

rarely occur in the orchard. Eastern Rosellas and Starlings will sometimes attack the apples whilst they are on the tree. However none of the above species have been seen to feed on wind-fall apples.—DAVID NOONAN, Bushy Park Road, Wantirna South, Vic.

Tree Martin—Predation by Snake.—Tree Martins, *Hylochelidon nigricans*, are fairly common along the tree-lined creeks in the open areas about Jandowae, Queensland, and pairs may be found breeding during the late Spring.

On one occasion, on October 21, 1961, I examined a nest in the hollow limb of a River Red Gum. The birds had been under observation for some time and I had estimated well incubated eggs at the time of my climb. I was most surprised when I examined the nest in the reflected light from a mirror to find an empty nest and a dead Martin with the head missing.

In searching the nesting hollow for the missing head I found that the hollow was occupied by a Brown Tree Snake, *Boiga fusca*, about two feet in length and coiled up at the rear of the nest.

Probably the snake had crawled into the hollow while the Martin was brooding, killed the bird and devoured the eggs.—LLOYD NIELSEN, Jandowae, Queensland.

OBITUARY

George Herbert Barker

George Herbert Barker died in Brisbane on June 25, 1965, aged 85 years. He was a member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union for nearly half a century. For 34 of these years, from December 1922 to September 1956, he was State Secretary of the Queensland Branch; few have served for such a term. For a long time too he was an active Vice-President and was elected President in 1940/41. It became axiomatic, not only with local enthusiasts but with visitors too, that his bookstore in Brisbane was the focal point for ornithology in Queensland.

Down the years he was a tireless worker not only for the R.A.O.U but for many kindred natural history clubs and the ideals these represented. He put much effort and persistence into the difficult and often unpopular field of conservation, covering all its ramifications. With his wide range of personal contacts he ever sought to have birds not only protected from direct violence, but also provided with suitable living areas such as National Parks and Reserves.

His experience with Scouts, Naturalists' Camps, and his own preference for camping out along the way, rather than under a roof, was a great boon to other members when R.A.O.U. Campouts were being organized. Naturally the Queensland Campouts were rated a great success. Those he organized at Byfield, near Rock-

hampton, in 1924; at Biggenden and Fraser Island in 1930, and Binna Burra in 1947, were long remembered and produced some notable results in field observations as was duly recorded in *The Emu*.

This latter Campout illustrates some of his talents. Knowing this area as a superb site for observing the little known rain-forest species he arranged the Campout there for 1937. It happened that few members booked and there was no Campout that year. George Barker was undaunted. On October 15, 1946 at the Annual Meeting in Melbourne it was decided that, as the War was over and peaceful activities were being resumed, a Campout should be held in 1947. Mr. Barker promptly invited the Union to hold this function at Binna Burra in Queensland. The result was not only a happy Campout then, but ever since an increasing number has enjoyed bird watching in the Lamington National Park.

G. H. Barker was most generous and helpful to local members in many ways. He firmly believed that books were for use and would freely lend expensive books, such as Mathews *Birds of Australia* from his own extensive library to fellow workers engaged in article writing. In this and other ways he assisted others to secure material for contributions to *The Emu*, though strangely little from his own nimble pen appears therein. His memorial is rather in the memories of his contemporaries.

Mr. Barker is survived by his wife, their married children, and many descendants to whom the sympathy and appreciation of members is expressed.—J. S. ROBERTSON.

News and Notes

XIV INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, OXFORD,

24th-30th JULY 1966

(3rd Announcement)

The preparations for the Congress and the preceding Scottish Bird Island Study Cruise are well advanced. Bookings for the cruise have been very satisfactory, and the organizers can promise unusual opportunities for bird study. After an official opening of the Congress itself in the Sheldonian Theatre on Sunday night, 24th July, there will be five plenary sessions in the mornings of the following week, at which a number of prominent research workers will report on recent advances in the fields of Ecology, Vocal Communication, Orientation, Systematics and Reproductive Physiology. Five afternoons will be devoted to sectional sessions. Various excursions will be organized on Wednesday 27th July. Throughout the Congress members will be welcome in Rhodes House, which will be available as a "social centre". The Congress will end with a traditional Garden Party in Trinity College.

The organizers will do their utmost to ensure prompt publication of the Proceedings. It is hoped to have the Volume of Abstracts available at the opening of the Congress, and to publish the full text of the papers read by invitation at the Plenary Sessions in a volume of Proceedings, to appear as soon as possible after the Congress.

To help with the above and because the time is approaching for definite confirmation of provisional bookings with colleges, lecture halls etc.,