

Correspondence

EMUS IN NEW GUINEA?

To the Editor

Mr. A. S. Le Souef, R.A.O.U., has forwarded the following letter received by him as the result of inquiries which he made concerning the possibility of the Emus being in New Guinea, a Stray Feather suggesting the likelihood having appeared in *The Emu*, Vol. XXXII, p. 64. The letter was received from the Mining Warden at Wau, Morobe Goldfield, New Guinea.

"The Director of Agriculture at Rabaul, Mr. G. H. Murray, sent your letter dated 14/7/1932, with reference to Emus at Edie Creek, along to me. Inquiries have been made here, but so far as can be gathered, no Emus are known to exist in this part of New Guinea, nor elsewhere in the Territory. The bird referred to by Mr. Lamb is in all probability the Moorook, a species of Cassowary. The Moorook, together with several smaller bush fowl, provides both European and Kanaka with good food.

"I have personally been over much of the Wau-Edie Creek area, and have seen the Moorook in its native haunts, but have seen no bird that could be described as an Emu. Surveyors and miners who have spent much time in the locality confirm my observations. Should any unusual bird or animal come under my notice, I shall furnish you with particulars. Captain Stevens, Bulolo, New Guinea, who is at present collecting birds for Harvard University, may perhaps be able to supply you with authentic data relative to bird and animal life in this part of New Guinea."

BIRD LISTS

To the Editor.

Sir,—I regret very much that the last number of *The Emu* is smaller than usual and I have also read an editorial note stating that no apology is offered for this fact. The previous issue of *The Emu* contained a paragraph to the effect that bird lists were of small interest and were not wanted. That statement, I think, was not justified.* I may point out that at times there are many other papers in *The Emu* that are of little interest to many of its readers, although of undoubted scientific value. Your criticism of bird lists is particularly unfortunate in this respect—that you are discouraging budding ornithologists or bird-lovers. I venture to say that quite a number of ornithologists started their careers by contributing papers on geographical dis-

*See Report of Hon. Editor printed elsewhere in this part.—Ed.

tribution—more or less lists. These, I think, in many cases are the first phase in the development of future authorities and as such are worthy of some encouragement. If a paper is considered of sufficient merit for publication in *The Emu*, is it necessary to criticize its value afterwards? I think it would be better to have the twenty-odd pages missing from this last number of *The Emu* filled with lists than to have nothing at all. On the cover of *The Emu* appears the following:—"A quarterly magazine to popularize the study and protection of native birds and to record results of scientific research in ornithology."—I am, etc.,

ROBT. H. D. STIDOLPH.

Masterton, N.Z., Oct. 18, 1932.

To the Editor.

Sir,—In a paper dealing with the Australian forms of the genus *Zosterops* (*The Emu*, Vol. XXXI, p. 290), I made the following statement regarding *Z. lateralis*:—

"The extent of yellow on the throat and the depth of colour on the flanks is not occasioned by seasonal change, nor is it a matter of sex. Two specimens of the same sex may be taken at the same time in the one locality, admirably showing both phases of plumage."

This is contradicted by Mr. A. G. Campbell (*The Emu*, Vol. XXXII, p. 91), who states that the differences are seasonal. Whilst I am not concerned with this expression of opinion, the fact that the specimens cited (Nos. 3027, 3028, R 9117, R 9118, 3083, 3084) in support of it form part of the collection on which my statement was based calls for comment.

Nos. 3027, 3028, *Z. lateralis*.—Both specimens are males, taken at Abbotsford, N.S.W., on the same day in winter (5/5/1910), and are perfect examples, respectively, of the two phases of plumage. Obviously this supports my contention.

R 9117, R 9118, "*Z. tephropleura*".—In this instance it would appear that Mr. Campbell has accepted, without question, the names on the labels. These names were attached to the specimens a number of years ago, to permit of their being registered prior to going on loan to a worker in another State. When examining the series I found that both were wrongly identified. R 9118 is a specimen of *Z. lateralis*, a good example of the plumage phase in which the entire throat is yellow. R 9117, although one of a large collection purchased as from "N. Queensland", is referable to *Z. flaviceps* Peale, an inhabitant of the Fiji group of islands. Further, the dates quoted by Mr. Campbell are

the official dates on which these specimens were purchased. Nothing is known as to when they were collected.

No. 3083 (collected September), No. 3084 (collected June).—These specimens exhibit pale and rich-coloured flanks respectively. It is possible to cite specimens, taken about the same time as these two, in which the colour of the flanks is the reverse.

Another point in regard to *Z. lateralis* which I would like to emphasize is that, so far, no specimen with the *entire* throat yellow has been recorded from either Tasmania or New Zealand.—Yours, etc.,

GEORGE MACK.

National Museum, Melbourne, 5/12/32.

Library Notes

The following additions to the Library are hereby acknowledged:—

The Wilson Bulletin, Vol. XLIV., Nos. 2 and 3. No. 2 contains "Curvature of Wing and Flapping Flight," by W. B. Taber, junr. No. 3 contains "A Study of Merriam's Temperature Laws", by S. Charles Hendleigh; "Life Zones, Modern Ecology, and the Failure of Temperature Summing," by Victor E. Shelford.

Annals of the Transvaal Museum, Vol. XV, Part 1. Contains "Preliminary Description of Sixty-six New Forms of South African Birds", by Austin Roberts.

The Avicultural Magazine, Vol. X, Nos. 9 and 10.

The Auk, Vol. XLIX, No. 4.

The Condor, Vol. XXXIV, No. 5.

The Victorian Naturalist, Nos. 6 and 7.

The South Australian Ornithologist, Vol. XI, Part 8.

Australian Science Abstracts, Vol. 11, No. 4.

The Australian Zoologist, Vol. VII, Part 3.

El Hornero, Vol. V, No. 1.

Scientific Publications of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Vol. IV, No. 1.

Les Oiseaux de l'Indochine Française. By J. Delacour and P. Jabouille (four vols.). See review in this part.

The Ibis, Vol. II, No. 4. Contains "Vocal Mimicry among Australian Birds", by A. H. Chisholm. [It is not intended . . . to attempt a detailed examination of the many pretty problems associated with bird-mockery . . . rather to submit an account of the chief bird-mimics of Australia." Deals with nineteen species, headed by Lyrebird, including several Bower-birds, Rufous Scrub-bird, etc.]