

BIRDS SEEN ALONG THE RIVER MURRAY BETWEEN BLANCHETOWN AND RENMARK

By L. S. FRANCIS.

The following comprises a list of birds seen during a boat trip on "P.S. Marion" from April 16th to 19th, 1945, between the above river towns.

The trip also included that portion of the Murray River from Murray Bridge to Blanchetown, but the birds seen on this lower portion of the river were almost identical with those seen during a previous trip, and have been recorded in S.A.O., Vol XVII, pt. 2, pages 19 and 20.

Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*): Two seen above Morgan, 2 near Cadell, and 8 below Renmark.

Black-tailed Native Hen (*Tribonyx ventralis*): Large numbers seen along parts of river, particularly on the Lower Murray. These birds would run along the banks and among the lignum bushes. Some were also seen near Berri. Easily recognised by their bantam-like tails.

Dusky Moorhen (*Gallinula tenebrosa*): Numbers seen along the river.

Eastern Swampen (Bald Coot) (*Porphyrio melanotus*): Numbers seen on the banks of the river and heard calling from the reeds. Known only as "Coot" by the mate of "P.S. Marion."

Coot (*Fulico atra*): A few seen and pointed out as "Toorie" or "Toory." See variation in spelling in "Nature-Lovers' Notebook," by the late T. P. Bellchambers, pages 44, 94.

Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): A few of these birds were seen.

Little Black Cormorant (*Ph. ater*): Numbers seen near Cadell, Berri, etc.

Pied Cormorant (*Ph. varius*): A few seen.

Little Pied-Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucus*): Some near Renmark.

Australian Darter (*Anhinga novae-hollandiae*): Two seen in the river with their bodies submerged.

Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*): Numbers seen along the river and particularly in the backwaters.

Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*): At several places along the river.

Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*): Seen in several places.

Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*): In several places—Cadell, etc.

Australian White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*): Three above Morgan, 2 at Waikerie, and single birds above Loxton.

Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*): Several in the top of a Red Gum below Blanchetown.

White Egret (*Egretta alba*): Several of these birds were seen along banks and in Red Gums.

White-faced Heron (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*): Seen generally.

White-necked (Pacific) Heron (*Notoph. pacifica*): One seen below Morgan flying across river late in the afternoon.

Nankeen Night-Heron (*Nycticorax caldonicus*): A few seen perched on weeping willows, and some flying across river.

Maned Goose (Wood-Duck) (*Chenonetta jubata*): Large numbers of these were seen on the river bank and in flight. Some were attacked by a Hawk while in the water.

Black Swan (*Chenopsis atrata*): Large numbers seen, some scuttling along the surface of the river.

Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*): Numerous. A few startled by a Hawk while on the water.

Grey Teal (*Querquedula gibberifrons*): In flocks and small parties in several places.

Hardhead (White-eyed Duck) (*Nyroca australis*): Native name "Punkari." Several flocks were seen along the river and pointed out as "Widgeon" by the captain and mate. One seen close to the boat had apparently been wounded, as it had difficulty in getting away from the boat.

Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*): Two birds scuttled to the stern of the boat.

Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*): One only seen, flying among gums.

Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*): Single birds frequently seen hovering, and their whistling calls heard.

Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*): One only seen, near Berri.

White Cockatoo (*Kakatoe galerita*): Large numbers seen among Red Gums.

Galah (Rose-breasted Cockatoo) (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*): Flocks seen flying among Red Gums.

Regent Parrot (Rock Pebbler) (?) (*Polytelis anthopeplus*): Two birds seen flying among the Red Gums at Cadell were possibly this species. Other parrots seen from the boat were possibly the Red-backed Parrot (*Psephotus haematonotus*).

Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*): Seen along river generally.

Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*): A few birds flew around the boat during the whole of the trip.

Fairy Martin (*Hylochelidon ariel*): Bottle nests were seen on the river cliffs, but no birds.

Willie Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*): Seen generally during the trip.

Magpie-Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*): Several seen.

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novaehollandiae*): Two seen flying among the Red Gums; 1 at Cadell, and 1 at Lyrup.

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus australis*): Both heard and seen among reeds near Berri and Waikerie.

Wren (*Malurus* spp.): Heard from the boat but none were seen during this trip. A superb Blue Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*) was seen at Berri on two occasions in scrub near the Pump House in October, 1934, and June, 1940, and 2 Purple-backed Wrens (*Malurus assimilis*) were seen at Hart's Lagoon Sanctuary near Waikerie on 12/10/44.

White-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga penicillata*): A few seen.

Noisy Miner (*Myzantha melanocephala*): A few seen among the Red Gums near the river.

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*): A few birds heard at Morgan.

Australian Raven or Crow (*Corvus* sp.): Numbers seen.

White-winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*): Five birds seen above Morgan.

Black-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*): Two seen at Morgan, one at Lake Bonney.

SOME OTHER BIRDS RECORDED ON PREVIOUS TRIPS.

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*): On Lake Bonney, October, 1938.

Whiskered (Marsh) Tern (*Chlidonias leucopareia*): Seven on Lake Bonney, October, 1938.

Rainbow Birds (*Merops ornatus*): Two on a fence at Renmark and some flying over scrub near river at Berri, and several near Lyrup, October, 1934.

Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovii*): One male seen in scrub near the river at Berri, October, 1934.

Little Grass Bird (*Megalurus gramineus*): Heard among reeds near Cobdogla in October, 1934.

Striped Honeyeater (*Plectorhyncha lanceolata*): Four seen above Chowilla in June, 1940, among Box trees (*Euc. bicolor*) near river.

Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*): Seen among bushes at Barmera, October, 1938.