

## LITERATURE

Edited by G. W. JOHNSTONE

### BOOKS

**Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan, together with those of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Ceylon** by Salim Ali and S. Dillon Ripley, 1972. Sponsored by Bombay nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay, Lond., NY: OUP. Vol. 5, Larks to Grey Hypocolius. Pp. xiii + 276, col. pll (paintings) 10, line drawings, maps. 253 x 180 mm. \$A18.00. Vol. 7, Laughing Thrushes to Mangrove Whistler. Pp. xiii + 236, col. pll (paintings) 11, line drawings, maps. 253 x 180 mm. \$A18.00.

Volumes 1-4 and 6 have already been reviewed in these columns (70: 37; 71: 144; 72: 119; 73: 141). Volume 5 covers the Alaudidae, Hirundinidae, Laniidae, Oriolidae, Dicruridae, Artamidae, Sturnidae, Corvidae and Bombycillidae, of which only the third and last families are not represented in Australia. Ali and Ripley list twenty species of larks from the Indian subregion, in nine genera (eight if we follow Harrison 1966, Ibis 108: 573-583, in synonymizing *Galerida* with *Alauda*). Australia, which seems so well suited to larks, has only the Bushlark *Mirafra javanica* (apart from the introduced Skylark *Alauda arvensis*), significantly the sole species occupying the corridor of the Sundas. The Indian subspecies of this species, *M. j. cantillans*, is stated to incorporate in its song imitations of the calls of practically every bird that shares its habitat; mimicry has been reported also in the Australian populations (Chisholm 1965, Emu 65: 57-64). *Alauda gulula* and *A. deva* are also stated to be mimics. According to Ali and Ripley, *Calandrella cinerea* and *Melanocorypha bimaculata* are two larks of gastronomy; they become excessively fat before the spring migration and are then caught in vast numbers.

The Indian subregion has nine species of Hirundinidae, compared with Australia's five. The only species occurring in both areas is the Barn Swallow *H. rustica*, with *H. r. gutturalis* a non-breeding visitor to northern Australia; the House Swallow *H. tahitica*, which occurs in India, and the Australian Welcome Swallow *H. neoxena* are probably best treated as members of a superspecies (Slater 1961, WA Nat. 8: 33-38; Storr 1973, List Qd Birds) rather than as conspecific.

The true shrikes, Laniidae, are absent from Australia, though *Lanius schach* and *L. cristatus* are recorded from New Guinea. The food of *L. schach* in India is rather grimly described as 'any small living thing that can be overpowered', and that of the other eight Indian species of *Lanius* seems to be little different. Strange then that snails are not mentioned in any of the detailed lists of prey given by the authors. I have encountered this apparently rare habit, snail-anvi's and all, with the Red-backed Shrike *L. collurio* (Parker 1960, Essex Nat. 30: 276-278) and know of only one other reference to it (Lachner 1958, Orn. Mitt. Stuttgart 10: 195-197).

India has four species of orioles (all in *Oriolus*), whereas Australia has three—two species of *Oriolus* and the Figbird *Sphecotheres viridis* (including *vieilloti* and *flaviventris*, see Storr 1973, op. cit.). The possibility that the Fairy Bluebirds *Irena* belong to the

Oriolidae has been mentioned previously (Emu 73: 142); coincidentally, perhaps, *I. puella* has been depicted in Plate 58 of this volume next to *Oriolus chinensis*. All four Indian species, *O. oriolus*, *chinensis*, *xanthornus* and *trillii*, are reported to take nectar, though their tongues are not known to be adapted for this habit.

