

avian co-operators, Dr. Carrick's work is virtually unknown as he has published little. This is due to the fact that he is concerned with several inter-related aspects of Starling ecology, and also because he is dissatisfied with many of his observations made prior to the adoption of a system of individual marking. (He has exploited not only leg bands, but also brightly-coloured feathers cemented on to the birds' tails—the technique is described in a paper published in the *Scottish Naturalist*, April, 1948, and is one in which Australian ornithologists might well be interested). I am quite certain that when the full account of Dr. Carrick's work is published, it will prove of very real interest and value to ornithologists in this country, as well as in the Northern Hemisphere; and I hope those who are in a position to help him make his study more comprehensive and complete by providing information of the kind he seeks (or who have friends who can do so) will not be backward in coming forward.

It seems hardly necessary to urge anyone furnishing information to Dr. Carrick to be explicit on the point of the locality of the observations, which it is desirable to relate to some easily identified centre. Small country towns are often very difficult to place by someone not in possession of detailed maps, and reference works such as railway and post-office guides. If any reader with Starling information prefers to communicate with me rather than write direct to Scotland, I would be only too happy to act as collecting and relaying point on Dr. Carrick's behalf.

Yours, etc.,

Wildlife Survey Section,
C.S.I.R.O., Canberra, A.C.T.
4/12/50.

F. N. RATCLIFFE.

Obituary

MRS. ADAM BLACK

The death occurred on July 4, 1950, at Kangaroo Hills, near Ingham, Queensland, of Mrs. Adam (Jane) Black who had been a member of the R.A.O.U. since 1916. She was the daughter of Peter Dalgleish of the Boort district, Victoria, and was born on May 29, 1860. She married Adam Black in 1890 and, as a bride, went to live at Elderslie in the Winton district in Queensland. There were many hardships attached to pioneering in those days and the Blacks encountered some serious droughts and were seriously affected by the great shearers' strike in the early 'nineties. After a residence of a few years on two other stations, they finally settled down in 1901 at Pajingo, 60 miles from Charters Towers, where they resided until Mr. Black's death in 1935 when Mrs. Black went to live with her daughter, Mrs. V. Allingham, at Kangaroo Hills.

In 1931 Mrs. Black undertook the compilation of a history of *The North Queensland Pioneers*, which is one of the most interesting books on that subject that has been published in recent years. Throughout her long life Mrs. Black was a keen lover of nature and did good service in promoting an interest in Australian birds and wildflowers amongst young people.—D.J.D.

Reviews

Western Australian Ornithology.—*The Western Australian Naturalist*, vol. 2, no. 5, September, 1950, is mostly devoted to bird matter. S. R. White ('Plumage changes in the red-shouldered Wrens (*Malurus*),' p. 121) gives detailed observations of the plumage sequences in the Morawa district of the *Malurus lamberti*/*M. pulcherimus* series and reports having failed to observe any fully-plumaged males in the winter months. V. N. Serventy ('Fairy Terns on Rottnest Island,' p. 126) gives field notes on a nesting colony, which in the 1949-50 season contained 234 pairs; a different site is chosen each season. L. Glaucert and D. L. Serventy ('Plumage changes in the Wandering Albatross,' p. 129) discuss three specimens received at the W.A. Museum in 1945 and include photographs of the ventral and dorsal surfaces with the wings outspread. The oldest is a bird in the 'snowy' phase (*chionoptera* of the older authors). An interesting point is revealed that the supposed reddish eyelid reported by some observers is really a post-mortem effect.

Among the 'From Field and Study' paragraphs is an item by S. R. White, accompanied by a splendid photograph, describing the nesting of the Little Grebe literally in the foliage of a jam tree (*Acacia acuminata*). The seeming paradox is explained by the site being a country dam, bare of vegetation and the only anchoring means available was a pendent spray of the tree. Mrs. Rica Erickson refers to bowing displays in the Rufous Whistler, which may be used both in courtship behaviour and in territorial disputes; "a knowledge of the boundaries of the territories of the birds concerned helps to decide the meaning of the whistlers' behaviour since courtship is conducted within a territory, while territorial disputes are usually held on its boundary."

A. Snell reports an instance of the Black-throated Butcher-bird mimicking the Blue-winged Kookaburra, and A. Robinson a case of the Grey Butcher-bird feeding on grapes. E. H. Sedgwick has a note on a Mulga Parrot (a male accompanied by a female) flying at its reflection in a window.—D.L.S.

Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds.—For those who have studied them in life, there can be little doubt that the birds of paradise are the most fascinating group of birds. They have everything—beautiful colour, exquisite feather structure, wonderful dances and displays, and a remarkable ecology. They would be an ideal group for someone to monograph and popularize. The mere description of their habits would make a fascinating story; to discuss the principles of their distribution, speciation, and general evolution would direct on these birds the limelight which they truly deserve.

Tom Iredale's *Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds* does not accomplish this object. The volume is clearly printed on fine paper and handsomely bound. This exhausts the only unreserved praise one can give to it. The plates have the advantage of completeness in that they illustrate all the described species, as well as nearly all of the hybrids. I have not seen the originals of Lilian Medland's paintings, but in the reproduction they often appear either wooden or, on the contrary, Audubonesque, and are not in the same class with work of artists like Lodge, Henry, Kobayashi, Fuertes, or Sutton.