

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS OF WHITE-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKES AT TELFORD SCRUB CONSERVATION PARK. A dark-morph and normal-morph White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina papuensis* were observed breeding at Telford Scrub Conservation Park (37°41'S, 140°47'E), 14 km N of Mount Gambier, from November 2001 to January 2002. Following that breeding event various aspects of breeding ecology for this species including description of nestlings were published (Green and Haywood 2003). The subsequent observations in this note include a description of a fledged dark-morph juvenile from the 2002–03 breeding season.

On 25 August 2002, I observed two adult White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes in the south-eastern corner of Telford Scrub Conservation Park in the Lower South East of South Australia. I assumed them to be the same pair as had been present in the previous breeding season because one of the birds was a normal-morph and the other identical to the dark-morph previously recorded (Green and Haywood 2003).

I next visited the park on 14 December 2002 and again saw the pair, this time approximately half way along the eastern boundary.

On 19 January 2003, I observed the normal-morph adult at this same location, and c. 400 m to the north I saw the dark-morph adult foraging in the tree canopy and heard a second bird calling. After a while a dark-morph juvenile was seen nearby and was soon joined by the normal-morph adult. I only observed the juvenile being fed once and this was by the normal-morph bird. I watched the birds for a further 15 minutes during which

time the birds remained perched in the canopy, and then all three flew to the south-east.

The dark-morph juvenile of unknown sex had a dull bill, grey throat, dark smudges to the ear coverts, neck and cheek (particularly noticeable when preening) and had dark almost black smudging between the throat and mid-breast in the shape of a rounded bib.

As reported in Taylor (1999) and Green and Haywood (2003) there are few published records of dark-morph White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes in South Australia and only one involving breeding of a dark-morph bird, so this record of a recently fledged dark-morph juvenile is noteworthy. Furthermore it is interesting that the birds produced normal-morph young in 2001–02 and a dark-morph young in 2002–03. Time constraints limited my ability to monitor the birds at Telford Scrub Conservation Park during the 2002–03 season, but I see this is as a priority for future seasons.

Conole (1992) records a pairing of a normally plumaged bird, the 'eastern form' (normal-morph) of Slater, Slater and Slater (1986) and a partly hooded bird (dark-morph) from Brisbane Ranges National Park, Victoria in December 1986. The nest was blown down in a storm and successful breeding could not be confirmed.

Conole (1992) also records an adult of the 'eastern form' and a hooded bird (dark-morph) flying with a large young bird at the 'Bannockburn Bush'. The young bird appeared likely to mature into an 'eastern form' bird.

An R.A.O.U. Nest Record card completed by S. Marchant records successful nesting by a bird with heavy black bib and face, and one with a

black eye mask only, from Moruya, New South Wales in November 1986. Marchant (1989) states that it is perhaps a measure of our ignorance of the nesting of the White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike that at the end of the 1986-87 breeding season, after almost 25 years of the Nest Record scheme, there were only 18 nest record cards for the species. In the 16 years since, there have been only eight additional records (J. Starks, pers. comm.). The lack of records of mixed morph pairings could reflect a genuine rarity in occurrence or could be a result of the overall paucity of data on the breeding ecology of this species.

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R. Green: P.O. Box 3211, Mount Gambier, S.A. 5290

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