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## The Spotted Dove on Eyre Peninsula

**G. CARPENTER AND E. SMITH**

In South Australia the Spotted Dove, *Spilopelia chinensis*, inhabits mainly suburban gardens, orchards and coastal vegetation from the South East westwards to Yorke Peninsula and north to Port Augusta (Blakers, Davies and Reilly 1984). Its occurrence in South Australia is thought to have originated from an accidental release from the Adelaide Zoo in 1931 (Condon 1968).

The first record from Eyre Peninsula was of two presumed deliberately introduced birds in the grounds of the agricultural research centre at Minnipa on 23 July 1965 (Chapman 1966). Green in Glover (1968) reported a "colony of 15+ apparently confined to a large garden in the Hundred of Hawker" (= Tumby Bay district) on 8 September 1966. Paton in Reid (1976) saw a few at Port Lincoln on 13-14 September 1975 and Gill in Reid (1976) reported that about a dozen were released in Port Lincoln by a local aviculturist in about 1972, where they were "plentiful" and "slowly increasing".

By the early 1980s there were still a few reports from Port Lincoln (e.g. Filsell in Glover 1983, Blakers, Davies and Reilly 1984), although that population is apparently no longer extant (J. Cooper pers. comm, GC pers. obs.). To the north-west, Read in Carpenter (1994) reported in October 1993 that a small population had recently established in the Roxby Downs township.

These were also likely to have been deliberately liberated, but were being controlled.

GC has recorded small numbers of Spotted Dove on north-eastern Eyre Peninsula from 2000 onwards. On 17 February 2000 a pair of doves flew overhead from an area of mangroves along an inlet just south of Arno Bay. One bird landed briefly on an exposed branch where the spotted neck feathers and grey-brown plumage were easily seen. The bird was very wary and flew off when approached to 30 m. The following day another pair of Spotted Doves was seen in mangroves at Second Creek, Tumby Bay, about 70 km SW of Arno Bay and 50 km NE of Port Lincoln. No doves were observed during brief searches in the towns of Arno Bay or Tumby Bay at this time.

On 22 March 2012 four Spotted Doves were seen in the township of Kimba. These were perched in low garden trees and feeding on the ground in a vacant lot. A loose group of about ten Spotted Doves was seen in coastal dune shrubland near the Lucky Bay rubbish dump (NE of Cowell) on 19 June 2012. On 26 February 2014 a single bird was also flushed from coastal shrubland at the southern edge of Port Neill township.

ES has observed birds while living at Whyalla since the late 1980s. A single Spotted Dove was first seen there on 6 September 1990. There were subsequently three reports in October 1994 and two in March 1997 (including a juvenile). Since 1997 they have slowly increased although the total population is suspected to be small, with the maximum recorded at any time being four.

These records indicate that Spotted Doves are slowly increasing in range on Eyre Peninsula, most likely having spread south along the coast from Port Augusta where the species is abundant (GC pers. obs.). The presence of mangroves in this area, a favoured habitat of Spotted Doves elsewhere (e.g. Gulf St Vincent), may have aided dispersal around the more hostile semi-arid habitats of northern Eyre Peninsula. Without

active control, Spotted Doves have the potential to become abundant across Eyre Peninsula as they have in south-eastern parts of the State.

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## Obituary: Frank Richard Hewett Chapman

7 July 1937 to 8 February 2014

### ANDREW BLACK

Frank was the only son and the oldest of three children of Frank Hewett Chapman and Nancy (née Richards) and a proud descendant of colonial pioneer Samuel Chapman who arrived aboard the *Cygnets* in 1836. He grew up in North Adelaide and Walkerville but moved to the 'family farm', a property of 330 hectares at Coromandel Valley, on the death of his grandfather (also Frank) in 1951. He loved the rural life as it was then, rode his own horse, kept all manner of pets and bred and trained sheep dogs, but his greatest early and lifelong passion was the study of birds in nature.

His father was a lawyer and staunch Liberal Party politician who kept a large aviary and joined the SAOA in May 1950, becoming President for one term in 1955. The younger Frank joined only 18 months after his father at the age of 14½. He attended Prince Alfred College and went on to Roseworthy as his grandfather had done, receiving his diploma with Honours in 1957 but within two years his father was dead and Frank had to assume the role of head of family and manager of its property.

Fortunately leadership (as well as politics) came naturally to Frank; he was President of the Mitcham Young Liberals from 1960 to 1962 and Secretary to the Mitcham branch of the Party from 1964 to 1967. In the same period he became Vice-President of the SAOA in 1960 and President in 1962. He thus became the youngest President of the Association and he took its leadership for eight successive years. During that period regular field excursions were established on a monthly basis and camp-outs were arranged annually from 1964. He participated strongly in



all Association activities and, while he published relatively little (Blaylock 2000), he had a very wide knowledge of our birds, giving at least nine presentations on different bird groups at general meetings between 1965 and 1972 (Chapman 1965-1972). He also produced a small SA Museum educational booklet on the identification of red robins (Chapman 1970).

The years leading up to and beyond 1962 were a crucial period for the Association (Schodde 2000), when strongly divergent views were held amongst members concerning conservation and the need for stronger legislative protection for wildlife. Frank's views were firm and he managed opposition from some members, many