

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORNITHOLOGIST

Official Journal of the South Australian Ornithological Association.

(First appeared 1914.)

Patron: Vacant. President: MR. S. E. TERRILL. Vice-President: MR. C. E. RIX.

Hon. Secretary: MR. H. T. CONDON, South Australian Museum.

Address: Box 386A, G.P.O., Adelaide.

Vol. XVI.

MAY, 1942.

Part 2.

BIRDS OF MID-YORKE PENINSULA

By T. G. Souter, "Gortmore," Maitland.

These notes have been compiled from observations made by me since March, 1922, until the present time (July, 1940). The part of the Peninsula where my observations have been made is from Moonta to Ardrossan in the north, and to Minlaton and Port Victoria in the south. On three occasions I have been down to the extreme south, once for three days. Numerous birds and tracks of the emu were seen on the occasion when I camped down there. The track had been fenced between the time I went down and my return, three days later. The new fence had been knocked down where emus had either run or had been chased through it. There were numerous bunches of feathers caught on the barbed wire. Although I saw nothing of the mallee fowls or their mounds, I thought that they would probably be seen there. It was with pleasure that I read in Mr. Jarman's notes ("S.A. Ornithologist," vol. 15, p. 75) where he refers to these birds.

The following is my list:

Dromaius novae-hollandiae (Emu).—Numerous fragments of egg shells were seen here in the remains of old native camp fires, that are found all along the western coast.

Eudyptula minor (Little Penguin).—These small penguins are numerous on Wardang Island, where their burrows are to be found under the shelving limestone; their dead bodies are often picked up along the seashore on the mainland.

Leipoa ocellata (Mallee Fowl).—This species and its nesting mounds were common

in this district before the land was cleared, according to old settlers.

Coturnix pectoralis (Stubble Quail).—Always plentiful here, and rather tame. During hot weather they shelter from the sun amongst the wheat heaps, and alongside fence posts.

Turnix velox (Little Quail).—Not very numerous, although often seen during the nesting season. They nest usually under tussocks, alongside the road, and along the fences.

Pedionomus torquatus (Plain Wanderer).—Odd birds seen occasionally, and found nesting on two occasions. See Emu, vol. xxxviii, Pt. 3, pp. 327, 328, and S.A.O., Vol. ix, Pt. 4, p. 150.

Phaps chalcoptera (Common Bronzewing).—A few pairs are still to be seen where there are small patches of mallee and teatree.

Phaps elegans (Brush Bronzewing).—Plentiful along the coast, and in small patches of scrub.

Ocyphaps lophotes (Crested Pigeon).—Very plentiful all through the district, where a few years ago only odd birds appeared.

Hypotaenidia philippensis (Banded Landrail).—Occasionally seen during a wet year, when swamps are found on the low-lying samphire areas in from the coast.

Tribonyx ventralis (Black-tailed Native Hen).—Seen occasionally in small flocks during a wet season.

Podiceps poliocephalus (Hoary-headed Grebe).—Also an occasional visitor.

Pachyptila desolata (Dove Prion).—Sometimes found either dead or exhausted after very stormy weather.

Phalacrocorax ater (Little Black Cormorant).—Occasionally seen.

Phalacrocorax varius (Pied Cormorant).—Seen at odd times.

Microcarbo melanoleucus (Little Pied Cormorant).—About in numbers all along the coast.

Diomedea sp. (Albatross).—A bird of this species was once seen for about half an hour through glasses, out at sea, but was too far away to be identified.

Pelecanus conspicillatus (Australian Pelican).—Seen in numbers up to fifty all the year, except in the breeding season.

Hydroprogne caspia (Caspian tern).—Odd birds observed along the coast.

Sterna bergii (Crested Tern).—Occasionally seen.

Sterna nereis (Fairy Tern).—Numerous at all times.

Larus novae-hollandiae (Silver Gull).—Very numerous.

Gabianus pacificus (Pacific Gull).—A few always along the coast.

