

A LATE BREEDING RECORD OF THE HOODED PLOVER. On the afternoon of 3 May 1990, while driving towards Beachport Conservation Park in the South-East of South Australia, I noticed what I thought were four adult Hooded Plovers *Charadrius rubricollis* feeding together at the edge of the Pool of Siloam. This highly saline lake is known locally as the Salt Lake and situated about 1 km W of Beachport Town Centre. When I stopped and viewed the birds through binoculars, I realised that in fact the group consisted of two adults and two well-grown runners.

An hour or so later I returned to the lake and found one of the adults roosting on a piece of

wood near the water's edge. The other adult was feeding nearby, but there was no sign of the two runners. However, I remained in the car watching the adults and after about 10 minutes the runners emerged from cover. I caught one, which was almost capable of flight, and estimated it to be 3-4 weeks of age.

This record is of interest because May is exceptionally late for Hooded Plovers to have runners. I have recorded them breeding in the South-East of South Australia on many occasions, and have found nests with eggs and adults with runners in October, November, December and January. The latest date I have for a nest with eggs is 23 January, and the latest for

adults with runners is 30 January. It is also noteworthy that in the Coorong region in 1985-86, during a study to assess the impact of off-road vehicles on the nesting success of Hooded Plovers, birds were recorded incubating eggs most frequently from November to January (Buick & Paton 1989).

Newman (1986) recorded an incubation period of 31 days for a Hooded Plover nest in Tasmania, and on Kangaroo Island an incubation period of about 28 days has recently been observed (T. Dennis, pers. comm.). Therefore, since the runners at Beachport were 3-4 weeks old, the adults must have commenced incubation some eight weeks earlier — during the first week of March. This is well outside the breeding period

given by Beruldsen (1980), who stated that the nesting season of the Hooded Plover is September to December, sometimes January.

REFERENCES

- Beruldsen, G. 1980. *A Field Guide to Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds*. Rigby: Sydney.
- Buick, A. M. & Paton, D. C. 1989. Impact of off-road vehicles on the nesting success of Hooded Plovers *Charadrius rubricollis* in the Coorong region of South Australia. *Emu* 89: 159-172.
- Newman, O. M. G. 1986. Hooded Plovers breeding at Mortimer Bay. *An Occasional Stint* 4: 18-20.

John Bransbury: 100 Fisher Street, Fullarton, South Australia 5063.

Received: 12 June 1990.