Nine species of *Dicrurus* inhabit the Indian subregion, compared with Australia's one, the Spangled Drongo *D. bracteatus* (sometimes regarded as conspecific with *D. hottentottus*). The Black Drongo *D. macrocerus*, treated as a separate species by Vaurie (1962, Check-list of Birds of the World 15), is regarded by Ali and Ripley as conspecific with the African *D. adsimilis*. Feeding on nectar is mentioned by the authors for the species *macrocerus*, *leucophaeus*, *caeruleus*, *aeneus*, *remifer*, *hottentottus* and *paradisus*, the flowers involved including those of *Salmalia malabarica* (= *Bombax malabaricum*), *Bombax insignis* (Bombacaceae), *Butea monosperma*, *Erythrina* spp., *Acrocarpus* (Leguminosae) and the introduced *Grevillea robusta* and *Eucalyptus* spp. Gardner (1925, Proc. U.S. natn. Mus. 67, Art. 19: 1-49), discussing the tongues of various groups, wrote: 'In the drongos ... this fraying becomes in some forms very elaborate. Thus, in [*D. hottentottus*], the tongue is deeply split and the sides are incised, forming long, delicate, forward-pointing hairlike fringes, the delicate strands of which are very uniform in size and length. This is only slightly less marked in [*D. leucophaeus*] while in [*D. remifer*] the processes are very short and delicate. [*D. paradisus*] is much the same, while [*D. macrocerus*] has considerably less fraying'. Beecher (1953, Auk 70: 270-333) wrote: 'In *D. hottentottus*, the adaptive loss of the bill-notch and the nectar-adapted tongue indicate a strong approach to flower-feeding, though the persistence of rictal bristles suggests that insect-eating is still paramount'. These observations raise the question of whether the Australian *D. bracteatus* takes nectar.

Two species of *Artamus* (Artamidae, woodswallows) occur in the Indian subregion, compared with six in Australia. One, *A. leucorhynchus*, is common to both areas. The other, *A. fuscus*, is recorded as occasionally taking nectar. Gillies and Hall (1903, Nature Studies in Australia) and McKean (1969, Bull. Br. Orn. Club 89: 129-130) have reported brush-tipped tongues in several of the Australian species, and there are scattered references to flower-visiting (Moseley 1879, Notes by a Naturalist on the 'Challenger'; Broadbent in Campbell 1900, Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds; Whitlock in Sargent 1928, Emu 27: 185-192; Ingram 1972, Sunbird 3: 64-65; Lowe and Lowe 1972, Aust. Bird Watcher 4: 205-210; and numerous unpublished observations). Nectar-feeding in the woodswallows would make an interesting study. Nectar apart, *A. fuscus* is reported as feeding largely on butterflies, including species of *Danaus* and *Euploea*, which are highly distasteful to most other birds (exceptions including *Dicrurus mac-*

*rocercus*) and to lizards. One wonders what effect such predation has on any selection pressures directing the evolution of non-distasteful butterflies towards mimicry of *Danaus* and *Euploea* spp.

The Indian subregion is well off for starlings (*Sturnidae*), with nineteen species in six genera, compared with Australia's one native, *Aplonis metallica*, and two introductions, *Sturnus vulgaris* and *Acridotheres tristis*. As with the drongos, most Indian species are said to include nectar in their diet, and the Indian Myna *A. tristis* and the Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* are thought to play an important part in the cross-pollination of *Bombax* and *Erythrina* spp. The single Indian species of glossy starling, *Aplonis panayensis*, is among those taking nectar; are there any observations of this habit in Australian populations of *A. metallica*?

Ali and Ripley list twenty-two species of *Corvidae* for the subregion, in eight genera. These include the colourful blue and green magpies *Citta* (*Citta* on Plates 63 and 64), the tree pies *Dendrocitta*, the choughs *Pyrrhocorax* and the odd Hume's Ground Chough *Podoces humilis*, placed by Vaurie (1962, op. cit.) in the monotypic genus *Pseudopodoces*. Plate 62, one of those from Smythies' Birds of Burma (1953), includes as a bonus the two species of *Crypsirina*, a genus not occurring within Indian limits. The six species of *Corvus* listed include the House Crow *C. splendens*, which not infrequently jumps ship at Fremantle, WA (Serventy and Whittell 1968, Birds of Western Australia), and which eats, according to Ali and Ripley, 'practically everything that can be eaten'. The Brown-necked Raven *C. ruficollis* is placed as a subspecies of *C. corax* by the authors, though in view of the marked differences in its ecology and morphology it is possibly better treated as a separate species, as by Vaurie (1962, op. cit.). Writing of confusion in the taxonomy of another Indian species, the Jungle Crow *C. macrorhynchus*, the authors remark: 'Eastward, in the Australasian Region, confusion is still more confounded!' Possibly this is a reference to the former inclusion in *C. macrorhynchus* of *orrus* and *ceciliae*, suggested by Hartert in 1929 and rejected by Mayr and de Schauensee ten years later. Our understanding of the relationships of the endemic Australian species of *Corvus* has recently been placed on a sound basis by Rowley (1970, CSIRO Wildl. Res. 15: 27-71), who recognized five species, *coronoides*, *mellori*, *tasmanicus*, *orrus* and *bennetti*, in a single species-group.

