

BIRDS OF THE TORRENS RIVER, ADELAIDE

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INTRODUCTION

In late 1974, the South Australian Ornithological Association was asked, by Hassel & Partners, Adelaide consultants, for its help in a planning study of the Torrens River within suburban Adelaide. The study was being conducted for the River Torrens Committee, which represented the local councils of suburbs along the river and several State Government bodies.

Some 17 observers visited the River from then until January 1976, after which a report to the consultants was prepared. This report (Whatmough, 1976) listed the species found in the survey and noted the changes in bird populations over the last century. It attempted to explain these changes and to predict the effects of altering habitats along the River, recommending that some sections be retained in their present state and that others be gradually developed as public parks.

The City of Adelaide was excluded by the River Torrens Committee from its study, but it was included in the S.A.O.A. survey. Recent changes in other parts of the River have tended to make them more like parts in the City; so the inclusion of this section allowed useful comparisons and predictions to be made.

The author has continued regular visits to much of the survey area up to December 1977. Records are available for all months from August 1974 in the City, and for most months from March 1975 in the suburbs.

HABITATS

The appearance of the River has been changed completely since Adelaide's founding. The original vegetation was described by Newman (1958). Only a few of the original trees remain. The shape of the channel and the vegetation of the banks and surrounding areas vary greatly from suburb to suburb. A NEAPTR paper (1976) describes the main features of the vegetation in and upstream of the City.

From the upstream limit of the S.A.O.A. survey near Athelstone, to the eastern edge of the City, the River has for many years been dominated by introduced plants. A line of River Redgums *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* often remains on one or both banks, but much of the channel has been overgrown by European Ash *Fraxinus oxycarpa* and Bamboo Grass *Arundo donax*. Willows *Salix* spp, Poplars *Populus* sp. and Olives *Olea europaea* have appeared in

places. Reeds, mainly the native bullrush *Typha angustifolia* are widespread at the water's edge. In some sections, private land extends to the centre of the stream; so the banks there are cliffs topped by back fences.

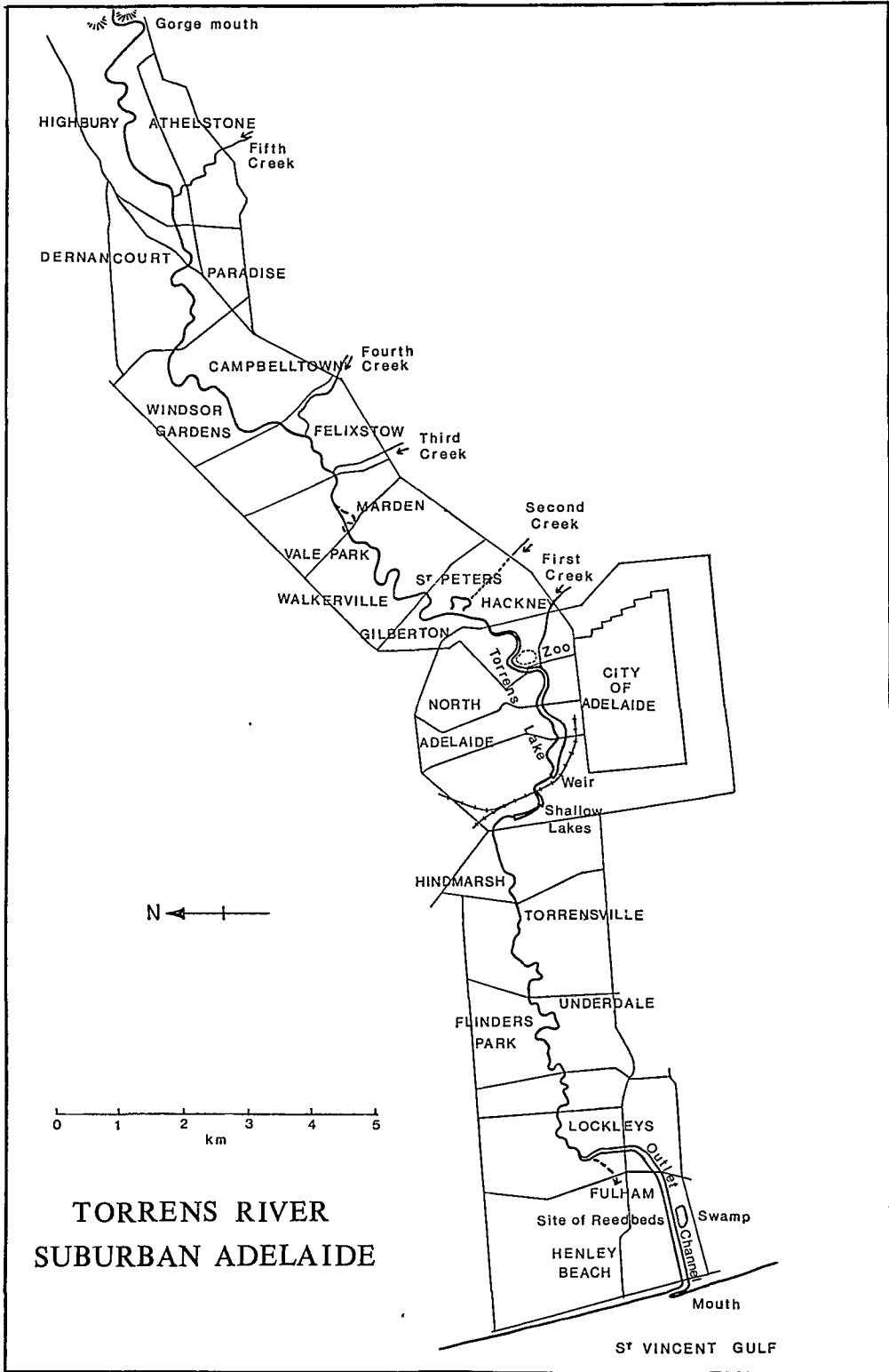
As land upstream from the City has changed from market gardens to residential areas, and from sand pits and rubbish dumps to government reserves for a "transport corridor" along the valley, local councils have taken every opportunity to turn the banks into public parks of neat lawns and native shrubs. The river channel has occasionally been dredged clear, but the bamboo belt has been left over long sections, and few adults go there.

