

prised and puzzled to note that all Squatter-Pigeons had *tan* skin around the eye. Further observations of the birds on the Atherton Tableland revealed that they, too, had tan, and not leaden-blue, skin around the eye.

Beginning to doubt the correctness of my identification, I examined the skins in the National Museum, Melbourne, and to my surprise found that every specimen there had the orbital ring tan.

I then began to doubt the correctness of the description of leaden-blue skin, although I had clear memories of birds I identified at Carandotta Station, in the channel country of western Queensland, in August 1955, having the leaden-blue skin. I accordingly asked a friend living near Inverell to let me know what was the colour of the skin round the eye of the birds in New South Wales, and the reply was that they were very definitely leaden-blue.

The conclusion, therefore, can only be that the Squatter-Pigeon of New South Wales and western and southern Queensland has a leaden-blue orbital ring, whereas birds from the Atherton Tableland and northwards to Cape York have tan skin around the eye.

It was suggested to me that possibly immature birds had the tan skin, but that can be safely dismissed because whole coveys of the birds (in North Queensland) have the tan-coloured skin.—H. R. OFFICER, Olinda, Vic., 12/10/62.

Obituaries

MR. BRUCE W. LEAKE

Bruce W. Leake, a foundation member of the R.A.O.U., died at Perth on July 22, 1962. He was born at York, W.A., on June 11, 1880, the son of a pioneer settler at Kellerberrin, in the eastern wheatbelt, who first made his home there in 1868.

In his early years Bruce Leake was an active field naturalist and formed a local egg collection. He was visited on several occasions by Tom Carter, who collected a number of birds in the neighbourhood of Bruce Leake's farm, "Cardonia", Woolundra, near Kellerberrin, and some of these were described as new subspecies by Gregory Mathews (e.g. *Calamanthus montanellus leakei*, *Barnardius zonarius woolundra*, *Nesoptilotis leucotis woolundra* and *Acanthagenys rufogularis woolundra*). On his last visit, a fortnight in March 1922, following a cyclone in the previous month, Carter made important observations on "out-of-season" nesting (*Ibis*, 1923: 218). Other early visitors to "Cardonia" included Dudley Le Souef and A. J. Campbell, in 1920, after the first R.A.O.U. Congress in W.A., when Bruce Leake became State Secretary in succession to W. B. Alexander.

One of his notable activities in ornithology was the breeding of Mallee-Fowl in captivity by the construction of an artificial mound

in an enclosure. A detailed account of the project was published in a Perth weekly, the *Western Mail*, of May 5, 1927, and this was the basis of a paper by Edwin Ashby in the *Auk*, 46, 1929: 294. Bruce Leake later wrote several other important articles in the *Western Mail* describing the fluctuations in the abundance of local birds and mammals since white settlement.

As the years drew on he was compelled to give increasing attention to his farm duties and was forced to withdraw from the natural history societies to which he had belonged. He became a successful merino studmaster and did not retire from these activities until two years before his death.

He never lost his interest in natural history, however. In his privately published book, *Reminiscences*, 1961, he devotes some attention to the natural history and the natives of the Kellerberrin district, while a second book, completed just before his death and now in press, deals more specifically with the local fauna.—D.L.S.

MR. L. GLAUERT

Ludwig Glauert, Director Emeritus of the Western Australian Museum, died at Perth on February 1, 1963. He was born in Sheffield, England, on May 5, 1879, and after training as a geologist came to Western Australia in 1908. After field and laboratory work with the Geological Survey he joined the W.A. Museum two years later, when he gained local fame for his investigations of the rich Pleistocene fossil mammal fauna in the South-West caves. He was the first to show that well-known eastern states creatures, like the Koala, the Tasmanian Wolf and the Tasmanian Devil, once inhabited Western Australia.

After his return from World War I he transferred his main research interests to the living fauna, working on many groups, including scorpions, crustacea (he pioneered in Western Australia the study of the interesting group of phreatoicid isopods), reptiles and mammals. In latter years he specialized mostly on the reptiles, revising the snakes and lizards and prepared handbooks on both of these groups for the use of local naturalists. He also worked to some extent on birds. He continued Mr. W. B. Alexander's beach patrols and added a good deal to knowledge of the marine birds visiting local seas. He described a new subspecies of Grass Owl, and, with Mr. C. F. H. Jenkins, provided the first scientific description of the eggs of the Banded Stilt, from a colony discovered at Lake Grace in 1930 by Mrs. B. E. Cannon.

His influence in Western Australia on scientific and public opinion was probably unequalled by any other comparable office-holder elsewhere in Australia. The daily press and broadcasting stations sought his views on all types of natural history questions of the moment; he had a great influence on University research students and amateur naturalists alike, offering suggestions for

research projects and providing stimulating assistance throughout. The training of school-children absorbed a good deal of his attention and he started special Museum classes in association with the Education Department, as well as arranging special exhibits for young visitors. When he retired from the Museum, in 1957, the occasion was marked by the publication of a special Valedictory Number of the *W.A. Naturalist*, (Volume 8, No. 7, March 1957) in which appeared a full biography and bibliography of his writings to date, and a series of papers by his colleagues and friends. Formal retirement, however, did not mean the cessation of scientific activity. He continued to appear at the Museum each morning and carried on work on the reptiles, and latterly the scorpions. After he entered hospital just before his death he insisted on revising a draft of his latest paper.—D.L.S.

MR. A. S. WILKINSON

The death occurred on December 28, 1962, at Palmerston North, New Zealand, of Alexander Stanley Wilkinson in his 83rd year. Mr. Wilkinson joined the R.A.O.U. in 1921. He was appointed State Representative for New Zealand a few years later and continued to hold this office until the time of his death. Born at Halcombe in the North Manawatu, North Island, he spent his boyhood in the north-west of the South Island in the Takaka area. Later he farmed a bush section in the centre of the North Island in the Raglan district. In 1906 he went to Masterton in the Wairarapa, living there until 1924 when he left to become custodian for the Department of Lands and Survey of the Kapiti Island bird sanctuary, an important place in both Maori and European history. During his 18 years there he restored its vegetation by organizing tree planting, together with the extermination of possums, wild sheep and goats. These animals were destroying the island's bird habitat by excessive browsing of plant growth. For his work on the island he received the Silver Jubilee Medal in 1935. Mr. Wilkinson's determination to restore the island's natural vegetation was linked up with horticultural interests. In Levin, after leaving Kapiti, he was President for a period of both the Native Flora Club and the Horticultural Club.

Mr. Wilkinson's contributions to ornithology included additions to knowledge of the birdlife of the Tararua range in the south of the North Island; this he published in *The Emu*, vol. 24, 1924. During his period on Kapiti he also recorded much original data relating particularly to incubation periods and population fluctuations of different species. The results of that work appeared mainly in *The Emu*, vol. 26, 1927, and in the Scenery Preservation Reports of the Department of Lands and Survey between 1925 and 1941. With Mrs. Wilkinson he published in 1952 a delightful and now rather rare book *Kapiti Bird Sanctuary*.—H.L.S.