Volume 5 ends with the refractory genera *Bombycilla* and *Hypocolius* (*Bombycillidae*), neither of which occurs in the Australian region.

Fifty-eight species of Indian babblers were dealt with in Volume 6; Volume 7 covers the remaining sixty-seven species and the flycatchers, monarchs and whistler. Among the babblers, several species are said to take nectar, including the White-crested Laughing Thrush *Garrulax leucolophus*, the Fire-tailed Myzornis *Myzornis pyrrhura* (the only babbler known to possess a brush-tongue, see Rand 1967, Fieldiana, Zool. 51: 53-61), six of the seven species of *Yuhina* and four of the five *Heterophasia*. Several species are stated to visit the flowers of *Rhododendron* (*Ericaceae*), though no further details are given. Reporting studies of the vegetation of Mount Wilhelm, Papua New Guinea, Wade and McVean (1969, Aust. natn. Univ. Res. School of Pacific Studies Publ. BG/1: 30-31) noted that among the local *Ericaceae* the white and pink-flowered heavily-scented *Rhododendron* spp were visited and presumably pollinated by hawkmoths, whereas the red-flowered scentless *Rhododendron* spp and the red-flowered (scentless?)

*Dimorphanthera* and *Vaccinium* spp were visited and presumably pollinated by honeyeaters. They observed further that the wide range in the length of the floral tubes of the red-flowered species appeared to be correlated with a corresponding range in the length of bill of the local honeyeaters. For example, the longest-billed species, *Melidectes princeps* (bill c. 47 mm), was almost always found feeding at *R. culminicolum* (length of floral tube 40-45 mm), whereas *Melidectes fuscus* (bill c. 35 mm) was observed only at the shorter-tubed *R. atropurpureum*. Are there any observations of nectar-feeding birds visiting the red-flowered *Rhododendron lochae* of north-eastern Queensland?

As noted previously, Ali and Ripley take Hartert's (1910) broad view of the *Muscicapidae*, within which they accord subfamilial rank to babblers, flycatchers, monarchs, whistlers, warblers and thrushes. At the other extreme Storr (1973, op. cit.) places the Australian species of this assemblage into eleven families, an action that reflects the growing uncertainty as to the relationships of the groups it contains. In their subfamily *Muscicapinae* Ali and Ripley list for India the genera *Rhinomyias* (1 species), *Muscicapa* (32), *Muscicapella* (1), *Culicicapa* (1) and *Rhipidura* (3). Some ornithologists would prefer to reduce *Muscicapa* by following the classification of Vaurie (1953, Bull. Amer. Mus. nat. Hist. 100: 453-538) and Vaurie and Parkes (in Parkes 1965, Ann. Carnegie Mus. 38: 49-67); under this arrangement, forms 1403-1410 and 1444-1446 would remain in *Muscicapa*, 1411-1427 and the unnumbered *hypoleuca* would be in *Ficedula*, 1428-1434 in *Niltava* and 1435-1443 in *Cyornis*. *Muscicapella* (*hodgsoni*), regarded as a subgenus of *Niltava* by Vaurie, is treated as a monotypic genus by Ali and Ripley.

