

THE BIRD COLLECTION OF R.C. CHANDLER: TARCOOLA TO OOLDEA (YELLABINNA REGION) 1908–9

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ABSTRACT

From November 1908 to February 1909, the Victorian naturalist R.C. Chandler collected 124 specimens of 39 bird species between Tarcoola and Ooldea on the surveyed route of the future Trans-Australia Railway. The existence of this collection, presented to the National Museum of Victoria (now Museum Victoria, MV) in March 1909, has gone largely unnoticed by South Australian ornithologists, e.g. S.A. White, A.S. Le Souef, J.B. Cleland, and J.N. McGilp, who visited the region during 1917–1949. It has also been overlooked in recent reviews of birds of the Yellabinna region, e.g. Cohen, Reid and Caspersen (1992) referred to 22 species represented in the South Australian Museum, whereas Chandler's collection contained an additional 26 species. Further specimens in the MV and Australian Museum, Sydney bring the total collected from the region to 63 species.

Two species, the Thick-billed Grasswren *Amytornis textilis* and Southern Scrub-robin *Drymodes brunneopygia*, have not been recorded in the central Yellabinna region since Chandler collected them there. The presumed contraction in range of these two species may be due to the influence of introduced predators but might also reflect natural longer-term environmental and ecological change.

INTRODUCTION

Two Thick-billed Grasswrens *Amytornis textilis* were known to have been taken by R.C. Chandler on 16 January 1909, c. 132 miles west of Tarcoola (Condon 1962, 1968–9; Parker 1972) and lodged with the National Museum of Victoria (now Museum Victoria, MV). An investigation of these specimens (Black 2004) established that they were among a larger collection of birds presented by Chandler to MV on 26 March 1909. The database for these specimens indicates they were collected between Wilgena, Tarcoola, Kychering and Ooldea, indicating a journey across what is now known as the Yellabinna region. This south-eastern portion of the Great Victoria Desert (GVD) is a vast (c. 44,000 sq. km) dunefield that has remained relatively unexploited, being outside the boundaries of pastoral activity. Much of this region is now formally protected as the Yellabinna Regional Reserve (see Figure 1). Copley and Kemper (1992) reviewed the biological and wilderness qualities of the Yellabinna region, while Cohen, Reid and Caspersen (1992) analysed its birds. The existence of Chandler's collection was almost certainly unknown to ornithologists who

visited the region subsequent to Chandler (White 1919; LeSouef 1921; Cleland 1923; McGilp 1932, 1949) and to authors of recent reviews of the birds of the GVD (Ford 1971; Black and Badman 1986; Cohen *et al.* 1992).

Our aims are to document this long-overlooked collection in its historical context and to demonstrate its contribution to the knowledge of birds of the Yellabinna region.

METHODS

We reviewed the MV database for the specimens received from R.C. Chandler on 26 March 1909, and examined the specimens and checked the data attached to them. We sought information about the collector R.C. Chandler and were able to examine the contemporaneous notes of his collection as well as some additional information recorded by his son L.G. Chandler (see below and Black 2004). Where the MV database proved deficient for reasons outlined below, the notes provided additional information in instances where the specimens and recorded details could be correlated confidently. In cases where more complete data had been recorded in MV the notes either confirmed the database or provided additional information.

One of us (ABB) searched archival material of the former Commonwealth Railways for information such as place names relating to the journey taken by Chandler, *viz.* the route of the then surveyed but unconstructed Trans-Australia Railway.

We examined recent accounts of the vegetation of the region for correlation with Chandler's notes and the MV database. ABB undertook field trips from Wilgena to Ooldea during 18–25 April 2003, and to Wilgena, Mt Finke and Kychering during 7–11 September 2003, collecting data on birds and their habitats and comparing these with other sources.

We compared the bird species present in the Chandler collection with the species lists reported from the region early in the twentieth century and with more current and comprehensive reviews.

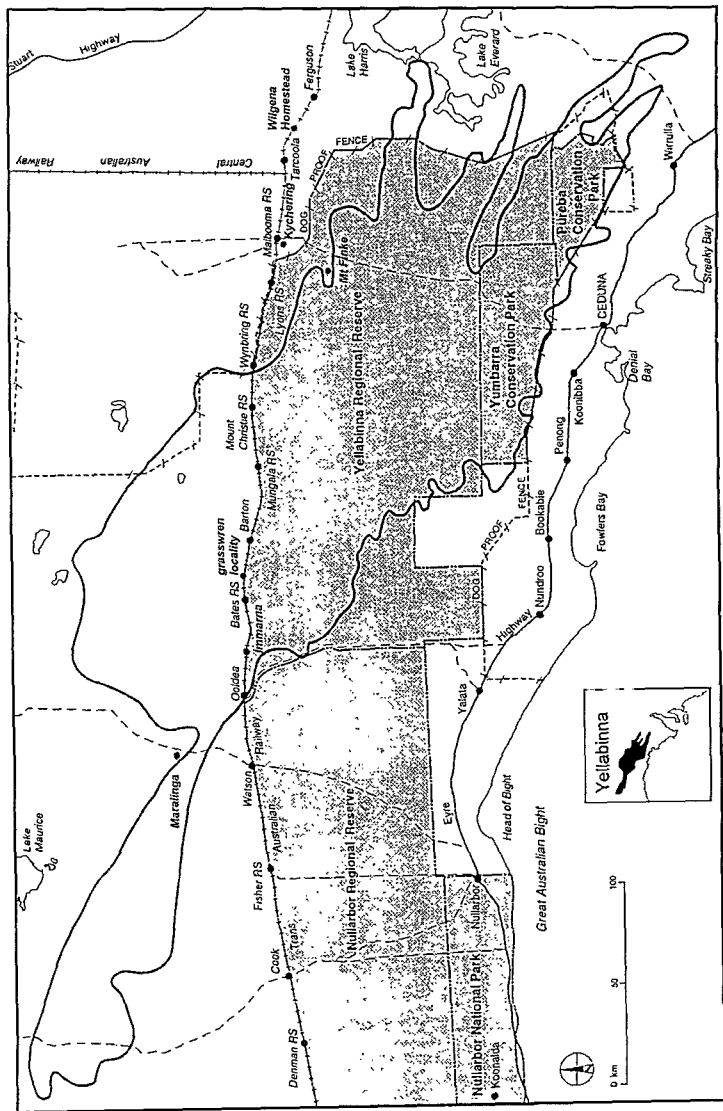


Figure 1. Map showing the Yellabinna Environmental Association (Laut *et al.* 1977) outlined by the bold continuous line, together with Reserves dedicated under the SA National Parks and Wildlife Act (from Copley and Kemper 1992). Railway Sidings (RS) on the Trans-Australia Railway are named. Other localities discussed in the text are also shown.

