

From Magazines, &c.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BIRDS.—Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant is well known by repute to students of ornithology, and his first critical notes on Australian birds are welcomed.

These notes appear in *The Ibis* (October, 1909) under the title "On a Collection of Birds from Western Australia, with Field Notes by Mr. G. C. Shortridge." The collection is representative, having been made in the South-Western, Central, and Western divisions of the State, and was presented to the British Museum by Mr. W. E. Balston. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant has "discovered" several novelties in the "Balston collection," which he has named respectively *Certhionyx occidentalis*, *Zosterops shortridgei*, *Z. balstoni*, *Climacteris wellsi*, *Malurus bernieri*, and *Sericornis balstoni*, a beautiful coloured plate being devoted to the two last-mentioned species.

Some of Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's novelties—notably *Certhionyx* and the two *Zosterops*—have passed through Australian hands, but not sufficient difference was detected to warrant separation from the accepted species. However, it is anticipated that Mr. Gregory M. Mathews will carefully weigh all possible evidence before he admits climatic or other variations in form as distinct species into his new standard work on "The Coloured Figures of the Birds of Australia."

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant has suggested an amalgamation himself regarding a common species, one of the "Magpies" or Crow-Shrikes. Mr. Shortridge's field note (p. 670) states that "The Long-billed Magpie (*Gymnorhina longirostris*, Milligan) is not uncommon on the Gascoyne River, where it takes the place of the *G. dorsalis*, Campbell, of the South-Western and Central divisions." Mr. Ogilvie-Grant proceeds to treat the latter species as synonymous with *G. leuconota*, Gray, of Eastern Australia, notwithstanding his critical description of the Western skins does not apply to those of the Eastern form. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant also does not think it possible to distinguish the Eastern from the Western form of the Scarlet-breasted Robins—*Petroica leggei* and *P. campbelli*.

* * *

THE BIRDS OF LORD HOWE AND NORFOLK ISLANDS.—In *The Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales*, vol. xxxiv., part 4, 27th October, 1909, Mr. A. F. Basset Hull, Sydney, has published an interesting and valuable treatise under the foregoing sub-heading.

There have been many fragments published of the birds of Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands, but nothing so completely written as the treatise under review, which has the advantage of being interwoven with the author's own observations. Mr. Basset Hull visited Lord Howe Island from the 3rd to the 17th

October, 1907, and Norfolk Island from 8th October to 15th November, 1908, his primary object being to see the immense flocks of Terns and other sea-birds during their breeding season, and at the same time to glean some information respecting land-birds.

About 80 species, the majority Australian, are dealt with systematically, with references to previous literature, habitat, and field observations, while the descriptions and dimensions of eggs enhance the oological value of the article. Particularly interesting are the remarks written under the heading of the "Big Hill Mutton-Bird" of Norfolk Island, whether it is *Æstre-lata neglecta*, Schlegel, or *Æ. phillipii*, Grey.

"With every possible deference to the authorities who have merged *Æ. phillipii* into *Æ. neglecta*," writes Mr. Basset Hull, "I am of opinion that the birds represent two distinct species. Further information as to the description and habitat of *Æ. neglecta* may be anticipated from the investigations of Messrs. T. Iredale and party, who spent nearly the whole year 1908 on the Kermadecs."*

The following table of Mr. Basset Hull shows a marked dissimilarity of the four kinds of birds, their habits, and their breeding seasons :—

Species.	Bird.	Nest.	Egg.	Breeding Season.
Lord Howe Petrel.	Uniform in colour.	At end of a burrow.	...	July-August.
Norfolk Island Petrel.	"	"	2.14 × 1.62	January.
<i>Æ. neglecta</i> (Sunday Island).	Very variable in colour.	In the open.	2.44-2.6 × 1.67-1.85.	October-November.
<i>Æ. neglecta</i> , var. (Meyer Island).	"	"	2.47 × 1.62-1.86.	April-May.

There certainly appears to be at least two species or varieties of birds—those uniform in colour of Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands, which lay in burrows, and those variable in colour of the more southerly Kermadecs, which lay in the open, except it be that in the case of the birds nesting in the open—the only Petrel known to do so, consequently differing from other Petrels, that breed in darkness underground—their environment may cause the particoloured offspring, similar to the Biblical statement of the patriarch of old and the "ring-straked, speckled, and spotted" cattle.

