

(W. H. Loaring), occurrence of the Red-eared Firetail at Wongong Brook (V. N. Serventy), and the Southern Emu-Wren near Perth (P. Kneebone).—D.L.S.

**South African Handbooks.** Longman's Field Handbooks include *Common Birds of the Cape*, 'Common Birds of the Central African River Systems' is contemplated, and we are now noting *Common Birds of the Bush*, by Dr. J. M. Winterbottom. These handbooks, at 5/-, are reliable and practical aids to identification. The one under review contains a key of ten helpful points in identification, accounts of 32 species, and four coloured plates. The area dealt with is the woodland lying between the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn in Africa. In most of this area all of the species dealt with are common; many extend over a greater area. Publishers are Longmans Green & Co. Ltd., Cape Town.—C.E.B.

**Breeding Birds of Kashmir.**—Under this title R. S. P. Bates and E. H. N. Lowther (Oxford University Press, 1952) have provided an admirable companion for, in particular, any fortunate visitor to Kashmir. The keen student, too, will find between its covers a mine of information—obviously gathered by men who have had a long acquaintance with the living birds. The authors make no pretence to an exhaustive treatment but, as a regional handbook, the work sets a high standard. Technicalities are reduced to a minimum, references being given under each species to standard texts. Emphasis is on field identification, distribution, habits and nesting—all delivered in an authoritatively readable manner. The book is illustrated with 151 photographs, some of which are exceptionally good, and five coloured plates which, individually and collectively, enhance the value of the work. A good index and end-paper maps complete an attractive and useful bird-book.—W.B.H.

**South Australian Ornithology.**—There are three papers of some importance in the latest number of the *South Australian Ornithologist* (vol. 20, pt. 7). G. M. Storr, A. H. Lendon and R. W. McKechnie have recorded some interesting observations on certain species seen during a trip to south-eastern South Australia and adjacent parts of Victoria in October 1951. J. B. Cleland has reviewed, in some detail, the dispersal of plants by birds. G. M. Storr, in a provocative critique of a recent paper by Amadon on the Cracticidae, is diametrically opposed to that author's views on the phylogeny of the family. Whereas Amadon believes the magpies and currawongs to have been derived from the butcher-birds, Storr regards the latter as specialized offshoots from a 'pre-*Strepera*' stock. Storr also postulates that there is only one species of 'magpie' and, further, that the latter is nothing more than a terrestrial butcher-bird. Storr is not a pure theorist—he is applying field knowledge, quite skilfully, to taxonomic problems, and were there a little more 'concrete' proof to back up his postulates, one could easily be convinced of their truth.—W.B.H.

## News and Notes

### HONOURS FOR MEMBERS

At the anniversary meeting of the Linnean Society of London, held on May 24, 1952, Dr. Ernst Mayr, of the American Museum of Natural History, was one of two distinguished overseas scientists honoured by election as Foreign Members.

At the sixty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Deutsche Ornithologen-Gesellschaft held at Freiburg in June 1952, Dr. D. L. Serventy was elected a Corresponding Member of the Society.

## BIRD BANDING.

Australian recoveries of birds banded in New Zealand of which reports have come to our notice are as follows—

“Gannet, *Sula serrator*, ringed at Cape Kidnappers as a chick, 23/2/52, by Dr. K. A. Wodzicki and Rev. F. H. Robertson. Washed up on beach between Crescent Head and Smokey Cape, N.S.W. (? 230 miles north of Sydney ?), and found by W. H. Grey, Upper Belmore River, via Gladstone, N.S.W. His advice received 15/5/52.”

“Gannet, ringed 23/1/52, Cape Kidnappers. Recovered, washed ashore 29/5/52, 8 miles south of Cape Byron (? c. 470 miles north of Sydney), by S. Hamilton, R.M.D. 31-48, Broken Head, Byron Bay.”

Members are invited to help trace the origin of an aluminium ring recovered from a web-footed bird (the leg only was found) on the beach at Sandringham, Victoria, on October 3, 1952. The inscription reads ‘ALOP.BWA.1952.7.36’. The word ‘ALOP’ and the figure ‘7’ are inscribed transversely. Communicate with W. B. Hitchcock, National Museum, Melbourne.

## HELMETED HONEYEATER SURVEY.

The R.A.O.U. Standing Committee on Conservation is interested in a survey, recently started, of the distribution of the Helmeted Honeyeater (*Meliphaga cassidix*) to be conducted by members of the Union and of the Bird Observers Club. During the survey all previously-known localities for this rare honeyeater will be visited, if possible, on field trips, and a search made for it. Adjacent creeks will be examined, and, where possible, a census made of the colonies.

Victorian members who are willing to assist in the survey are asked to communicate with Mr. Hugh Wilson, 14 Torrington Place, Canterbury, E.7.

The area being examined now is on the eastern side of the Dandenong Ranges, but assistance would also be welcomed from members in Gippsland to visit the localities more distant from Melbourne.

Of the known localities for the Helmeted Honeyeater none is reserved, and clearing of the trees or scrub would drive out the birds from those localities. That has already happened at some places where the species existed in the past. One object of the survey is to select a suitable area for reservation so that this beautiful honeyeater may be preserved.—D. TOMKIN, Sec. R.A.O.U. Conservation Committee, Melbourne, Vic.