RESULTS

The MV specimens

The MV database contained records of 124 bird skins of 39 species presented by R.C. Chandler to MV on 26 March 1909 and collected by him from 1 November 1908 to 2 February 1909 between Tarcoola and Ooldea. Many of the specimens were undated or carried only the date of receipt, 26/3/1909. It can be seen from Table 1 that Chandler proceeded west from Tarcoola to Ooldea, but the undated specimens could have been collected on either the outward or return journey (see below). The majority of the specimens had an MV registration number, a field number (see below) and other data. Other specimens had lost their field numbers and other data, though most were identified for locality and a few had additional information on the labels.

The collector R.C. Chandler and his notes

Whittell's (1954) review of literature of Australian Ornithology has no entry for R.C. Chandler, but has a three-page list of papers and articles of L.G. Chandler, born in 1888 in Malvern, Victoria.

The RAOU Centenary review of Australian ornithology (Robin 2001) also contains no reference to R.C. Chandler but refers to L.G. (Les)

Chandler (pp. 124, 144–146, 173, 175) as a pioneer of bird-banding (Chandler 1913) and bird photography before and between the world wars. L.G. Chandler exhibited bird skins at meetings of the Bird Observers' Club of Victoria in 1908 and 1910 (Zoë Wilson, pers. comm.) and moved to Red Cliffs, Victoria, after World War 1 (Robin 2001, p. 145). Believing that he might be a relative of R.C. Chandler, ABB made enquiries in the Sunraysia district and communicated with Mary Chandler, a writer of local and family history. She is the daughter of L.G. Chandler and granddaughter of R.C. Chandler. Ms Chandler provided information about her grandfather's life (see Appendix) and subsequently located and made available a notebook, handwritten in pencil, belonging to her father which contained some of R.C. Chandler's original notes from his collecting trip between Tarcoola and Ooldea in 1908–9.

R.C. Chandler, in his original notes, numbered his specimens in groups, mostly of the same species and taken at the one locality, sometimes a single bird, more usually two (e.g. male and female) and occasionally in larger numbers (up to nine). Unfortunately, presumably because of limited literacy, he did not provide bird names, though he recorded the colours of the soft parts of each bird skin. Over the original script were additional numbers (in ink) for each specimen.

Table 1. Dates and localities recorded in MV database for the specimens collected by R.C. Chandler.

Date (d/m/y)	Locality	Dated specimens	Undated specimens
1/11/1908	Eucla [<i>sic</i>] Dam, west of Tarcoola*	2	–
22/11/08	Tarcoola, 20 miles west of Wilgena	7	6
22/11/08	Kyehering Soak	2	17
6/12/08	Kyehering Soak	1	–
11/12/08	Kyehering Soak	17	–
14/12/08	Kyehering Soak	6	–
14/12/08	Kyehering Soak, 13 miles west	1	–
17/12/08	Kyehering Soak (or Rockhole)	5	–
17/12/08	Kyehering Soak (or Rockhole), 14 miles west	4	4
18/12/08	Kyehering Soak	1	–
9/1/09	Tarcoola, 132 miles west	13	5
9/1/09	West Tarcoola [<i>sic</i>]	1	2
16/1/09	Tarcoola, 132 miles west	4	–
16/1/09	Tarcoola, 142 miles west	1	–
23/1/09	Ooldea	6	5
2/2/09	Ooldea	1	–
Undated	Kyehering Soak, 10 miles west	–	2
Undated	Unlocalised	–	11
Totals		72	52

* But see Addendum on p. 198.

These numbers were almost certainly written by L.G. Chandler soon after his father's return, in preparation for presentation of the collection to MV (see Table 2). The ink numbers extend to 122, with some omissions and a direct comparison with the MV database did not allow a complete correlation. A list of all specimens collected by R.C. Chandler, together with the 'field numbers' assigned to them by L.G. Chandler (where retained), are shown in Table 3.

R.C. Chandler noted the localities of almost all of his specimens as so many miles west of Whymbring [Wynbring] Well, Soke or Soak, though the first page of his notebook also included the names Kychering and Kychering Soke [Soak]. Labels on most of the MV specimens on the other hand specified localities as the same number of miles west of Kychering, with a few, as in the

case of the grasswrens, listed as 132 and 142 miles west of Tarcoola. Whymbring was an error of locality and subsequently was corrected at MV to Kychering (see discussion in Black 2004). Wynbring and Kychering are not interchangeable names, though they have been confused before, e.g. in McGilp (1949). The former is now the better known since it is the name of a railway siding, as well as being a water source to which the explorer Ernest Giles was led by a local Aboriginal man Jimmy in 1875 (P.B. Copley in Copley and Kemper 1992). Examination of the Commonwealth Railways documents, now in the Australian Archives, revealed that both Wynbring and Kychering were considered suitable sites for rock-based water catchments for railways purposes during the survey and planning of the Trans-Australia Railway. Unlike Wynbring, which was

Table 2. Summary of dates and localities of R.C. Chandler's specimens as recorded in his notebook. The column headed 'RCC' shows numbers used by R.C. Chandler for specimens or groups of specimens. The column headed 'LGC' shows field numbers given by L.G. Chandler for each specimen. Note that field numbers 115, 118, 123 and 124 are not recorded, though 115 and 124 are in the MV database.

RCC	LGC	Date (day/month/year)	Locality (where stated)
-	1	1/11/1908	Euclou Dam [Euclou Dam, c. 220 km east of Tarcoola*]
-	2, 3(?)	"	-
1, 2	3(?), 4, 5	22/11/08	Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
2	6	"	20 miles west of Wolgena [Wolgena]
3	7, 8	"	Whymbring [Kychering]
4	-	"	-
5	9, 10	"	20 miles west of Wolgena [Wolgena]
6	11-14	"	-
7-10	15-21	"	Whymbring [Kychering, Kychering Soak]
11, 12	22-26	6/12/08	Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
13-19	27-44	11/12/08	Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
20-23	45-55	"	10, 13 and 20 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
24, 25	56-58	14/12/08	-
26	59	"	13 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
27-32	60-68	"	-
33, 34	69-72	17/12/08	-
35-40	73-82	"	14 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering] Well, Soak or Rockhole
41-42	83-86	"	Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
43	87	18/12/08	5 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering] Soak
44	88	"	West of Whymbring [Kychering]
45	89	"	-
46-50	90-107	9/1/09	110 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering]
60	108, 109	16/1/09	110 miles west of Whymbring [Kychering]
70-72	110-114	23/1/09	-
73	-	"	118 miles west from Ooldea [Kychering]
74	116, 117	"	-
75	119-122	"	118 miles west from Ooldea [Kychering]
86	-	1/3/09 [2/2/09 in MV database]	20 miles east of Ooldea

* See Addendum on p. 198.

extensively dammed, the Kycherling Water Reserve was never used for this function but was subsequently leased for pastoral purposes. Maps in the archival documents show a rockhole and soakage as well as Kycherling Hill (stone pile), all within 500 metres of one another about 1 km S of the railways reserve and 2–3 km SW of Malbooma Railway Siding. In recent years the name of Malbooma has usually been applied to this area and the adjacent pastoral land, rather than Kycherling, the name now given to a small pastoral lease immediately to the west (see Figure 1).