The Australo-Papuan and Pacific 'robin-flycatchers' *Microeca*, *Eopsaltria*, *Petroica*, *Poecilodryas* etc. seem to form a close-knit group, possibly of common origin. The action of Vaurie (1953, op. cit.) in placing *Microeca* in the tribe *Muscicapini* ('typical flycatchers') and omitting all mention of the other genera is therefore puzzling. Storr (1973, op. cit.) regards the typical flycatchers (including *Microeca*, *Eopsaltria*, *Poecilodryas* etc. and excluding *Rhipidura*) as constituting, together with the thrushes, a single family, the *Turdidae* (an association with which I would agree).

India possesses two species of monarch flycatchers, a paradise flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi* and a blue monarch *Hypothymis azurea*. (Ripley (1961, Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan) combined *Hypothymis* and *Monarcha* but used the junior name *Monarcha* for the enlarged genus. Attention was drawn to this error by Mayr (1962, Auk 79: 720) but in this volume *Monarcha* Vigors and Horsfield, 1827 has again been employed instead of *Hypothymis* Boie, 1826, without comment). Australia has six species of monarchs, in *Monarcha* (or, following Ripley, *Hypothymis*) and *Arses*. Whether *Myiagra* (including *Seisura* and *Piezorhynchus*, see Mayr 1963, Emu 63: 1-7 and Schodde and Hitchcock 1968, Tech. Pap. Div. Wildl. Res. CSIRO Aust. 13) and *Machaerirhynchus* are at all close to the monarchs is debatable; my opinion is that *Myiagra* is much closer to *Rhipidura*. A reappraisal of all the monarchine, myiagrine and rhipidurine genera, including those of Africa, is long overdue.

Volume 7 ends with India's only whistler, the Mangrove Whistler *Pachycephala grisola* (Blyth, 1843), a mainly Malaysian species that extends westwards to the Andamans and the Bay of Bengal. This species was listed as *P. cinerea* (Blyth, 1847) by Ripley

(1961, op. cit.), but Mukherjee (1970, J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc. 67: 112-113) has shown that the name *grisola* is not indeterminate and must be used instead. Mukherjee traced the use of *grisola* in the primary literature to 1939, but it was in fact employed in 1956, by Galbraith (Bull. Brit. Mus. nat. Hist. Zool. 4(4): 131-222).

I would support the suggestion of Schodde and Hitchcock (1968, op. cit.) that the Brown Whistler *P. simplex* (Northern Territory) is not conspecific with the Grey Whistler *P. griseiceps* (Queensland, New Guinea). I am presently investigating the possibility that the affinities of *simplex* lie rather with *phaionota* (Moluccas and islands off western New Guinea) and *grisola*. In this connexion it is interesting to note that Mathews (1912, Austral avian Rec. 1: 41) described the Melville Island population of *simplex* as *Pachycephala grisola riordani*.

S.A.P.

**Animals of the Arctic—the Ecology of the Far North** by Bernard Stonehouse, 1971. London: Ward Lock Ltd. Pp 171, numerous col. pl, figs, maps. 280 x 220 mm. £2.75.

'Far to the north of cities and civilization, surrounding the north geographical pole, lies an ice-covered, roughly rectangular ocean'. So starts this fine book; the region covered by it extends to include also the bare tundras round the Arctic Ocean and the northern edge of the boreal coniferous forest. It has six chapters: Arctic and Subarctic; North Polar Regions; The Changing Polar Climate; Arctic Seas; The Chain of Life; Sea Birds of the Arctic; Life on the Tundra; and Polar Challenge: Man in the Arctic. There is a short bibliography of seventeen useful texts for further reading, a highly selective glossary of eighteen technical terms and a useful index.

Visually, the book is superb. Reproduction of the numerous coloured photographs has been uniformly successful, providing a fine example of the offset process. One of the most impressive photographs is the spread on pages 80-81 of a colony of Kittiwakes, their nests clinging to the ledges of an overhanging sandstone cliff; another is the flying Puffin on page 87. There are many clear maps and figures, and these are valuable aids to the text. The only illustrations that lower the standard of the book as a whole are some of the paintings used to depict the various forms of life, often in place of photographs. The small washed-out portraits of sea-ducks on page 92, and of geese and ducks on pages 144-145 are the worst examples. The white marks on the sides of the neck of the Brent Goose have somehow become joined to form a collar. The bird named as a Curlew on page 91 is surely a Curlew Sandpiper.

