

always appreciate the Union's 'big brother' interest in it and the generous gesture evidenced by the despatch of the volumes. Mr. R. V. Roberts, of Wellington, effected a signal service to the Society when he initiated the inquiry that eventuated in the Union's action.

Correspondence

'SET' OF *The Emu* FOR NEW ZEALAND

To the Editor.

Sir,—New Zealand members of the R.A.O.U. as well as those of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand will be pleased to learn that a 'set' of *The Emu* comprising volumes 4 to 41 has been generously placed in the library of the O.S.N.Z. now housed in the Auckland Museum. The volumes or parts are available on loan to all members of the O.S.N.Z. as well as to the New Zealand members of the R.A.O.U. This action of the Council of the R.A.O.U. will be deeply appreciated by all New Zealand members of both societies. The Council of the O.S.N.Z., in particular, expresses its thanks to the R.A.O.U. for its action in making the set available. It will greatly assist members carrying out field work and research on the birds of the Australian and New Zealand regions.

Should any member of the R.A.O.U. be in a position to supply any parts of volumes 1 to 3 the secretary of the O.S.N.Z., Mr. E. G. Turbott, Auckland Museum, would be glad to hear from him.

W. R. B. OLIVER	} Members of Council
A. S. WILKINSON	
R. A. FALLA	

Obituary

DR. ERIC POCKLEY

Dr. Eric Osbaldiston Pockley, whose death took place on November 11, 1956, at Avalon, near Sydney, joined the Union in 1933. He was keenly interested in bird behaviour. He attended several camps and will be remembered by his companions on such trips for his lively personality and fund of reminiscences. Born in 1876, he was among the first dozen pupils of the Sydney Church of England Grammar School. He travelled to school from his home in Killara, some ten miles away, in a dog-cart. He graduated from Sydney University and became resident doctor at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Later, after working as a ship's doctor, he studied at Oxford and Vienna.

Throughout his long life he had a passion for travelling and exploring. Quite recently, at the age of 78, he visited Ayers' Rock in Central Australia. Before the 1914-18 war, he made a motor-cycle tour of Europe. Later he shot big-

game in East Africa and, later still, travelled extensively in New Guinea, visiting that island yearly for many years. On one occasion he walked across Papua from north to south over the Owen Stanley Range, with a companion, collecting for Rothschild. Dr. Pockley also visited the Fiji Islands and other parts of the Pacific.

A keen sportsman, he won the Covered Court Tennis Doubles Championship in 1912, his partner being Stanley Doust.

Dr. Pockley's contributions to *The Emu* are—

- 1936 'Parrots and Psittacosis', vol. 36, pp. 51-52.
- 1937 'Notes on the Greater Moustached Swift', vol. 36, pp. 315-316.
- 1937 'Notes on Nesting Holes of a Megapode', vol. 37, pp. 63-65, pl. 9.
- 1939 'Psittacosis in Fulmar Petrels', vol. 39, p. 66.
- 1948 'Notes from Fiji', vol. 48, p. 72.
- 1948 'Ovulation and Light Intensity', vol. 48, pp. 81-82.
- 1952 'Gaping Bills in Hot Weather', vol. 52, p. 32.
- 1953 'Notes on a Frogmouth seen near Mt. Isa', vol. 53, p. 266.
- 1954 'Notes on the Fern Wren', vol. 54 pp. 141-145.

—K.A.H.

Review

Golden Whistler Superspecies.—'Variation, Relationships and Evolution in the *Pachycephala pectoralis* Superspecies' (*Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.)*, Zoology, vol. 4, no. 4, London 1956) by Ian C. J. Galbraith (pp. 131-222, 8 text figures and 3 pages of references) is a comprehensive and stimulating study, in terms of geographic speciation, of a superspecies rich in the diversity of its forms.

Including sections on plumage patterns, variations, natural groups, intergradation, affinities and arrangement, evolution, adaptation, and a checklist, and regarding *P. schlegelii*, *soror*, *pectoralis*, and *flavifrons* as constituting the *P. pectoralis* superspecies, this paper should interest all Australian students of speciation. It treats a group already noted by Mayr as being difficult in the matter of diagnostic characters, and the author seeks, and effectively uses, a standard male and female plumage pattern against which variation can be measured.

On points of general interest it may be mentioned first that *melanops* of Tonga, *caledonica* of New Caledonia and the hen-feathered *teysmanni* of Salayer are considered races of *pectoralis* and secondly that the author adopts the principle "that minor subspecies should be combined, in order to emphasize the more important discontinuities. . . ." Allowing for the subjective element in deciding on the 'minor' subspecies, this would seem justifiable in a study seeking an over-all picture of significant facts.

Applied to Australian birds this approach reduces Mayr's twelve races (*Amer. Mus. Nov.*, no. 1653) to seven, merging *occidentalis* with *fuliginosa*, *youngi* with *pectoralis*, *ashbyi* with *queenstandica*, and *hilli* and *bynoei* with *melanura*. It is to be noted, however, that all of these subspecies are conventionally retained in Galbraith's checklist.

The worker of purely field interests will find in this group, as in others, opportunity to fill gaps in the present knowledge. Habitat preference, feeding habits, and behaviour, when someone studies them, may all be found to produce important additional data to assist sub-specific arrangement.

Essentially a study in geographic speciation, this paper is also, in part, a valuable systematic survey of a widespread Australian species.
—A.McE.

The date of publication was March 27, 1957.