The course of the River along this stretch has been altered in two places. At Marden, an irregular meander was replaced by a straight channel when the Lower Portrush Road was built about 1970. The new channel has filled with tall reeds and bamboos, while part of the old course, which has since been filled, was a stagnant lagoon during the survey. At St. Peters, the neck of a large meander has been cut by a wide, concrete-lined lake with a weir at either end. The original channel remains joined to the River at both ends, and the upper weir ensures that some water continues to flow around it. Published plans indicate that the old bed will be retained in its present state.

Through the City, the River is in land that was reserved as parkland when the City was first laid out. A few steep sides remain, but most of the banks are backed by sloping lawns with trees and shrubs. A large weir, built about 1929, has formed the upper two thirds of the course into the well-known Torrens Lake, which is a popular summer venue for various kinds of small craft. Two small weirs form most of the lower third into the "Shallow Lakes". Each of the three lakes can be (and sometimes is) drained for maintenance, leaving extensive areas of mud.

Apart from the central parts of the Torrens Lake, the lake shores are lined with reeds. Ashes appear at the eastern edge of the City, while the channel below the Shallow Lakes is filled with weeds.

From the western edge of the City to Fulham Gardens, the River is often backed by factories and market gardens. A few parks are appearing, but most of the banks are steep and grassy. A



section of Ashes occurs at Thebarton and a few Redgums remain, but other trees, reeds and bamboos are scarce. The channel appears to have been lined with stone in parts, and concrete flood control structures have been built in several places.

Below Fulham Gardens, the River originally continued into the Fulham Reedbeds, a broad swampy area from which water flowed into the Port River to the north and into the Patawalonga Creek to the south. White (1919) described this area in detail. To control flooding, a wide channel was built in the 1930s to lead the River around the south side of the swamps and directly through the sand dunes to the sea at Henley Beach. This channel is now the only outlet. Its floor has been kept clear of reeds in recent years, and is muddy or weedy depending on water levels. The levee banks on either side are grassy and horses are grazed there, but clumps of trees have now been planted on the banks.

On the south bank at Fulham a pumping station has been built to move storm water from the low surrounding areas into the channel. A lower swampy area has been left, or formed, in which storm water collects when it exceeds the capacity of the pumps. This area can dry out but there are usually some pools of water present. A small waterhole was dug at one end of the area in 1977, apparently to enhance it as a nature study area for schools. Around the pumping station, several drains pass through low concrete culverts which are regular nesting sites for one bird species.

The River leaves the Outlet Channel over a concrete weir into a deep pool, then across the beach. Currents tend to form a sand bar at the mouth, diverting it to the north, and this bar forms a convenient resting place for some shore birds.

The flow in the River varies strongly according to recent rainfall and to metropolitan water supply needs. After a long dry spell there may be no surface flow, but natural and man-made pools remain in many places.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

Historical records were called for in the S.A.O.A. survey, and were sought in back copies of the *South Australian Ornithologist* and *South Australian Naturalist*. Full lists were available only for the City, Fulham Reedbeds and Outlet Channel, though bird notes in the *S.A. Ornithologist* included other areas.

The earliest full lists for the City were submitted by B. Glover, and covered the period from 1948 to 1955. Glover also published

(1953) a list of all species recorded in the Botanic Park and Garden and adjacent parts of the River. Paton (1976) has given a more recent list for the same area, but neither of these works indicates which species are found in the River.

White (1919) gave a complete list of birds recorded by his family around their property "Weetunga" at the Fulham Reedbeds. A further list (White, 1925) was published, and bird notes from the Reedbeds appeared in the *S.A. Ornithologist* up to 1944, well after the Outlet Channel had been built.

Glover (1952) published the first list for the Outlet Channel and he has submitted records up to 1955 for this area. His description of the channel shows that reeds were once abundant there but that they have since been cleared out.

The historical checklist below shows the combined lists, derived from the records for different parts of the River in different periods. Note that some lists contain only "casual" records; these are so indicated, and they do not imply that many common species were absent.

RECENT RECORDS

All records since 1969 were considered "recent", but most of these were made after August 1974. Fairly regular monthly coverage after March 1975 made possible a detailed study of seasonal variations in the abundance of different species.