The text is well written, informative and often stimulating. For example, in discussing the simplicity of Arctic ecology (as opposed to the complexity of, for example, tropical ecology) the author suggests that, although the small number of species involved is in part a result of the harshness of the environment, it also arises from its newness. Since the glaciations of the Permo-Carboniferous, 150 million years ago, there was none of the curious habitats offered by today's polar regions until the Pleistocene ice-age started, only about three million years ago. Thus no bird, mammal or flowering plant had met such an environment before, because they did not exist 150 million years ago.

The chapter on seabirds, although perhaps too super-

ficial for the specialist, does succeed well in providing a concise summary of the 50 or so species that obtain food during at least part of the year from the Arctic Ocean. In addition to the typical groups of marine and coastal birds, these include the phalaropes, divers and some eleven species of duck, which all feed at sea in spring while they wait for winter snow to clear and lakes to open. These species are also mentioned in a later section on 'Birds of the tundra', the divers, swans, geese, ducks, waders, raptors, auks and songbirds, almost all migrants from the temperate zone. Australasian readers will perhaps find this section tantalizing. For example, the thirty or so species of waders that migrate annually to breed on the tundra, many of which spend the other half of the year on Australasian shores, are dismissed in a single paragraph!

But this merely serves to remind the reader that this is not primarily a 'bird book'. I think it succeeds admirably as a guide to the ecology of the Arctic and, incidentally, to man's place in that great ecosystem.

G.W.J.

**Animals of the Antarctic—the Ecology of the Far South** by Bernard Stonehouse, 1972. Peter Lowe. Pp 171, numerous col. pl, figs, maps. 280 x 220 mm. £3.25.

This book deals with the cold region round the South Pole, the continent of Antarctica together with the broad expanse of the Antarctic Ocean and the scattering of small archipelagos and islands north to the Antarctic Convergence. It is a companion volume to *Animals of the Arctic*, reviewed above, and is likewise divided into six chapters: The Antarctic Region; The Antarctic Ocean; The Antarctic Islands; Antarctic birds; The Mammals of Antarctica; and Man and the Antarctic. At the back are a short bibliography and glossary, and a comprehensive index, which is, unfortunately, unreliable.

The text is in general crisp and informative and is very well supported by a wide selection of photographs, maps and diagrams, all of which are in colour. The choice of illustrations is frequently superb. For example, among the birds is a fine study of the Brown Skua on page 79.

The section on birds accounts for about one quarter of the book. This chapter is useful and reasonably up to date, but contains nothing very profound. It attempts to trace the ecological adaptations for breeding in birds of the south polar region. Most successful are accounts of the penguins, but the other seabirds and the few landbirds are by contrast dismissed with generally brief and superficial text. Scientific names have been avoided almost completely, but this has little merit because the concepts of taxonomic relations have been introduced here and there throughout the section.

All of the birds, other than penguins, are illustrated by paintings. Many of these species are also well illustrated by photographs, as are the penguins. It is a pity that the opportunity was not taken to use coloured diagrams and detailed illustrations more freely and informatively to show, for example, the structures of the bill and various feeding techniques of the petrels, rather than simply portraying all of the birds mentioned, often not very successfully.

The book is a good general introduction to Antarctic biology, but not a particularly useful source of information on the ecology of most of the Antarctic birds, penguins excepted.

P.J.F.

**Guide des Oiseaux et Mammifères des Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises** by J. Prevost and J.-L. Mougin. Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé S.A. Pp 230, b. & w. pl 12, col. ill 10, figs 18, maps 47 + end covers. 135 x 203 mm. In French. £3.50.

The Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises (TAAF) consist, on the Antarctic continent, of Terre Adélie, a slim wedge of land between longitudes 136°E and 142°E, extending north from the south pole to a 240-km stretch of coast; and, in the sub-antarctic zone, of the Iles Kerguelen at 49°S, the Archipel Crozet at 46°S, and the Iles Saint-Paul et Nouvelle-Amsterdam at 38°S, all in the southern Indian Ocean. Terre Adélie is effectively an enclave in Australian Antarctic Territory, which it adjoins to east and west, and the only French Antarctic station. Dumont d'Urville (at the same longitude as Adelaide, SA), is about 1,300 km east of Casey, Australia's easternmost station on the continent. Kerguelen is about 500 km north-north-west of Australia's Heard Island. Because the contents of this book are derived from observations at the four principal localities, they are of peculiar interest to Australians.

The book reminds me of a Collins field-guide, and this has presumably been the publishers' model. The bulk of the text consists of accounts of each species in turn, giving a description for identification, measurements, comparisons with similar species and details of distribution, habitat, breeding cycles, food and mortality. All species, native and introduced, recorded in TAAF are covered. The fifty-nine forms of birds include such unlikely species as the Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*, recorded only once at Kerguelen where it had been killed by a Brown Skua *Stercorarius skua lonnbergi*; and this is given as full treatment (even to the extent that both are illustrated on the dust-cover) as, for example, the Blue Petrel *Halobaena caerulea*, nesting at Crozet and Kerguelen. The coloured illustrations, grouped in the middle of the book with the black-and-white photos, are by F. Berille and although rather small, portray on the whole successfully fifty-one of the species. Maps at the back record all known breeding localities of the forty-six species breeding in TAAF, and show some records of occurrence elsewhere. Mammals receive the same treatment as birds, but the only whale included is the Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*.

As a source of information this book has great value, but as a source of authoritative reference material its usefulness is limited. Measurements, for example, are given sometimes as a single figure (presumably a mean), sometimes as a range; numbers of individuals measured and differences in measurements between the sexes, which are often considerable, are seldom indicated. No references are quoted as sources of data (and it would probably be unreasonable to expect them in a book of this size), so that the material presented can be taken at face value only. Although it may seem carping to expect a field-guide to do the job of a handbook, this book offers more than most field-guides; and one feels that with only a slight enlargement of its content, and probably format, it could have succeeded admirably as a handbook.

Written in moderately succinct French, the only concession to the English reader is the inclusion of English names of animals, both in headings in the text and in the index. The maps would have been more conveniently placed beside the text for each species, instead of being grouped together at the back. Their interpretation is greatly aided by reference to a map repro-

duced on each end-cover, showing all the islands of the Southern Ocean.

Translated into English, this book would be an invaluable vade-mecum for Australian ornithologists travelling south. One wonders how long it will be before a comparable work is available for the birds and mammals of Australian Antarctic Territory and her subantarctic islands.

G.W.J.

**The Natural History of Cape Clear Island**, edited by J. T. R. Sharrock, 1973. Berkhamstead (England): T. & A. D. Poyser Ltd. Pp 207, numerous b. & w. pl, drawings, figs, maps. Paperback edition (not for sale); casebound edition, c. 140 x 220 mm. £3.00.

The bird observatory on Cape Clear Island was founded in 1959, since when observations made there have been of such significance that it has deservedly earned world-wide renown. This book sets out the results of the observatory's first eleven years, and provides an absorbing picture of the island and its life.

Bird observatories were established at many points round the coasts of the British Isles from 1933 onwards (see Lockley 1973, *Emu* 73: 222-229), but Cape Clear Island occupies a site of special significance: it is the most southerly point of Ireland (apart from the Fastnet Rock) and only a little east of the most south-westerly point. It is therefore uniquely placed to receive vagrant birds, not only across the Atlantic from America, but, depending on weather systems, also species originating in Europe and Asia. However exciting all this may be to the observatory's visitors, especially during the spring and autumn migration periods, the results assembled here are impressive and do show how patterns emerge from consistent recording of common migrants and rarities.