Mr. Basset Hull's remarks on the familiar Mutton-Bird

* The result of Mr. Iredale's investigations appears in this issue of *The Emu*, pp. 13-15.—Eds.

(*Puffinus tenuirostris*) are also exceedingly interesting, and the reader can contrast a "rookery" on Lord Howe Island in a beautiful palm-glade, where the interlacing foliage excludes the sun's rays, with a "rookery" in the open on some grassy island in Bass Strait. Of interest, too, is his chapter on the snow-white Tern (*Gygis alba*), that lays its single egg on the bare bark or knot-hole of the limb of a tree.

Six excellent photo-reproductions of nests and eggs accompany the article.

* * *

NEW ZEALAND BIRD NOTES.—Interesting notes on New Zealand bird-life may always be looked for in the Nature Study column which Mr. James Drummond, F.L.S., F.Z.S., conducts for the *Lyttelton Times*. In a recent issue Mr. Drummond quotes extensively from a letter written by Mr. P. J. O'Regan regarding a visit to the Inangahua Valley, West Coast. "It is absolutely certain," writes Mr. O'Regan, "that our ground birds will disappear in a few years unless we have them placed in sanctuaries, preferably some islands adjacent to New Zealand. Once, when I was a member of Parliament, I tried to have a clause inserted in the *Animals Protection Act*, making it a punishable offence to introduce cats, weasels, and similar animals on to any island near the New Zealand coast, but my attempt failed, I don't know why. It is certain that something should be done in earnest before it is too late. I do not know if there are any ground birds on the Auckland and other southern islands; if not, you ought to get up an agitation to have Wekas, Kiwis, and other birds placed there."

"On this occasion," says Mr. Drummond, "Mr. O'Regan spent three weeks in the Inangahua Valley. He heard a Kiwi only three times, and he did not either see or hear a Weka once. Yet these birds, until quite recently, were as plentiful as in the days of the first settlers. Everybody with whom he discussed the position told him that the Weka had disappeared as completely as if the countryside had been swept by fire. There is no doubt in his mind as to the cause of this extermination. He blames the stoats and weasels, which are plentiful in all places, from proximity of settlement to the virgin bush, and which destroy the eggs and young birds. Rivers are not often insuperable obstacles to the pests, and no locality seems to be safe from their ravages. A settler told him that two years ago a weasel's nest, found in the Motupiko Valley, contained no fewer than 30 young birds—Tuis, Robins, Sparrows, Tomtits, Parrakeets, and others. Things that Mr. O'Regan saw and heard of during his holiday lead him to dissent from Mr. Mackenzie's statement that the Weka is able to fight the stoat and weasel; he believes that no native bird is immune from the danger the presence of these creatures implies.

"In recent years, in all parts of the West Coast, there has been a notable decrease in the numbers of the Pigeons and the Kakas, and Mr. O'Regan is more firmly convinced than ever that this has

resulted mainly from the presence of vast flocks of berry-eating Starlings, Thrushes, and Blackbirds, which eat the berries even before they are ripe, and leave little for the luckless native birds. He makes stoats and weasels share the blame in regard to the Pigeons and the Kakas, as several bushmen told him that the vermin attack the nests of all birds, whether they are in trees or on the ground. His observations show that the general decrease in numbers does not apply to the 'Morepork' Owl, the Kingfisher, and the Fantail. The Fantail, indeed, is probably more plentiful now than it ever was before. The Tui is holding its own fairly well. He saw no Blue Ducks during his visit. He was told that this native is still seen in remote mountain streams, but he cannot understand how it can combat an enemy which has defeated the Weka. He admits that there may be cases in which a Weka, which is a game and powerful fighter, and is accustomed to dealing with rats, has successfully fought a weasel, but he points out that there is no doubt that, during the past five years, the Weka has disappeared from forests where it had flourished for years. 'To anyone who is acquainted with the West Coast as I am,' he says, in concluding this part of his letter, 'it was a painful experience to spend three weeks in the bush without hearing a Weka.' "

