

A RUFOUS FANTAIL AT LANGHORNE CREEK. The Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons* was first recorded for South Australia on 10 December 1933 when a specimen was taken at Coombe by W.J. Harvey (Sutton 1934). Condon (1951) assigned this bird to the race *rufifrons* of eastern Australia. Birds of this race are migratory, coming south in late October or early November to breed in wet forests (Reader's Digest 1976; Pizzey 1980). Some breed regularly in the Portland forests which adjoin the South Australian border in the

lower South East. A second record came from Bool Lagoon where one was observed on 21 March 1983 by H. Bakker. It was found dead and partly decomposed near the same spot two weeks later (Bakker and Parker 1986).

On 14 December 1992 a Rufous Fantail was seen about 2 km south of Langhorne Creek by P. Hender. It was hawking insects amongst orchard trees near sheds on the Hender property. It was still present on the following day and was secured as a specimen for the South Australian Museum. A male of the

race *rufifrons*, its skull was completely pneumatized and the gonads had begun to enlarge. The bird was in almost the exact spot where P. Hender had found a dead female Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca* on 29 March 1964, the first record for South Australia (Condon 1965).

Like much of South Australia, Langhorne Creek experienced an unusually wet spring and early summer in 1992. The abnormally wet conditions may therefore have encouraged the bird to venture well beyond its normal range. The first record for the State of the Brush Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus* had been made some 20 km north a month earlier (Figwer and Britten-Jones 1994), its movement possibly also influenced by the unusually wet conditions.

A sight record of the Rufous Fantail from Tooperang (Smith 1946) was ignored by Terrill and Rix (1950) and Condon (1951 *et seq.*), then discussed and dismissed by Bakker and Parker (1986). Support for their action comes from the time of the sighting, namely 28 August, a surprisingly early date for a pair to have been present.

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