In the following description of the notes of R.C. Chandler (and elsewhere in this manuscript) information enclosed by square brackets represents the authors' corrections of Chandler's notes, particularly place names.

The first page of R.C. Chandler's notebook included the following (also see Figure 2):

*'1 coondambo [Station] dalegraph [telegraph]
2 kingoona [Kingoonya, a settlement]
port Aguster [Augusta]
euclor dam, Tarcoola gold mine
Wolgena [Wilgena]
R.C. Chandler
"Tarcombe"
22 Park St East
S Melb Vic.
kycherling [crossed out]
krycherling io ong soke
whymbring [Wynbring] rock

kycherling soke
whymbring rock
Ooldea Soak, nullarbor pl () ns
nullarbor plains'*

The second page of Chandler's notebook listed three specimens without numbers (but numbered 1–3 by L.G. Chandler). Two were given the date '1 November 1908' and locality 'Euclor Dam'. In MV this locality was understandably but erroneously recorded as 'Euclor Dam, west of Tarcoola'. Commonwealth Railways archival material refers to Euclor Dam. Its exact location in or near Tarcoola is unknown, but a small watercourse known as Euclor Creek occurs many kilometres to the east, beyond Kingoonya (see Addendum on p. 198).

R.C. Chandler's notebook numbered subsequent specimens (sometimes in groups), and each but the first specimen (which seems to have an additional number 3) was given a field number by L.G. Chandler as noted above (see Table 2).

Bird skins were described with field numbers 4 to 122, but the last recorded specimen was unnumbered (c.f. 124 skins in MV). Dates were provided, but it is not certain whether these referred to the date when the bird was secured, the skin prepared or the notes written. On some dates the number of specimens recorded was rather large.

Eighteen birds were listed for 22 November 1908 (R.C. Chandler's specimen numbers 1–10, field numbers 4 (or 3) to 21). The locality was given as either Whymbring [Kycherling] or 20 miles west of Wolgena [Wilgena], i.e. a point about halfway between Tarcoola and Kycherling, the latter being about 22 miles (35 km) west of Tarcoola. Habitat was given only twice, viz. each time as stunted gum and myall country. The reference to 'gum' is unexplained since there are no eucalypts (mallees) in the vicinity of Kycherling Rockhole, Hill or Soak (now a well), all of which are located within about one kilometre of Malbooma Outstation, a part of the larger Mulgathing pastoral lease. On the other hand mallee vegetation is present c. 12–15 km S of Tarcoola and Kycherling (ABB, pers. obs.) and Chandler may have deviated from the railway route in this portion of his journey.

Five birds (field numbers 22–26) were listed for 6 December 1908 at Whymbring [Kycherling] without habitat notes. Twenty-nine bird skins were listed for 11 December 1908. Of these, 18 (field numbers 27–44) were from Whymbring [Kycherling] from habitats described as stunted myall scrub and once as mulga myall scrub. The remaining eleven (field numbers 45–55) were from either 20, 13 or 10 miles west of Whymbring [Kycherling], with one reference to stunted oak myall scrub. Thirteen skins (field numbers 56–68) were listed for 14 December 1908, the locality stated only once as 13 miles west of Whymbring [Kycherling]. Habitats were recorded as mulga scrub (twice); mulga and black oak scrub; black oak scrub; and mallee, oak, mulga. Eighteen skins (field numbers 69–86) were listed for 17 December 1908, the locality given in six instances as 14 miles west of Whymbring [Kycherling]. Habitat was given as mallee scrub three times; and as myall and salt bush, blue bush; stunted mallee and blue bush and mulga scrub; and stunted oak. Three further skins were recorded for 18 December 1908, the first from five miles west of Whymbring [Kycherling], the third with no locality given, but from mallee scrub.

After an interval of three weeks 18 specimens

Table 3. Annotated list of the bird species collected by R.C. Chandler between Tarcoola and Ooldea, 1 November 1908 to 2 February 1909. MV registration names and numbers are followed in brackets by L.G. Chandler's field number if known, and by additional data from the MV database and/or, in brackets, observations from R.C. and/or L.G. Chandler's notes if adding to or clarifying the information (RCC and LGC respectively). Further notes in square brackets are made by the authors. The following field numbers are unaccounted for: 30, 36, 39, 44, 56–58, 67–69, 77, 87 and 88.

Specimens are described as:

M = male, F = female, Ad = adult, Imm = immature, Juv = juvenile, and S/Ad = sub-adult.

Localities named include:

Wilgena [Homestead] (30°46'S, 134°44'E) which was the most westerly pastoral lease at the time.

Tarcoola (30°42'S, 134°33'E), a gold-mining town c. 14 km W of Wilgena.

Kyechering Rockhole, Soak, Well, and Hill (30°42'S, 134°11'E) lie immediately west of Malbooma Outstation and are c. 35 km W of Tarcoola.

'110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering]' (c. 30°29'S, 132°27'E) is presumably c. 20 km W of Barton Siding, 10 km E of Bates Siding and 60 km E of Ooldea Siding.

'118 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering]' (30°29'S, 132°19'E) is presumably a few kilometres west of Bates Railway Siding.

'20 miles east of Ooldea' (c. 30°30'S, 132°09'E) is presumably near the previous site of Immarna Railway Siding.

1. Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*: B.847 F and B.848 M Ad, Kyechering Soak [not conclusively identified in Chandler's notes].
2. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*: R.11671 (1) M S/Ad, 1 Nov. 1908, Eucla [Euclol] Dam, west of Tarcoola.
3. Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*: R.11564 (2) M Ad, 1 Nov. 1908, Eucla [Euclol] Dam, west of Tarcoola (iris dark brown, bill black, legs sepia – RCC).
4. Major Mitchell's Cockatoo *Cacatua leadbeateri*: R.9395 M and R.95396 F, Kyechering Rockholes 14 miles west [probably (80, 81) obtained in stunted oak scrub on 17 Dec. 1908 – RCC].
5. Australian Ringneck *Barnardius zonarius*: R.9156 (97) M Ad and R.9157 (98) F Ad, 9 Jan. 1909, Tarcoola 132 miles west (mallee and stunted scrub 110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering] Well – RCC).
6. Mulga Parrot *Psephotus varius*: R.9160 (26) M Ad, 6 Dec. 1908, Kyechering; R.9161 (37) M Imm and R.9163 (38) F Imm, 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak, myall (mulga/myall); R.9162 (59) F Ad [probably M S/Ad] 14 [probably 11] Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak 13 miles west, mulga; and R.9158 (94) M Ad, R.9159 (95) M Ad and R.9164 (96) F Ad, 9 Jan. 1909, Tarcoola 132 miles west (110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering], mallee and stunted oak and myall – RCC).
7. Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*: R.9167 (78) M Ad and R.9168 (79) F Ad, 17 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Rockhole 14 miles west (stunted mallee and blue bush and mulga scrub – RCC).
8. Barn Owl *Tyto alba*: B.17015 (82) F Ad, 17 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak 14 miles west (mallee scrub – RCC).
9. Australian Owllet-nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus*: R.8838 (124) M Ad, 2 Feb. 1909, Ooldea (in stunted oak 20 miles east of Ooldea Well or Soak – RCC). [Though the field number was not recorded in the notes by LGC it is present on the label of the specimen.]
10. Red-backed Kingfisher *Todiramphus pyrrophygia*: R.9170–9178 (45–51, 62, 63) 3 M Ad, 3 F Ad, 3 Juv. (45–51) 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak 13 miles west; (62, 63) 14 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak 13 miles west, in mulga and black oak scrub (a nest with four young birds was found in the bank of a dry watercourse – LGC).
11. Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*: R.9169 (115) F S/Ad, 23 Jan. 1909, Ooldea (118 miles west of Kyechering, mallee and oak stunted scrub – RCC). [Field number not recorded in notes by LGC.]
12. White-browed Treecreeper *Climacteris affinis*: B.864–868, 2 F Ad, 3 M Ad, Kyechering Soak or 20 miles west of Wilgena [possibly includes three birds taken on 22 Nov. 1908, 20 miles west of Wilgena, (17–19) (from stunted gum [sic] and myall country – RCC)].
13. Splendid Fairy-wren *Malurus splendens callainus*: R.9930 (28) M Ad, R.9932 (29) F S/Ad, and R.9931: (31) F S/Ad, 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak; and R.9933 (105) M Ad, and R.9934 (106) F Ad, 16 Jan. 1909 (110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering] stunted myall mulga and other scrub – RCC) (not plentiful, in twos and threes – LGC).
14. Variegated Fairy-wren *Malurus lamberti assimilis*: R.9962–9965 (102–104, 107) 3 M Ad, F Ad, 9 Jan. 1909 (110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering] in stunted myall mulga and other scrub – RCC) (only two companies seen, in one [of them] six or seven birds – LGC).
15. Thick-billed Grasswren *Amyzornis textilis myalli*: R.10001 (109) M Ad, and R.10002 (108) M [actually F] Ad [= AMNH 265214], 16 Jan. 1909 (110 miles west of Whybring [Kyechering] – RCC; see Black 2004).
16. Redthroat *Pyrholaemus brunneus*: R.9887 (99) M Ad, R.9889 (100) F and R.9890 (101) F S/Ad, 9 Jan. 1909; R.9886 and

continues...

Table 3 (continued)

