

of the species. As swans are very seldom shot by sportsmen, recoveries are expected to be few. For this reason each swan banded is also marked with a 2-inch wide plastic collar around the neck. These collars are of various colours—yellow, white, and red—the different colours denoting different localities. Already over 2,000 swans have been so marked.

It would be of very great assistance to the Division of Wildlife Research if anyone who saw a swan anywhere with a collar around its neck would report the locality and the date, and if possible the colour of the collar, to that Division. It is felt that the most extensive data will come from these sightings rather than from the recovery of bands in this particular case.

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#### HONOURS

Mr. H. J. Frith, Chief, Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO, has been advised by the Senate of the University of Sydney that his published work, entitled "Collected papers on the ecology of birds", has been accepted for the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Science in Agriculture.

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#### WANTED TO BUY

*The Emu*, volumes 1, 2 and 3, and parts 1 and 2 of volume 10. Apply John Howell, bookseller, 434 Post Street, San Francisco 2, California, U.S.A.

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#### PHOTOGRAPHS REQUIRED OF FALCONS

Mr. F. P. W. Wyer is engaged in writing a Monograph of the Falcons of the World which he hopes to illustrate by photographs, including colour ones. He would be grateful to get in touch with anyone who has photographed the falcons of Australia, especially in colour. He is also particularly interested in the Black Falcon, *Falco subniger*, as to its distribution and ecology. Mr. Wyer's address is: The Hoddern, Piddinghoe, Newhaven, Sussex, England.

## Letters to the Editor

Sir,

The following outline of the Conservation Committee is intended to supplement the publication of the Union's conservation policy (1963: 76-7) and the notes thereon appearing in this issue.

As conservation problems vary so greatly between States it was decided that committee members should be responsible for taking any action that they consider necessary in their respective States. In order to simplify their task the policy was made as flexible as possible and applicable to all parts of the Commonwealth. Each State is represented by a conservation secretary who may nominate additional members to assist him if required.

The conservation secretaries report periodically to Council through the convener. A summary of these reports is sent to each committee member so that he will be kept informed of the overall position.

The convener is responsible for all matters beyond State jurisdiction and for co-ordinating the work of the committee within the framework of the Union's policy.

The conservation secretaries are listed hereunder in the hope that Union members will report any matters that require action by the committee:

*Queensland:* N. Jack, 54 Cochrane Street, Paddington, Brisbane; F. H. M. Everett (member), 23 Pioneer Street, Toowong.

*New South Wales:* J. A. Palmer, 82 Bridge Road, Glebe.

*Victoria:* R. J. Edge, Allansford.



*South Australia:* E. F. Boehm, Erdora Farm, P.O., Sutherlands.

*Western Australia:* D. L. Serventy, 27 Everett Street, Nedlands (acting secretary, vice V. N. Serventy, 34 Onslow Road, Subiaco).

*Tasmania:* R. H. Green, Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston.

*Ex-officio:* The President of the Union.

The New Zealand Branch has decided that it would be impracticable to be represented on the committee.

I wish to express my appreciation of the energy and enthusiasm of the committee members, and particularly of the late J. M. Hewitt, O.B.E., whose untimely death is a personal loss to each of us.

The committee is faced with an onerous task and the measure of its success will depend very largely on the goodwill and co-operation of Union members.

Yours, etc.,

T. I. GELLIBRAND

Convener,

R.A.O.U. Conservation Committee

### *The Name for the Royal Albatross*

Sir,

Westerskov (*Emu*, 1961, pp. 153-170) discusses the nomenclature of the Royal Albatross at length and concludes that we should give up the name *Diomedea epomophora* Lesson 1825 in favour of *D. regia* Buller 1891. It is not claimed that Lesson's name is necessarily invalid. He had sailed through the haunts of the Royal Albatross and may well have been describing it although his description *might* apply to an old, white male of the Wandering Albatross (*D. exulans*). Buller himself, however, was somewhat confused about the adult plumages and indeed such confusion existed for several decades more (see R. C. Murphy, 1936, *Oceanic Birds of South America*, Vol. 1, pp. 575-584).

The decision to use *epomophora* rather than *regia* was made by Mathews in 1912, a long 51 years ago, and since then he has been followed in most of the literature, such as Alexander's *Birds of the Ocean*, Peters' *Check-list*, and Murphy's *Oceanic Birds of South America*. I am sure most of us would have preferred to see Buller's name used for the species. Still, are we not better off to continue to use the name that has been in circulation for half a century? (I believe this length of time has been given some special significance in the recent revised edition of the official *Rules of Nomenclature*.) Since there are very few new birds left to describe, perhaps ornithologists can be philosophical in promoting the opinion that naming species is mere drudgery and that it does not much matter who performs this chore. Such an attitude would certainly contribute greatly to stability in nomenclature with which we are allegedly all in favour.

Yours, etc.,

DEAN AMADON

American Museum of Natural History, New York.

1/7/63.

The date of publication was November 30, 1963.