 1937, I saw some 200/300 Swifts flying at about 1,000 feet southwards, twelve miles west of Moorook; and on 18th February, 1938, several hundreds in all of Fork-tailed Swifts were flying over Moorook from 5.20 p.m. until 6.30 p.m. They may have been flying over at a much earlier time. The birds were travelling due north from 70 to 100 feet high, and appeared to me to be feeding as they flew on. A thunderstorm was passing over at the time. A specimen, a female, was secured on 18th February, 1938, and presented to the S.A. Museum.