The winter seasons of 1975 and 1976 contrasted strongly. In 1975 it was wet in southern areas of South Australia and dry inland, while in 1976 it was quite dry around Adelaide. The winter of 1977 was also dry, but not so much as the previous year. Some species whose numbers vary seasonally were strongly affected by these differences.

The Torrens Lake was drained for maintenance in June 1977 and refilled in August. This change gave a brief opportunity to study the effects on the birds there of the temporary loss of part of their habitat.

To allow comparisons between different parts, the River was divided into 22 sections, most of which extended from one road crossing to the next. Most recent sightings can be related to one of these sections.

For records over the period March 1975 to December 1977, it was found that—with the exceptions noted below—the population in a given section depended most strongly on whether that section was upstream from the City, in the City, downstream or at the Outlet Channel. This fact is both plausible, considering the great differences in appearance of these four

parts of the River, and convenient, for all recent and historical records could be related to one of these parts (or to the Reedsbeds, which the Outlet Channel replaced).

The exceptions were as follows:

1. The beach at the River's mouth was quite unlike the Outlet Channel, though it had too few species to be considered separately.
2. The pool at the pumping station at Fulham has fewer species than the Outlet Channel proper, but some that were not found in the Channel.
3. The disused part of the river bed at Marden, the new channel that replaced it, and another section at Paradise, are deficient in species compared to other sections upstream from the City.

The recent lists are included in the historical checklist for comparison with historical records.

The annotated check list that follows refers only to recent records. The distribution of each species is given only in terms of the four main parts of the River; further details of localities are given only for unusual records. Records, other than the author's, are acknowledged as follows: AB—A. Black; RH—R. Hannaford; McN—E. and M. S. McNamara; SM—S. A. McNamara; R—J., M., P. and R. Reid (various joint lists); JS—J. Saunders.

For each species, the abundance is given for each of the four sections of the River (respectively outlet channel, downstream, city and upstream), and is based mainly on monthly traverses made between March 1975 and December 1977. Abundance is classified as by Clark (1967), using the following abbreviations:

- A—abundant (can be found without search).
 C—common (can be sought with fair certainty in the appropriate habitat).
 F—frequent (regularly found in the appropriate habitat).
 O—occasional (found irregularly).
 R—rare (found only on one or two occasions).

This classification has been found less useful when abundance varies seasonally, or over long periods.

Definite evidence of breeding is shown by the letter "b" after the abundance symbol for the appropriate section.

ANNOTATED LIST

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

F, F, C, O. Mainly a non-breeding autumn and winter visitor, but a few birds may leave

late or arrive early in breeding plumage. Most numerous in 1975, least numerous in 1977. Stays longer in the City but left in June 1977 when the Torrens Lake was drained. A pair, seen courting on November 6, 1976 on the Shallow Lakes, may have produced the young seen the following month in the Botanic Garden.

HOARY-HEADED GREBE

Podiceps poliocephalus

F, F, F, O. Mainly a non-breeding autumn and winter visitor. Seldom seen in full breeding plumage. Most numerous in 1975 and in the Outlet Channel in 1977.

AUSTRALIAN PELICAN

Pelecanus conspicillatus

O, R, R, —. An occasional visitor to the Outlet Channel. A flock of ten circled over the River at Flinders Park (downstream) on October 10, 1977. A single bird visited Bonython Park, City, on October 5, 1969 (AB).

BLACK CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

O, R, O, — (1975-6); O, O, C, R. (1977). Has changed its abundance remarkably. Up to December 1976, only single birds in the City and few elsewhere. Since then, up to ten birds in the City, widespread though irregular records downstream, and records upstream at St. Peters.

LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax sulcirostris

C, F, A, O. Always present, but numbers greatly reduced in autumn and winter. Most left the City when the Torrens Lake was drained and were slow to return when it refilled.

PIED CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax varius

O, R, O, R. Only scattered records of single birds.

LITTLE PIED CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax melanoleucos

F, F, C, F. Widespread but less numerous than Little Black Cormorant. Briefly declined in the summer, and in the City when the Torrens Lake was drained. A more general decline up to autumn 1976 followed by an increase up to the end of the survey.

WHITE-FACED HERON

Ardea novaehollandiae

C, C, C, F. Declines each summer; declines longer in the City perhaps because of human activities. Particularly numerous in autumn 1975.

WHITE-NECKED HERON *Ardea pacifica*

—, —, R, —. Six sightings of a single bird in the City, along the Torrens Lake and Shallow Lakes, between February 8 and November 4, 1975.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

—, —, R, —. A single bird at the railway bridge in the City on May 30, 1975 and, in the company of a Great White Egret, on the following day.

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Egretta alba*

F, F, F, O. Sometimes widespread but always solitary. More numerous in cooler months of 1975 and 1977; but for most of 1976 was seldom seen in the City and unrecorded elsewhere.

NANKEEN NIGHT HERON

Nycticorax caledonicus

—, —, O, O. Occasional single birds or groups up to five roosting in quieter parts of the River. Sometimes visits the pines along the back fence of the Adelaide Zoo and feeds after dusk along the willow-lined stretch upstream from the Frome Road bridge. Also reported from this area in the period 1970-74 (R).

