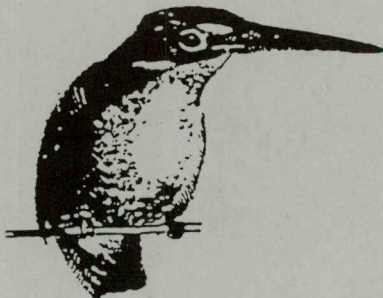


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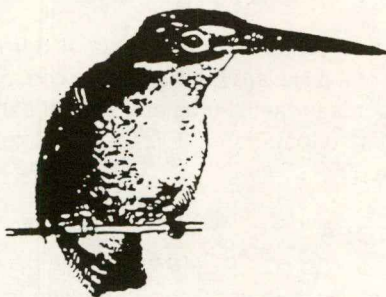
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CORRIEGENDA

In Australian Birds Vol. 21 No 3, an article by Dariel Larkins entitled "Bush Stone Curlews: Recollections of their occurrence at Prestons, NSW", an error occurred in the text as published, while the "Acknowledgements" and "References" section of the paper were omitted altogether.

Similarly, in Australian Birds Vol. 23 No 1 in the article by Alan Morris, entitled "The birds of Botany Bay National Park", one whole page was omitted as a result of an error on the original computer disk. The missing page could not be retrieved prior to the issue going to press. The opportunity, is therefore taken to correct these errors and to apologise to the authors and to the readers for the loss of the sections of the two papers.

The Editor.

BUSH STONE-CURLEWS: RECOLLECTIONS OF THEIR OCCURRENCE AT PRESTONS, NSW.

In paragraph 4, page 82, Aust. Birds 22:82 (1989) insert "red-breasted robins" for Flame robins *Petroica phoenicea*.

Insert:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This account is based on the records of Bernera Farm, and on the recollections of three generations of the Havard family. Further comments on woodcutting at Prestons are available from the records of the Church and School Lands, NSW Archives Office, Sydney, and from the unpublished papers of Elizabeth Edmonson, Australian War Memorial Archives, Canberra, ACT.

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Macpherson, E. 1860. My Experiences in Australia, being recollections of a visit to the Australian Colonies in 1856-7. London.

THE BIRDS OF BOTANY BAY NATIONAL PARK- ADDITIONS

Brush Cuckoo *Cuculus variolosus*

Rare; summer migrant, Oct-Mar. Eucalyptus forests & woodland.

Fantailed Cuckoo *Cuculus pyrrhophanus*

Common; Winter visitor, Apr-Sept. Woodlands.

Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalix*

Uncommon; summer migrant, Aug-Feb. Heathlands & woodland.

Shining Bronze Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx lucidus*

Rare; summer migrant, Aug-Feb. Singles in Congwong Bay- Henry Head 20/9/86 & 20/2/88, more regular on southern headlands. Woodland & forests.

Common Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea*

Rare; summer visitor, Oct-Feb. Favours fig trees at Captain Cooks Landing Place.

Tawny Frogmouth *Podargus strigoides*

Uncommon; woodland & forest. Resident.

Spine-tailed Swift *Hirundapus caudacutus*

Uncommon; summer migrant, Oct-Mar. Hawking over heathlands & woodlands.

Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae*

Common; resident. Woodland & forest. Absent northern headlands!

Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta*

Common; summer migrant, Sept-Mar. Woodlands & forest. Only northside record at Congwong Bay 20/9/87.

Dollarbird *Eurystromus orientalis*

Uncommon; Summer migrant, Oct-Feb. Pair nest in tall Eucalyptus at Little Congwong Bay & another pair at Captain Cooks Landing Place.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*

Common; most habitats. Nests on cliffs and in fortifications.

Tree Martin *Cecropsis nigrigans*

Rare; vagrant. Single Henry Head 21/8/86 and La Perouse 20/2/87.

Fairy Martin *Cecropsis ariel*

Uncommon; summer migrant, Aug-Feb. Regularly at Kurnell, nesting in culvert in village. Small flocks.

Australian Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

Uncommon; resident. Low heath, golf courses & grass areas. Breeds.

