

BIRD NOTES

BROWN QUAIL NEAR AUBURN — On 31 August 1975, a Brown Quail *Coturnix australis* was seen as it ran from the edge of a road 2 km north of Auburn in the Lower North of S.A. A good view was obtained from about 4 m after the bird pushed through some tall grass and stood still for a short time in shorter grass. The bird was then followed for about 15 m as it made its way through an area of canary grass and into reeds growing in the bed of a small creek. Several brief views were obtained from as close as 2 m as the bird crossed open spaces in the thick growth. The quail did not fly.

Viewed from 4m. A large quail with inconspicuous markings on its fairly dark brown upperside giving it the appearance of being almost plain coloured. When it paused, the eye was seen to be reddish-brown and darker than the colour of the face, and the beak was dark grey. Undersides were not seen; but the colour of the back immediately distinguished the bird from Stubble Quail *C. pectoralis* which is heavily marked with large pale streaks.

The opportunity is taken here to give details of several further sightings at White Cliff near Koolunga where this species has been recorded previously (Pedler, 1975, *S.A. Orn.* 27 : 3-5).

On 2 August 1975, one was flushed from rushes at the water's edge; and on 11 September, three were flushed from under artichokes near the river. The whole area where Brown Quail had been seen at White Cliff was flooded in late October 1975. On 17 February 1976, a Brown Quail was heard calling there and a good view was obtained when it was flushed. The call was as described before (Pedler, 1975) and was directional, but the bird seemed much closer than it actually was, possibly because of the loudness of the call. The quail was flushed within a few metres of the same spot a week later. The maximum number seen at White Cliff is three; so the population is small, and, as cover is variable because of grazing, the birds may move along the River Broughton or in some seasons into nearby crops. — L. P. PEDLER.

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