WHITE IBIS *Threskiornis molucca*

F, R, R, R. Often found in small parties in the Outlet Channel but seldom elsewhere.

STRAW-NECKED IBIS

Threskiornis spinicollis

R, R, —, —. A single bird in dark brown and white plumage was first seen under lawn sprinklers in a riverside park at Lockleys on March 13, 1976, then recorded here regularly till July 10. An immature bird, probably the same individual, was seen regularly in the Outlet Channel from August 21 to April 9, 1977, by when it had the black and white plumage of an adult but no yellow neck plumes.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus*

R, —, —, —. A pair in the Outlet Channel near the Tapleys Hill Road bridge on November 26, 1977 and one bird in the same area on December 17. In these months the water level in the channel was unusually low because river flow had almost ceased.

ROYAL SPOONBILL *Platalea regia*

O, R, R, —. Occasional single birds in the Outlet Channel. One bird seen downstream at Hindmarsh on May 15, 1969 (AB). In the City, four in Elder Park on July 18, 1969, when the Torrens Lake was also drained (AB) and one in the Shallow Lakes on March 12, 1977.

YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL

Platalea flavipes

O, —, R, —. Occasional groups of up to four birds in the Outlet Channel. In the City, two in Elder Park on July 18, 1969 (AB); one in the Shallow Lakes on February 12, 1977 and two there on March 12.

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

R, —, Cb, R. Seldom seen outside the City, where the lakes provide broad areas of shallow water with weeds and reeds. Two to three broods appear each year, between June and February. Numbers vary slowly, up to 15. Only solitary birds in the Outlet Channel, on August 16, 1975 and March 13, 1976. A single immature bird, present at Hackney for several months in late 1976, was the only upstream record.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED SHELDUCK

Tadorna tadornoides

—, —, R, —. Single birds in the City, at Elder Park on September 7, 1974 and in the Shallow Lakes on February 8, 1975.

BLACK DUCK *Anas superciliosa*

Fb, Ob, F, Fb. Hybrids between this species and the Mallard occur in large numbers in various plumages; so there is some uncertainty about the exact number of pure Black Duck along the River. Breeds only occasionally with itself, October-January. More numerous in the wetter months.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Ab, Cb, Ab, Cb. Great numbers in many kinds of domestic and wild plumages, especially in the City where it is encouraged with picnic scraps. Hybridises profusely with Black Duck, and possibly with Chestnut Teal; it is a real threat to such species in the Adelaide region. Breeds (and interbreeds) September-March.

CHESTNUT TEAL *Anas castanea*

R, —, Ob, —. Often one to three birds in the City, including possible Mallard hybrids. A brood of seven on November 24, 1974 near the University. A few reports from the Outlet Channel.

GREY TEAL *Anas gibberifrons*

F, —, F, R. In the Outlet Channel, sudden arrivals of flocks of up to 50 birds, which stay for several months then decline. Main flocks June-October 1975 and March-October 1977, at about same times that the Black-tailed Native Hen was common in the channel or nearby. In the City, up to three birds which sometimes strayed upstream to St. Peters.

BLUE-WINGED SHOVELER

Anas rhynchos

R, —, —, —. A lone male in the Outlet Channel on March 19, 1977.

WHITE-EYED DUCK *Aythya australis*

O, —, O, —. Up to ten in the Outlet Channel and ten in the City during winter 1975. Other autumn records in the City in 1975 and 1976, and four on September 25, 1972 (AB).

MANED WOOD-DUCK *Chenonetta jubata*

F, O, Fb, —. A lone male remained in the Outlet Channel or nearby parts of the River from March 1975 to December 1977. A female appeared here several times in 1976 and 1977 but they did not seem to pair. Several in the City, seen with young in spring of 1974 and 1975.

MUSK DUCK *Biziura lobata*

C, R, O, —. Usually a few present in the Outlet Channel. Larger numbers here and several in the Torrens Lake, City, in autumn and winter 1975. A few in the City and downstream at Underdale in autumn 1977. Males with fully-grown lobes seldom seen.

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE

Elanus caeruleus

R, F, R, O. An irruption of this species occurred in southern areas of South Australia in 1975. Birds appeared along the River in July and the monthly total reached seven in December 1975 and again in July 1976. Numbers have since declined slowly.

BROWN GOSHAWK *Accipiter fasciatus*

—, —, R, O. Occasional sightings upstream at St. Peters and Felixstow in secluded vegetation. One City sighting near Botanic Park (R). Mostly immature birds.

COLLARED SPARROWHAWK

Accipiter cirrhocephalus

—, —, R, R. Single birds near Botanic Park, City, on June 6, 1976, at Paradise on February 21, 1976 and at Felixstow on March 27, 1977. All immature.

WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE *Aquila audax*

—, —, —, R. One circling overhead at Paradise on June 18, 1977.

SWAMP HARRIER *Circus approximans*

—, R, —, —. An immature bird flying along the River at Underdale on February 12, 1977.

BROWN FALCON *Falco berigora*

—, —, —, R. Recorded in 1974-5 at Gilberton (RH).

LITTLE FALCON *Falco longipennis*

—, O, —, R. Irregular sightings of single birds at Walkerville in winter 1975, and downstream in 1976-7.

