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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

JANUARY 31st, 1919.

The monthly meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held in the Royal Society's Rooms, North Terrace, on Friday evening. Capt. S. A. White, C.M.B.O.U., presided. Owing to the holidays no meeting was held in December, and an unusually large amount of business had accumulated. Messrs. W. G. and R. G. Thomas were elected members. Mr. Edquist reported progress of the committee appointed to form a juvenile branch of the association, and showed a sketch and letter from a member of the Boorowie Bird Club, describing a white-necked crane which had appeared in that district. The Chairman pointed out that this was the white-necked heron (*Myola pacifica*). The same member also stated that a blue mountain parrot kept in captivity had laid 17 eggs this season—eight clutches of two each (the normal number), and one clutch of one egg. Following upon the complaints about boys interfering with birds' nests at Stirling East, members were delighted to hear from Mr. Edquist that the head master of the public school in that district had formed a bird club with a large membership, and that the boys were learning to love and protect the birds now, instead of destroying them. The Chairman reported that the owners of Thistle Island were anxious to make it a fauna and flora reserve, and at their request he had undertaken to introduce mallee fowls, kangaroos, wallabies, and phalangers. He considered it an ideal spot for a sanctuary, and was

in great hopes that the animals would soon multiply. Mr. J. W. Mellor reported that birds were mating late this season. He had seen the young of brush wattle birds, harmonious shrike thrushes, and white-plumed honey-eaters, quite lately. The imported starlings have been more plentiful than ever, and were sweeping off the fruit in spite of all efforts to prevent them. The Chairman directed attention to a letter from Mr. Clarke, of Kangaroo Island, asking if he could obtain some great brown kingfishers to liberate on the island. All present agreed that it was risky to introduce any animal into a country hitherto unknown to it, lest it should change its habits. Mr. F. R. Zietz exhibited a specimen of the red-tailed tropic bird. It had been forwarded to the Museum by Mr. Bradley, of Grattala Farm, near Port Lincoln. The bird had been flying round for several days. This is a new record for South Australia, and the first ever known to have appeared in South Australian waters. Mr. Zietz pointed out that when this bird was being skinned no aural canals could be found. Upon Dr. Morgan examining it, he stated that the wandering of the bird out of his habitat may be attributed to this. Mr. J. W. Mellor stated that the magpies were keeping up their raids upon the young sparrows, and that they had diminished the imported pests very much. The rest of the evening was taken up by Mr. Frank Parsons in describing a recent trip on the Murray River, and the birds in the vicinity of the New South Wales border. A few very nice skins were shown to illustrate the birds found there.

FEBRUARY 28th, 1919.

Capt. S. A. White, C.M.B.O.U., presided. Mr. Robert Beck was proposed for membership. Dr. A. M. Morgan mentioned that the black-throated grebe had mated twice in the Botanical Garden lake this season, and said the old idea that grebes could not walk on land was exploded, for he had seen these birds in the gardens obtaining pieces of vegetation some little distance from the water, and then returning with it to their nest. The doctor exhibited a neat pair of collapsible scales which he had made. He said he had found it difficult to get scales which would pack away in a small space for travelling. He was using the scales in connection with the brain weights of birds which he was now investigating. Mr. Edwin Ashby was welcomed back from America. This member stated that he was under the opinion that the swift lorikeets (*Lathamus discolor*) had visited Blackwood again this

season. If this be the case, it is interesting, because they have only come over from Tasmania at long intervals. Mr. Ashby also exhibited the new colour plates and nomenclature of colour standards by Dr. Ridgeway. There was a good deal of discussion over this, but all were of the opinion that it was a much-needed chart. Mr. Ashby was requested to procure several copies for members. Mr. F. R. Zietz reported that two female black falcons (*Neofalco subniger*) had been sent in from the lakes district. Mr. Lienau gave some interesting notes upon the breeding in captivity of the painted finch. Mr. J. W. Mellor handed in some interesting notes made at Lockleys during the last month. The matter of permits being issued to persons who wanted to visit bird sanctuaries was brought up, and some members expressed themselves strongly upon the matter. A small deputation was elected to wait upon the Minister and point out the danger that may follow the practice mentioned. The Chairman stated that he had been busy during the month addressing different associations and bodies in the country upon bird protection. Among others, he had a most sympathetic audience at Murray Bridge, and through the courtesy of the head teacher of the Murray Bridge School had addressed the students there. He had also spoken at Payneham and other places. The Chairman also stated that in conjunction with the Government Department he was about to put up new notice boards on the islands in the Coorong. Dr. Morgan drew attention to the good work done by the Chairman, and said if he did not do it no one else would, but he should not be allowed to bear all the expenses. The Chairman read some notes upon the changing of colouration with the common blue wren. He stated that by January 23 of this year most of the male wrens began to lose their blue plumage, and that by February 27 many had taken on the brown plumage of the females. The New-Holland honey-eater was mating late this season, for on February 2 young birds were being fed that had just left the nest. Mr. E. Ashby exhibited a small collection of skins to illustrate the birds observed by him during a brief visit of an hour or two at a water hole in the mallee near Karoonda. A surprising number of species were identified in such a short time. Mr. Ashby who was congratulated on being made a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithological Union, further entertained the meeting with an account of notable ornithologists he had met in America, and the work the States are doing for the protection of birds.