

## RAOU FELLOW: CITATION

At the Annual General Meeting on 8 May 1974, the Council's recommendation that Mr S. Marchant be elected Fellow was accepted.



**STEPHEN MARCHANT**

The facts that Stephen Marchant has recently been made a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union and that the citation for the Union Medal of the British Ornithologists' Union (reprinted in Newsletter No. 9, Nov. 1971) described him as 'one of the great international figures in ornithology' is, of course, irrelevant as far as nomination for Fellowship of the RAOU is concerned. For, Fellows of the Union must be persons who have rendered distinguished services to Australasian ornithology; and, in Australia at least, he has been a controversial figure.

His determination that EMU, as the official mouthpiece of ornithology in a region of great scientific importance, should qualify as a journal of international repute has meant an insistence, as Editor, on high standards of scientific scholarship and in the use of language and on the elimination of anything that might bear the stamp of a cosy parochialism; and this has sometimes led to conflict. Nevertheless, many of those who have disagreed with him have come to respect his ability to see an opponent's point of view and to be convinced by argument, while tribute has been paid to his patience and the constructiveness of his criticisms.

However, it is not merely, or even mainly, for his Editorship that he has been nominated. In the mid-sixties, he was a leader among a group of ornithologists with overseas experience who saw the size of the gap that had opened up between Australia and the rest of the scientific world, and who set about bridging it. He was a founder of the ACT branch of the RAOU (now the Canberra Ornithologists' Group) and was its Chairman when Canberra staged the 1968 RAOU Congress—a full-scale three-day scientific meeting, the first of its kind in Australian ornithology. He established the Nest Record Scheme and organized it for several years. As an RAOU Councillor, he was active in the appointment, in 1968, of the Review Committee, whose report led to major changes in the constitution and activities of the Union.

Finally, he is Editor of the third edition of the Checklist, of which Part I has just been published. This task has been made the more difficult by the premature retirement of the compiler; and Stephen Marchant has devoted uncountable hours to the process of seeing the text through the press—infinity more than his own modest ascription on page iv would suggest.

Australian ornithology found in Stephen Marchant the right man in the right place at the right time.