

Notes from Moorook, S.A.

By Samuel Sanders.

Moorook is situated on the left bank of the River Murray, fourteen miles in a direct line west of Berri. My house is close to the river; to the south is a large backwater or lagoon with an area of about 700 acres, and to the north is another lagoon with about the same area. At times I see a number of sea birds about the lagoons. Silver Gulls (*Larus novae-hollandiae*) are always here since the river was locked.

25th December, 1937.—Black Ducks (*Anas superciliosa*) and Teal (*Querquedula* sp.) were noted. The Ducks were feeding on the duck-weed and I have never seen so many of these birds before; fifteen Musk-Ducks (*Biziura lobata*); eleven Egrets and five small Egrets (*Egretta* spp.); five Spur-winged Plovers (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*), twenty or more Black Swans (*Chenopsis atrata*).

28th December, 1937.—I saw a pair of Black-fronted Dotterels (*Charadrius melanops*); flocks of Galahs (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*), Cockatoo Parrots (*Leptolophus hollandicus*); Shell-Parrots (*Melopsittacus undulatus*); four Ringneck Parrots (*Barnardius barnardi*); three pairs of Mallee Parrots (*Psephotus varius*); three Nankeen Kestrels (*Falco cenchroides*); five White-breasted Wood-Swallows (*Artamus leucorhynchus*); twenty or more Bee-eaters (*Merops ornatus*), and I noted five of their nesting burrows in old rubble pits; twenty-three White-winged Choughs (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*) in all, in four flocks; and near an outback road five Brown Songlarks (*Cin-clorhamphus cruralis*) were observed. Box gums were in bloom and Honeyeaters were busy. A pair of Red-capped Robins (*Petroica goodenovii*) in the orchard had two young fully feathered. A pair of Willie Wagtails (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) had two young which had been on the wing for a month, but were still being fed.

On the Kingston Lagoon.—Eight Black Swans, seven Egrets, and a large flock of Blue Bald Coots (*Porphyrio melanotus*).

7th February, 1938.—Noted a Restless Flycatcher (*Scisura inquieta*). Four Bee-eaters were sitting on a clothes-line close to the back of our house.

12th February, 1938.—Saw to-day four Spur-winged Plovers; several clutches of young Black Duck (flappers); and two clutches of Teal, and small numbers of Black Swans and Pelicans (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*); numbers of Magpie-Larks

(*Grallina cyanoleuca*); two flocks of Babblers (*Pomatostomus* sp.) and some White-breasted Wood-Swallows and Dusky Wood-Swallows (*Artamus cyanopterus*).

February, 1938.—I noticed a Spotted Nightjar (*Eurostopodus guttatus*) sitting in the shade of a mallee tree. The day was very hot with a shade temperature of 100°.

31st March, 1938.—We had a plague of mice, and a Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus axillaris*) has been about for weeks. It feeds on the mice, and I noticed that this species always prefers to rest on a high structure, such as wireless or telephone-poles. The Magpies (*Gymnorhina*) have been feeding on the mice, and Owls seem to be more in evidence since the plague. A Brolga (Native Companion) (*Grus rubicundus*) was seen on 29th March and again to-day. I think it is the same bird that we have seen about for years, but it has been absent for the past seven or eight months.

12th April, 1938.—A Restless Flycatcher has been about again. A White-faced Heron (*Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae*) was seen. Four Terns (including the Caspian (*Hydroprogne caspia*)) were noted flying across the river.
