

after 5 a.m. the birds began to leave in small parties, but only about 70 were seen to depart. The night previously we had counted about 300 as they approached from the mainland. By these observations it would seem that in the breeding season at least, the great majority of birds stay on their island home. These observations, however, are by no means complete, and it is possible that many more birds arrived or departed after dark or before daylight as the case might be.

Our party had an interesting experience with an immature Beach Stone-Curlew, which was found crouching with neck outstretched at the border of scrub and beach. Everybody possessing a camera photographed it as it lay on the leaves and coral fragments, and it scarcely resented my examining it and turning it over to disclose the pure white chest markings. I lifted its neck from the ground, but extremely slowly it lowered it again to its former position among the debris. It was at length induced to trot quietly away into the scrub. The birds of Double Cones would not long survive if ever rats or cats were accidentally introduced there.

Besides the species already dealt with Double Cone Islands carry quite a number of other interesting forms, whilst the adjacent reefs are rich with waders. The islets are connected by a long reef, over which one may wade at low tide. They are perhaps the most interesting isles of the Whitsunday Passage, and now that they are sanctuaries I see no reason why Nutmeg Pigeons and Jungle-Fowl should not regain the numerical strength of former days.

#### Summary and Conclusions.

1. The Whitsunday Islands are not of coralline origin, but are the tops of submerged mountains, and the bird-fauna is continental rather than oceanic, although waders abound.
2. The islands contain a diversity of extensive habitats, but generally speaking suitable food for birds seems scarce. The birds have few enemies.
3. Numerically and specifically the totals of birds are small, but the avifauna is remarkably diversified. There are at least 25 land birds and about 18 waders at present recorded.
4. Several islands were recommended as ideal sanctuaries to the Government; a brief account of each of these islands is given.
5. It is thought that Nutmeg Pigeons have materially increased since Double Cone Islands have been declared sanctuaries, and it seems probable that both *Megapodius reinwardt* and *Myristicivora spilorrhoa* will regain their former strength if left unmolested in these island sanctuaries.

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Fines and costs aggregating £360/10/- were recently imposed in the Cowes (Phillip Island, Vic.) police court on seven men for having in their possession 204 Mutton-birds, which are protected on the island. Inspectors of the Fisheries and Game Department acted promptly in obtaining the necessary evidence and launching prosecutions.