In another issue are some excellent notes on the Huia, as follow : — " Mr. Gregor M'Gregor, of Wanganui, knew the Huia in the early days of settlement, when this bird was fairly plentiful in parts of the Rimutaka, Tararua, and Ruahine Ranges, and was found, in fact, over the whole of the country drained by the Manawatu, Rangitikei, and Hautapu Rivers. He has seen dozens of Huias on occasions when he made his way through the forests. He states that they come readily when their whistle is imitated by a human being. They have a very acute sense of hearing, and will come from a distance of over 100 yards. They do not usually fly down, but run or hop along the ground, usually coming down the open slope of a hill. He has never seen Huias singly; they have always been in pairs. They are snared, but always on the ground, and never on a tree. They are more in evidence on foggy or wet days. In the summer time they go high up the ranges; in the winter the snow on the mountain-tops drives them down to lower altitudes. There is usually a great deal of rimu, maitai, and birch timber in their forest haunts. Many large rimu trees fall to the ground and decay, and offer homes to huhu grubs, for which the Huias have a marked weakness. At one time, Mr. M'Gregor adds, Huias were very plentiful near Taihape. He feels strongly that determined efforts should be made to catch some for liberation on the bird sanctuaries. The female lays up to three, four, or five eggs in a season, four being quite common, and he is convinced that the birds would thrive well on the sanctuaries, where they would be protected from all natural enemies, including man—the most relentless of all."

A note on the White-eye (*Zosterops cœrulescens*):—" The White-

eyes, apparently, made their appearance on the Chatham Islands about the same time as they came from Australia to New Zealand. Mr. A. Shand, who has lived on the islands for 55 years, states that he saw these birds for the first time about a year after his arrival. They were strangers to the Chatham Islands Maoris, who were greatly interested in the new arrivals. The Hauhau prisoners from Poverty Bay, who were placed in custody on the islands in 1868, caught large numbers of White-eyes for food. The favourite method was by the use of eel baskets. These baskets are made with a very narrow opening, arranged half-way down the length of the basket, the reeds sloping up from one end to the entrance. The birds, like the eels, entered the baskets to get the bait, but could not find the end of the entrance again, and were captured."

* * *

A COLLECTION OF SUB-FOSSIL BIRD AND ANIMAL REMAINS FROM KING ISLAND, BASS STRAIT.—In the *Memoirs of the National Museum*, Melbourne, No. 3 (February, 1910), Prof. Baldwin Spencer, C.M.G., and Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., have collated some interesting material concerning the species of Emu once inhabiting King Island, but now extinct. With the assistance of a local resident, Mr. Kershaw, in November, 1908, and again in January, 1909, collected a large number of vertebrate remains among the sand-dunes of South Point. These included many Emu bones. The writers are further indebted to the Tasmanian Museum authorities for specimens, and the whole collection under notice comprises:—

1. Sixty-four femora.
2. Forty-one tibio-tarsi.
3. Seventy tarso-metatarsi.
4. Four pelves of which the total length can be measured, and parts of sixteen others.
5. Parts of six skulls.
6. One pectoral arch.
7. Portions of three sterna.
8. Fourteen fibulæ.
9. Ribs.
10. Vertebral bodies.
11. Toe bones.

These remains were chiefly distributed over the sand-dunes on the extreme southern portion of the island. The area covers some 300 acres in extent, and the sand is constantly moving and sifting out the bones, which then are to be picked up in the troughs. Wallaby remains are the most numerous, but mixed up with them are parts of Emus, wombats, and dasyures, in a fair state of preservation, with here and there portions of skeletons of both seals and sheep (these latter are apparently later additions).

The first Emu remains from King Island were procured by Mr. A. G. Campbell, in November, 1902 [see *The Emu*, vol. iii., (1903), p. 113], and were presented to the National Museum. They were a thigh-bone and a pelvis, and were found on the margin of the Martha Lavinia Lagoon, near the north end of the island. They were taken to be small specimens of the Australian mainland species (*Dromæus novæ-hollandiæ*). The more complete series of bones obtained later by the Tasmanian Museum enabled Prof. Spencer to definitely describe a new species, to which the name of *Dromæus minor* was given [see *Victorian Naturalist*, vol. xxiii. (1906), p. 140].