NANKEEN KESTREL *Falco cenchroides*

O, F, —, R. Mainly a winter visitor to the Outlet Channel and Downstream sections; most records from May to September.

LITTLE BUTTON-QUAIL *Turnix velox*

—, —, R, —. A lone female at edge of steep grassy bank in Bonython Park, City, on December 6, 1975.

BANDED LANDRAIL *Gallirallus philippensis*

—, —, R, —. Recorded near Botanic Park, City, in the period 1971-74 (R).

AUSTRALIAN SPOTTED CRAKE

Porzana fluminea

R, —, R, —. Three birds in the swamp at Fulham during winter 1975. A single bird near the Adelaide Zoo on December 4, 1977, on mud exposed when the water level fell slightly in the Torrens Lake.

BLACK-TAILED NATIVE HEN

Gallinula ventralis

O, R, O, —. There was an irruption of this species in 1975 and a local increase around Adelaide in 1977. In 1975, flocks appeared from June to September in the swamp at Fulham and further up the Outlet Channel. A few also appeared around the Torrens and Shallow Lakes in the City from June to December. In 1977 two birds appeared in October and November around the head of the Outlet Channel, and one or two were present in the City throughout the year.

DUSKY MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Rb, Ab, Ab, Ab. Seldom seen in the Outlet Channel, where there is no cover for it; very numerous in the City where flocks graze on the lawns. Fewer seen in summer. Breeds September-March in the City and for shorter periods elsewhere.

PURPLE GALLINULE *Porphyrio porphyrio*

—, R, A, O. Seen mostly in the City, and never in the Outlet Channel, where there are no reeds. Numbers decline in summer, and appear to have increased overall from 1975 to 1977.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Ob, O, F, —. A great variation of abundance, there being many about in autumn and

winter 1975, then only a few, mostly in the City. A sharp increase began in late 1977 when there was little water flow but much weed. Reports of young in the Outlet Channel in February and June 1975 (McN, JS); these probably came from nests further upstream.

SOOTY OYSTERCATCHER

Haematopus fuliginosus

R, —, —, —. Seen at the mouth in May and July 1975. Also recorded here in 1974 (SM). Unlikely to be found elsewhere on the River.

SPUR-WINGED PLOVER

Vanellus miles novaehollandiae

Ab, R, F, —. Always present in the Outlet Channel, but in far greater numbers from November to April each year. Birds in the City spend most of their time elsewhere in the parklands but visit the River often. Two young in September 1977.

BANDED PLOVER *Vanellus tricolor*

R, R, —, —. Occasional records of one or two at the Outlet Channel and at Lockleys in 1975 and 1976.

RED-CAPPED DOTTEREL

Charadrius alexandrinus

R, —, —, —. A flock of eight at the mouth in April 1976.

BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL

Charadrius melanops

O, —, —, —. One or two in the higher parts of the Outlet Channel, often seen in spring but otherwise irregular.

RED-KNEED DOTTEREL *Charadrius cinctus*

Fb, —, —, —. Usually in the swamp at Fulham, but moves to the Outlet Channel or leaves the district when conditions are dry. Most abundant in 1975, then absent for much of 1976. Young or immature birds in the swamp in October 1975 and October 1977.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

F, —, —, —. A few birds have visited the Outlet Channel and adjacent swamp in the past few years, generally between August and May. Numbers have declined; up to four were seen in 1974-75 and 1975-76 and two in 1976-77; none was recorded in 1977-78 up to December.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

F, —, R, —. A few birds in the Outlet Channel and adjacent swamp each year, mostly from October to February. One recorded in December 1972 in Bonython Park, City (AB).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*

R, R, —, —. Two records from the Outlet Channel; in October 1975 (JS), and two birds in December 1977. One bird downstream at Underdale in November 1975 at foot of steep grassy banks.

RED-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis*

O, —, —, —. A few records of small numbers at the mouth and in the Outlet Channel in the 1975-76 and 1977-78 seasons.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER

Calidris acuminata.

F, —, —, —. Recorded regularly in the Outlet Channel and Fulham swamp, but only from September to December.

JAPANESE SNIPE *Galinago hardwickii*

R, —, —, —. Single birds flushed from long grass in the swamp at Fulham on November 17, 1976 and February 12, 1977.

BLACK-WINGED STILT

Himantopus himantopus

Ab, —, —, —. Present in the Outlet Channel always, and in the swamp at Fulham when there is water. More numerous in spring and summer, but scarce in autumn of 1976. Bred in the swamp in 1975 and 1976, about September-November.

SILVER GULL *Larus novaehollandiae*

A, F, A, O. Very numerous in the City and in the Outlet Channel—large flocks use the banks there as rest areas and, in the City, as a source of picnic scraps. Other parts of the River have only local food sources and seem to be used mainly as corridors. Numbers decline in late winter and early spring when the birds are breeding elsewhere; most records upstream of the City were in May and June 1975.

WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybrida*

R, —, R, —. A single bird at the Outlet Channel on November 26, 1977; also reported here in 1973-74 (JS). Six in Bonython Park, City, on January 10, 1973 (AB) and one at Pinky Flat on February 15, 1975.

