

Descriptions of a New *Calamanthus* and a New *Megalurus* from Western Australia.

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IN the last issue of *The Emu* I described a new *Melithreptus* which I discovered in an expedition to the Stirling Ranges, in the South-East Division of this State. Since then I have gone carefully through all the skins collected, with the result that I have to add a new *Calamanthus* to the list of Australian birds. Also I have to add a new *Megalurus*, from Lake Yanchep, which I obtained during the last Christmas holidays.

CALAMANTHUS MONTANEI LUS, n. sp.

General colour above dingy greyish-brown, streaked with black, the feathers being distinctly centred with this colour, but not so broadly as in *C. fuliginosus*, the streaks running in more defined longitudinal lines than in that species; rump and upper tail coverts uniform, tinged with a faint greenish shade; uppermost pair of tail feathers uniform dingy brown, and without subterminal black bar; forehead faintly washed with rufous; lores whitish; eyelid and a narrow eyebrow white; ear coverts brown, resembling feathers of forehead, and showing the faintest tinge of rufous; cheeks, chin, throat, and chest ashy-white, boldly streaked with black down the centre of the feathers; remainder of under surface light yellowish-buff, becoming almost white on abdomen. The sides only of the body streaked with black; axillaries and under wing coverts

cream-coloured, with a faint tinge of pinkish-buff; quills greyish-brown, with edge of inner web cream-coloured; tail feathers (except uppermost pair) brown, with pronounced black subterminal bar and white tips. Bill and feet dark horn colour. Total length, 5.25 inches; culmen, 0.5; tail, 2; tarsus, 0.9.

Type in the Western Australian Museum, Perth.

The new species differs from *fuliginosus* principally in that the upper surface is a lustreless dingy brown, instead of the shiny greenish-brown of that species, and that the striations are narrower. The chin, throat, and chest also show more ashy whiteness, and the striations on those parts are bolder and extend farther down the body. The olive-yellow wash of the lower portions of the body in *C. fuliginosus* is supplanted with a much lighter coloured wash, which inclines to whiteness on the abdomen. There is scarcely any appreciable difference in the external aspect of the sexes.

The new bird was found in the sterile stony tracts on the north or sheltered side of the Stirling Ranges. Its song is a series of musical warbling notes, which it utters either on the ground or in a low bush. It runs along the ground like a mouse, and is very difficult to flush. Apparently it does not leave a body scent, as *C. fuliginosus* is said to do, as my Quail bitch did not show any disposition to follow it, neither did she show any canine signs of pleasure when the dead bird was placed near her nose. The birds were very numerous in the sterile places indicated, but very difficult to secure.

I assign to it the scientific name of *Calamanthus montanellus*, and the vernacular one of the Rock Field-Wren.

MEGALURUS STRIATUS, n. sp.

General colour above dark brown (not fulvous), broadly streaked with black down the centre of the back and mantle; rump and upper tail coverts inclined to dull fulvous, both streaked with black; forehead very faintly tinged with dull rufous; head streaked with black, but not so as to form longitudinal lines; wing coverts, like the back, centred with black and margined with brown; wings dark brown, with secondaries blackish-brown, some of them margined with white; tail feathers dark brown; lores blackish; faint eyebrow whitish; cheeks and ear coverts dull whitish, slightly mottled with dusky edgings to feathers; cheeks, chin, throat, and chest whitish, distinctly and regularly striated with black and brownish-black centres to feathers, the striations more pronounced and broader on chest; centre of abdomen white; sides of body and of abdomen, flanks, and under tail coverts not fulvescent, but washed with smoky-brown and striated with blackish-brown; shoulders of wing edged white; axillaries and under coverts creamy; quills greyish-brown; bill and tarsi fleshy-brown. Total length, 5.25 inches; culmen, 0.45; tail, 2.25; tarsus, 0.75.

Type in Western Australian Museum, Perth.

The bird above described was shot by me at Lake Yanchep, 35 miles north of Perth, during the last Christmas holidays. Whilst writing these notes I have before me skins of the Lake Yanchep bird, and of *M. gramineus*, from Victoria and from Mandurah estuary, which is situate some 40 miles south from Perth. Little difference exists between the Victorian and Mandurah skins. On the other hand, the difference between those skins and the Lake Yanchep skins is most marked. The latter is very much smaller, and in addition lacks the oily fulvous colour of the upper surface, sides, flanks, and tail coverts of the former, and in lieu of it has a dullish lustreless smoky-brown. Another point of difference is that the Lake Yanchep bird is striated from chin to abdomen as boldly as a *Calamanthus*. I shot four birds, and not any one of them exhibited any appreciable difference from the others. The estuary where the Mandurah bird was obtained is salt, and possesses extensive mud-flats covered with samphire. The water of Lake Yanchep is fresh, and heavily charged with carbonate of lime, the formation surrounding the lake being limestone. Is it not possible that the presence of the rich fulvous colour of the estuary bird is due to the mud-flats, and the absence of it in the Yanchep bird to the harsh and harder limestone water?

The notes of the new bird are two melancholy ones, resembling in sound the syllables "tee tee." In the protected area of the Swan River, at Perth, the local bird has three notes, "titty tee tee." The birds were numerous, but difficult to flush, owing to their secretive habits.

I assign to the new species the scientific name of *Megalurus striatus*, and the vernacular name of the Striated Grass-Bird.