- R.9888 [sex, age and date(s) not identified], (99–101 from 110 miles west of Whymbing [Kyechering] in stunted myall mulga and other scrub – RCC).
17. Weebill *Smicrornis brevirostris*: R.9824 (90) M S/Ad and R.9825 (91) F S/Ad, 9 Jan. 1909 (110 miles west of Whymbing [Kyechering] – RCC).
 18. Inland Thornbill *Acanthiza apicalis*: R.9855 [Presumably (86) F, 17 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak. This specimen is the holotype of *A. apicalis erema* (Campbell 1922), (iris light grey, bill and feet black – RCC) and as worded also by Campbell].
 19. Chestnut-rumped Thornbill *Acanthiza uropygialis*: R.9859 (83) M Ad, R.9860 (84) F Ad and R.9891 (85) M Ad [although label of only (83) retained], 17 Dec 1908, Kyechering Soak. [R.9860 F and R.9891 M are paratypes of *A. uropygialis erema* (Campbell 1922) (iris white, bill and feet black – RCC), and as worded also by Campbell].
 20. Southern Whiteface *Aphelocephala leucopsis*: B.853 M Ad and B.854 F Ad, 10 miles west of Kyechering Soak [probably (53, 54), (iris white – RCC), these words are also on the MV label, 11 Dec. 1908].
 21. Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater *Acanthagenys rufogularis*: B.850 M Ad and B.851 F Ad, 14 miles west of Kyechering [probably (75, 76) – (iris light blue...tip of bill black, near face flesh colour – RCC), worded similarly on the MV label, 17 Dec. 1908, in scrub].
 22. Yellow-throated Miner *Manorina flavigula*: B.869 M Ad and B.870 F Ad, Kyechering Soak [probably (3, 4), (iris brown, bill yellow, skin round iris yellow, pale black legs – RCC), 22 Nov. 1908].
 23. Singing Honeyeater *Lichenostomus virescens*: B.871–874 M Ad 3, F Ad, Kyechering Soak [includes (22–24), (iris grey, legs pale blue – RCC), worded similarly on the MV label, 6 Dec. 1908].
 24. Grey-fronted Honeyeater *Lichenostomus plumulus*: B.859–863, 3 M S/Ad, M Ad and F S/Ad, Tarcoola [sic], 20 miles west of Wilgena [not confidently identifiable but may include (5–8) recorded from this locality in Chandler's notes for 22 Nov. 1908].
 25. Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii*: R.9330 (9) M S/Ad, R.9331 (10) F Juv and R.9327 (20) M Ad, 22 Nov. 1908, 20 miles west of Wilgena; R.9318 (25) M Ad, 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering; R.9324 (52) F Juv, 11 Dec. 1908, 20 miles west of Kyechering; R.9319 (64) M Ad, 14 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak; R.9321 (71) F Ad, R.9322 (72) F Ad, R.9326 (73) M Ad and R.9325 (74) F Juv, 17 Dec. 1908, Kyechering [myall, saltbush, bluebush, mulga, mallee, 14 miles west of Kyechering Soak – RCC]; R.9323 (89) F Ad, 18 Dec. 1908 (mallee scrub west of Whymbing [Kyechering] – RCC); R.9320 M [perhaps (65) with (64) above], R.9328 M [no locality/date] and R.9329 F [perhaps (21) with (20) above] (the felt the male birds were of two kinds with different cap-size, the narrower the richer – LGC).
 26. Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata*: R.9369 (60) M S/Ad and R.9370 (61) M Ad, 14 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak.
 27. Southern Scrub-robin *Drymodes brunneopygia*: R.9578 (92), M Ad and R.9579 (93) F Ad, 9 Jan. 1909 (110 miles west of Whymbing [Kyechering] Well or Soak – RCC) (only two birds seen, about half a mile apart in oak and other stunted scrubs, mostly hopping on the ground and flying to a low bush if disturbed – LGC).
 28. White-browed Babbler *Pomatostomus superciliosus*: R.9632 (15) M Ad and R.9633 (16) M Ad, 22 Nov. 1908, Kyechering Soak.
 29. Chestnut Quail-thrush *Cinelosoma castanotus*: R.9574 (110) M S/Ad, 23 Jan. 1909 (in stunted black oak, beach [sic], mulga and other scrub, 118 miles west of Whymbing [Kyechering] – RCC).
 30. Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*: B.883 (32) M [actually F] Ad, B.885 (33) M [actually F] Ad and B.886 (34) F Ad [actually M S/Ad], 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak (iris Indian red, bill tip black, close by face white or pale colour, legs yellow ochre – RCC); and B.884 (116) M [actually F] Ad and B.887 (117) F Ad, Ooldea [sic] (118 miles west of Whymbing [Kyechering], black oak and mallee – iris red, tip of bill black, yellow near face, legs yellow – RCC).
 31. Crested Bellbird *Oreocia gutturalis*: R.9672–9675 (11–14), 2 M Ad and 2 F Ad, 22 Nov. 1908, Tarcoola [sic] 20 miles west of Wilgena; R.9668 [probably (35)] M Ad and R.9669 (55) F Ad, 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak and R.9670 (113) M Ad and R.9671 (114) F Ad, 23 Jan. 1909, Ooldea [sic] (118 miles west of Kyechering – RCC).
 32. Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*: R.9458 (66) M Imm, 14 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak; and R.9459 (111) M S/Ad and R.9460 (112) F Ad, 23 Jan. 1909, Ooldea [sic] (118 miles west of Kyechering – RCC).
 33. Grey Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica rufiventris*: B.875 M Ad and B.876 M Ad, West Tarcoola [sic] and B.877 Kyechering Soak [not identifiable in Chandler's notes].
 34. Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina novaehollandiae*: R.9552 (70) F Ad, 17 Dec. 1908, 14 miles west of Kyechering Soak (mallee scrub – RCC).
 35. Masked Woodswallow *Artamus personatus*: B.855–858 2 M and 2 F, Ooldea [sic] [almost certainly (119–122), (23 Jan. 1909, 118 miles west of Kyechering, iris brown, tip of bill black, near face blue, legs black – RCC)].
 36. Dusky Woodswallow *Artamus cyanopterus*: B.849 F Juv, Ooldea [sic] [not identifiable unless (118) or (123), as below].
 37. Grey Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus*: B.852, Ooldea [sic] [not identifiable in Chandler's notes, though could be (118) or (123), field numbers omitted by LGC, dates/localities unknown].
 38. Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata*: B.878–882, 2 M Ad, 2 F Ad and F S/Ad [includes (40–43), 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak (iris red, bill vermilion, legs flesh colour – RCC) (caught in a net from hundreds going down a well for water – LGC)].
 39. Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*: R.9153 (27) F Ad, 11 Dec. 1908, Kyechering Soak (albino [pale – albinistic] in company of other Welcome Swallows near a well – LGC).

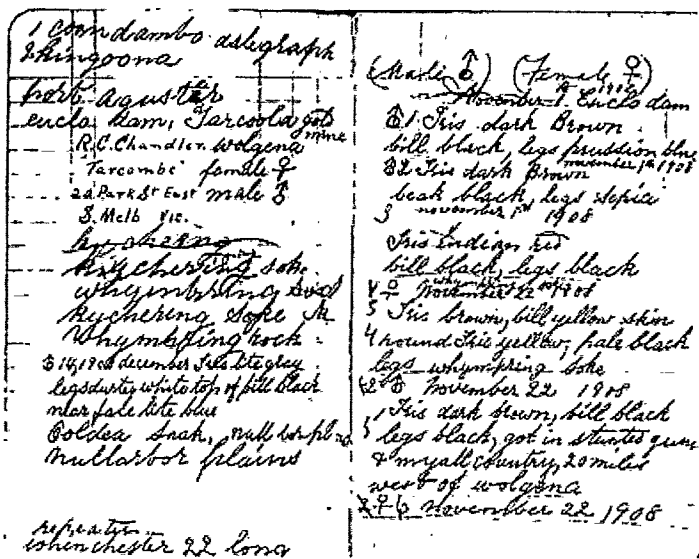


Figure 2. The first and second pages of R.C. Chandler's notebook.

(field numbers 90–107) were listed on 9 January 1909 from 110 miles west of Whybring [Kychering], and a week later the grasswren specimens (field numbers 108 and 109) were recorded from the same locality. The habitat and other details of the grasswren specimens were more extensive than for other specimens (see Black 2004). Three other habitat observations were offered: mallee and stunted oak and myall scrub; mallee and stunted scrub; and stunted myall, mulga and other scrub. Thirteen specimens (field numbers 110–122) were recorded for 23 January 1909, the locality given twice as 118 miles west from Ooldea [sic, should be west of Kychering; see Black (2004) for a discussion of this error]. The habitat was described three times: stunted oak, beach [sic], mulga and other scrub; mallee and oak stunted scrub; and black oak and mallee. The final specimen was not numbered in the notes, the date given as 1 March 1909 (correct-

ed in MV to 2 February 1909) and was from stunted oak 20 miles east of Ooldea Well or Soak.

DISCUSSION

R.C. Chandler was the first person to study seriously the birds of the area now known as the Yellabinna region, collecting specimens between Tarcovna and Ooldea. His collection of 39 bird species has remained unpublished for nearly a century. It is clear that others who visited the area later were unaware of Chandler's collection. These included White (1919) who described birds seen between Tarcovna and Ooldea from four trips from January 1917 to May 1918, Le Souëf (1921) who visited Ooldea for two days in November 1920 and seven days in July 1921, Cleland (1923) who visited Ooldea for a few days in August 1922 and McGilp (1932) who reached

Table 4. Bird species listed for the Yellabinna region (from Cohen *et al.* 1992). Species known to have been observed outside the Yellabinna region (Black and Badman 1986) have been omitted. Species marked with * are possibly from records beyond the limits of the Yellabinna region, either from more northern parts of the GVD, adjacent pastoral country or the Nullarbor Plain. The species in brackets were not included by Cohen *et al.* (1992). Additional specimens in the AM of Masked Owl *Tyto novaehollandiae* and Slender-billed Thornbill *Acanthiza iredalei* from Ooldea are likely to have been taken on the Nullarbor Plain.