APPARENT OUT-OF-SEASON BREEDING BY PALLID CUCKOO

S. MARCHANT

Experience at Moruya since 1974 makes it probable that the breeding season of passerines and near-passerines, as defined by the laying of new clutches, in these parts ends with the calendar year. Out of several hundred accurately aged nests of about 40 species, a mere handful has been started after 1 January: 1 Eastern Yellow Robin *Eopsaltria australis*, 1 Superb Fairy-wren *Malurus cyaneus*, 8 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters *Lichenostomus chrysops*, 3 Grey Fantails *Rhipidura fuliginosa*, 2 Rufous Fantails *R. rufifrons* and 1 Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula*. This disregards the Superb Lyrebird *Menura novaehollandiae* and the Red-browed Firetail *Emblema temporalis* which start nests in June and from November to June respectively.

It was not particularly surprising to find the nest of a Yellow-tufted Honeyeater *Lichenostomus melanops* on 22 January 1989 with two new-laid eggs because some species (above) normally do start nests late in this area. It was, however, a surprise to find an egg of the Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus* in the nest on 24 January. It hatched on 4-5 February, the Honeyeater's eggs were ejected on 5-6 February but the young Cuckoo was lost between 8 and 14 February.

The surprise was for several reasons. First, no Pallid Cuckoo's egg had been found before in the study area. In fact, the species is not a member of the breeding community in woodland and forest hereabouts. It has rarely even been seen in the area, although its song is heard every year at the edge of the woodlands or in partly cleared land 200-500 metres from the limits of the area. Secondly, in 1988-89 the last record of the Cuckoos was on 18 November and by 24 January it was reasonable to suppose that they had long since left. Thirdly, it may be supposed that, like the European Cuckoo *C. canorus*, the Pallid Cuckoo does not breed in simple pairs or that the possibility of true pair formation is unlikely (Wyllie 1981), that one female lays one or two clutches each year and that, just like other birds, she produces about 12-20 eggs each year and lays them fairly continuously at a rate of one every two days during a period of about 6 weeks (Chance 1922, 1940), starting as soon as she is in condition and can find suitable hosts. In other words, at Moruya the Pallid Cuckoos, arriving in the last part of September, would probably have finished laying for the season by the end of November.

What then was a Cuckoo doing laying so late, after its laying period was probably at an end? It is ridiculous to suggest what might seem to be the only explanation, if the above speculations are right: that an itinerant female Cuckoo, probably migrating late, met an

equally itinerant male just at the time when she happened to have come across a nest suitable for parasitizing, and waited about for some days to complete the necessities for laying. The matter would be explained much more parsimoniously, if the female Cuckoo had mated some time earlier and had stored the sperm until the opportunity for laying occurred.

Prolonged storage of sperm in domesticated birds has been known for over 200 years and the duration of storage has been determined in captivity in Anseriformes, Falconiformes, Galliformes, Columbiformes and Psittaciformes (Birkhead 1987). The maximum duration has ranged from 6-8 days in three Columbiformes to 72 days in the Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* and the mean duration has been 42-51 days in the Turkey, 21-22 days in the Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* and 11 days in the Budgerigah *Melopsittacus undulatus*. Evidence from wild birds is available only from seabirds. Among them, the Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* has a mean interval from the last observed copulation to laying of 8.1 days; the Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophrys*, of 14.6 days; the Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*, of 19 days; Buller's Shearwater *Puffinus bulleri* of 30 days; and the Great-winged Petrel *Pterodroma macroptera*, of 60 days (Birkhead 1987).

Thus, storage of sperm is not uncommon, at least among non-passerine birds and can be for a long time. At this stage it would be too much to suggest that it occurs among cuckoos, especially because, knowing so little about their breeding habits, we cannot be sure of such factors as pair bonding, frequency of copulations and so on, which have a close relation to the question of sperm storage. However, it is obvious that, if it does occur, it could explain much that is puzzling in the breeding of cuckoos, from their ability to parasitize hosts, themselves with uncertain times of laying, to apparently late or out-of-season breeding, as described above. Perhaps this note will stimulate others to look for, and record, similar oddities. With enough examples, even isolated ones, we could begin to ask questions needed for further research.

I am grateful to Dr P.J.Fullagar for discussion and comment and especially for providing me with Dr Birkhead's paper.

