

BOOKS, PAPERS AND LITERARY NOTES

Edited by ALLAN MCEVEY

Reviews

BOOKS

Penguins by John Sparks and Tony Soper, 1967 (1968 in Australia), Angus and Robertson, Sydney. Pp. 263, 33 photographs and 10 figures, 8" x 5 1/2". \$6.50 (Aust.). The general information on penguin biology will interest many readers, but the authors' limited experience of penguins, which apparently does not extend beyond the London Zoo, and their inadequate knowledge of at least the Southern Hemisphere literature, make this an unsatisfactory book for ornithologists. They are not in the penguin swim, so it is an armchair effort.

The account of the penguin anatomy and physiology, breeding biology and general ecology, evolution and exploitation is worth about \$4.00, taking into account that some of the photographs and figures are excellent. There is no excuse for the dull and fuzzy photographs of Royal Penguins at Macquarie Island (20 and 21, p. 112), especially when another contributor of first-class material (John Warham), to name only one of several readily-available sources, could easily have bettered them.

The same species serves to illustrate the authors' inadequacy as ornithologists. *Eudyptes schlegelii* gets specific status, but is a regional form of the Macaroni Penguin, *Eudyptes chrysolophus*, and there are black-faced and many intergrade forms at Macquarie Island. This Australian outstation appears to have been handed over to New Zealand. And to state that the Macaroni (p. 224) and the Rockhopper, *E. crestatus*, (p. 221) can be confused is to show an ignorance of two very distinctive species. Photographs 14 and 15 (p. 80) show the latter's widely separate head crests, and photograph 19 (p. 97) clearly shows the Royal Penguin's crests meeting across the forehead; but the drawing of the Macaroni (p. 222), which has the same crest as the Royal, reveals the authors' and the artists' unfamiliarity with their material.—ROBERT CARRICK.

PAPERS

"Verhaltensökologische Studien an afrikanischen und australischen Estrildien", by Klaus Immelmann and Gertrud Immelmann. *Zool. Jb. Syst.* 94: 609-686, 1967. Very marked parallel adaptations in behaviour and breeding ecology have been found in African and Australian Grass Finches in the course of the research outlined in this paper.

Attention is drawn by the Immelmans to exceptional cases such as, for example, two ground-living African genera which have developed independently a running mode of progression on the ground. On the other hand, a specialized Australian species, the Crimson Finch (*Neochmia phaeton*) is unique in its adaptation to living close to or within human settlements. Several Australian species have developed a special form of drinking by sucking in a pigeon-like manner.

Whereas in Africa several Grass Finches have at least in part become dependent on disused nests of other kinds of birds, all Australian Estrildidae build their own nests.

This contribution to ornithology contains a mass of information that deserves careful examination by both field workers and taxonomists interested in our finches.—E. F. BOEHM.

In Brief . . .

(It is not possible for the Review Editor to check the bibliographical accuracy of all titles and references supplied by contributors.)

Australasian Publications

Species. "Skua Studies" by E. C. Young. *Journ. Biol. Soc. Vic. Univ. Wellington* 15: 129-32. Dec. 1967. This deals mostly with the nesting behaviour of the Antarctic Skua, *Catharacta maccormicki*, at Capes Bird and Roysds, Antarctica. The skuas do not depend habitually on penguin chicks and eggs for food and retain capacity to fish at sea. Other details cover size and annual formation of colonies, behaviour and chick survival which is poor.

—H.L.S.

"A New Species of Australian Grass-Wren" by Norman J. Favaloro and Allan McEvey. *Mem. Nat. Mus. Vic.* 28: 1-9 Mar. 1968. *Amytornis barbatus* n. sp. from Teurika, north-west N.S.W. is described with photographs of skin and nest. It is regarded as belonging to the *striatus* group.—A.McE.

Aviculture. "Notes on the Torres Strait Pigeon" by R. W. McKechnie. *Bird Keeping in Aust.* 9: 17-18, 1966. An interesting account of behaviour and breeding in captivity. "Breeding in captivity of the Southern Fig Bird" by R. Rowlands. *Bird Keeping in Captivity* 10: 75 1967. Details of the breeding behaviour of a little known species.—A.L.

Overseas Publications

Regional. "A. S. Meek's three Expeditions to the Solomon Islands" by Shane Parker. *Bull. B.O.C.* 87 (8): 129-135. A useful summary of Meek's collecting trips to the Solomons. "Bird Report: 1966" by Lord Medway and I. C. T. Nisbet *Malay Nat. Jour.* 21: 34-50 Jan. 1968. Contains observations on migration, birds attracted by lights, bird banding and brief systematic bird observations. A long distance movement of Black Bittern, *Dupetor flavicollis*, from Sungei Way, Salangor to Taduki, Manipur, India, is of interest.

—J.L.McK.