In the following table are given the measurements of bones of six specimens of *Dromæus novæ-hollandiæ*, of the large series of the King Island form (*D. minor*), and the measurements of the one skeleton extant of *D. peroni*,* the extinct Kangaroo Island Emu. In the case of the King Island form three series of measurements are given—the minimum, the maximum, and those between which lie the great majority of the measurements :—

	<i>D. novæ-hollandiæ</i> .	<i>D. minor</i> .	<i>D. peroni</i> .
	mm.	mm.	mm.
Skull, length ...	90-91	58-62	80
„ width ...	75-76	54-56	66
Femur ...	217-243	140, 150-180, 186	180
Tibio-tarsus ...	415-446	265, 270-320, 363	342
Tarso-metatarsus ...	335-411	216, 220-280, 292	290
Pelvis, length ...	440-442	249-292	340
„ width in front ...	80-105	64	75
„ width behind ...	105-113	78-84	92

It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise, judging by what has taken place in insular differentiation of Ratite birds in New Guinea and the islands adjacent to the north of Australia, that King and Kangaroo Islands, and Tasmania† as well, should each possess its own species of Emu.

From the large series of remains a diagnosis is then given :—

DROMÆUS MINOR.

Size varying considerably, but always much smaller than that of *D. novæ-hollandiæ*; not exceeding that of *D. peroni*, but of more robust build. Tibio-tarsus rarely exceeding 330 mm., most usually from 270 to 320 mm., in greatest length. Tarso-metatarsus rarely exceeding 280 mm., most usually from 220 to 280 mm., in greatest length. Frontal region of skull decidedly

* In Paris Museum.

† See *The Emu*, vol. vi. (1907), p. 116.

dome-shaped. Length of skull from frontal suture to occiput not or only slightly exceeding 60 mm. Greatest width of skull not or only slightly exceeding 55 mm.

Habitat.—King Island, Bass Strait. Now extinct.

It is very interesting to know that the remains of eggs were frequently met with, either in small fragments in the loose sand or in patches embedded in the firmer soil beneath. In one or two instances fully half the shell was found completely flattened out and fractured into small fragments, with the surface more or less removed by the action of the driving sand.

The original discovery of an Emu on the islands of Bass Strait was made in 1802. In December of that year Baudin, in his exploring ships, *Géographe*, *Naturaliste*, and *Casuarina*, visited Kangaroo Island, from which they carried three Emus alive to Paris. A little later four naturalists of the expedition were left stranded at Sea Elephant Bay, King Island, while the ships stood out to sea, owing to bad weather. They were fortunate in reaching a sealers' camp, the chief man among whom, Cowper by name, entertaining the Frenchmen in his quarters. An account is published of the naturalists seeing two "Casoars" hanging in the larder, and closely questioning Cowper, who said he had killed over 300 birds, his dog being specially trained for the purpose. It is singular that the naturalists did not procure any specimens of the bird, though the descriptions accurately fit an Emu. They may have considered it identical with the Kangaroo Island bird. It is a matter of great regret that in the early days of Australian exploration so few specimens of the fauna of these islands were preserved.

This "Memoir" is well illustrated with eight large photo-plates.

Reviews.

[“Ornithologists at Warunda Creek.”]

CAPTAIN S. H. White, of South Australia, has issued, under the above title, a neat little *brochure*, which is a pleasantly written “Record of the A.O.U.’s Expedition to Eyre Peninsula, October, 1909, with Notes on Ornithology, Botany, and Entomology.” The “Record” may be taken as supplementary to the official report of Mr. Robert Hall, C.M.Z.S., which appeared in *The Emu*, vol. ix., p. 123, and contains an interesting narrative and independent bird observations. Capt. White has added the Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*) and the familiar Blue Wren (*Malurus cyaneus*)—its most westerly recorded range—to the list of birds, while he holds that the *Strepera* observed was not *melanopectera*. Mr. J. W. Mellor has since described the bird as *fusca* (see present issue of *The Emu*, p. 34).

The only thing that offends the artistic eye in the production of this little work—a circumstance over which the author had apparently no control—is its typographical errors, which are too numerous to be excused. Liberties have also been taken with technical terms. Why insert hyphens between the generic and specific names? If master printers place important matter in the hands of their juniors, they (the printers) can only expect to receive adverse criticism. The publication was also worthy of better paper, which would have been an advantage to the excellent photographs that were freely interspersed throughout its pages. A few copies still remain, which may be had at half price—3s. 6d.—on application to the author.

[“A History of the Birds of Kent,” by Norman F. Ticehurst. Witherby and Co., London. 21s. net.]

