

## The Royal Penguin in Tasmanian Waters

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Previous records for the Royal Penguin (*Eudyptes schlegeli*) in Tasmanian waters were published by Hindwood and Sharland (*Emu*, vol. 44, p. 81) and by Sharland (*Emu*, vol. 45, p. 177) but no specimens were collected. The earliest record for the Commonwealth was an immature bird taken in South Australia, 1933 (Condon, *Emu*, vol. 50, p. 59).

Two occurrences of the Royal Penguin have recently been recorded from Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania. One bird, a sight record only, was observed at Pirate's Bay between March 16 and 18, 1952. The remains of a second bird were collected on April 12, 1952, by me from the same area. It appears to be the only specimen so far taken in Tasmania.

Captain D. Colbron Pearse, of the Tasmanian Museum, reported the first instance, and gave a description and coloured sketch by which the bird has been identified. Following that report, M. S. R. Sharland and I visited the same area and were fortunate enough to collect the second specimen. The bird, which had been dead for quite some time, was little more than dried skin and feathers adhering to skeletal remains. Thorough examination of the remains convinced both of us that it was a Royal Penguin.

Referring back to the first record, it is evident that that bird was not the same individual as the bird collected by me. The former possessed a peculiar ruff of feathers on the back of the neck, was in post natal moult, and markings on the under-flippers differed from those on the flippers of the second specimen.

Captain Pearse, who was fortunate enough to observe the bird at close quarters, made several colour sketches of it, and he said the bird stood about two feet in height, was greyish-blue on the upper-parts, including the forehead and crown, and was pure white on the under-parts, right up to the chin, and on the face. The crest was deep yellow in colour. The flippers, greyish-blue on the upper-sides, were white below, with a dark line running along their anterior margins, and there was a dark patch on the posterior edge of the 'elbow'. The colour of the bill was orange, the iris brownish-red, the legs and feet pinkish with the posterior part of the tarsus and the underside of the feet black. One peculiarity, of which I can find no further record, was the presence of a pink spot (about the size of a shilling) just in front of the eye on both sides of the

face. Captain Pearse did not ascertain whether this marking was feathers or naked skin. The bird appeared to be healthy and was not alarmed when approached closely; it attended to the preening of its feathers with people only an arm's length away.

The bird collected on April 12, 1952, has markings and colouring very similar to those of the bird observed by Captain Pearse. The upper-parts including the feathers at the base of the culmicorn and crown of head are bluish-grey. The crest is deep yellow and united over the forehead by a crescentic patch of similar colouring. The entire under-parts including the face are white. White feathers are present in the upper tail-coverts. The markings on the flipper differ slightly from those figured by Captain Pearse. The underside of the flippers are white with a dark patch at the terminals and the 'elbow' posteriorly. A dark line persists along the anterior margins lightening towards the terminals.

Owing to the deteriorated condition, description of colours of such details as the bill and legs bear little true significance. The legs and feet are pinkish-white; the rear of the tarsus and soles of feet black. The bill is orange. Measurements of the specimen, in millimetres, are: exposed culmen, 68; depth of closed bill, 26.5; width of bill, 25; tarsus, 34; middle toe and claw, 74; flipper (from axilla), 195.

Apart from the structural differences already noted between the two birds, the presence of the post-natal moult ruff on the back of the neck of the first specimen, and the difference in pattern of the under-flipper of the two birds, and taking into account the weather conditions at the time, I consider it most improbable that the two specimens observed could be one and the same, owing to the advanced state of deterioration of the specimen collected only about three weeks later than the first observation.

#### SUMMARY

Two further occurrences of the Royal Penguin (*Eudyptes schlegeli*) have now been recorded for Tasmania. The remains of one of these birds have been collected and are now housed in the reference collection of the Tasmanian Museum (registered no. 10028/B2658).

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

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## Birds of Terang, South-western Victoria

By GORDON BINNS, Hawthorn, Vic.

The author resided in the town of Terang from June 1947 until the end of February 1950. During that period a close watch was kept on the bird life occurring in the vicinity, particular attention being given to the many species frequenting the Lake Terang area. The district offers an unusual variety of types of country. It is undulating, with occasional rounded, bare hills—e.g. Mts. Noorat, Leura, Warrnambool and Shadwell. There are many lakes, which vary considerably, some being salt and completely devoid of water vegetation or of fringing reed-beds. Most of these lakes are exceedingly deep, with the notable exception of Lake Terang, which is now a mere shallow swamp. The lakes in the near vicinity of the town are Keilambete, Terang and Mumblin. Terang 'Lake' is really within the town itself, and occupies the bottom of a huge circular bowl. The north, east and west sections of the depression are embodied in the park, and the southern corner is portion of Keayang Station property. The local cemetery overlooks the swamp from the top of a steep hill that forms the southern boundary. A number of prominent buildings are built on other points which overlook the swamp.

The Prince's Highway, passing through Terang, follows the lip of the crater-like basin on the north and west. The golf links lie on the same two sides, and borders the water—so close that players frequently wade through the shallows during the progress of the game. Cricket, tennis, football and bowls are played, to a lesser extent, in the park, between the Highway and the water. Therefore, at all seasons of the year people are coming and going, and it is remarkable how little notice is taken of them by the various birds frequenting the area.

To the south of the town, and some three miles distant, the Mount Emu Creek flows in a westerly direction. Between Terang and Dixie it is sluggish and muddy, but between the Peterborough road (at Ayrford Bridge) and Garvoc it is very stony and passes through some fine little gorges, sometimes in rapids and cascades. Between these disturbed reaches, there are deep pools. The quieter reaches are often overhung with tea-tree, and sometimes fringed with reeds.