

Notes on two North Australian bird species.—The status of the Flock Pigeon, *Histriophaps histrionica*, is considered to be one of near extinction, Cayley (1958). Some recent sightings have tended to allay these fears, Marshall and Drysdale (1962): Marshall (1964), (1966). The following notes reinforce these recent observations. In addition notes are included on the behaviour of Budgerigars made at the same time.

The observations were made in the course of work on the behaviour of cattle while at Alroy Downs on the Barkly Tableland of the Northern Territory between the dates of October 20 and November 30, 1966.

FLOCK PIGEONS. On several occasions between October 21 and 28, 1965, flocks of what the author identified as Flock Pigeons were sighted on the shadeless Downs country of the Tableland, (No. 17 and No. 6 bores on Alroy Downs). In every instance the sightings were made either in the mornings at about seven o'clock or in the evenings at about six o'clock. The flocks ranged from two to three hundred in number and were first seen flying close to the ground towards the water. (Because flight was so rapid numbers were estimated by general impression.) After flying over the Turkey Nest water storage tank two or three times at a low height they would settle in a compact flock on the bank. Following a very brief stay for a drink they would fly off across the plain, never appearing to fly higher than about four feet from the ground, and disappear from sight very quickly.

BUDGERIGARS. This observation concerned the watering behaviour of Budgerigars at a Turkey Nest tank in the desert country on the Southern edge of the Barkly Tableland on November 4, 1966. (No. 7 Bore, Alroy Downs). Small flocks of Budgerigars were seen to fly over the water, hover momentarily within about a foot of the surface, then drop onto the water with their wings folded. The birds drank during the brief time they were floating on the tank, and when they flew from the water their wing feathers were noticeably wet but this did not appear to significantly influence their flight performance. The flocks ranged from fifteen to twenty-five in number and after drinking they flew off into the distance.—P. J. SCHMIDT, Department of Livestock Husbandry, University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W.

REFERENCES

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Marshall, J. and Drysdale, R. 1962. *Journey Among Men*.
Marshall, J. 1964. *Emu* 64: 150.
Marshall, J. 1966. *Emu* 66: 131.