Museum codes: C = R.C. Chandler's collection in Museum Victoria
 V = Other Museum Victoria specimen records from Ooldea, chiefly of J.R. Kershaw
 A = AM specimen records from Ooldea, from E.L. Troughton and J.W. Wright (W.E. Boles, pers. comm.)
 S = South Australian Museum specimen records

Source codes: 1 = White 1919
 2 = Le Souëf 1921
 3 = Cleland 1923
 4 = McGilp 1932, 1949
 5 = Cohen *et al.* 1992
 6 = Black (pers. obs.) April and September 2003

Bird species	Museum specimens	Source:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emu <i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>	—		—	—	—	+	+	+
Malleefowl <i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	—		—	—	—	+	+	—
Stubble Quail <i>Coturnix pectoralis</i>	S		—	—	—	—	+	—
(Musk Duck <i>Biziura lobata</i>)	..		—	—	—	—	—	+
(Black Swan <i>Cygnus atratus</i>)	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
(Australian Wood Duck <i>Chenonetta jubata</i>)	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Grey Teal <i>Anas gracilis</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
(Chestnut Teal <i>Anas castanea</i>)	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Hardhead <i>Aythya australis</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Hoary-headed Grebe <i>Poliiocephalus poliocephalus</i>	..		—	—	—	—	—	+
White-faced Heron <i>Egretta novaehollandiae</i>	—		—	—	—	—	+	—
White-necked Heron <i>Ardea pacifica</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Black-shouldered Kite <i>Elanus axillaris</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Black-breasted Buzzard <i>Hamirostra melanosternon</i>	..		—	—	—	—	—	—
Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Whistling Kite <i>Haliastur sphenurus</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Spotted Harrier <i>Circus assimilis</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Brown Goshawk <i>Accipiter fasciatus</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Collared Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter cirrocephalus</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Wedge-tailed Eagle <i>Aquila audax</i>	—		+	—	—	—	—	+
Little Eagle <i>Hieraetus morphnoides</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Brown Falcon <i>Falco berigora</i>	C S		+	—	+	—	—	+
Australian Hobby <i>Falco longipennis</i>	A		—	—	—	—	—	—
*Black Falcon <i>Falco subniger</i>	—		..	—	—	—	—	—
Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Nankeen Kestrel <i>Falco cenchroides</i>	A		—	—	+	—	—	+
Eurasian Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	+
Australian Bustard <i>Ardeotis australis</i>	A S		+	—	—	—	—	+
Little Button-quail <i>Turnix velox</i>	A		—	—	—	—	—	+
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>Calidris acuminata</i>	C S		..	—	—	—	—	—
*(Bush Stone-curlew <i>Burhinus grallarius</i>)	—		—	—	+	—	—	—
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	—		—	—	—	—	—	—
*(Pacific Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis fulva</i>)	C		—	—	—	—	—	—

continues...

Table 4 (continued)

Bird species	Museum specimens	Source:	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Red-capped Plover <i>Charadrius ruficapillus</i>)	-		-	-	-	-	-	+
Black-fronted Dotterel <i>Euseiornis melanops</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
(Red-kneed Dotterel <i>Erythrogonyx cinctus</i>)	-		-	-	-	-	-	+
Banded Lapwing <i>Vanellus tricolor</i>	V		-	-	-	+	+	-
Masked Lapwing <i>Vanellus miles</i>	-		-	-	+	-	-	-
Silver Gull <i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Whiskered Tern <i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	+
Rock Dove <i>Columba livia</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Bronzewing <i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>	-		-	-	+	-	+	+
Crested Pigeon <i>Ocyphaps lophotes</i>	-		-	+	-	-	+	+
Galah <i>Cacatua roseicapilla</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo <i>Cacatua leadbeateri</i>	C A		+	+	+	-	+	+
Cockatiel <i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Musk Lorikeet <i>Glossopsitta concinna</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	-
Purple-crowned Lorikeet <i>Glossopsitta porphyrocephala</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	-
Australian Ringneck <i>Barnardius zonarius</i>	C S		+	-	+	-	+	+
*Blue Bonnet <i>Northiella haematogaster</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	+
Mulga Parrot <i>Psephodus varius</i>	C V A S		+	+	+	+	+	+
Budgerigar <i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	C		+	-	-	-	+	+
Bourke's Parrot <i>Neopsephodus bourkii</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Scarlet-chested Parrot <i>Neophema splendida</i>	S		-	-	-	-	+	+
Pallid Cuckoo <i>Cuculus pallidus</i>	V		-	+	-	-	+	-
Fan-tailed Cuckoo <i>Cacomantis flabelliformis</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Black-eared Cuckoo <i>Chrysococcyx osculans</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	+
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo <i>Chrysococcyx basalis</i>	V		-	-	-	-	+	+
Southern Boobook <i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	C		-	-	-	-	-	-
Tawny Frogmouth <i>Podargus strigoides</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	-
Spotted Nightjar <i>Eurostopodus argus</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Australian Owllet-nightjar <i>Aegoheles cristatus</i>	C		-	-	-	-	-	+
Red-backed Kingfisher <i>Todiramphus pyrrhopygia</i>	C		+	-	-	-	+	+
Rainbow Bee-eater <i>Merops ornatus</i>	C V S		+	+	+	+	+	+
White-browed Treecreeper <i>Climacteris affinis</i>	C A		-	-	+	-	+	+
Rufous Treecreeper <i>Climacteris rufa</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	-
Splendid Fairy-wren <i>Malurus splendens</i>	C V A S		+	+	+	-	+	+
Variiegated Fairy-wren <i>Malurus lamberti</i>	C S		-	+	+	-	+	+
White-winged Fairy-wren <i>Malurus leucopterus</i>	V A		-	-	-	-	-	+
Striated Grasswren <i>Amytornis striatus</i>	S		-	-	-	-	-	-
(Thick-billed Grasswren <i>Amytornis textilis</i>)	C		-	-	-	-	-	-
Spotted Pardalote <i>Pardalotus punctatus</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Striated Pardalote <i>Pardalotus striatus</i>	S		-	-	+	-	+	+
Shy Heathwren <i>Hylacola cauta</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Redthroat <i>Pyrrholaemus brunneus</i>	C V S		+	-	+	-	+	-
Weebill <i>Smicrornis brevirostris</i>	C V		+	+	+	+	+	+
Inland Thornbill <i>Acanthiza apicalis</i>	C V		+	-	-	-	+	+
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill <i>Acanthiza uropygialis</i>	C V A S		-	+	+	+	+	+
Yellow-rumped Thornbill <i>Acanthiza chrysorrhoa</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Southern Whiteface <i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i>	C V A		+	+	+	-	+	+
Red Wattlebird <i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Spiny-checked Honeyeater <i>Acanthagenys rufogularis</i>	C V		+	-	-	-	+	+
Yellow-throated Miner <i>Manorina flavigula</i>	C S		+	-	+	-	+	+
Singing Honeyeater <i>Lichenostomus virescens</i>	C V A		+	-	+	-	+	+
White-eared Honeyeater <i>Lichenostomus leucotis</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+
Purple-gaped Honeyeater <i>Lichenostomus cratitius</i>	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Yellow-plumed Honeyeater <i>Lichenostomus ornatus</i>	V S		+	-	+	+	+	+
Grey-fronted Honeyeater <i>Lichenostomus plumulus</i>	C V S		-	-	+	-	+	+
Brown-headed Honeyeater <i>Melithreptus brevirostris</i>	-		+	-	-	+	-	-
White-fronted Honeyeater <i>Phylidonyris albifrons</i>	V S		+	-	-	-	+	+
Pied Honeyeater <i>Certhionyx variegatus</i>	-		-	-	-	-	+	+