THE author of this handsome volume, which to a British ornithologist should prove of much interest, undertook its preparation sixteen years ago. His stated reasons for adding to the great library of books on British bird-life are the importance of Kent from an ornithological point of view and the fact that no history of its avifauna as a whole has ever before been produced. Two other works of a similar nature have appeared since Mr. Ticehurst commenced the task he has now so successfully accomplished, but his book is far from being superfluous on that account.

The history, status, distribution, and migratory movements of each species are dealt with in a concise and lucid manner, and, reading some of the chapters, one longs for such a history of the birds of Victoria or any other State of the Commonwealth.

The area of Kent is about 1,554 square miles; there is a great length of coast-line, and “nearly all parts of the country are enriched by extensive woodland tracts and coppices and by park-like lands surrounding ancient country seats.” “Besides being one of the most beautiful counties in England, Kent is essentially an agricultural county, and is in parts highly cultivated.” Nearly half of the total area of 995,014 acres consists of permanent pasture. Yet Kent is one of the finest parts of England for the bird observer. Of the 107 species of birds which breed regularly in the county, 37 are purely summer visitors, and 70 may be found throughout the year.

The book is excellently printed and bound, but the half-tone illustrations, of which there are twenty-four, leave something to be desired. The frontispiece, for instance, representing a pair of Kentish Plover at their nest, is evidently from a beautiful and interesting photograph, to which the reproduction has not done full justice.

[“A Handbook of the Birds of Tasmania and its Dependencies,” by Frank Mervyn Littler, F.E.S. (Member of the Australasian Ornithologists’ Union). Launceston, Tasmania. Published by the author. 1910.]

THIS handbook is well timed, and will be welcomed by all nature students, especially Tasmanians and ornithologists.

It is royal 8vo size, contains 235 pages, and is a marvel for neatness, while its arrangement is excellent. The name of each species is given in the vernacular, with the scientific name and authority in brackets; then follow, succinctly written, a description of the “Male,” “Female,” “Young,” “Nest,” “Eggs,” “Breeding Season,” “Geographical Distribution,” and last, but not least from a popular point of view, “Observations.” Thus 214 birds, including accidental and casual visitors, have been dealt with, in a manner calculated to make the book a useful and scientific reference, and members of the A.O.U. will congratulate their fellow-member accordingly.

While the author frequently quotes predecessors and contemporaries, which are freely acknowledged, his own store of knowledge of Tasmanian birds makes the work more valuable, and very little remains for the reviewer to criticise adversely. The author drops the Boobook Owl of the mainland out of the Tasmanian list, recording only the little Spotted Owl (*Ninox maculata*). Under the head of the Raven (*Corone australis*) Mr. Littler states:—“After an investigation extending over some years, and examination of specimens” of Crows so called “from nearly every district in Tasmania, I am forced to the conclusion that the Crow (*Corvus coronoides*) is non-existent in this island.” Another bird off the Tasmanian list! Although the White-shouldered Caterpillar-catcher (*Lalage tricolor*) has found its way on to the Tasmanian list, Mr. Littler has been unable to discover how and when it was recorded. A good place is not given to a second yellow-breasted Thickhead (*Pachycephala gutturalis*), notwithstanding two records by field observers. Mr. Littler is of opinion that they may have been *P. glaucura* only. It would be interesting were a Tree-creeper (*Climacteris*) found in Tasmania. “Although no specimens have been secured, I have seen it in the big forests in the north-east of the island,” writes Mr. Littler. Whether it be *leucophæa* or *scandens*, better to obtain a specimen for complete identification. The scepticism of a person trained in his own subject is not to be condemned. Notwithstanding two good field observers reported records of the Fairy Martin (*Petrochelidon ariel*) for Tasmania, Mr. Littler affirms:—“I have no personal knowledge of this species in Tasmania, nor have Messrs. Arthur Butler, H. C. Thompson, H. Stuart Dove, or several other observers from whom I inquired.” The list of foster-parents given for the various Cuckoos is exceedingly interesting, and includes one or two new records. Mr. Littler is again sceptical about the New Zealand Bronze-

Cuckoo (*Chalcococcyx lucidus*) being accidental. If it can get down to Macquarie Island it can surely reach Tasmania. Mr. Littler recognizes two species of Brown or Swamp Quail for the island—namely, *Synæcus australis* and *S. diemenensis*. As only one Albatross, the White-capped (*Thalassogeron cautus*) breeds in Australia, and that in Tasmanian waters (Albatross Island), it is remarkable that Mr. Littler has dismissed this fine species with such sparse remarks. Regarding the Musk-Duck (*Biziura lobata*), Mr. Littler confirms the clutch of eggs as “two or three,” a statement that will be a slight shock to some oologists, who affirm that this curious Duck lays double these numbers.