But perhaps contributing even more to the observatory's ornithological significance is its record in the field of sea-watching. Before its foundation, sea-watching had been practised along the eastern coast of Britain, and notably in the English Channel at Portland Bill on the Dorset coast. It soon became plain that Cape Clear, as a result of its location at the south-western corner of the British Isles, commanded a region of considerable movement of seabirds and presented possibly unrivalled opportunities for its study. Rare shearwaters, such as Cory's, Little and Great, occur regularly; and Sooty Shearwaters, previously regarded as rare in these latitudes, turn up in hundreds every autumn, rafts of over 300 having been recorded at times. There have even been four confirmed sightings of Black-browed Albatrosses, one in summer and three in autumn, and a single August record of a Wilson's Storm-petrel. The island also has a small but slowly increasing breeding population of Fulmars and small colonies of the four British breeding auks—Razorbill, Guillemot, Black Guillemot and Puffin.

Nearly half of the book consists of a systematic list of the birds, prepared by the editor, with histograms for most species seen on more than ten occasions, showing occurrence through the year. These are based on the 11-year averages for 1959-69, expressed per hour of observation for birds recorded in sea-passage, per day for other species. The island is about 5 km long and 1.7 km wide with an area of 640 ha; clearly all birds present could not be counted each day, and in fact the data were collected during 2,952 hours of systematic sea-watching and 2,038 daily census counts. Thus the year has been split into 24 half-monthly periods for the seabirds and 72 five-day periods for

the landbirds, and the histograms display the seasonal patterns of occurrences. Many points of interest emerge from these results, especially when related species are compared; perhaps one would have liked a little more critical, even speculative, appraisal of some of them.

To some extent this criticism is answered in other sections. In 'Sea-watching', the editor discusses some of the technical problems and errors inherent in this most demanding activity. It is a little daunting to learn that for effective sea-watching, a team of four is necessary; one watching close birds with the naked eye, one using binoculars to see those further out, one with a telescope to pick up the distant ones, and one writing down the observations. W. R. P. Bourne contributes a short but typically stimulating section entitled 'Cape Clear and seabird studies', in which he traces the history of study of the movements of seabirds and assesses the findings at Cape Clear in the context of those made at other sites along the western coasts of Europe.

In 'The Ornithological Year' the editor summarizes, on a half-monthly basis, the major ornithological events occurring through the year, an excellent guide for the ornithologist planning a visit. In 'Some good days' he recalls three memorable days, evoking in the reader the excitement and enthusiasm that bird-watching can generate.

Other sections, by various authors, cover many other aspects of the island's natural history: mammals, various

invertebrate groups, plants, its human population and place-names. A full history of the observatory is also given, and makes the achievements recorded in this book the more remarkable: the only period when the observatory had a resident Warden (paid a subsistence salary) was for twelve months in 1968-69; otherwise it was manned only when amateur ornithologists could take their holidays there. One, perhaps surprising, omission is any summary of the results of bird-banding at the observatory; but it is explained that with the considerable amount of cover on this quite large island the major emphasis has been put on observing, leaving little time for banding. Indeed the banding total has averaged only about 200 birds per year. It is perhaps salutary for us in Australia, where so much effort has been expended in bird-banding, to realize just how much important information can be accumulated by simple observation at a single strategically chosen locality over several years.

The book is simply but well produced by offset printing, and is greatly enhanced by the many delightful pen and ink drawings, mostly of birds, by Robert Gillmor. It is a worthy tribute to the enthusiasm of the editor and all associated with the observatory. One can well appreciate the sentiment expressed by a regular visitor to the observatory: 'This is a place I just can't Cape Clear of!'

G.W.J.

#### AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGY

*A continuing and selected catalogue of papers compiled by A. R. McEvey*

Because the contents of the *New Guinea Bird Society Newsletter* are usually short notes mainly of local interest, we have decided not to give details of each issue as previously and as customary for other periodicals selected. We intend to summarize the contents of issues received in the following way:

*New Guinea Bird Society Newsletter* (83-93) March to September 1973

Contain brief observations and local records by many observers.

