

nest. Direct observation the nest site supported the fact that only the parent birds were near the nest box during breeding.

The total number of events for each selected time period (e.g. 60 minutes) was recorded by holes punched in a roll of paper tape. Each event was an interruption of the infra-red beam such as when a bird entered or left the nest hole. The paper tape could be removed at convenient times and analysed against real time. Field trials of the apparatus were also conducted using nesting Crimson Rosellas.

In both the field trials the species successfully reared fledged young. It appeared that the presence of the recorder and the switching gear had little or no effect on parental behaviour.

The pre-selected time intervals enable subtle changes in the frequency of nest visitation behaviour to be

recorded and these could be related to climatic conditions. However, it should be noted that the shorter the time interval selected, the greater the power drain from the battery and therefore the more often it would be necessary to change the battery.

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A NORTHERN TERRITORY SPECIMEN OF HUTTON'S SHEARWATER

The recent revelation that Hutton's Shearwater *Puffinus huttoni* migrates into the northern Indian Ocean (Halse, 1981, *Emu* 81: 42-44) together with Warham's suggestion (1981, *Emu* 81: 44) that pre-breeding birds may circumnavigate Australia is supported by the recent discovery of a live but exhausted bird in Katherine, Northern Territory. The bird was found early in the morning of June 6, 1981 and handed to the Conservation Commission by Ms. P. Kerr. It was later prepared as a study skin and lodged with the Northern Territory Museum (Reg. No. T1001). Identification as *P. huttoni* was based on size (wing 226 mm., exposed culmen 37.2 mm), the heavy grey brown suffusion on the neck and

the grey brown axillaries lacking white tipping. The specimen was a female with a straight oviduct and an immature ovary lacking developed follicles. Its fresh weight of 267 g is considerably lighter than the mean weight of 364.1 g derived from seventeen birds weighed on the breeding colony (Harrow, 1976, *Notornis* 23: 269-288). The specimen collected at sea off north-western Western Australia was also much heavier in weight, 370 g (Halse, loc. cit.). Despite the seemingly exhausted state of the bird and its extremely light weight, post mortem examination showed moderate amounts of subcutaneous fat present. Only the body feathers were moulting.

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