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A NOTE ON THE BIRDS OF THE MONARO REGION

B.J. LEPSCHI

The Monaro Region of south-eastern New South Wales covers some 15470 km² of tableland, montane and alpine country bordered in the north by the Australian Capital Territory, in the south by the Victorian border, the Snowy Mountains in the west and the Gourock Range in the east.

Costin (1954) studied in detail the ecology of the area, particularly the botany and pedology, and also provided reasonably complete faunal lists. The bird list consists of 160 species (by current taxonomy; introduced species are listed separately on p.131), and has been frequently referred to by authors working on the avifauna of the region (eg. Gall & Longmore 1978, National Capital Development Commission 1984), however, closer examination of the list shows it to be somewhat inaccurate.

Costin, being a botanist by profession, carried out no fieldwork and based the list on distributional data contained in Caley (1944) and Royal Australian Ornithologists Union (1926) as well as the limited field observations of McKeon (1946). Caley and the 1926 RAOU Checklist were both rather inaccurate on distribution, and some of McKeon's records are questionable (see below). Costin appears to have unwittingly transcribed errors perpetrated by these authors into his list.

Most species listed by Costin are found in the area, while some may occur as vagrants (such as Black-tailed Native-hen *Tribonyx ventralis*, Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*, Black-eared Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx osculans* and Crimson Chat *Ephthainura tricolor*), although I know of no specific records to support this. Others are clearly erroneous (eg. Brush Turkey *Alectura lathami*, Orange-bellied Parrot *Neophema chrysogaster*, Elegant Parrot *N. elegans*, and Ground Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina maxima*). There are some notable omissions; for instance: Little Pied Cormorant *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*, Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*, White-throated Treecreeper *Cormobates leucophaea* and Yellow-faced Honeyeater *Lichenostomus chrysops*. All this appears to reflect the way in which the list was compiled; by an author with little ornithological knowledge using inaccurate published material. Consequently, Costin's bird list for the Monaro Region should be disregarded by future workers.

As a recognised area for ornithological observations, the region overlaps with the Canberra Ornithologists Group's "area of concern" (see Canberra Ornithologists Group 1985) and includes montane areas dealt with in studies such as Gall and Longmore (1978), Jordon and Rodwell (1965) and Longmore (1970), and therefore, compilation of a revised bird list would probably be of little value.

It may be of value to briefly discuss the observations made by McKeon (1970), as these appear to be the only major field observations for the area prior to Costin's work.

McKeown covered the Kosciusko area of the region in early 1946 and recorded 58 species (three cited by genus only); of these, the following appear to be erroneous: Bell Miner *Manorina melanophrys*, Lewin's Honeyeater *Meliphaga lewinii* and Black-faced Woodswallow *Artamus cinereus* (= *melanops*). The latter two appear to be mis-identifications for the White-eared Honeyeater *Lichenostomus leucotis* and Dusky Woodswallow *A. cyanoleuca* respectively, while the Bell Miner too appears to be a mis-identification, but the actual species in question is not clear (the only possible similar species, the Noisy Miner *M. melanocephala*, does not occur in alpine regions (Blakers *et.al* 1984).

The list also includes two other species which are somewhat doubtful; Peaceful Dove *Geopelia placida* and a *Myzomela* sp. honeyeater (Scarlet Honeyeater *M. sanguinolenta*?). Both species are unusual for the Kosciusko area, although Blakers *et.al* (op. cit.) cites records for the latter for the "Snowy Mountains".

Apart from these few doubtful records, McKeown's list is quite sound, although as for Costin (1954) there are some surprising omissions.

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WATERBIRD BREEDING AT LAKE COWAL, NEW SOUTH WALES

WAYNE LAWLER

Lake Cowal (33°35'S, 147°30'E) is a natural freshwater lake of about 100km² (maximum 150km²) situated in the intensively cropped and grazed western plains 360km west of Sydney. Its catchment is mainly local, although floodwaters can enter from the Lachlan River. The main waterbird habitats are flooded lignum *Muehlenbeckia cunninghamii* (roughly 3000ha), flooded red gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* with lignum understory (1500ha), sedge, and open water with submergent aquatic plants. Vestjens (1977) gives a more detailed description in a report collating seven years of observations from a large portion of the lake, when 66 species of waterbirds and waders were recorded, and 34 species were observed breeding.

