

Notes on the Birds of Kangaroo Island.

By J. Burton Cleland, M.D.

In November, 1924, in company with Dr. R. S. Rogers, I was able to pay a short visit to Kangaroo Island, when we motored to Flinders Chase, at Rocky River, spent two days there, and returned to Kingscote. At the end of February and the beginning of March of this year I accompanied Dr. A. A. Lendon on an excursion to various parts of the island likely to have been traversed by a party who were landed near Cape Borda in 1837 and lost themselves. On this occasion we motored to the Bay of Shoals; to Rocky River, in the extreme south-west; to Middle River, on the north coast; to Cape Borda, *via* the telegraphic line, along the backbone of the island; and to Pennington Bay and American River, Kingscote being our headquarters. Notes were made on the species of birds seen and their numbers, and the results are embodied in this paper. A few skins were also secured on the latter trip.

In addition to the notes in the list at the end of this paper, a small dark-coloured Hawk was seen at Rocky River, the Pacific Gull was noted at Kingscote, a number of Little Grass-Birds (*Megalurus gramineus*) were met with amongst the low bushes, chiefly *Nitraria*, on the Beatrice Spit, near Kingscote, and a *Calamanthus* (?) was heard on the slope below Cape Borda Lighthouse. Mr. J. H. Gosse informed me that about 1886 he had heard the Southern Stone Curlew on Kangaroo Island. Mr. Cameron stated that he had not yet seen Willie-Wagtails (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) or Butcher-Birds on the island, and believed that neither occurred, and we saw none on our various trips.

As on previous occasions, the various trips made have been recorded as separate "journeys" for convenience of tabulation and to help in indicating the distribution of the birds. These "journeys" consist of the following:—

(1) Kingscote to near Vivonne Bay, 16th November, 1924, morning; cool, fine, with fresh wind, country chiefly low scrub and mallee—38 miles.

(2) Return, 20th November, 1924, afternoon; fine, sultry.

(3) Kingscote to Vivonne Bay, 1st March, 1926, morning; fine, mild—40 miles.

(4) Return, 2nd March, 1926, afternoon; fine, mild.

(5) Near Vivonne Bay to Rocky River, 16th November, 1924, afternoon; chiefly low scrub, with occasional timbered watercourses—30 miles.

(6) Return, 20th November, 1924, morning.

(7) Vivonne Bay to Rocky River, 1st March, 1926, afternoon—27 miles.

(8) Return, 2nd March, 1926, morning.

(9) Kingscote to Bay of Shoals, 28th February, 1926, morning; weather close; low scrub and along the shore of this shallow bay—11 miles.

(10) Return, same day, morning.

(11) Kingscote to Cygnet River, 28th February, 1926, afternoon—16 miles.

(12) Kingscote to Middle River, north coast, 3rd March, 1926, morning; fine, fresh; open, grassy, in places low scrub—42 miles.

(13) Return, same day, afternoon.

(14) Kingscote to Cape Borda, *via* the Telegraph Line, 4th March, 1926, all day; fine, fresh; chiefly low scrub with occasional small forests, a deep valley well timbered at Ravine de Casoars—68 miles.

(15) Return, 5th March, 1926, all day; weather the same.

(16) Kingscote to Pennington Bay, 5th March, 1926, morning; fine, fresh; chiefly low scrub—23½ miles.

(17) Return *via* American River, same day, afternoon; for six or seven miles along the shore of American River—31 miles.

In the figures accompanying the lists of birds, the individual numbers of each species seen on these journeys are given in sequence, unless the species were only seen on a few of the journeys, when the number of the journey is given in parentheses. When the species was seen in the earlier journeys only, the sequence is not completed. This plan can be exemplified also by the mileage, thus:—(1) 38, (2) 38, (3) 40, (4) 40; (5) 30, (6) 30, (7) 27, (8) 27; (9) 11, (10) 11; (11) 16; (12) 42, (13) 42; (14) 68, (15) 68; (16) 23½, (17) 31. Total, 582½ miles.

