

Macdonald; "An Autumn Ramble," by Mr. A. J. Campbell; and "Autumn Notes," by Mr. A. G. Campbell; while Mr. F. E. Howe exhibited a male Red-capped Robin (*Petroica goodenovi*) with a partially scarlet throat, thus showing affinity to *P. ramsayi*, and Mr. Le Souëf exhibited and explained many fine series of his oological specimens.

INTERESTING returns of "birds striking the light" continue to come in from the lighthouse observers. Mr. D. Le Souëf is tabulating these returns, which so far chiefly relate to sea-birds. But Mr. Geo. Johnson's last report from Cape Wickham, King Id., mentions several small land-birds—Cuckoo, Fantails, Robins, &c. He also has been the means of recording a new bird for the Tasmanian "region"—namely, the White-browed Wood-Swallow (*Arlamus superciliosus*), which appeared in numbers for the first time on the island about the 9th April last. In Mr. Johnson's subsequent notes it will be interesting to learn how long these migratory Wood-Swallows remained—not long, possibly. Probably the birds had recently flocked on the adjacent mainland previous to a northern move, and making a southern wheel, touched King Island. One of the Wood-Swallows shot by Mr. Johnson accompanied his schedule.

### An Autumn Ramble.

BY A. J. CAMPBELL, Col. M. B.O.U.

BIRD observations are usually made during the spring and summer months, in this country at least, when bird-life is more plentiful and interesting.

In this short sketch I propose to mention 34 species of birds identified in autumn (6th May, 1905) during one day's outing on the Mornington Peninsula, which divides the waters of Port Phillip from those of Western Port.

The locality may be generally described as open forest country, consisting of swamp or grey gums (*Eucalyptus*), fine-leaved peppermint gums and manna gums, mixed with *Casuarina*, *Exocarpus*, blackwood, &c., with a ground scrub of *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, &c.

My bedroom window being partly open, before dawn I can hear the "Boobook" call of the little Brown Owl. The spring of day is heralded by the laughter-like notes of a family of Great Brown Kingfishers camped in a tree about 150 yards away. Then follow the cheerful carols of Magpies. When it is broad daylight a familiar Black-and-White Fantail calls at my window as if to say "Good morning, sir." Afterwards I detect the voices of Wattle-Birds, Spotted Pardalote, Magpie-Lark, Grey Thrush (harsh notes, peculiar to winter months), and Noisy Miners. I can hear the "quick-quick, quick-quick" notes of Rosella Parrakeets passing by

the house, and the screeches of numerous Lorikeets. And on opening wide my window, I noticed a pair of Brown Flycatchers on the garden fence, and some Babblers hopping over the ground among the fruit trees about 50 paces away. So much for "feathered friends" seen or heard before I break my fast. After breakfast, with a sympathetic companion,\* I ramble into a bush paddock, where Lorikeets are clamorous everywhere. The cause is not far to seek. The swamp gums, which have not flowered here for years, are now full of bloom, surcharging the air with a mawkish-like aroma. These nectar-laden blossoms have attracted four kinds of the honey-eating Parrots, all species sometimes seen feasting in the same tree. The most numerous is the Little Lorikeet, which is seen in strings at times upon the tops of dry branches. Then, in point of numbers, come the Musk Lorikeet. Some Swift-flying Lorikeets are identified by their longer-pointed tails, and when on the wing by brilliant scarlet under-shoulder parts, and by their chattering-like notes. The fourth species is the little Purple-crowned Lorikeet, seen in pairs, but few and far between.

Passing an old cultivation paddock a single Spur-winged Plover is disturbed with protesting cries, and male Flame-breasted Robins are seen perched upon stumps or posts. In an acacia hedge is a Scrub-Wren (probably *Sericornis osculans*), with noisy notes, a contrast with the merry songs of a Shafted Fantail and a Yellow-faced Honey-eater. In a more thickly timbered patch a pair of Brush Wattle-Birds is observed, also White-eared and White-plumed Honey-eaters, in addition to a beautiful male White-throated Thickhead, some Striated Tits, and a Butcher-Bird. Here, too, we capture a female Rosella, fluttering along the ground and through bushes, endeavouring to escape us. We examine her with much curiosity. She evidently is suffering from moult troubles, and, having shed the primaries of both wings, is unable to fly. In the tail there remains a feather or two, but the rest of the body is fairly clothed, though somewhat soiled in travelling over the ground. This bird apparently is no exception, because my companion informs me that during his walks afield this season he has seen several Rosellas similarly feathered, incapable of flight. I must not omit to mention an exceedingly handsome Great Brown Kingfisher, which we observed closely—an old male, no doubt, judging by the splendid patch of blue on his wing coverts and the rich brownish markings of the upper tail coverts.

In the afternoon we visit a messmate (gum) forest, brightened with early-flowering pink epacris, and through which runs a tea-tree creek. Here we add to our list Orange-winged Sittella, Scarlet-breasted Robin, Yellow-tailed Tit, Red-browed Finch, Little Field-Wren (*Chthonicola*), Ground-Thrush (*Geocichla*—a single example), and on returning home the familiar Swallow, several of which will, no doubt, remain in the district during the winter. We are glad to notice how plentiful the large and useful Babbler (*Pomatrhinus*)

\* Mr. G. E. Shepherd, of Somerville.

is becoming. A flock of 10 or 12 goes hopping across the road before us. Their cat-like call is very remarkable. An orchardist one day thought that another cry of these birds sounded like "Every three yards, every three yards." He was planting fruit-trees at the time.

At the close of day I waited near a camping place of Laughing Jackasses (Great Brown Kingfishers), where I was much entertained watching the home-coming of the family, notwithstanding the crowds of stinging mosquitoes. At dusk, or 40 minutes after sundown, two birds coming from opposite directions sailed into the tree, and after a hearty laugh moved to a particular perch. Soon afterwards three others came, one by one, each in turn receiving a noisy welcome, ending in chuckling notes of seeming satisfaction and contentment. Convivial choruses from other families could be heard in the distance in different directions. At last darkness was complete, and all had shut down for the night.

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### Australasian Ornithologists' Union.

ROUGH MINUTES, 30TH MEETING A.O.U. COUNCIL, HELD AT DR.  
C. RYAN'S, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 21ST JUNE, 1905.

Correspondence was received from Professor J. A. Allen, thanking the Council for electing him an honorary member of A.O.U. Mr. P. Peir, of Sydney, also wrote, stating that the cost price of the official badge of the A.O.U.—viz., an Emu carved on Emu-egg shell, and designed by him—would be 3s. for the carved shell, and if set in an 9-carat gold pendant, suitable for wearing on the watch chain, or on the lapel of the coat, or as a brooch, it would cost 8s. complete. These prices were considered by the Council as remarkably reasonable.

Communications were received from Mr. W. Rodier, of Tambura Station, N.S.W., and the *Review of Reviews*, New York.

Mr. R. Henry, of Pigeon Island, Dusky Sound, New Zealand, also wrote, stating that he had no objection to his article "Bird Sanctuaries of New Zealand," which appeared in *The Emu*, being republished in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1904, in conjunction with the article by R. A. Vivian entitled "Some Bird-Life of British Papua," which the Institute also wished to republish.

Auditors for the current year were elected, viz :—M. Symonds Clark and Edwin Ashby, as general auditors, and as local auditors C. L. Barrett and E. D'Ombraim.

It was decided that the next Annual Congress, which is to be held at Adelaide, should take place about the middle of October, and that a "working field trip" would be taken to Kangaroo Island, since many interesting features are to be found amongst