More recently, the lake dried naturally in 1987 and reflooded naturally in April and May 1989. A one day visit was made on 19 November 1989 to one part of the lake. About 150ha of lignum flooded to a depth of 800mm was surveyed, as was 100ha of red gum, flooded to 600mm, two-thirds of which had lignum understory (red gum/lignum). Smaller subsample areas were more intensely searched and counted. The following observations were made, supplemented by those of Mr Trevor Bolte of "Lakeside", and included some apparently new records for the lake.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Five pair in a hectare of red gum/lignum, all with nests and eggs. Similar density over several hectares. One pair with young brood.

Hoary-headed Grebe *P. poliocephalus*

Pairs with young broods throughout lignum. Approximately four pair per hectare.

Australian Little Grebe *P. novaehollandiae*

Pairs with nests, mainly in red gum/lignum. A density of three pair per hectare.

Australian Pelican *Pelecanus conspicillatus*

Four nests with eggs on banks out in the lake on 16 September which failed (Trevor Bolte, *pers.comm.*).

Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*

Six nests with eggs in half a hectare of red gum, in association with Little Pied Cormorant nests. Uneven distribution throughout red gum.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Building nests in one area of red gum in association with Little Black Cormorants (Trevor Bolte *pers.comm.*).

Little Black Cormorant *P. sulcirostris*

Nests with eggs and young in red gum (Trevor Bolte *pers.comm.*).

Little Pied Cormorant *P. melanoleucos*

40 nests with eggs in half a hectare of red gum. Uneven distribution throughout red gum.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

At least 15 nests in one area of red gum/lignum of one hectare, with a few Intermediate Egret *E. intermedia* nests. Nests were in trees and lignum bushes with adults sitting 6/12/89.

Rufous Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

30 birds roosting inside lignum bushes in half a hectare of red gum/lignum. Similar density throughout red gum/lignum and slightly fewer in lignum. Nesting (with eggs) in crowns of lignum bushes and in trees - possibly ten or more nests per hectare, also some juvenile birds.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Nests, either with eggs or freshly built, scattered amid Straw-necked Ibis nesting colony. 30 nests in one hectare, but extent unknown.

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica*

Nest building or nests with eggs adjacent to Straw-necked Ibis colony. 50 nests in one hectare but extent unknown.

Straw-necked Ibis *T. spinicollis*

Nesting colony of at least 40ha in lignum. Nests with eggs and fledged juveniles.

Over 30 nests in 50m² in places but not evenly distributed. By a rough estimation of density the total colony could have numbered between 5000 and 10000 nests and 15000 to 30000 ibis.

Royal Spoonbill *Platalea regia*

Nesting pairs scattered through large Straw-necked Ibis colony. Three pair in one hectare.

Magpie Goose *Anseranas semipalmata*

One pair with nest and 16 eggs in top of a lignum bush.

Wandering Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna arcuata*

Five birds (one pair, one group of three) in pools amid lignum. A subsequent visit 6/12/89 revealed one nest with six eggs and a sitting adult in a lignum bush.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Two pairs per hectare of lignum. Throughout lignum and red gum/lignum and also common in open water. Broods from very young to almost adult.

Freckled Duck *Stictonetta naevosa*

Two pair seen in approximately two hectares of lignum. Both males with coloured bills, both pairs returning to particular bushes. One nest found with seven eggs.

Grey Teal *Anas gibberifrons*

About four pairs per hectare throughout lignum. One incubating in red gum hollow, one two-week old brood seen.

Pacific Black Duck *A. superciliosa*, Blue-winged Shoveler *A. rhynchos* three to four pair, and Pink-eared Duck *Malacorhynchus membranaceus* one to two pair, per hectare throughout lignum. No nests found nor broods seen.

Hardhead *Aythya australis*

Three to four pair in half a hectare of red gum/lignum. Nests deep in lignum bushes (two searched for and found - clutches of 11, 12 eggs). Also broods (two seen - both freshly hatched). Pairs throughout lignum and red gum/lignum.

Blue-billed Duck *Oxyura australis*, Musk Duck *Biziura lobata* and Marsh Crake *Porzana pusilla*. Two of each seen in the lignum and red gum/lignum areas covered. No breeding observations.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Six to ten pair with nests (freshly built or with eggs) per hectare throughout lignum and red gum/lignum. Others with young broods. Also juveniles. Nests were either low in lignum or floating grebe-style beside lignum bushes.