continues...

Table 4 (continued)

Bird species	Museum specimens	Sources: 1	2	3	4	5	6
Crimson Chat <i>Ephianura tricolor</i>	V A	+	+	+	-	+	+
*Orange Chat <i>Ephianura aurifrons</i>	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
White-fronted Chat <i>Ephianura albifrons</i>	--	-	-	-	-	+	+
Jacky Winter <i>Microeca fascians</i>	V	+	-	-	-	+	+
Red-capped Robin <i>Petroica goodenovii</i>	C V A	+	+	+	-	+	+
Hooded Robin <i>Melanodryas cucullata</i>	C V A	+	+	+	-	+	+
Western Yellow Robin <i>Eopsaltria griseogularis</i>	S	-	-	-	+	+	-
Southern Scrub-robin <i>Drymodes brunneopygia</i>	C S	-	-	-	-	+	-
White-browed Babbler <i>Pomatostomus superciliosus</i>	C V A	+	-	+	-	+	+
Chestnut Quail-thrush <i>Cinlosoma castanotus</i>	C S	+	+	+	-	+	-
Varied Sittella <i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i>	C A	-	-	-	-	+	+
Crested Bellbird <i>Oreoca gutturalis</i>	C V A	+	-	+	-	+	+
Gilbert's Whistler <i>Pachycephala inornata</i>	S	-	-	+	-	+	+
Golden Whistler <i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>	S	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rufous Whistler <i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i>	C S	-	-	-	-	+	+
Grey Shrike-thrush <i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>	C V	+	-	+	-	+	+
Resilient Flycatcher <i>Myiagra inquiteta</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Magpie-lark <i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grey Fantail <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	S	-	-	-	-	-	-
Willie Wagtail <i>Rhipidura leucophrys</i>	-	+	+	+	-	+	+
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike <i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>	C	-	-	+	-	+	+
Ground Cuckoo-shrike <i>Coracina maxima</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
White-winged Triller <i>Lalage sueurii</i>	V A	-	-	-	-	+	+
Masked Woodswallow <i>Artamus personatus</i>	C	-	-	-	-	+	+
White-browed Woodswallow <i>Artamus superciliosus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Black-faced Woodswallow <i>Artamus cinereus</i>	V S	-	-	+	-	+	+
Dusky Woodswallow <i>Artamus cyanopterus</i>	C	-	-	+	-	+	+
Little Woodswallow <i>Artamus minor</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Grey Butcherbird <i>Cracticus torquatus</i>	C	+	-	-	-	+	+
Australian Magpie <i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Grey Currawong <i>Strepera versicolor</i>	-	+	-	+	+	+	-
Australian Raven <i>Corvus coronoides</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Little Raven <i>Corvus mellori</i>	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
Little Crow <i>Corvus bennetti</i>	-	+	-	+	-	+	+
White-winged Chough <i>Corcorax melanorhamphos</i>	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
Richard's Pipit <i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	V S	+	-	-	-	+	+
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Zebra Finch <i>Taeniopygia guttata</i>	C	+	-	-	-	+	+
Mistletoebird <i>Dicaeum hirundinaceum</i>	-	+	-	-	-	+	+
White-backed Swallow <i>Cheramoeca leucosternus</i>	V	+	+	+	-	+	+
Welcome Swallow <i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	C	-	-	+	-	+	+
Tree Martin <i>Hirundo nigricans</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Fairy Martin <i>Hirundo ariel</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
*Rufous Songlark <i>Cincloramphus mathewsi</i>	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
*Brown Songlark <i>Cincloramphus cruralis</i>	V	-	+	+	-	-	-
Common Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-

Ooldea briefly from the Nullarbor Plain. The description of Chandler's two Thick-billed Grasswren specimens was not published until after White's, Le Souëf's and Cleland's reports (Campbell 1927).

Chandler's notebook only referred to bird specimens collected. White and later Cleland both recorded a number of species not collected by Chandler: Crimson Chat *Epthianura tricolor*, Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*, White-backed Swallow *Cheramoeca leucosternus* and Brown Songlark *Cincloramphus cruralis*. White also added Stubble Quail *Colurnix pectoralis*, Australian Bustard *Ardeotis australis*, Brown-headed Melithreptus *brevisrostris* and White-fronted *Phylidonyris albifrons* Honeyeaters, Orange Chat *Epthianura aurifrons*, Jacky Winter *Microeca fascians*, White-winged Triller *Lalage sueurii*, Grey Currawong *Strepera versicolor* and Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*. Cleland added Common Bronzewing *Phaps chalcoptera*, Banded Lapwing *Vanellus tricolor*, Bush Stone-curlew *Burhinus grallarius* and Black-faced Woodswallow *Artamus cinereus*. Some of the above may well have been recorded from the Nullarbor Plain near Ooldea. Cleland also referred to Le Souëf's records which included the Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus*.

McGilp (1932) visited Ooldea in October 1931 after several days on the Nullarbor Plain but spent little if any time in the Yellabinnia woodlands and added no further species. In 1947 McGilp (1949) made observations along the netting fences proposed for the official State-managed 'dog-proof fence', beginning at Wynbring, i.e. at the north-eastern boundary of the Yellabinnia region. A few miles north of Wynbring he observed a pair of Western Yellow Robins *Eopsaltria griseogularis*, this being the northern-most sighting of the species in South Australia. His list of birds did not record locality for all species, and therefore only a minority can be confidently attributed to the Yellabinnia region.

