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**THE SPINE-TAILED SWIFT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA***(See Cover Picture).*

By H. T. CONDON.

On February 13, 1947, a female Spine-tailed Swift (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) was picked up on the Mt. Barker Road by Sir C. Trent de Crespigny and sent to the S.A. Museum. This is the first specimen to be taken in South Australia. The plumage generally is slightly darker than that of the male figured by Mathews in "The Birds of Australia," with more blue on the wings and nape. It is now preserved in the South Australian Museum (Reg. No. B 23688), and the following details were taken from the body before skinning:—Total length 7.75 ins.; wing spread (or span) 19.0 ins.; weight 3.5 ozs.; iris, deep brown; legs and feet, slate blue; bill, brownish black; inside mouth, pink; tip of tongue, blue; skin around eye, pale grey; bare skin on carpus, dark grey. No feather lice were present. The left wing was broken and head damaged. Stomach empty.

A number of sight records of the Spine-

tailed Swift in South Australia have been published. Captain S. A. White reported two birds on September 4, 1920. H. H. Howard of Nargultie, via Streaky Bay, saw sixty birds on January 23, 1936 and several hundred at "Perlubie," near Streaky Bay on January 19, 1938. Mr. R. Crompton, of Stonyfell, near Adelaide, observed approximately 100 individuals in the summer of 1935, while Mr. A. Crompton has stated that he feels certain that he saw 12 to 15 birds at Port Willunga in the summer of 1912 or 1913, although at the time he was not aware of their identity. The Spine-tailed Swift is a vigorous flier, and I have observed them during unsettled weather in the "Wet" season in the Northern Territory in immense scattered flocks. They are readily distinguished in the field from the smaller White-rumped or Fork-tailed Swift (*Micropus pacificus*) which has a longer tail and is the species commonly observed in this State.

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Spine-tailed Swift



Fork-tailed Swift

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