Two interesting aspects of the observations are the apparently high breeding density of some waterbird species, such as the Night Herons, grebes, Hardhead, Coot and ibis; and the presence of unusual species, notably Magpie Geese and Wandering Whistling-Duck.

No direct comparisons are available with previous waterbird breeding at Lake Cowal, but Vestjens (1977) did not record Hardhead or Freckled Duck breeding despite intensive observation of waterbirds between 1969 and 1976. Crome (1988) describes a relation between the drying and reflooding of another inland basin and extensive waterbird breeding, and this effect may have contributed to the productivity of Lake Cowal.

The occasional records of Magpie Geese breeding in New South Wales in recent years involve mainly northern sites (see Clancy, 1985), although a brood was reported in September 1989 near Griffith and in the Macquarie Marshes *NSW F.O.C. Newsl. No.115 & 116*. Likewise, a cursory survey of literature indicated very few published records of the Wandering Whistling-Duck from southern New South Wales, although Frith (1977) mentions the occurrence of "odd ones" at Griffith. Vestjens (1977) did not record this species at Lake Cowal.

Blakers *et. al.* (1984) suggests that southern occurrences of these two species could be escapees. Alternatively, increased wetland availability in Eastern Australia in 1988 and 1989 (see Kingsford *et. al.*, 1989 & 1990) may have encouraged vagrants from the north.

One conclusion is beyond speculation - Lake Cowal is a natural wetland of great value to our waterbirds and needs to remain just that.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Mr Trevor Bolte of Lakeside who enthusiastically shared his observations of Lake Cowal's birdlife with me.

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A BLACK-EARED CUCKOO AND WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOWS.

ERNEST S. HOSKIN

The Black-eared Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx osculans*, a rare species in Sydney, usually parasitizes the nests of birds that build covered nests. The Speckled Warbler *Chthonicola sagittata*, the cuckoo's most frequent host in Sydney, builds a covered nest on the ground in shale areas.

At Longneck Lagoon, on 15 December 1987, my wife and I observed a young Black-eared Cuckoo on a branch of a eucalypt at least 17m from the ground being fed by two adult White-breasted Woodswallows *Artamus leucorhynchus*. This suggested the woodswallows reared the cuckoo which would be contrary to the usual habits of the Black-eared Cuckoo. The woodswallows were in the process of building a nest which was an open cup-shaped structure of dried grasses in a shallow hollow in a dead tree.

A similar situation occurred in Victoria. J.V. Ryan writes in *The Bird Observer*, No 586... 'On 23 November 1961, I came across a young Black-eared Cuckoo being fed by a pair of Yellow Robins in thick scrub just over the railway. I knew there were several pairs of Chestnut-tailed Heathwrens in this particular spot. A pair of these birds must have been the foster-parents. When the fledgeling left the nest, it decided to stay put on a perch about four feet from the ground. Heathwrens expect their own young to follow them around in their quest for food, quite often over a wide area. Apparently, the Cuckoo was abandoned by the heathwrens leaving the friendly Yellow Robins to satisfy the hungry chirping youngsters'.

There is no positive proof the Heathwrens reared the Cuckoo, but the writer did say 'apparently'.

There is also a possibility, in both cases, of the suggestion by A.H. Chisholm in January 1959 (reference obscure), he writes... 'the egg having been placed in a certain nest in some instances (as is often the case with other cuckoos) because nothing more desirable was available at the time'. Also, there are many instances of young cuckoos being fed by birds other than their hosts.

Assumptions can only be verified when a full study is made of the various life histories of incidents relating to cuckoos and their hosts.

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(Editors Note. In the most recent complete summary of Australian Cuckoos M.G. & L.C. Brooker 1989 Cuckoo Hosts in Australia. *Aust. Zool. Reviews* No 2 1989, it is confirmed that the major biological hosts of this species are the Redthroat *Sericornis brunneus* and Speckled Warbler *S. sagittatus*. However the White-breasted Woodswallow is classified as a "potential host" in respect to rearing the young.)

