

A FURTHER SIGHTING OF THE ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE

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Received August, 1974

Following the reported sighting of the Oriental Pratincole, *Glareola Pratincola*, in December, 1973, by Brian W. Finch and J. B. Cox, it is interesting to record a third sighting of the same species.

On May 27, 1974, at approximately 4.15 p.m. whilst driving along the Eyre Highway during an Adult Education Ornithological Safari to the Great Victoria Desert, and the Nullarbor Plain, several members of the party observed an Oriental Pratincole. It was sighted sitting on the roadside edge whilst we were negotiating a flooded section of the unsealed Highway about 20 miles west of Nullarbor Station. The bird did not appear shy, and it

flew only when four of our party alighted from the vehicles, and then only a few feet, and quite low. Regrettably, time was a limiting factor and our observations were made under pressure and in a poor light. However, six observers had sufficient time to obtain a good general view of the bird, which was within 25 feet of the stationary vehicles. It allowed a closer approach to within about 15 feet, the general appearance being that of a dark bird, with a whitish throat encircled by a black serrated line commencing in front of and going through the eyes. The breast was buffish in colour and the underparts white. The bill appeared pinkish-brown at the base, the rest

black, and was short and decurved. The legs were short, and the wings long and pointed, folded over the forked tail, and the posture was more horizontal than upright. No white was discerned on the rump, nor any colour on the underwings as it flew, but since its flight was swift and into the low-lying sun at a height of about 5 feet, close observation of these points was not possible. Again, the overall impression of the bird in flight was that of a dark bird, but the swallow-like flight and forked tail were very evident.

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The date of the sighting, May 27, is notable, as normally one could expect migrating birds to have departed by this date. However, J. N. Hobbs and A. R. McGill (1973), observed a single bird on May 22, 1971, and a specimen was taken in N.S.W. in July, 1877, at Botany Bay, N.S.W. All other records to date have been obtained during the summer months.

REFERENCES

- Hobbs, J. N. and McGill, A. R. (1973), *Aust. Bird Watcher* 2, No. 1