

remotely-situated members of a geographical group. Thus, while the neighbouring forms will inter-breed freely, the extreme races will not do so. This would apply to the forms of *Barnardius* in Western Australia. It seems evident, as Ogilvy-Grant states (*Ibis*, 1910), that where *B. z. zonarius* and *B. z. semitorquatus* meet, as in the vicinity of Beverley, the numerous intermediate forms found there are due to inter-breeding. It is doubtful whether the large *B. z. semitorquatus* from the south could be successfully mated with its northern congener, *B. z. connectens*, although the connecting forms appear to inter-breed freely with their immediate neighbours. Did the intermediate races not exist, however, then *B. z. semitorquatus* and *B. z. connectens* would rightly be regarded as two species, but owing to the evident transition from one form to the other, definite dividing lines cannot be drawn, and I do not think that there are sufficient grounds for the splitting of the western representatives of *Barnardius* into three full species, as some ornithologists would maintain.

Feeding Habits of the Winking Owl.—Whilst mustering cattle in the Bundaberg district (Queensland), I had occasion to ride through a tea-tree swamp, then dry (May 15, 1930). Here I noticed a Winking Owl (*Ninox connivens*) perched in a small, thickly-foliaged tree; clutched in one talon, and resting against the trunk of the tree, was a Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), which had not long been dead. The Owl appeared ravenous, for it was savagely tearing the flesh from the "Mopoke." On my approaching closer, it attempted to fly away with its prey, but had not flown more than twelve yards before the weight of the *Podargus* forced it to the ground. It then left the partly-eaten bird, and made for a tall eucalypt, where many small birds commenced to harass it. On examining the Frogmouth, I saw that most of the flesh had been torn from the head, neck and breast. The Winking Owl has been known to feed on rabbits and marsupials, although at the time it seemed unusual to me that such a bird should attack and eat a *Podargus*. However, A. J. North (*Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds*, Vol. III, pt. IV, 1912, p. 305) mentions the following incident, taken from a letter sent him by Mr. H. G. Barnard:—" . . . My brother, Mr. C. A. Barnard, lately saw one Winking Owl with the half-eaten body of a *Podargus strigoides*." My own observation was made at about 10 o'clock in the morning.—H. H. INNES, R.A.O.U., Barolin Station, Bundaberg, Queensland.