The omissions of the “Handbook” are indeed few, if any. The White-naped Honey-eater (*Melithreptus lunulatus*) was secured on the Kent Group by the expedition of the Field Naturalists’ Club of Victoria, 1890, also a variety of *Sericornis frontalis*. Mention also might have been made of the recently extinct Emus of Tasmania and King Island.

The handbook is adorned with 50 beautiful half-tone photo. blocks of birds, nests, &c., many of which have, as acknowledged, been previously reproduced in *The Emu*. At the end of the volume, in the form of an appendix, is an “Extract from the *Tasmanian Game Protection Act 1907*.” Even ornithologists should know enough of the law to keep them out of trouble.

In conclusion, as the little work has been classically treated by the author, so have the printers, Messrs. Walker, May and Co., Melbourne, ably done their share. The setting and arrangement of the type and printing are artistic, while typographical errors are practically *nil*. The book is worth double its published price, 4s.

[“The Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand.”]

THE library of the A.O.U. has been enriched by two handsomely got up volumes, quarto size, which have been presented by the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, on “The Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand.”

The volumes, which are edited by Dr. Chas. Chilton, are mainly the reports on the geo-physics, geology, zoology, and botany of the islands lying to the south of New Zealand, based chiefly on the observations and collections made during an expedition in the Government steamer *Hinemoa* (Capt. J. Bollons), in November, 1907.

The scientific members of the expedition numbered 26, and were divided—one party landing on Auckland Islands and the other party on Campbell Island; arrangements as to camp-life—tents, cook, &c.—being somewhat similar to those carried on during the Union’s own insular working camp-out expeditions. The *Hinemoa* reached Auckland Islands on the 16th November,

coincidentally well timed, because castaway sailors—survivors of the wreck of the *Dundonald*—were found there.

The scientific articles are preceded by the "Narrative of the Expedition," "The Discovery of the Islands," and "The History of their Scientific Investigation," all of which are most interesting reading even from a popular point of view, not to mention their historical importance.

It being beyond the limits of space and the range of the reviewers to notice all the valuable and technical articles which comprise the two volumes, they will, however, venture some remarks on that portion of Mr. E. R. Waite's article (xxv.) dealing with "Aves." According to Mr. Waite's statement, the ornithological work was inadequately performed for such an important expedition, for the following principal causes:—(1) Most of the subjects to be studied had been allotted to different specialists of the expedition, whilst arrangements in respect of ornithology had fallen through; (2) it was not until after the return to New Zealand that Mr. Waite was deputed to write up the birds; and (3) it was a rule of the expedition that "neither birds nor their eggs were to be taken." Bird protection done to the death (of scientific knowledge)! However, Mr. Waite has compiled a very able and instructive chapter, consisting of an enumeration of species recorded from these southern islands, together with his own notes, some of these notes being made in February, 1907, when he accompanied His Excellency the Governor on his tour, which touched the Snares, Auckland, Campbell, Antipodes, and Chathams. The following Australian species may be mentioned:—

