CORRESPONDENCE
OUR ORNITHOLOGICAL HISTORIANS

To the Editor,

Sir—In the general interest it seems desirable to review certain points raised by A. H. Chisholm in "Our Ornithological Records", Emu 67: 142, being a critical reaction to R. W. Wheeler's "The Role of the Field Worker in Australian Ornithology", Emu 66, 133.

After reading both articles as an occasional reader with the devoted enthusiasm of an amateur, rather than as a regular member reader, I am prompted to write this letter to ask several questions that sprang to mind.

Do two wrongs make a right? Or, how is it thought to correct a "serious injustice to many notable figures" by such an attack? Surely both Chisholm and Wheeler can be included as notable figures in Australian Ornithology and our records, in my opinion, are only marred rather than enhanced, or even corrected, by such references.

The omission of some bibliographical material seems to unduly perturb Mr. Chisholm. Why? Although apparently one of the reasons animating his letter I can't understand it for, in his title, Wheeler specifically referred to the "field worker" and I see no necessary connection with published material. Of course we all recognize the value of publishing the results of field work for the benefit of later workers, but Wheeler's emphasis was quite clearly on the Role of the Field Worker. Moreover, his references to Collecting, Photographing and Banding suggest an emphasis on stimuli to field work involving the amateur rather than the professional. As the amateur's interests do not so frequently culminate in publication as do the researches of the professional it could be maintained that Wheeler, who has been intimately involved in a wide range of amateur activities over a long period is admirably suited to record some of these experiences. Our historical records would be more complete as a result of such efforts.

Other references as to what, or who, is to be included or admitted are very much a matter of opinion and I'm personally just as interested in Wheeler's as in Chisholm's opinions—let's have both—but is it necessary to have the personal undertones that seem to have emerged?

C. J. GIBSON, Turramurra, N.S.W.

CORRECTION

In The Emu 54: 40, the Blue-breasted Pitta, Pitta macklotii, is listed with a short explanatory note. A few years later Mr. Coleman told me that on reflection he was inclined to think that he had in fact heard the "walk to work" call of the Noisy Pitta, Pitta versicolor, at some time or other. I consider therefore, for the sake of future
record, the Noisy Pitta should be substituted for the Blue-breasted Pitta. The latter name was only used because it appeared that the former did not in fact live in the area.

I am fully satisfied that it could not have been the Blue-breasted Pitta, for it is far out of its normal range, and as I was the member to report the bird in the first place the alteration must surely rest with me.—H. R. OFFICER, Duneira, Monbulk Rd., Olinda, Vic.

Amendment to Paper

The following amendments to the paper, "A Survey of Birds' Music" by K. C. Halafoff, Emu 68: 21-40, were received after the publication of that paper. They are included here to make the paper correct.

(1) P. 24, last line
   After "(1/200")" add "According to Armstrong".

(2) P. 32, eighth line from bottom
   After "(River Warbler)" add "according to Thorpe".

(3) P. 35, fifth line
   After "per second" add "according to Armstrong".

(4) P. 30, third line from bottom
   Change "C-C-De" to "F-C-De".

(5) P. 31, Fig. 16
   Add "The score is ½ tone lower than that referred to on pp. 23 and 24".

Facsimile of R.A.O.U. Checklist

The Libraries Board of South Australia has just published a facsimile edition of the 1926 R.A.O.U. Checklist of Australian Birds. In addition it has also reproduced all the amendments to date. Copies of the Checklist, long out-of-print, and the amendments, which have never before been printed in collected form, may be obtained from the South Australian Public Library, Adelaide at $4.00 post free.