

BIRD NOTES

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF BOURKE'S PARROTS. On an afternoon in May 1982, my wife, two children and I were travelling along a remote fence-line near the intersection of the Hugh River Stock Route and the Finke River (24°26'S, 133°06'E), south-west of Alice Springs. Our attention was drawn to a bird fluttering on the ground 100 m ahead. I approached cautiously and confirmed my initial identification of the bird as Bourke's Parrot *Neophema bourkii*. To my surprise, I was able to catch the bird. Careful physical examination revealed no obvious injury and the bird's plumage sparkled with good health. After releasing the bird, which fluttered and 'danced' in amongst the nearby shrubbery, we pressed on only to see another fluttering Bourke's Parrot three hundred metres further along the track. That this was a different bird was almost certain for all of us had been keenly watching the open shrublands ahead and to each side as we progressed. Regrettably, our need to find a campsite prevented us from attempting to catch the second bird.

Given the apparent good health of the birds, it occurred to me later that they may have been feeding on some seed, foliage or fruit which had intoxicated them. Reports of similar observations would be most interesting and may help interpret the seemingly perilous behaviour noted above.

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