

all have large bills, the averages and variations in the birds from the different States being as follows:—

State.	Largest.		Smallest.		Average.		Mean. (No. of specimens in brackets.)
	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	
New South Wales	40	42	38	38	39	40	39.8 (5)
Victoria	41	39	35	34	38	36	36.8 (57)
Western Australia	40	38	39	38	40	38	38.0 (4)

The numbers are, of course, too small to found any conclusions on them, though they certainly suggest that Victorian birds have smaller bills than those from the more northern States.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, we think we may claim to have shown that all the Penguins that breed on the coasts of Australia belong to one race, for which the proper name is *Eudyptula minor novæhollandiæ*, and that no further differentiation of forms is possible on the evidence at present available. Mr. Mathews has specially appealed to Australian ornithologists to study the problem on the spot, and we have done so entirely without prejudice, with the above result. We do not think Mr. Mathews has anywhere stated how many skins had been examined by him when he separated the Australian birds of this species into three sub-species. We have given full details of the numbers available to us and the localities from which they were obtained, so that in any further discussion of the subject other workers may know exactly on what material our conclusion is founded.

#### Protection of Birds.

WE have received vol. ii. of "The Statement of the Permanent Wild Life Protection Fund" of the U.S.A., 1915-16, and we heartily congratulate the author, Dr. W. T. Hornaday, on what he has brought before us and on the good work that has been done by the Fund. It is difficult to realize how any of the American States can possibly refuse to protect fully their animal and bird life after reading what is brought before them in this book; but possibly many do not want to read it.

It is with pleasure that we are able to state that the Victorian Parliament has just passed an amendment of the *Game Act*, which prohibits the possession of feathers and eggs of practically all our valuable insectivorous birds, including the Egret. Our hon. secretary has been trying to get this done for years past, and we congratulate the last Government (which had Sir Alexander Peacock as its Premier) upon having passed such a much-needed

law, which we must now all help to carry out. The clauses in it which are especially valuable are as follows:—"6. In section nine of the Principal Act—(a) 'Any person who buys sells consigns or knowingly has in his possession house or control any flesh skin feathers or other portion of any game or native game killed or destroyed during any period in which such killing or destroying was or is prohibited by this Act or by any Proclamation thereunder shall for every such offence be liable to a penalty of not more than Five pounds and for every subsequent offence to a penalty of not less than Ten pounds or more than Fifty pounds'; (b) at the end of the said section nine there shall be inserted the following sub-section:—'(2) After the first day of January One thousand nine hundred and eighteen so far as regards Egrets and so far as regards any other native game specified in any proclamation to be made by the Governor in Council for the purposes of this sub-section any person so offending shall be liable to the like penalties as aforesaid whether such Egrets or native game were killed or taken in Victoria or elsewhere.'"

We are glad to notice that a similar provision is before the Parliament in New South Wales.

The Duchess of Portland presided at the twenty-seventh annual meeting of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, held at the Middlesex Guildhall on 12th March, 1918. The society's gold medal was presented, through representatives, to Dr. Hornaday and Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt, for their successful efforts in forwarding the treaty—the first international treaty for such a purpose—between the United States and Canada for the protection of birds migrating between those countries. This treaty protects all bird-life between the Gulf of Mexico and the North Pole, and has saved American farmers many millions of dollars, inasmuch as that hitherto the loss in crops destroyed by insects amounted in the United States to 520,000,000 dollars.

Mr. Butler, attaché to the American Embassy, replaced Mr. Page, who was unable to attend, and represented Dr. Hornaday. In thanking the society for this distinction, awarded for the first time to an American, he said that the news would be of keen interest to all those interested in bird-life throughout the States. He compared moths and insects to the enemy submarines, and the birds to the aviators who watch and destroy them.

Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt, who was formerly a lecturer at Manchester University, and has since done so much by both speech and pen for the bird-life of Canada, was represented by Sir George Purley.

Birds that do more harm than good, if there are such, are not worth mentioning—their number is so small; and it was suggested that if farmers were made to understand this through chambers of agriculture and farmers' unions from a materialistic point of view, results would be more satisfactory than if the propaganda

came through private sources, which are generally looked upon with suspicion.

An instance was given regarding the woods which have been felled, where the insects swarming to the newly-cut stumps were so overwhelming in their numbers that it will be impossible to use those same woods for years unless the birds are allowed to save them.—*The Queen*, 23/3/18.

### Description of a New Sub-species of *Hylacola pyrrhopygia* (Vig. & Hors.)

By F. E. HOWE, C.M.Z.S., R.A.O.U.

THROUGH the courtesy of Mr. H. L. White, of Belltrees, I was enabled to exhibit before the Bird Observers' Club of Victoria, on 22nd March, 1917, skins of a mature male and an immature male and female, collected by Mr. T. P. Austin at Cobbora, New South Wales, on 7th October, 1916 (see *Emu*, vol. xvi., part 3, p. 161).

The mature bird differs from typical specimens of *H. pyrrhopygia* collected near Sydney in being much paler above and below. The eyebrow is much whiter, the black centre of the throat and breast feathers is not so dark, and is more linear; the chestnut under tail coverts are broadly tipped with white, and the tips of the outer tail feathers are whiter and broader. This bird is also much larger than the typical *H. pyrrhopygia* collected near Sydney.

*Habitat*.—Cobbora, New South Wales.

Type specimens now in the H. L. White Collection, National Museum, Melbourne.

I propose that this race be scientifically known as *Hylacola pyrrhopygia magna*, and in the vernacular as Large Ground-Wren.

### Publications Received Since April, 1917.

W. B. ALEXANDER, M.A., HON. LIBRARIAN.

[It is regretted that, owing to pressure on space, no contributions to the library were acknowledged in vol. xvii. of *The Emu*.]

*Bird Lore*, vol. xviii., No. 6; vol. xix., Nos. 2-6; vol. xix., Nos. 1 and 2.

*Avicultural Magazine* (3rd series), vol. viii., Nos. 1-12; vol. ix., Nos. 1-5.

*Austral Avian Record*, vol. ii., Nos. 4-8; vol. iii., Nos. 1-3.

*Ibis* (10th series), vol. v., Nos. 1-4.

*Journal of the South African Ornithologists' Union*, vol. xi., No. 2.