A.G. Bolam (1923), former stationmaster at Ooldea, was aware of the presence of Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata*, and Maurice who explored the GVD in 1901 and 1902 noted Malleefowl as well as the Bush Stone-curlew (Cleland 1942).

The birds of the GVD received little further attention until Julian Ford made some very thorough and thoughtful studies in the late 1960s (Ford and Sedgwick 1967; Ford 1971). The South Australian section of the GVD was surveyed by

the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia in 1980 (Greenlade, Joseph and Barley 1986). As part of that survey Black and Badman (1986) reviewed the birds identified in the eastern GVD, including the Yellabinnia region, listing a total of 123 species. In the *Biological survey of the Yellabinnia region*, Cohen *et al.* (1992) listed 121 bird species from the survey area, but provided a more extended list as an appendix, some of which were from outside the Yellabinnia region. Only 22 of these species were known to be represented in the South Australian Museum (SAM) as specimens from the Yellabinnia region. Unknown to these authors were specimens of another 26 species taken earlier by Chandler that were in the MV. Furthermore the MV had additional bird specimens of 29 species collected from near Ooldea, notably by J.R. Kershaw in July 1921. In October 1921 E.L. Troughton and J.W. Wright collected specimens of 19 species in the Ooldea area for the Australian Museum, Sydney (AM). These two collections added a further 15 species, resulting in a total of 63. The list of birds recorded for the Yellabinnia region (adapted from Cohen *et al.* 1992) is shown in Table 4, together with the specimen records of the 63 species from the SAM, MV and AM.

Chandler collected eight bird species not subsequently recorded by White (1919), Le Souëf (1921), Cleland (1923) or McGilp (1932), namely Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*, Barn Owl *Tyto alba*, Australian Owllet-nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus*, Thick-billed Grasswren, Southern Scrub-robin, Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera* and Masked Woodswallow *Artamus personatus*. Chandler's two remarkable records are the Thick-billed Grasswren and the Southern Scrub-robin, both at the same locality. The Thick-billed Grasswrens collected by R.C. Chandler were at least 400 km from the nearest record of the species in the Gawler Ranges (Black 2004). In the *Biological survey of the Yellabinnia region*, Cohen *et al.* (1992) recorded the Southern Scrub-robin only from its southern extremity, *viz.* from near the southern boundary of Yumbarra Conservation Park (CP). There is only one recent record of the species north of Yumbarra CP, a single bird collected by John Cox and ABB (SAM B31688) on 17 October 1978 in a relatively well vegetated interdune with bullock bush *Alectryon oleifolius*, brilliant hop-bush *Dononaea microzyga* and senna *Senna* spp. near Nalara

Rocks c. 10 km SW of Childara Rockhole (Joseph and Black 1983). The locality where Chandler obtained his two specimens, 110 miles west of Kychering, is c. 160 km NW of Yumbarra CP and c. 220 km WNW of Nalara Rocks. It seems likely therefore that the ranges of both the Thick-billed Grasswren and Southern Scrub-robin have retreated from the locality where Chandler collected them in 1909. The same conclusion may be drawn in relationship to the Western Yellow Robin observed by McGilp (1949), the nearest recent reports being more than 100 km to the south (Cohen *et al.* 1992).

If the apparent range contraction of these three bird species is a true indication of local extinction it seems unlikely to be due to human-induced habitat change. The Yellabinna region has not been subject to grazing by domestic stock or other intensive use except locally, e.g. around Ooldea and Maralinga and near the railway and is 'mostly untracked wilderness' (Copley and Kemper 1992). Introduced mammals including fox, cat and rabbit are present in the Yellabinna region and may have had some adverse impact on the three species, all of which are ground feeders. On the other hand such a retreat in range could reflect long-term environmental and ecological change, as is implicit from the presence of a number of mallee-dependent species only in the higher latitude, higher rainfall peripheral parts and not in the bulk of the GVD (Ford 1971; Black and Badman 1986; Cohen *et al.* 1992; Black 2004). Furthermore there are at least four bird species not recorded by earlier observers which have been observed rather consistently in recent times. These are the Galah *Cacatua roseicapilla*, Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata*, White-eared Honeyeater *Lichenostomus leucotis* and Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*. Apart from the White-eared Honeyeater the other three are conspicuous and readily identifiable birds. An increase in range and/or status may be inferred.

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APPENDIX

The collector R.C. Chandler

Robert Charles (Charles or Charlie) Chandler was born near London on 2 February 1851, the fourth of seven children of William (born 1818) and Elizabeth, nee Johnson. The family arrived in Melbourne in July 1853 and established a highly successful market garden producing exceptional cabbages and later cauliflowers and apples. The children assisted in building the family house near Glenferrie Road, Malvern and had almost no formal education, consequently Charles was virtually illiterate. He was a wealthy land owner when he married in 1880, but the marriage certificate referred to him as a gardener. Mostly he liked to be known as a gentleman, but his main interest and pre-occupation throughout life lay with natural history, becoming an expert collector and preparator of specimens and a member of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. For many years the family entertained many naturalist visitors, including Ferdinand von Mueller, A.J. and A.G. Campbell, Dudley Le Souëf, Robert Hall and others. In the early 1900s he separated from his wife and later moved to Frankston where he had a camp. He spent much time in the bush, camping and collecting in the Victorian Mallee with his son Les in 1912 (Chandler 1913) and helped Les on his block at Red Cliffs after World War 1. Chandler collected extensively for H.L. White and the RAOU collection. He died in Mildura Hospital in March 1936.

ADDENDUM

Addendum to the preceding paper, 'The bird collection of R.C. Chandler: Tarcoola to Ooldea (Yellabinna Region) 1908—9' by A.B. Black and N.W. Longmore (*South Australian Ornithologist*, 34 (6), pp. 185-198).

'Eucolo Dam': A number of dams on Eucolo Creek are shown on the 1989 1:250,000 series map (Torrens), with names including Eucolo Dam, Eucolo Reservoir (Government) and Burando Dam. Commonwealth Railways Archives refer to the construction of a dam and reservoir on Eucolo Creek in early 1915, the name being changed to Burando Dam the following year. Mentioned in a letter of 30 January 1914 is a State Government Dam 'constructed about three or four years ago'. An associated pastoral map pre-dating railway-construction shows Eucolo Dam and Hut where the 'Government' Reservoir is placed on the 1989 map. This seems almost certainly to have been the 'Eucolo Dam' visited by Chandler. Luke (1997) indicates that Burando is 128 miles (206 km) east of Tarcoola by rail: the 'Government' Reservoir is about 13 km further east. The Eucolo Dam specimens were taken three weeks before any from the vicinity of Tarcoola, which is readily understood, given the distance between these two localities.