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia*

R, —, R, —. One on the beach at the mouth on March 18, 1977; recorded in the Outlet Channel in 1973-74 (JS) and there or on the beach in 1974 (SM). Several records of single birds over the Torrens Lake in November 1975.

CRESTED TERN *Sterna bergii*

C, —, —, —. Usually rests on the beach at the mouth, and occasionally moves into the Outlet Channel. Numbers declined strongly from 1975 to 1977.

FAIRY TERN *Sterna nereis*

R, —, —, —. Recorded at the Outlet Channel or mouth in 1974 (SM).

CRESTED PIGEON *Ocyphaps lophotes*

C, O, A, O. Widespread, but most common in the Outlet Channel and City. Numbers decline in summer in the City and in winter in the Outlet Channel. In other parts of the River, recorded numbers gradually increased from 1975 to 1977.

DOMESTIC PIGEON *Columba livia*

Cb, C, C, C. A common visitor from surrounding suburbs. Known to nest under bridges, and may do so in other riverside buildings.

SPOTTED TURTLEDOVE

Streptopelia chinensis

F, F, Ab, A. More numerous where there are trees or shrubs that form a dense cover. Numbers decline slightly in winter.

LITTLE CORELLA *Cacatua sanguinea*

O, —, —, R. A small flock appears to visit the banks of the Outlet Channel each summer.

GALAH *Cacatua roseicapilla*

F, Fb, O, F. Small numbers recorded consistently in winter and spring, but larger numbers visit occasionally at any time.

RAINBOW LORIKEET

Trichoglossus haematodus

—, —, O, O. Recorded only in or near the City. Not recorded during 1975.

MUSK LORIKEET *Glossopsitta concinna*

O, O, C, O. Usually in flowering eucalypts. Tends to feed in an area for several months, but does not follow a seasonal pattern. Not recorded downstream or in the Outlet Channel for most of 1975 or much of 1977; few records for most of 1975 and 1976 upstream. Numbers probably affected by food sources away from the River. Often travels several kilometres each evening to a roosting site away from food.

PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET

Glossopsitta porphyrocephala

R, —, R, O. Frequent upstream in 1977; other records scattered.

COCKATIEL *Nymphicus hollandicus*

—, —, R, —. A single bird in the City on February 8, 1975, possibly an escapee.

ADELAIDE ROSELLA

Platycercus elegans ssp.

—, O, O, O. Seen most often in the City, probably because woodland habitat is most extensive there.

EASTERN ROSELLA *Platycercus eximius*

—, —, O, R. Seen outside the City only once, at Vale Park on August 28, 1976. This species seems to be interbreeding with the Adelaide Rosella in the City, producing offspring with blue cheek patches or excess red areas on the breast or abdomen; one of these birds was recorded near the River.

RED-RUMPED PARROT

Psephotus haematonotus

—, R, F, O. Recorded only in or near the City; probably a visitor from other parts of the parklands there.

BLUE-BONNET *Psephotus haematogaster*

—, —, R, —. A single bird of the red-bellied race (*P. h. haematogaster*) was recorded in or near Bonython Park, City, four times between March 9, 1975 and February 10, 1976. It may have been an escapee.

ELEGANT PARROT *Neophema elegans*

R, —, —, —. A single bird was recorded at the swamp at Fulham, on January 15 and March 19, 1977, feeding on stony ground and on dry clay with small flowering shrubs. The bird was immature but with plumage sufficiently developed for identification in the second sighting.

BUDGERYGAH *Melopsittacus undulatus*

—, —, R, R. Two recorded near Botanic Park, City on May 11, 1969 (AB). Two upstream at Marden on November 27, 1977 and another on the same day at Highbury.

PALLID CUCKOO *Cuculus pallidus*

—, R, R, O. A few records, between May and September, in 1975 and 1976.

FAN-TAILED CUCKOO

Cuculus pyrrhophanus

—, —, R, F. Appears in the Upstream section each year, between May and August.

HORSFIELD'S BRONZE CUCKOO

Chrysococcyx basalix

—, —, R, O. Appears upstream each year; most records in August. Summer records on January 11, 1975 at Walkerville (R) and on December 21, 1974 in Bonython Park, City.

BOOBOOK OWL *Ninox novaeseelandiae*

—, —, —, R. A single record at Gilberton in 1974 (RH, no date).

FORK-TAILED SWIFT *Apus pacificus*

—, —, —, R. Recorded at Gilberton in 1974 or 1975 (RH).

LAUGHING KOOKABURRA

Dacelo novaeguinae

—, —, R, R. Scattered records from the City (where a few birds have been recorded often in nearby parklands) and from Paradise and Highbury.

SACRED KINGFISHER *Halcyon sancta*

—, R, R, O. Seems to visit the River, mostly upstream from the City, in "waves", to be recorded at several places for two or three months. No winter record.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

O, R, —, —. Recorded along the Outlet Channel, mostly in spring, each year, but recorded numbers declined from 1975 to 1977. A single record downstream at Lockleys on June 29, 1975.

WELCOME SWALLOW *Hirundo neoxena*

A, Ab, Ab, Ab. Much less numerous in summer and autumn downstream and in the Outlet Channel. No seasonal variation in the City or upstream. Sometimes nests under bridges; young birds recorded November-December.