Stercorarius parasiticus (Arctic Skua).—Seen occasionally on the reefs, and hawking over the sea.

Arenaria interpres (Turnstone).—Odd birds seen occasionally.

Haematopus ostralegus (Pied Oyster-Catcher).—A few pairs always about; they nest on a small rocky islet north of Wardang Island.

Haematopus unicolor (Sooty Oyster-Catcher).—Fewer than the above species, but always odd pairs about; they also nest on a small island north of Wardang.

Lobibyx novae-hollandiae (Australian Spurred Plover).—Always a few pairs about along the grassy flats near the coast.

Zonifer tricolor (Banded Plover).—Very numerous. Found nesting from March to January. On one occasion a nest was found with six eggs.

Squatarola squatarola (Grey Plover).—Occasionally seen along the rocky flat beaches and mud flats near Point Pearce.

Charadrius cucullatus (Hooded Dotterel).—A few pairs seen along the Spencer Gulf

coast. On one occasion an egg was picked up near Balgowan.

Charadrius bicinctus (Double-banded Dotterel).—In fair numbers along the coast; on one occasion a small flock were in a grass paddock near our homestead.

Charadrius ruficapillus (Red-capped Dotterel).—Very numerous at all times. Nests found both along the coast and three miles inland, on drift sand.

Charadrius melanops (Black-fronted Dotterel).—Occasionally seen here in small numbers.

Peltohyas australis (Australian Dotterel). Pairs and small flocks seen, mostly in the spring, when they nest here.

Cladorhynchus leucocephalus (Banded Stilt).—Seen along the coastal flats at Point Pearce in large numbers at times.

Numenius cyanopus (Eastern Curlew).—Odd pairs along the coast at Point Pearce.

Mesoscolopax minutus (Little Whimbrel).—This bird was only seen once along the coast. I was able to get within a few yards of it. I am certain that it was this species from its coloration and length of bill.

Tringa nebularia (Greenshank).—Odd birds seen. Not very common, and very shy.

Erolia acuminata (Sharp-tailed Sandpiper).—To be seen in large flocks along the coast, and on swamps near by.

Erolia ruficollis (Red-necked (Little) Stint).—Frequently seen in fair numbers.

Burhinus magnirostris (Southern Stone-Curlew).—Odd pairs seen and heard around here; three years ago a pair were found nesting near Curramulka. Not seen here during the last two years.

Eupodotis australis (Australian Bustard).—A small flock breed on Wardang Island, and odd pairs have been noted on the mainland at Point Pearce.

Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae (White-faced Heron).—Odd pairs to be found along coast at Point Pearce, and on inland swamps.

Demigretta sacra (Reef Heron).—Occasionally seen on rocky flats along the coast.

Cereopsis novae-hollandiae (Cape Barren Goose).—Odd pairs seen along the coast. They have been reported to me from Wardang Island, although not nesting there.

Chenopsis atrata (Black Swan).—Seen in numbers up to between three and four hun-

dred on a shallow bay between Point Pearce and Port Victoria. They frequent this part all the year with the exception of the breeding season, to return again after the young birds are able to fly. In 1935 they did not leave here at all, for some unknown reason, but did not show any signs of nesting.

Casarca tadornoides (Chestnut-breasted Shelduck), (Mountain Duck).—Odd birds have been seen on dams and swamps, but not for several years.

Anas superciliosa (Grey (Black) Duck).—A few visit here during the open season.

Querquedula gibberifrons (Grey Teal).—To be seen in numbers most of the year round. At times, in flocks of several hundred, they frequent the same bay as the swans, and, like the swans, leave for breeding purposes.

Malacorhynchus membranaceus (Pink-eared Duck).—During December, 1937, we had a heavy fall of rain, which flooded a large area, and several large swamps formed. Early in 1938 numbers of ducks appeared, and amongst them a small party of the Pink-eared.

(To be continued.)