SIGHTING OF A NORTHERN SHOVELER AT LAKE COWAL, CENTRAL NEW SOUTH WALES

C. BRANDIS

During the week 14-21 October 1989, members of the Illawarra Bird Observers Club held a campout at the property "Lakeside" on the north-western shore of Lake Cowal in central NSW (33°40'S.147°30'E). The northern end of the lake has areas of lignum *Muehlenbeckia cunninghamii*, with cane grass *Eragrostis australasica*, and other aquatic vegetation between the clumps, changing to large patches of cane grass and then clear water with the odd standing dead tree. The shore has areas of River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, cane grass and cleared areas of flooded pasture (Vestjens, 1977). During our stay the water level was estimated to be falling at about 20mm per week (T. Bolte *pers.comm.*)

On the 17th October, we were observing waterfowl from two small outboard dingies, in the north western section of the lake. We were travelling in a westerly direction about 800m from the shore between a large lignum stand and an area of cane grass in about 600mm of water. Large numbers of waterfowl were present in the area following heavy winter rains and all species typical of this region were present, (Vestjens, 1977). Birds were constantly rising and diving in our path and about midday a particular individual caught my attention when it rose from the lake about 300m from the dinky. It flew north for a few seconds, belly-banked to me, continued in a south westerly direction for nearly 500m, then turned north again to cross our path just over 500m away before continuing northwards and out of sight. At the time of observation I was using Soligor 8X32 binoculars and had the bird within my view for approximately 45 seconds.

My first impression was a flash of white, then as I focused on the individual, I noticed a duck about the same size of a Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*. It had a distinctive profile of a long dark bill; dark head and upper neck; white lower neck, breast and across the upper back; and a dark belly. As the bird banked the underwings exhibited a large white patch at the inner leading edges similar to the Australasian Shoveler *A. rhynchotis*. While flying directly away at a low angle some white could be seen on the back but I could not determine if this was the upper back or another part of the bird and I was left with the impression of a generally dark back. As the bird crossed our path again, these initial impressions of the bird's colour pattern and jizz were confirmed.

During the trip back to Lake Cowal my sighting of the Freckled Duck *Stictonetta naevosa*, completed my sightings of all resident Australian duck species and this bird was new to me. At the time of observation I consulted Slater (1986) and came to the conclusion

that the bird was a Northern Shoveler *A. clypeata*, in the adult male breeding plumage. Unfortunately none of the other members heard my call over the noise of our engine and there were problems with the engine failing on the other dingy. Two trips around the area on subsequent days failed to detect the bird again.

Upon returning home again I consulted other references, field guides by Simpson & Day (1984), Anon (1983) and Ali & Ripley (1983) and text in Frith (1982), Campbell (1974) and National Photographic Index (1983). These corroborated my initial conclusion that the bird was a Northern Shoveler. However the references checked gave varying descriptions of the extent of the white on the back from all white with only a central dark line (Ali & Ripley, 1983) through "back brown with lighter edges to the feathers" (Frith, 1967) to "back and rump black" (Nat. Photographic Index of Aus. Wildlife, 1983). This sighting appears to be the third record of this species in NSW, the others being from central NSW in 1839 and Louth in 1975 (Morris, McGill & Holmes, 1981).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Trevor Bolte of "Lakeside" for allowing us access to his property and the use of his two dingies and Chris Chafer for his constructive comments on the preparation of this paper.

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RECENT BREEDING RECORDS OF THE BARRED CUCKOO-SHRIKE AT PORT MACQUARIE, NEW SOUTH WALES.

G.P. CLANCY

Observations were made on adult Barred Cuckoo-shrikes *Coracina lineata* at Macquarie Nature Reserve, Port Macquarie, in January 1983. On 8 January a juvenile was present and was being fed by the adults. On 14 December 1985 I observed an adult Cuckoo-shrike feeding a nestling in a nest in a Camphor Laurel *Cinnamomum camphora*. I made daily observations on these birds until 17 December, although no birds were located on 16 December. The nestling fledged on 15 December. (The details of these breeding records are to be published elsewhere). These observations constitute the first confirmed breeding records for the state since 1909, and the first breeding records to date south of Alstonville (28°50'S, 153°26'E). N.P. North (1913-14) detailed the nesting attempts of the species at Alstonville during the period 1905-09, where most clutches were collected. Eggs were collected during the months of December and January with the exception of a clutch located in November 1909. The Atlas of Australian Birds (Blakers *et al.* 1984) contains no breeding records for New South Wales. D. Gosper (*pers. comm.*) recorded the species in 1980-81 at Cherry Tree North State Forest, near Mallanganee, west of Casino. Eight birds, apparently paired, were present on 23 November 1980. Nine birds, including a pair with a fledged young still begging, were present in a fruiting fig on 1 March 1981. Two adults and a juvenile were present in the same fruiting fig on 5 April 1981. The juvenile lacked the yellow eye of the adults and had a pale coloured upper breast.

