

Bell (1967, *Emu* **67**: 62) records the species as 'reasonably abundant on the lagoons' in the Balimo Sub-district, Papua. Schodde and Hitchcock (1968, *Tech. Pap. Div. Wildl. Res. CSIRO, Aust. No. 13*) recorded only 'single birds and small groups of four to five that were observed on a number of occasions . . . . around the margins of the lake (Kutubu).' Schodde (pers. comm.) saw only flocks of less than 10 birds on small lakes and dams in the Port Moresby area between June and September 1962. He did not visit Moitaka ponds.

From the above it certainly appears that *P. sulcirostris* prefers lagoons and lakes rather than rivers in New Guinea and has been thought to be generally uncommon. The founding of the New Guinea Bird Society recently (Mackay 1966, *Aust. Bird Bander* **3**: 34) has probably caused a great development of bird watching at Port Moresby and generally. Before this most information came from overseas expeditions which perhaps were concerned with more interesting species. However, Moitaka has been a popular birding area for visitors and local residents for several years and is close to Port Moresby, so it is unlikely that the cormorants there have been missed. They have probably responded to the recent development of the sewage works. The ponds were completed in 1954 and soon became colonized by fish, so that both *Tilapia* spp. and *Gourami* spp. are now established (Mackay *in litt.*). A third alternative would appear to be that *P. sulcirostris* may be to some extent nomadic; the species has not been reported breeding at Moitaka and may not visit the area at that time, but the counts to date are not sufficiently frequent to confirm this (40, 24 Oct. 1966; 550, 7 May; 700, 28 May; 1000, 18 June; 1800, 24 June, all 1967: Mackay pers. comm.).

Moitaka, being near Port Moresby, is a very suitable study area. Local bird-watchers might keep regular counts of the numbers of individuals (and species) frequenting the Treatment Ponds. By noting the direction of the evening flight, roosting and breeding grounds might be discovered. The species has economic interest. Rand & Gilliard (*op. cit.*) mention that the indigenes eat them. Fish-raising in ponds may become important, so that a study of likely predators such as this species would be well worth while, and could be extended to the banding of nestlings at the breeding colony when it is located.

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5 July 1968, revised 20 February 1969.

### **Grey-backed Storm Petrel in Tasmania**

Gould collected four specimens of the Grey-backed Storm Petrel *Garrodia nereis*, from which he described the species, in eastern Bass Strait in May 1839. The specimens are now in the

Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, USA (Alexander 1921, *Emu* **20**: 224-227). Since then the species has not apparently been collected in Australia or at sea nearby, though Sharland (1958, *Tasmanian birds*) records individuals south-east of Tasmania.

The Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston, recently received two specimens. The first (Reg. No. 1968.2.221) was found dead by a schoolboy on 10 June 1968 at the base of the Eddystone Point lighthouse among a number of others apparently of the same species. The second (Reg. No. 1968.2.224) was found by a farmer at Priory about 16 km from the north-eastern coast on 8 July 1968. It had apparently died as a result of striking overhead wires.

Unfortunately the birds had died about three weeks before being skinned and they could not be sexed or aged, but their measurements were as follows: total length 157 and 154 mm, tail 62 and 62, wing 120 and 126, wing spread 325 and 331, tarsus 31·7 and 30·8, middle toe 26 and 25·6, bill to base of skull 17·7 and 19·1, first and second specimen respectively throughout. These measurements are slightly less than those given by Stuart-Sutherland (1922, *Emu* **22**: 54-59) for two birds collected on Puysegur Point at the south-western corner of the south island of New Zealand on 7 December 1921, but the difference may be partly the result of dessication.

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7 August 1968.

### **Albert Lyrebird in Blackall Range**

Records of the Albert Lyrebird *Menura alberti* north of Brisbane were examined by A. H. Chisholm (1957, *Emu* **57**: 25-30), who referred to an egg which had been in the possession of A. J. Campbell and which had been taken on the Mary River, draining north through the Blackall Range, stating that it had been taken probably by W. H. Caldwell who was studying the lung-fish and platypus in that area. The egg is now in the National Museum, Melbourne. It is of interest to note that there are also two eggs, apparently from the same source, in the British Museum (Natural History).

Campbell obtained his egg from someone in Britain; this was probably the dealer Jamrach who had supplied two similar eggs to P. Crowley, a well known egg collector in the latter half of last century. The Crowley collection was bequeathed to the British Museum where it was received in 1901-2. The two lyrebird eggs were entered in the register as from the Mary River and are so listed in the Museum Catalogue of Birds Eggs 1903, vol. 3. If any further history had been associated with the eggs it is now lost because unfortunately the Crowley catalogues, from which the register data had been extracted, were returned to the family.