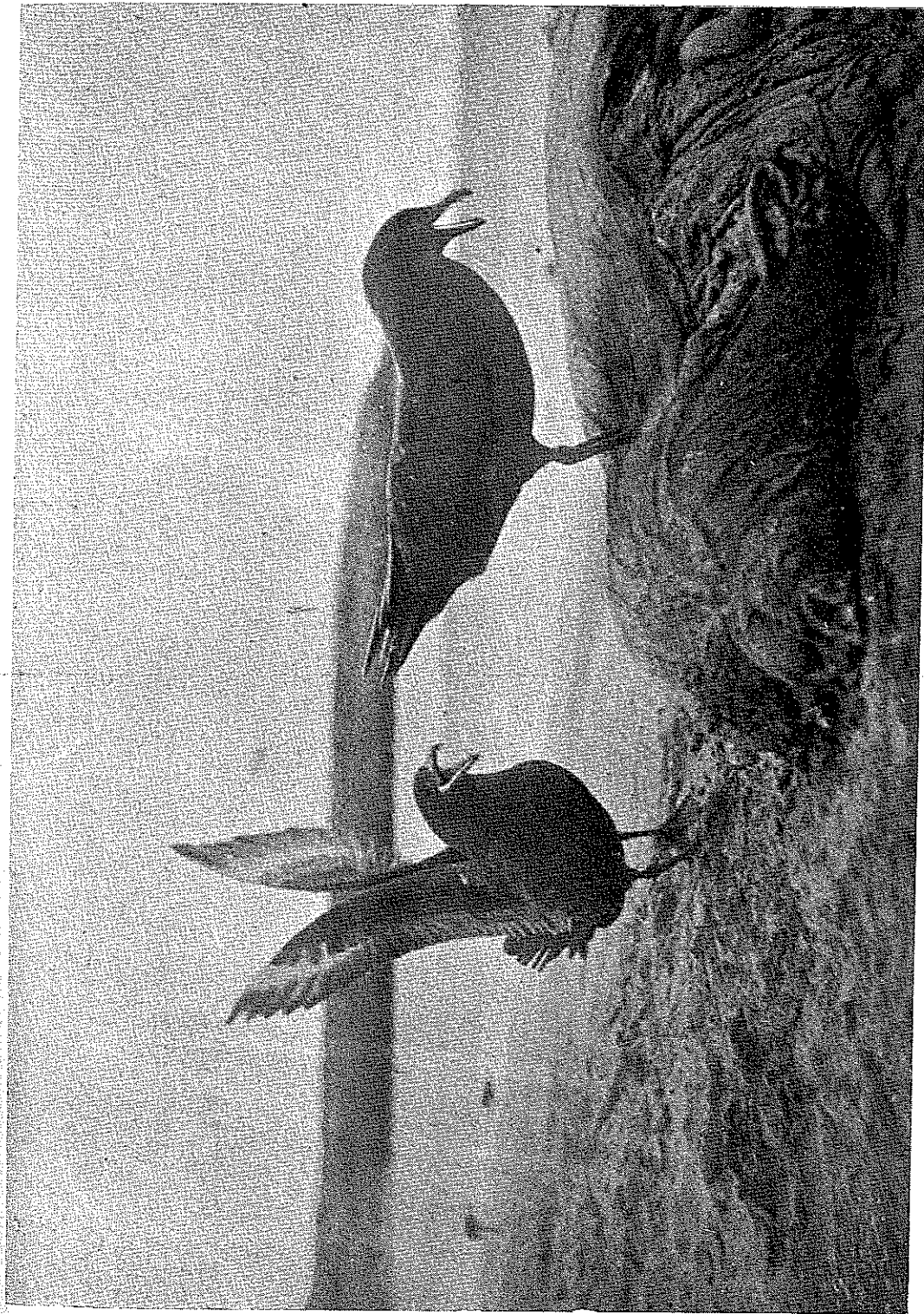
Zosterops cerulescens (White-eye).—This self-introduced bird from Australia to New Zealand now extends its range to Auckland, Campbell, and Chatham Islands.

Catharacta (Megalestris) antarctica (Skua).—This well-known marine marauder was found on many of the islands, and through the courtesy of the "Institute" (per favour of Dr. C. Chilton), the illustration is reproduced of "Skua Gulls at a carcass of a seal" (Plate VII.)

Estrelata lessoni (White-headed Petrel).—Mr. Waite found this rare Petrel breeding on Disappointment Island, Auckland group.

Majaqueus aequinoctialis (White-chinned Petrel).—This other Petrel of Kerguelen fame also appears to nest on Disappointment Island, because a decayed specimen was taken from a burrow, while several dead birds were observed lying about.

Daption capensis (Cape Petrel).—Voyagers assert that the beautiful "Cape Pigeon" is becoming scarce on the route between the Cape and Australia. This bird is said to breed on the Western Snares, but Mr. Waite had no opportunity of verifying the statement. It was only recently (1904) that the



Skuas (*Megalestris antarctica*) at Carcass of Seal.

BLOCK KINDLY LOANED BY PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTE OF CANTERBURY, N.Z.

Scottish expedition discovered the eggs of the Cape Petrel on the South Orkneys.

Prion banksii (Banks Dove-Petrel).—Mr. Waite writes :—" On the evening of the day on which we pitched our camp on the Auckland Islands, we noticed some pale-coloured birds flying close to us in the moonlight, but as silently as Owls. Next morning we discovered that the whole of the peat along the coast-line was riddled with holes, whence proceeded a crooning kind of sound."