D. Secomb (*pers. comm.*) has observed the species at the Nambucca Heads Golf Course. Birds were present in figs on 1 February 1986 and 6 & 16 March 1986. On the first and last dates one young bird was present, identified by mottling on the head and fine barring on the breast. Differences in plumage details suggest that two different birds were involved. Both were being fed by an adult. These observations suggest that breeding may have occurred in the Casino and Nambucca Heads areas but, as the young birds observed were free-flying, the possibility that they had travelled some distance from their natal area cannot be dismissed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Ern Hoskin (The Keith Hindwood Bird Recording Service), Dennis Gosper and David Secomb, who provided records of the species for this paper.

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- Greg. P. Clancy, 56 Armidale Road, Coutts Crossing, NSW, 2460.

UNUSUAL FOOD FOR THE REGENT BOWERBIRD

S.G. LANE

The food of the Regent Bowerbird *Sericulus chrysocephalus* is usually described as insects, native berries and fruits, including cultivated ones.

On 28 September 1989. at Boambee near Coffs Harbour, a fully plumaged male Regent Bowerbird was observed feeding, for about ten minutes, on the seeds from the opening seed pods of the Coast Wattle *Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae*. While watched by four observers from a distance of about 20m the bird appeared to obtain the seeds from pods within reach of his perching spot, and then it moved to another part of the tree to repeat the process. An examination of the pods afterwards revealed open pods without seeds. Unopened pods were evident and some pods beginning to open, contained green seeds.

This is the first time I have observed this species feeding on such seeds.

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MAGPIE GEESE BREEDING ON WARBURN DRAINAGE RESERVE, GRIFFITH, NEW SOUTH WALES.

J.N.S. TARR

Warburn Drainage Reserve (34°12'S, 145°56'E) 15km N.W. of Griffith, normally almost dry through the winter months had filled and overflowed onto adjacent farmlands due to abnormally heavy rainfall during autumn and winter of 1989.

At 0930hrs on 13 September 1989, while pumping water out of our property I was surprised to see three adult Magpie Geese *Anseranas semipalmata*, swimming away from me at a distance of about 60m. On examining them through binoculars I could see at least seven goslings around one adult. The goslings appeared very young, being grey with rusty-red heads and only very small and consequently hard to count among the reeds and pin-rush. They moved further out into the drainage reserve and out of sight among the Cumbungi *Typha orientale*.

On 19 September 1989 I chartered a light aircraft and together with John Brickhill (N.P.W.S.), John Tarr Jnr. and Peter Little, pilot, flew over the drainage reserve and located four adult geese. We couldn't see any goslings due to the height and speed of the aircraft. Nothing more was seen of them until I again chartered an aircraft on 8 November. Together with Dr. H.B. Deas, Michael Tarr and Ron Gibbons, pilot, we flew over the drainage reserve and located two adult geese with the goslings now nearly fully fledged. Michael Tarr counted eleven geese but once the aircraft had passed over them the goslings were hard to count in the grass (water couch *Paspalum paspalodes*) and pin-rush.

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BOOK REVIEW

A GARDEN OF BIRDS AUSTRALIAN BIRDS IN AUSTRALIAN GARDENS

by Graham Pizzey

Published by Viking O'Neil, Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, 1988, 342pp, 51 B&W photographs, 32 colour photographs & 19 B&W illustrations by Richard Weatherly, \$A50.

What better way is there to encourage those many thousands of Australian gardeners to also become interested in our Australian birds, than through this book.