TREE MARTIN *Cecropis nigricans*

O, O, O, F. Most records between July and January each year, but some remained through autumn 1975.

FAIRY MARTIN *Cecropis ariel*

Fb, O, —, —. A regular migrant. Birds arrived at the Outlet Channel in late July or early August, and departed in early March each year from 1975 to 1977. Nests in concrete culverts at the swamp at Fulham, and strays up the River as far as Underdale.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

O, —, R, —. Recorded regularly in early 1976 in the Outlet Channel; other records scattered.

BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE

Coracina novaehollandiae

R, O, O, C. Widespread upstream with no seasonal variation. Fewer records in spring and summer elsewhere.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

O, F, F, A. Abundant in ashes and park shrubs, irregular in other areas.

LITTLE GRASSBIRD *Megalurus gramineus*

O, R, C, A. Present in reeds all the year, but changes its call seasonally, giving the more familiar whistling call mainly in spring and summer. Particularly abundant and widespread in spring 1975.

CLAMOROUS REED-WARBLER

Acrocephalus stentoreus

O, R, Cb, Cb. Strongly seasonal. Found from August to January in all but the most isolated patches of reeds; a few remain throughout the year. Most numerous in late 1976. Young birds recorded November-December.

GOLDEN-HEADED CISTICOLA

Cisticola exilis

R, —, —, —. A single record of two birds on the banks of the Outlet Channel, near the swamp at Fulham, on August 16, 1975.

BROWN SONGLARK *Cincloramphus cruralis*

R, R, —, R. Scattered records of single birds in spring of 1975 and 1976. This species probably regards the river banks as an extension of nearby open areas.

YELLOW-RUMPED THORNBILL

Acanthiza chrysorrhoa

—, R, R, R. Scattered records of single birds; seems to prefer introduced trees.

BROWN THORNBILL *Acanthiza pusilla*

—, —, —, R. A single record of two on December 13, 1975, in bamboo grass and ashes at Vale Park. Not normally found this far from the ranges.

WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WREN

Sericornis frontalis

—, —, —, F. First noted at Paradise on November 8, 1975, then at other localities nearer the City in 1976 and 1977, including St. Peters (November 21, 1976) and Walkerville (regular records). Possibly overlooked in earlier visits. Usually in bamboo grass with a few trees. Walkerville is only 14 km from Garden Island, where the Spotted race (*S. f. maculatus*) has been recorded in mangroves, but only the nominate race was recorded along the River.

GREY FANTAIL *Rhipidura fuliginose*

—, —, —, F. In varying numbers upstream, but not seasonal. Declined in 1977.

WILLIE-WAGTAIL *Rhipidura leucophrys*

Fb, Ab, Ab, Ab. Abundant in most places. A brief increase in summer in the City and downstream, probably the result of local breeding September-March.

GREY SHRIKE-THRUSH

Colluricincla harmonica

—, —, O, Cb. Regular records above Felixstow, with a slight increase in spring. Recorded near Botanic Park, City in August and September 1974, and at St. Peters for a period in 1975, but not in either place since. Young birds recorded November-December.

CRESTED SHRIKETIT

Falcunculus frontatus

—, —, —, R. A single record from Gilberton in 1974 (RH).

MISTLETOEBIRD *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*

—, —, —, R. Recorded at Gilberton in 1974 or 1975 (RH); heard there on April 23, 1977.

STRIATED PARDALOTE *Pardalotus striatus*

—, R, O, O. Scattered records only. Found upstream only in 1977.

SILVEREYE *Zosterops lateralis*

O, F, —, G. An odd distribution — never recorded in the City, but seldom missed at St. Peters. Seems to prefer dense introduced vegetation, particularly olives. Numbers increase in all areas in autumn and winter.

WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER

Lichenostomus penicillatus

F, C, Ab, Ab. Abundant in all eucalypts and ashes, occasional to frequent elsewhere. Young birds recorded October-November.

WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER

Melithreptus lunatus

—, R, —, —. A single record of two birds on June 14, 1976 at Torrensville, in late-falling autumn leaves of an oak.

YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATER

Philidonyris novaehollandiae

O, O, R, Fb. Great variations in numbers, with a six-monthly cycle if any. Plentiful in summer 1974-75, then no record until winter 1976. Successively larger influxes in summer 1976-77 and winter-spring 1977.

EASTERN SPINEBILL

Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris

—, —, R, R. Recorded in the City on July 10, 1976 and November 26, 1977, in dense shrubbery in river bank gardens. Upstream records at Gilberton on May 30 and July 24, 1976, and at Windsor Gardens on May 30, 1976, of birds heard in dense vegetation.

NOISY MINER *Manorina melanocephala*

R, O, Cb, O. Most numerous in the City, where numbers decline in summer. Seldom seen far upstream from the City. Not recorded downstream in 1975, but present there in 1976 and 1977, in small numbers in spring and autumn.

LITTLE WATTLEBIRD

Anthochaera chrysoptera

R, O, Fb, F. Usually confined to a few localities with eucalypts. Partly seasonal, seldom

being recorded in the City in summer, or anywhere in autumn. First appeared at the Outlet Channel in May 1977, and became more abundant upstream in late 1977.