Diomedea exulans (Wandering Albatross).

D. regia (Royal Albatross).

D. melanophrys (Black-browed Albatross).—Most descriptive accounts are given of these splendid creatures, together with fine plates of brooding birds on their nests.

Phæbetria fuliginosa * (Sooty Albatross).—This fine species was noticed nesting on the ledges of cliffs on the Aucklands. It is also known to breed on the Antipodes and Campbell Islands, where Mr. Waite obtained eggs in February. Macquarie Island should also be added to the breeding localities in sub-antarctic islands. †

Aptenodytes patagonica (King Penguin).—This large and handsome Penguin is of peculiar interest to Australians, as a straggler, apparently from Macquarie Island, where immense rookeries exist, has been found off the Tasmanian Coast. ‡ A splendid photo. half-tone illustration is given of a remarkable Penguin rookery—(*Catarrhactes pachyrhynchus*)—a New Zealand species—on the Snares.

It is astonishing how far south some of the introduced European birds were found—Thrushes and Blackbirds on the Snares; nests and eggs of the latter observed on the Aucklands; while House-Sparrows and Starlings are reported as having been seen on Campbell Island.

A useful coloured map of the Antarctic and Subantarctic Regions, cleverly drawn by Mr. E. N. D'Oyly, accompanies the work. But why did that cartographer insert "Royal Company's Islands," seeing they have been officially expunged from the charts by the authorities of the Navy, § an action confirmed by Sir E. Shackleton, when he caused the *Discovery* to explore the locality on her last homeward voyage?

The whole work—much of it extremely laborious—reflects the greatest credit on all concerned, from an enlightened Government, which authorized the expenditure, to the Government Printer who published it. Thus a scientific national

* Should this species not be *P. cornicoides*, Hutton?—EDS.

† Vide "Nests and Eggs" (Campbell), p. 938.—EDS.

‡ Robert Hall, *Emu*, vol. ix., p. 250.

§ This was done at the instance of the Council of the A.O.U.—vide *Emu*, iv., p. 32 (1904).—EDS.

monument has been left—a reference for all time. No doubt the Government of the day will extend the same courtesy to the Australasian Ornithologists' Union, as it hopes to organize an expedition (composed of Australian and New Zealand members) to explore more ornithologically the romantic southern islands of New Zealand, of the avifauna of which, as Mr. Waite has informed us, our knowledge is yet "very inadequate."

Correspondence.

BIRDS OF THE EAST MURCHISON, W.A.

To the Editors of "*The Emu*."

SIRS,—In the April issue of *The Emu*, Mr. Whitlock, in his East Murchison notes, mentions my name in a way which calls for some comment on my part.

With regard to Mr. North's "record,"* to some particulars in which Mr. Whitlock takes exception, this certainly needs a little explanation from me. As to the dates, these, probably owing in the first place to carelessness on my part, have got somewhat mixed. On 13th June, 1908, I took nest and eggs of *Cinclosoma marginatum* at Wiluna; the nests taken on 30th August and 1st September of same year were those of *C. castanonotum*, and were taken about 80 miles east of Kalgoorlie, while on the Transcontinental Railway survey, as Mr. Whitlock points out; how I came to mix these up with *C. marginatum* I don't know. The "record" also mentions another set of *C. marginatum* taken by me on 19th August, 1906. This is correct, but the locality given is wrong. "Lake Way, W.A.," should read "Mt. Ida, W.A."

The delay in the publication of this "record" was practically all my fault, as Mr. North had repeatedly written to me for the particulars about the skin and also for the eggs for description. What I take exception to in Mr. Whitlock's article is his direct assumption that I am incapable of taking off a skin well enough for descriptive purposes, and that the skin sent by me to Mr. North from Wiluna was too mutilated for description. I quite agree with Mr. Whitlock in his remarks about the tenderness of the skin, but I maintain that the skin I sent was good enough for the purpose for which it was intended. However, Mr. Whitlock's statements are, in my opinion, more excusable than those of the editors of *The Emu*, contained in a footnote to the article under discussion; in this footnote the editors not only directly support the assumption that my skin was too mutilated for description, but also, without justification, directly accuse Mr. North of injustice to another collector.

* "Records of the Australian Museum," vol. vii. (1909), pp. 322-324.—EDS.