

Dr. Sharpe founded this species on a single male specimen, procured in the north-west of our State (W.A.) *C. cinnamomeum* is an interior bird, and, moreover, a species likely to be met with around Lake Way. The female of the latter is not strikingly distinct from that of *C. marginatum*. It seems to me, therefore, quite a natural thing for Mr. North to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the presence in his hands of the two males and one female of *C. marginatum* collected by myself to aid him in his description and identification of the female skin sent by Mr. Gibson. I do not blame him for doing so, but I think at the same time that an acknowledgment of the fact was due either to Mr. H. L. White or myself.

I take this opportunity, too, of stating that it is rather painful to me to have my sexing of the type specimen of *Lacustroica whitei* questioned by Mr. North, even if indirectly.\* After skinning and sexing birds for upwards of 30 years, I think I may be trusted to distinguish the male from the female, especially during the height of the breeding season.—I am, &c.,

F. LAWSON WHITLOCK.

Young's Siding, D.R., W.A., 6/6/10.

### Bird Observers' Club.

THE quarterly dinner and ordinary meeting of the club were held at the Strand Tea Rooms, Collins-street, Melbourne, on 14th April, 1910. There was a good attendance. At the conclusion of the dinner, Dr. H. W. Bryant was voted to the chair. A report from the Chief Inspector of Vermin, Mr. F. E. Allan, regarding the use of poisoned baits in orchards (forwarded by the Secretary for Agriculture) was read. Mr. Allan contended that the statement that thousands of birds were destroyed annually by means of baits was exaggerated, if not entirely without foundation. Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., said the shooting in orchards did more damage than poison. Mr. G. E. Shepherd remarked that only Parrots and other birds provided with crops were liable to poisoning. Mr. C. F. Cole expressed the same opinion. The resignation of Mr. E. J. Christian, of the Kamarooka Estate, was received with regret, and it was resolved that he be placed on the list of country members. A paper by Mr. A. G. Campbell (Pomonal), dealing with the Victorian *Sericornes*, was read by Mr. A. J. Campbell. The author's contention was that *Sericornis frontalis* and *S. osculans* are really distinct species. Several members stated that two distinct types of nest were of general occurrence, one type being covered with moss externally, the other with bark. Mr. L. G. Chandler exhibited skins of *S. frontalis*, and Mr. J. A. Ross eggs of *S. frontalis* and other species of *Sericornis*. In the general discussion of the evening, reference was made to recent flocking of migratory birds, and to White-bearded Honey-eaters (*Meliornis novæ-hollandiæ*) nesting, as a result of protracted warm weather. Mr. J. A. Leach, M.Sc., reported that a dead specimen of *Oceanites oceanicus* had been picked up 9 miles from the sea-coast, at Geelong. Instances of Mutton-Birds (Short-tailed Petrel) and White-faced Storm-Petrels having been

\* *Vict. Nat.*, xxvi., p. 138.

found several miles inland were cited by members. During the evening presentations were made to Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls and Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley on the occasions of their respective marriages. Mr. J. A. Ross made the presentations. In returning thanks, both Mr. Mattingley and Mr. Nicholls expressed great pleasure at the manifestation of esteem by fellow-members.

#### ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of the Club were held at the residence of Dr. H. W. Bryant, "Tarella," Toorak, on 18th May, 1910. Dr. Bryant presided, and there was a full attendance of members. The hon. treasurer, Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls, presented the balance-sheet for the past 12 months. It showed that, despite a fairly heavy expenditure for the period, there was a satisfactory credit balance with which to start the new year. The balance-sheet was adopted, the Chairman congratulating the hon. treasurer on the manner in which he had handled the Club's finances. The hon. secretary, Mr. Chas. Barrett, gave a verbal report. He said the Club had now been established five years, and its record was one of steady progress. Every member was a working ornithologist, and to the credit of the Club stood a good deal of valuable field work. He suggested, however, that some specially qualified members should direct their attention to the study of plumage phases, migration, parallelism, and other branches of ornithology which are much neglected in Australia. In the discussion which followed, Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., said the study of plumage phases and the food of birds was of great importance. Mr. J. A. Ross said that some work was now being carried on in regard to plumage phases. Members of the Club had no time for serious scientific work. Mr. J. A. Leach, M.Sc., expressed the opinion that osteology and other subjects mentioned presented great difficulties to the untrained student. Something might be done, however, in regard to economic ornithology, which was almost entirely neglected in the Commonwealth. Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S., said that the most important thing to study was the relation of birds to man. The Chairman remarked that specialization in some form was a very desirable thing. Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls said the study of ornithology had made great advances in Australia of recent years. The energies of young students should be diverted from mere collecting, and to the study of migration and similar subjects.

Mr. H. W. Wilson reported that matters in connection with the Gould League of Bird Lovers were proceeding satisfactorily, a large number of certificates having been sent out. On the motion of Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls, seconded by Mr. J. A. Leach, Mr. Donald Macdonald was unanimously elected an honorary life member of the Club, in recognition of the services he has rendered to the cause of popular bird study. Messrs. C. Wilson, O. W. Rosenhain, and J. S. Kitson, and Dr. C. S. Sutton, were elected as ordinary members. Mr. Chas. Barrett was re-elected hon. secretary, Mr. E. Brooke Nicholls hon. treasurer, and Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley member of committee (with the hon. secretary and hon. treasurer). The Chairman congratulated members on the continued success of the Club. The work done by members, he considered, had not only advanced our knowledge of the Australian avifauna, but had been of value to the community. Dr. H. W. Bryant read a paper entitled "A Trip to the Mouth of the Snowy River." The nature of the country in the vicinity was described and a list of birds observed, with field notes of interest, given. Mr. E. B. Nicholls read some notes on the Crested Penguin (*Catarrhactes chrysocome*), and Mr. C. F. Cole contributed a paper on "The External Structure of Birds." Messrs. A. W. Milligan, J. A. Leach, and others took part in a discussion regarding the sense of smell in birds. It was the general opinion that birds do possess the sense in question to a certain degree. The meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the host and Mrs. Bryant.