

about three hundred yards from the shore, after which the birds were not seen again.

Shortly after this a reply was received from Mr. A. R. McEvey of the National Museum, advising me that the bird had been identified as *Calidris tenuirostris*, that it was in the beginning of breeding plumage, and that the specimen was registered as No. B7085 in the National Museum Collection. Mr. McEvey also kindly supplied the information that the four other specimens in the National Museum were from Napier Broome Bay, Carnarvon, and Cairns. Contact was then made with Mr. H. T. Condon of the South Australian Museum, and the fact elicited, amongst other helpful information, that there had been no previous record of the species for South Australia.

Notes taken of the soft parts while the bird was alive are as follows—bill brown, darker on the upper mandible; legs, yellowish brown; irides, dark brown.

Glossy Ibis Notes

By V. T. LOWE, Mystic Park, Vic.

Little has been written on the habits of this species (*Plegadis falcinellus*). Therefore these notes might be of interest, although it seems certain that they refer to an unusual individual. I had had this bird under observation for some time and had speculated on its possible movements when, to my surprise, Alan Johnson of Ballarat told me of recorded notes he had of a parallel nature. On returning to Ballarat he sent me his notes and I present them as furnished to me, with my own following.

Alan Johnson records—

The first occasion on which I noted this species at Ballarat was on Jan. 16, 1952, on a swampy area close to the city. The bird was accompanied by nine Straw-necked Ibis. It was rather shy, but preferred to feed away from the 'Straw-necks' and would join them only when they were flushed. The bird was there again the following evening in the same company. On Jan. 18, 1952, the Glossy Ibis was in the company of a number of White-necked Herons, the Straw-necked Ibis having disappeared. It was fairly easily approached on this occasion.

On Feb. 1, 1952, the Straw-necked Ibis had returned but the Glossy had gone, and I did not see it again that year. However, on Sept. 24, 1953, a single Glossy was noted on the south-west corner of Lake Wendouree. Despite heavy traffic on the road about one hundred yards away, including noisy trams, the bird was feeding quietly and would permit one to approach to within fifteen feet before flushing. The bird remained in the area until Oct. 9, 1953, when it departed for haunts unknown. The bird was not injured and seemed quite content.

At Mystic Park during the winter of 1952, flood-waters covering pastures attracted numbers of Glossy Ibis. It was quite usual to see as many as twelve birds together, and once a group of twenty-seven. However, in one spot a lone Glossy Ibis was seen on several occasions, never joining groups

feeding nearby. It stayed on for some three weeks after the other birds of the species had drifted from the district. In that season it was last seen near the end of November. Early in the winter of 1952 a single Glossy Ibis arrived at the same place and stayed for at least five weeks, the only bird of its species to be seen in the locality that season. The spot favoured was one mile east of Mystic Park, shallow water surrounding a clump of black box trees, near a large water channel and alongside a road. On July 22, 1952, the bird was feeding close to one White-faced Heron and one Magpie-Lark. Suddenly a remarkable diversion occurred. The Ibis blundered forwards several steps, veered for about the same distance, then took to the air up above the trees, circled them at about twice tree-top height and came to earth again in a series of graceful sweeps and side-slips. This performance was repeated twice more in the space of a few minutes, after which the bird resumed its quiet feeding. The Heron and Magpie-Lark were entirely unconcerned.

Following this we saw the Ibis at weekly intervals; then on August 28, 1952, I watched it at the pools with one White-faced Heron nearby. On this occasion the Glossy Ibis improved on its earlier display, rising to an estimated height of 190 feet, though this time descending in an almost vertical dive, concluding with five or six speedy zigzag movements with wings swishing. On landing, a twist or two of the wings and a shake of the body straightened the plumage and quiet feeding was resorted to once again. Thus it was obvious that the bird was not in any way alarmed. The Heron had continued its quiet feeding and had not raised its head during this second display.

It would seem certain that this behaviour was of a purely recreational nature. I have seen no other Glossy Ibis act in this way. Though the appearances of these birds here are generally in the spring months, they do at times occur in mid-summer. Seven Glossy Ibis were recorded at the Marsh, three miles south of Mystic Park, on February 24, 1956, but were driven away by duck shooters. In dry years the Glossy Ibis is rarely seen in the Kerang lakes district, but, given a rainy winter to 'water-log' a few paddocks or to provide a little flooding, one looks forward confidently to a few birds. It is our experience that a flock of Glossy Ibis never remains intact for longer than a matter of hours. On consecutive days a few birds will be seen scattered at points miles apart, the groups varying in numbers often daily until once or twice during the period of their stay in the district one may see them in a closely-packed flock. It was such an experience that was enjoyed by three observers near Mystic Park township on January 29, 1957, when F. T. H. Smith, Len Robinson, and Edgar Whitbourn counted a flock of from 45 to 50 birds.

We have not found the species breeding in the district, nor have we known birds to mix for breeding with those in the Reedy Lake Ibis rookery near Kerang.