Species and Taxonomy. "The type-locality of White-quilled Rock Pigeon *Petrophassa albipennis* Gould" by Shane Parker. *Bull. B.O.C.* 88 (4): 57-58. The type-locality is the easternmost of the Sunday Islands, 123° 13' E. 16° 24' 30" S at the mouth of King Sound, north-west Australia. The elucidation of the type-locality casts much doubt upon the validity of the race *alisteri*. "On the Thick-billed Ground Dove *Gallicolumba salamonis* (Ramsay)" by Shane Parker. *Bull. B.O.C.* 88 (4): 58-59. The type-locality is determined and the species' apparent rarity noted. "An instance of apparent sympatry between the Great and Spotted Bowerbirds" by Shane Parker. *Bull. B.O.C.* 88 (3): 56. *C. nuchalis* and *C. maculata* were observed at the one locality near Hughenden, Qld. "Records of four Species of *Pterodroma* from the central Pacific Ocean" by Patrick J. Gould and Warren B. King. *Auk* 84: 591-4. Details, sightings and specimens of *P. ultima*, *P. rostrata*, *P. neglecta* and *P. arminjoniana*. "Storm-Petrels *Oceanodroma* spp. in the Indian Ocean by R. S. Bailey, R. Pocklington and P. R. Willis. *Ibis* 110: 27-34. Specimens of *O. monorhis* and *O. matsudairae* were encountered and collected in the Indian Ocean. Notes on identification at sea are given.

—J.L.McK.

Species and Ecology. *The Living Bird*. 6th Ann. 1967: 187-211. "Ecological Adaptations of the Brown Bobby", by K. E. L. Simmons. Describes coloration of adults and young, feeding behaviour, food supply, mortality, breeding cycles and social behaviour. "Breeding seasons of the House Sparrow and Tree Sparrow *Passer* spp. at Oxford", by D. C. Seel. *Ibis* 110 (2): 129-144. In *P. domesticus* laying birds fell into two groups, namely "early" and "later" starters, which, from a comparison with data obtained from birds of known age, appeared to be mostly females two or more years old, and females one year old respectively. In *P. montanus*, however, it appeared that birds of all ages were beginning breeding at about the same time in the season. The laying of the first clutches in both species was correlated with prevailing air temperatures.—J.L.McK.

Morphology, Physiology, and Embryology: "A study of clicking and its source in some avian species", by John A. McCoshen and Robert P. Thompson. *Can. Jour. Zool.* 46 (2): 169-172. An investigation was carried out to study clicking and its source in 12 avian species. Clicking sounds were

found to be qualitatively the same for all species although the frequency and the intensity varied. After hatching, the sounds continued in all but one species, (viz. Ring-necked Pheasant), and continued for the longest duration in the passerines where it lasted for five days. The glottis was observed to be the source of clicking and the sounds may be caused by the movement of cartilage tissue. "A study of the effect of egg separation on hatching time and of the source of clicking sounds in the embryo of the domestic chicken", by John A. McCoshen and Robert P. Thompson. *Can. Jour. Zool.* **46** (2): 243-248. Hatching times of separated eggs were more variable than eggs in close contact. (Significant difference at the 0.05 level.) Other observations are described. "A timed series of embryonic developmental stages of the Adelie Penguin (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) from Signy Island, South Orkney Islands" by C. Herbert. *Brit. Antarctic Surv. Bull.* **14**: 45-67.—J.L.McK.

Song. "Dual singing by New Guinea birds" by Jared M. Diamond and John W. Terborgh. *Auk*. **85**: 62-82. The songs of 217 New Guinea species were identified. Three species were found to engage regularly in dual singing, four species occasionally and one species rarely.—J.L.McK.

Literary Notes No. 12

An Ornithologist's Library (Concluded). The following question was put to several ornithologists. "If, in the light of your *present* knowledge of ornithological literature and of your *present* experience in ornithology, you were just taking up the study of birds, which six books would you aim to purchase as the first in your ornithological library and why? (Approx. maximum price \$20 per book or total of \$120)."

The replies:

Mr. Jack Hyett, Editor, *The Emu*: "The Review Editor's question poses a problem. If one were really a beginner one would probably choose six books devoted to bird identification, but the request is to choose the beginnings of a library in the light of present attitudes. I imagine that I would still make my first choice the first book I bought as a beginner forty years ago, Cayley's *What Bird Is That?*, not now as an aid to identification, but rather for the tremendous amount of information about each Australian bird packed into its text.

For identification purposes there is still only one book which, with all its faults, covers the whole field, and that is Leach's *An Australian Bird Book*, so that becomes second choice.

Then it would be necessary to add a book on bird biology for proper understanding of the ways of life of the creatures of our studies. There are many possibilities here but Van Tyne and Berger's *Fundamentals of Ornithology* seems to me to be the most comprehensive and is therefore added.

Although there is much overlapping between Landsborough Thomson's *A New Dictionary of Birds* and Van Tyne and Berger it seems to be a fundamental reference which could not be omitted.

Because, at present, I find the study of bird behaviour the most fascinating aspect of ornithology a further reference book in this subject seems essential and Armstrong's *Bird Display and Behaviour* would be my choice here.

To counterbalance these texts and to keep alive the real spirit of amateur bird-study, my last choice would be a book which is not entirely a birdbook, but which is a much-read inspiration in my own library, the old classic, Gilbert White's *Natural History Of Selbourne*.