

their wings (to say nothing of their abominable screeching) was like the thundering of distant surf or the passage of a high wind through trees. At sundown each day the "foxes" passed over our camp on their way to feeding-grounds; their numbers then seemed to run into millions. A much more heartening sight was the presence of a fair number of koalas (native bears) in trees about the locality.

The conduct of the camp throughout was excellent. A cook had been taken out from Rockhampton, and "waiters" were arranged by roster, with the energetic G. H. Barker giving general oversight as secretary. On Saturday night, October 25th, we gave a lantern entertainment, lecturettes, etc., to the good people of Byfield, and on the following day the return journey to Yeppoon was made. There the party split, chiefly into two bodies, one to visit the Keppel Islands and the other to spend a few days on Tambourine Mountain, south-east of Brisbane.

Visit to North Keppel Island

By M. S. R. SHARLAND, R.A.O.U., Hobart.

The Keppel Islands, consisting of North and South Keppel, and many rocks and islets, lie some ten or twelve miles off the coast opposite Yeppoon, in Keppel Bay. The day following the return from camp at Byfield a party of twelve set out in a fishing boat for the northern island in the hope of adding to their list of birds species that frequented the open sea and the shore. It was a warm, sunny day, and the voyage to the island was delightful. Many Wedge-tailed Shearwaters skimmed the ocean and came close to our boat, while several Pied Cormorants were observed en route. We landed in a small bay towards the northern end of the island on the beach of which was seen a solitary Pied Oyster-catcher, which flew away uttering his piping note, while a Silver Gull and several Crested Terns were some distance out.

North Keppel Island is approximately five miles in length by about one and a half miles in width at the widest part, and is covered with a thick growth of low eucalyptus scrub, palms, and a little mangrove. On the ocean, or eastern, side, the hills and the tops of the cliffs are bare of vegetation except thick coarse grass, well over a person's ankles, in which Pipits and Brown Quail were flushed. Members explored almost every part of the island in the four or five hours at their disposal, and found several birds nesting, including the Boobook Owl, Bar-shouldered Dove, White-headed Sea-Eagle, Quail, Forest Kingfisher, and others. One of the party captured a young, but almost full-grown Stone-Plover, who was made to pose for enthusiastic photographers. On a rock jutting out into the sea a disused nest of a pair of Osprey was found, and the birds were flying overhead.

Sea-Curlew and Sandpipers were observed on the muddy flats around the coast, but there was a lack of shore birds generally. The most characteristic bird of the island was the Varied Honey-eater (*Meliphaga versicolor*), which crowded the trees and made a great din. Strange to say, although so numerous on the island, they were not observed on the mainland. Pheasant-Coucals, Bee-eaters, Friar-Birds, Brown Hawks, White-fronted Herons, Australian Goshawk, Mangrove Bitterns, Chestnut-eared Finches, Crows and Reef Heron were among the others observed.

The return journey to Yeppoon was made in the evening, and just before the sun had disappeared behind the hills, a stately Frigate-Bird sailed high above our boat and was lost to sight in the dusk. Many Crested Terns passed us, flying north.

Notes on the Birds observed during the Queensland Congress and Camp-out, 1924

By H. WOLSTENHOLME, R.A.O.U., Wahroonga, Sydney.

The birds observed were those of three localities:

1. ROCKHAMPTON and the neighbouring places to which outings were made during the period of the Congress.
2. YEPPOON, a seaside resort about 30 miles from Rockhampton, where a stay of a day or two was made on our way to and from Byfield. North Keppel Island was visited from Yeppoon.
3. BYFIELD, the place of the camp-out, a small banana-growing settlement, 25 miles north from Yeppoon, with palm-fringed creeks and banana plantations extending up into the thick scrub of the hillsides.

Members helped me greatly with these notes by reporting their observations. We were very fortunate in having Mr. H. G. Barnard with us at the camp and on the various outings, and we profited much from his long experience and wide knowledge of the birds of Northern Australia.

One hundred and eighty-two species were identified, and nests of 42 different species were seen.

Megapodius reinwardt. Scrub-Fowl.—These birds seem to be fairly plentiful in the Byfield district. In the thick scrub on the hillsides several of the huge steep-sided, small-topped mounds in which the eggs are deposited were shown to us—some that had been in use quite recently. A large lizard came out of a hollow in one mound, which gave us expectations of finding eggs, but though our guides dug deeply and thoroughly, no egg was found. The mounds are used and added to each year. This particular one was nearly 10 feet high and about 40 feet round the base, and has been in use four or five years.