

## A DUNLIN SIGHTING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JOHN L. McKEAN

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The Dunlin *Calidris alpina* breeds in the northern holartic region in summer and migrates south to winter in southern Asia, Africa and southern North America. Its status in the Australian region appears to be that of a straggler or a rare visitor. Sightings have been reported from Victoria (Sympson 1968, Smith 1969, 1972, 1972a), Tasmania (Thomas 1969), Queensland (Fien 1972) and Timor (McKean *et al.* 1975). Hindwood (1944) discusses a record of Dunlins shot on the Claremont Islands, Queensland in April, 1885. It is interesting to note that three of these records plus the following record are of more than a single bird. [It has not previously been recorded in South Australia — editor.]

On October 11, 1975, John H. Lewis and myself examined a mixed group of waders feeding over an exposed sand bank near the mouth of a small creek near Ardrossan, South Australia. Two Dunlins were noted feeding some 10 m away. My first impressions record 'dumpy dark brown birds rather like Broad-billed Sandpipers but larger and lacking their diagnostic median head stripe and wing markings.' Curlew Sandpipers were present close by

and appeared to be slightly longer in the legs and of a much greyer colouration. The Dunlins' bills were long, slightly down-curved and black and the leg colouration was noted as being dark, either black or black brown; crown, uniformly brownish; eye-stripe visible; upper breast back and upper side wings mottled dark grey brown and belly dirty white. After watching the birds for about 15 minutes with 10 x 50 binoculars, we flushed them and were able to note in flight the dark tail centre with white on either side and a thin buffy-white wing stripe.

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*Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO, P.O. Box 84, Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602.*