Also:

(84) Birds observed on Mt Albert Edward, Papua (B. J. Coates)

(85) Review of *Avifauna of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea* by J. M. Diamond 1972 (L. W. C. Filewood with his personal observations)

(87) Magnificent Riflebirds in display (B. J. Coates)

(87) Additions to the list of birds of Anir (Feni) Island, New Ireland District (B. J. Coates)

(93) The Pectoral Sandpiper—a new bird for Papua New Guinea (B. J. Coates) 3

*The Tasmanian Naturalist* (34 No references) (35) November 1973

White-browed and Masked Woodswallows in Tasmania (R. Good, A. M. McGarvie, O. M. G. Newman and D. Pinner) 2.

A record of the Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus* in Tasmanian waters (D. R. Milledge) 5

A third Arctic Tern *Sterna macrura* for Tasmania (D. R. Milledge) 5

Easter camp 1973, Adventure Bay (inc. birds) (C. H. Mosey and M. L. Westbrook) 7

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the landbirds, and the histograms display the seasonal patterns of occurrences. Many points of interest emerge from these results, especially when related species are compared; perhaps one would have liked a little more critical, even speculative, appraisal of some of them.

To some extent this criticism is answered in other sections. In 'Sea-watching', the editor discusses some of the technical problems and errors inherent in this most demanding activity. It is a little daunting to learn that for effective sea-watching, a team of four is necessary; one watching close birds with the naked eye, one using binoculars to see those further out, one with a telescope to pick up the distant ones, and one writing down the observations. W. R. P. Bourne contributes a short but typically stimulating section entitled 'Cape Clear and seabird studies', in which he traces the history of study of the movements of seabirds and assesses the findings at Cape Clear in the context of those made at other sites along the western coasts of Europe.

In 'The Ornithological Year' the editor summarizes, on a half-monthly basis, the major ornithological events occurring through the year, an excellent guide for the ornithologist planning a visit. In 'Some good days' he recalls three memorable days, evoking in the reader the excitement and enthusiasm that bird-watching can generate.

Other sections, by various authors, cover many other aspects of the island's natural history: mammals, various

invertebrate groups, plants, its human population and place-names. A full history of the observatory is also given, and makes the achievements recorded in this book the more remarkable: the only period when the observatory had a resident Warden (paid a subsistence salary) was for twelve months in 1968-69; otherwise it was manned only when amateur ornithologists could take their holidays there. One, perhaps surprising, omission is any summary of the results of bird-banding at the observatory; but it is explained that with the considerable amount of cover on this quite large island the major emphasis has been put on observing, leaving little time for banding. Indeed the banding total has averaged only about 200 birds per year. It is perhaps salutary for us in Australia, where so much effort has been expended in bird-banding, to realize just how much important information can be accumulated by simple observation at a single strategically chosen locality over several years.

The book is simply but well produced by offset printing, and is greatly enhanced by the many delightful pen and ink drawings, mostly of birds, by Robert Gillmor. It is a worthy tribute to the enthusiasm of the editor and all associated with the observatory. One can well appreciate the sentiment expressed by a regular visitor to the observatory: 'This is a place I just can't Cape Clear of!'

G.W.J.

#### AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGY

*A continuing and selected catalogue of papers compiled by A. R. McEvey*

Because the contents of the *New Guinea Bird Society Newsletter* are usually short notes mainly of local interest, we have decided not to give details of each issue as previously and as customary for other periodicals selected. We intend to summarize the contents of issues received in the following way:

*New Guinea Bird Society Newsletter* (83-93) March to September 1973

Contain brief observations and local records by many observers.

Also:

(84) Birds observed on Mt Albert Edward, Papua (B. J. Coates)

(85) Review of *Avifauna of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea* by J. M. Diamond 1972 (L. W. C. Filewood with his personal observations)

(87) Magnificent Riflebirds in display (B. J. Coates)

(87) Additions to the list of birds of Anir (Feni) Island, New Ireland District (B. J. Coates)

(93) The Pectoral Sandpiper—a new bird for Papua New Guinea (B. J. Coates) 3

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A third Arctic Tern *Sterna macrura* for Tasmania (D. R. Milledge) 5

Easter camp 1973, Adventure Bay (inc. birds) (C. H. Mosey and M. L. Westbrook) 7

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