It will be noted that in most cases a journey out and a return journey are recorded, and that on two of the routes the same ground was covered four times. Were not the same birds seen and counted in these cases where the route has been again

traversed? Doubtless that is so to some extent, but as the birds are not stationary, and the area seen on each side of the route is narrow, rarely a quarter of a mile wide, it is reasonable for our purpose to consider repeated journeys as equivalent to parallel 'traverses,' say in a forest survey, and count the individuals as distinct.

Including the species already mentioned, at least 64 species of native birds were seen and three species of introduced birds. In the 582½ miles of the "journeys" 1,856 individuals of native species were counted, or approximately 3.2 per mile.

Leaving out of consideration such water birds as Silver Gulls (61), Spur-winged Plovers (85), White-faced Herons (51), Black Swans (144), etc., which are necessarily more or less confined to the neighbourhood of water, the most numerous species met with were the following:—*Gliciphila melanops* (162), White-backed Magpies (141), New Holland Honey-eaters (134), Crows (91), Pipits (79), Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos (62), White-fronted Chats (57), Silver-eyes (54), Wattle-Birds (34), Welcome-Swallows (34), Dusky Wood-Swallows (33), Black-winged Bell-Magpies (21), Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes (16), and Bronzewing Pigeons (16). Hawks of all kinds numbered only 24, of which 17 were Kestrels. In the above list introduced birds are excluded, and under Wattle-Birds and Bronzewing Pigeons two species may be included. It must also be remembered that prominent birds, such as Magpies, cannot escape attention while travelling, whereas many smaller birds, such as Emu-Wrens, *Malurus*, and *Acanthiza* must be missed through not being disturbed. These remarks are also applicable to the next paragraph.

As regards the distribution of the birds, some idea can be gathered as to whether a species is widely dispersed or not by noting on how many of the 17 "journeys" made individuals were noted. Arranged thus, we find that Magpies were seen on all the 17, Crows on 16, New Holland Honey-eaters on 14, *Gliciphila* and Pipits on 12, Bell-Magpies on 11, Zosterops on 10, Bronzewing Pigeons, Welcome-Swallows, White-fronted Chats, and Dusky Wood-Swallows on 9, Kestrels on 8, and Scarlet Robins and Thrushes on 7.

—List of Birds Seen, with Numbers.—

14. *Phaps elegans* (perhaps including *P. chalcoptera*).—1, 1; 4, —; —, —, 1, 1; 1, —; —; —, 2; 1, 3; —, 1. Total, 16. *P. elegans*, near Rocky River, 2/3/26, ♀, iris dark brown, bill dark brown, pharynx flesh-coloured, legs near salmon colour or boiled shrimps, total length 11½ in., span of outspread wings 22 in.