Graham Pizzey shows that not only has he a wealth of knowledge on the identification, jizz and habits of birds, but also he has much knowledge of and experience of Australian flora.

This book explores Graham's own garden on the Mornington Peninsula. He takes us back into the history of Australian flora with the development period of Australian gardens that were based on the traditional English garden.

He provides information about relationships between plants, birds and insects that will encourage gardeners to provide habitat for Australian birds.

A chapter is devoted to the "Escape of Garden Exotics" that deals with introduced species that are causing immense damage to the Australian bush.

Through descriptions of gardens of well known Australians along coastal South-eastern Australia, information for many and varied situations is provided.

The authors' fine photographs, both colour and black and white, are enhanced by Richard Weatherly's sketches at the commencement of each chapter.

This book has appeal to a broad spectrum of people, not only the avid birdwatcher but also the keen gardener.

Graham Pizzey has produced a high quality book that is bound to serve as a "coffee table" book for quick reference, or for indepth reading.

Rona Bolton.

BOOK REVIEW

CUCKOO HOSTS IN AUSTRALIA

by M.G. Brooker and L.C. Brooker

Published by Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales 1989, Australian Zoological Reviews Number 2. 67pp, 30 tables and 14 figures. Cost \$5 from the Society.

This publication identifies the major hosts of the ten species of Australian parasitic cuckoos and examines their record of parasitism. The data is used to rank host species in order of importance, to map the breeding distribution of each cuckoo and to determine their laying periods. All the literature pertaining to parasitic behaviour is reviewed. The publication lists the potential host species and compares parasitised and unparasitised potential hosts, as well as describing the factors which may influence host selection.

Michael and Lesley Brooker are ideally suited to write this review as they have specialised in research into the behaviour of the Shining and Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos in the vicinity of their property at Gooseberry Hill, a Perth outer suburb, since 1984. Their interest however embraces all the Australian parasitic cuckoos and has culminated in this Review.

In order to obtain the information for the book, they have culled all the historical ornithological literature, reviewed the RAOU nest record cards, and examined all the best private and museum oological collections. From this vast amount of information, plus their own extensive research (which between 1984-87 resulted in 179 instances of parasitism being recorded for the aforementioned cuckoos), they have brought together a vast amount of data on which to base the Review.

The study highlights what is known and what is not known about our cuckoos. It is most useful in confirming for example, that the major brood hosts for the Black-eared Cuckoo is the Speckled Cuckoo and Redthroat, but many unrelated species will feed the young cuckoo and other species could be potential hosts. There are still many gaps in our knowledge of the behaviour of our parasitic cuckoos, and this valuable booklet certainly indicates where future research can be carried out by both amateur and professional ornithologists. I congratulate the authors on their achievements and commend the book to all serious bird-watchers and encourage them to record their observations.

Alan Morris.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors are requested to observe the following points when submitting articles and notes for publication.

1. Species, names, and the order in which they occur are to be in accordance with "Handlist of Birds in New South Wales". A.K.Morris, A.R.McGill and G.Holmes 1981 Dubbo: NSWFOC.
2. Articles or notes should be type written if possible and submitted in duplicate. Double spacing is required.
3. Margins of not less than 25mm width at the left hand side and top, with similar or slightly smaller at the right hand side of the pages.
4. No underlinings or no abbreviations except as shown in the examples.
5. Photographs should be glossy finish and not too small.
6. The *Style Manual*, Commonwealth Government Printing Office, Canberra (1966) and subsequent editions will be the guide for this Journal.
7. Diagrams will be on plain white paper drawn with india ink. Any lettering is to be 'professional style' or lightly penciled.
8. Dates must be written "1 January 1975" except in tables and figures where they may be abbreviated.
9. The 24-hour clock will be used, times being written 06:30, 18:30 for 6.30am and 6.30pm respectively.
10. Mr, Mrs, Dr are not to be followed by a full stop.
11. In text, numbers one to ten are spelt; numbers of five figures or more should be grouped in threes and spaced by a thin gap. Commas should not be used as thousands markers.
12. References to other articles should be shown in the text- '...B.W.Finch and M.D.Bruce (1974) stated...'and under heading.

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Aust. Birds 9:32-35

13. Acknowledgements to other individuals should not include Christian names or initials.

AUSTRALIAN BIRDS

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