RED WATTLEBIRD

Anthochaera carunculata

O, O, Fb, C. More widespread than Little Wattlebird. More numerous than usual in spring 1976. Slightly seasonal in the City with more records from autumn and winter.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

R, —, R, O. Occasional small flocks upstream, usually at Paradise or Highbury and in spring or summer. Recorded once in the Outlet Channel on September 11, 1976, and in the City before 1975 (AB). Some part-albino birds noted.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

O, —, R, Fb. More often seen than Goldfinch, and more markedly seasonal; most records in spring and summer. Absent from the Outlet Channel in the 1975-76 season.

RED-BROWED FIRETAIL

Emblema temporalis

—, —, —, R. A single record of a pair in bamboo grass and trees at Paradise on January 15, 1977.

ZEBRA FINCH *Poephila guttata*

—, R, —, O. First noted at Paradise on November 8, 1975, this species has since spread as far down as Felixstow. Most numerous in winter 1976, when a flock of 110 was seen at Paradise. A single bird downstream at Lockleys on May 21, 1977.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

A, A, A, A. Widespread and abundant.

COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Ab, Ab, Ab, A. Widespread and abundant. Breeds September-December.

MAGPIE-LARK *Grallina cyanoleuca*

Ab, Ab, Ab, Ab. Slightly more numerous in spring and summer, evidently the effect of breeding. Prefers more open localities. Breeds September-December.

WHITE-BACKED MAGPIE

Gymnorhina tibicen leuconota

F, Cb, F, Fb. Seems to prefer large lawned areas with a few trees.

LITTLE RAVEN *Corvus mellori*

F, F, F, Fb. More numerous in winter and spring, particularly upstream, probably as a result of breeding July-October.

	Reed-beds			Outlet Channel		Down-stream			City					Up-stream		
	A	B	C	D	R	A	B	R	A	B	C	D	R	B	R	
Barking Owl*	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tawny Frogmouth	X	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Spotted Nightjar	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Spine-tailed Swift	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Fork-tailed Swift	X	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Azure Kingfisher	X	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—
Laughing Kookaburra	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X
Red-backed Kingfisher	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sacred Kingfisher	X	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	X	—	X	X	X	—	—	X
Rainbow Bee-eater	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Singing Bushlark	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Skylark	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Welcome Swallow	X	X	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X
White-backed Swallow	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tree Martin	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X
Fairy Martin	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richard's Pipit	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	X	—	—	X
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike	X	X	—	X	X	X	—	X	—	—	X	X	X	—	—	X
White-winged Triller	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	X	—	—	—	—
Blackbird	—	X	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	X	—	—	X
White-browed Babbler	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Little Grassbird	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	X	X	X	X	—	—	X
Clamorous Reed-Warbler	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	X	—	—	X
Golden-headed Cisticola	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brown Songlark	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Rufous Songlark	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
White-fronted Chat	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Crimson Chat	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Orange Chat	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southern Whiteface	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Weebill	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X
Brown Thornbill	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
White-browed Scrub-Wren	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Superb Blue Wren	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X
Grey Fantail	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	X
Willie Wagtail	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	X	—	X	X	—	—	X
Restless Flycatcher	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jacky Winter	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Robin	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Red-capped Robin	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Flame Robin	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Golden Whistler	X	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Rufous Whistler	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

*Originally recorded as Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua* and re-identified as *N. connivens* by Schodde (1977).

	Reed-beds			Outlet Channel		Down-stream			City					Up-stream	
	A	B	C	D	R	A	B	R	A	B	C	D	R	B	R
Grey Shrike-Thrush	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	X	—	X
Crested Shrike-Tit	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X
Brown Treecreeper	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mistletoebird	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	X
Yellow-rumped Pardalote	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Striated Pardalote	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Silvereye	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	X
Singing Honeyeater	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
White-plumed Honeyeater	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	X	X	X	X	—	X
White-naped Honeyeater	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Black-chinned Honeyeater	X	X	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	—
Yellow-winged Honeyeater	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Striped Honeyeater	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Regent Honeyeater	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Eastern Spinebill	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Noisy Miner	X	X	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Little Wattlebird	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	X	—	X
Red Wattlebird	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Goldfinch	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Greenfinch	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Red-browed Firetail	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Beautiful Firetail	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diamond Firetail	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Zebra Finch	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
House Sparrow	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Red Bishop Bird	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Common Starling	—	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	X	—	X
Olive-backed Oriole	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Magpie-Lark	X	X	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	X	X	X	X	—	X
Masked Woodswallow	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
White-browed Woodswallow	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dusky Woodswallow	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Grey Butcherbird	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
White-backed Magpie	X	X	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	X	—	X
Little Raven	X	—	—	X	X	—	—	X	—	X	—	X	X	—	X

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CORRIGENDUM

to 'Birds of the Torrens River, Adelaide'

R. J. Whatmough, S.A. Orn., Vol. 28, Pt. 1

In the Historical Checklist on p. 11, the names of the 11th to 15th species are out of order. The order should be Little Pied Cormorant, Darter, White-faced Heron, White-necked Heron, Little Egret. Distributions are in the correct order.