- "Native Hen."—(1) 1. Total, 1.
 Grebe.—(17) 1. Total, 1.
 55. *Sterna bergii*.—(17) 2. Total, 2.
 57. *Larus novae-hollandiae*.—8, 1, —, 1; (9) 7; (14) 4, 11; 18, 11. Total, 61.
 62. *Haematopus ostralegus*.—(17) 14. Total, 14.
 63. *Haematopus unicolor*.—(5) 2. Total, 2.
 65. *Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*.—3, 2, —, —; (9) 4, 4, —; 18, 18; —, —; —, 36. Total, 85.
 66. *Zonifer tricolor*.—(13) 9. Total, 9.
 "Plover."—(14) 2. Total, 2.
 71. *Charadrius ruficapillus*, Pennington B.
 72. *Charadrius cucullatus*.—(12 and 13) 4 (at Snelling's Beach, Middle R.). Total, 4.
 78. *Numenius cyanopus*.—(14) 1, (17) 1. Total, 2.
 Stints.—(14) 20, (17) 7. Total, 27.
 Large Snipe.—(17) 1. Total, 1.
 101. *Notophox novae-hollandiae*.—(2) 1; (9) 4, 3; —; 2, 1; 22, —; —, 18. Total, 51.
 106. *Chenopsis atrata*.—(8) 18, (9) 12, (10) 11, (14) 6, (17) 97. Total, 144.
 Duck.—(17) 7. Total, 7.
 Shags.—(10) 6, (17) 14. Total, 20.
 132. *Circus approximans*.—(1) 1. Total, 1.
 135. *Accipiter cirrocephalus* (?).—(12) 1. Total, 1.
 136. *Uroaetus audax*.—(6) 1. Total, 1.
 149. *Falco berigora*.—(12) 1, (14) 1. Total, 2.
 150. *Falco cenchroides*.—(2) 2, (3) 1, (9) 1, (12) 6, (13) 3, (14) 1, (16) 1, (17) 2. Total, 17.
 Large Hawks.—(1) 1, (10) 1. Total, 2.
 156. *Trichoglossus moluccanus*.—(4) 12, (5) 2, (7) 10, (8) 2, (12) 2, (13) 3. Total, 31.
 157. *Glossopsitta concinna*.—(6) 2. Total, 2.
 Lorikeets - unidentified.—(5) 2, (14) 12, (15) 5. Total, 19.
 160. *Calyptorhynchus funereus*.—(2) 19, (5) 2; (6) 5, (8) 3, (14) 43, (15) 37. Total, 62 (allowing for doubling).
 The two last figures refer to the same flock, seen on the outward and return trips to Cape Borda. Mr. Percy May says that the male birds always feed the females. At one time, many were shot for bait. In one instance, the male of a pair was killed. The hen bird soon returned with another mate, who suffered the same fate, and was replaced by still another. On the other hand, if the female was killed the male bird disappeared.

161. *Calyptorhynchus lathamii*.—This Red-tailed Cockatoo is smaller and much rarer, and was not seen. Mr. May says it is much less timid than the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, and can be approached easily. Its note is much more feeble and creaky.
173. *Platycercus elegans*.—(4) 5, (6) 2, (7) 2, (8) 1. Total, 10.
Psephotus sp.—(2) 19. Total, 19.
Neophema sp.—(2) 1. Total, 1.
209. *Hirundo neoxena*.—, 4, 4, —; 5, 3, —, 1; 1, —; 1; 14, —; —, —; 1, —. Total, 34.
211. *Hylochelidon*, probably *H. nigricans*.—(2) 3, (3) 1, (12) 1. Total, 5.
 Swallows, (4) 1. Total, 1.
214. *Petroica multicolor*.—(1) 4, (2) 4, (4) 1, (9) 1, (14) 1, (15) 1, (17) 1. Total 13. Seen at C. Borda.
218. *Melanodryas cucullata*, probably.—(9) 2, (10) 1, (16) 1. Total, 4.
219. *Rhipidura flabellifera*.—(1) 2. Total, 2.
221. *Seisura inquieta*.—(1) 1, (2) 1, (11) 1, (13) 1, (14) 1. Total, 5.
227. *Pachycephala pectoralis*.—(1) 1, (3) 1, (14) 1. Total, 3.
 Between Kingscote and Vivonne B., 1/3/26, unsexed anatomically, plumage of young ♂ or ♀, iris dark brown, bill nearly black, pharynx flesh-coloured, legs greyish-black, soles pallid, total length 7 in., span of wings 11 in.
231. *Colluricincla harmonica*.—(1) 2, (2) 1, (5) 1, (10) 1, (15) 1, (16) 1. Total, 7.
234. *Coracina novae-hollandiae*.—(1) 6, (5) 3, (6) 1, (15) 5, (16) 1. Total, 16.
242. *Hylacola cauta*.—(1) 1, (7) 1, (8) 2, (14) 1, (15) 1. Total, 6. Seen at C. Borda.
251. *Epthianura albifrons*.—27, —, 2, 1; —, —, —, —; 2, —; —; 1, 6; 6, —; 3, 9. Total, 57.
261. *Acanthiza pusilla*.—(1) 3, (7) 1. Total, 4. Seen at C. Borda.
Geobasileus.—(1) 1. Total, 1.
275. *Sericornis maculatus*.—(1) 3, (2) 1, (5) 3, (12) 1, (14) 1. Total, 9. Middle R., 3/3/26, ♂, iris whitish, bill brown and paler below, pharynx fleshy white, legs light brown, total length 5 in., span of wings 6½ in.
276. *Malurus cyaneus*.—(1) 3, (2) 3, (14) 5, (15) 1, (16) 1. Total, 13.

281. *Stipiturus malachurus*.—(6) 1, (7) 1, (14) 3. Total, 5.
Near Vivonne B., 1/3/26, ♀, iris yellow brown, bill blackish brown, pharynx fleshy white, legs brown, total length $7\frac{3}{8}$ in., span of wings $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. Near C. de Couedie.
291. *Artamus cyanopterus*.—3, 6, 2, 1; 2, 5, —, —; 1, —; —; —, —; 2, —; 11, —. Total, 33.
303. *Zosterops halmaturina*.—15, 8, —, —; 2, —, 4, 6; 2, —; —; 2, —; 1, —; 2, 12. Total, 54. Vivonne B., 2/3/26, ♀, iris pale yellow brown, bill brown and pallid at the base below, pharynx flesh-coloured, legs light brown, total length $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., span of wings, $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.
305. *Pardalotus ornatus*.—(1) 3, (2) 3. Total, 6.
Pardalotus xanthopygus.—(2) 1. Total, 1.
315. *Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*.—(2) 1, (6) 2, (14) 1, (15) 1, (17) 1. Total, 6.
316. *Glyciphila melanops*.—14, 18, —, 5; 30, 19, 11, 5; —, —; —; 3, 9; 25, 19; —, 4. Total, 162.
320. *Meliphaga virescens*.—1, 1, —, 1; —, —, 1, —. Total, 4.
323. *Meliphaga leucotis*.—(1) 1. Total, 1.
M., unidentified.—7, 2, 4, —; 2, 5, —, 1; —, —; —; 2, 1; 2, —; —, —. Total, 26.
328. *Phylidonyris pyrrhoptera*.—(14) 2, (15) 3. Total, 5.
Heard at Stu'n'sail Boom R. and heard and seen at Ravine de Casoars.
329. *Meliornis novae-hollandiae*.—2, 8, 13, 16; 16, 16, 14, 9; —, —; —; 1, 3; 8, 26; 1, 1. Total, 134.
334. *Anthochaera chrysoptera*.—(2) 3, (6) 2. Total, 5.
A., unidentified.—1, —, —, 2; 8, —, 9, 2; —, —; —; 5, —; 2, —; —, —. Total, 29.
338. *Anthus australis*.—4, 9, 2, 1; 6, 3, —, —; 11, 37; —; 3, 1; 1, —; 1, —. Total, 79.
341. *Zonaeginthus bellus*.—(1) 3, (6) 2. Total, 5.
Finch, unidentified.—(15) 1.
Corvus.—5, 9, 6, 9; 6, 5, 3, 2; 6, 6; 3; 9, 5, 7, —; 4, 6. Total, 91.
351. *Strepera melanoptera*.— —; —, 1, 1; 3, 2, 1, 2; —, —; —; 1, 1; 5, 2; 2, —. Total, 21.
356. *Gymnorhina hypoleuca*.—12, 16, 6, 14; 3, 6, 6, 1; 1, 5; 9; 19, 14; 11, 5; 3, 10. Total, 141.
Unidentified Birds.—21, 13; 4, 13; 21, 11, 33, 14; 8, 6; 3; 13, 9; 57 (probably mostly *Glyciphila* and *Meliornis*), 18; 5, 2. Total, 251.
Sparrows.—51, 31, 13, 9; 8, —, 6, —; 18, 19; 96; 108, —; 31, 4; 22, 8. Total, 424. Present at C. Borda.

Starlings.—24, 11, —, 3; —, —, —, —; 12, 46; 20; 61,
113; 30, 11; —, 28. Total, 359.

Goldfinches.—20, 19, —, 4; —, —, —, —; 5, —; 6; —,
—; 1, —; 3, —. Total, 58.

Kangaroos.—(5) 3, (7) 1, (15) 1. Total, 5.
