

## Common Tern Recovery in Australia



- Common Tern alighting at nest.

Photo: C. D. Deane

In December 1968 I received a cutting from the *Belfast Telegraph* which mentioned briefly that a Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) banded on the Copeland Islands off the coast of County Down, Northern Ireland had been recovered near Gunbower, Victoria, Australia.

This is a remarkable recovery, but it was especially interesting to me as much of my early banding had been carried out during week-ends spent at the Copeland Bird Observatory, one of a chain of coastal stations engaged in the study of migration.

I wrote immediately for further details and was amazed to learn that the bird was one I had banded some nine years previously. (See Recovery Round-up, p. 41).

The banding occurred on Mew Island, the outermost of the three islands comprising the Copeland group. At that time the Island was one of the few places where all four of the larger species of British terns (Common, Arctic, Roseate and Sandwich) bred together. The bird was one of several caught during darkness in a 60 foot net erected over the rocks near the edge of the sea. This technique was applied with success for a short period after the terns had returned to the island in early May. It was discontinued once egg-laying had begun, to avoid possible interference with the breeding cycle.

This recovery constitutes the second record of the nominate race, *Sterna hirundo hirundo*, for Australia. The first, a bird also carrying a ring, was found exhausted near Fremantle, Western Australia on 7 January 1956. It had been banded as a nestling at Marum near Noortalje, Sweden on 9 July 1955. (See *Western Australian Naturalist*, vol. 5, no. 4, May 1956, pp. 86-88).

Alan E. F. Rogers,  
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We are grateful to Mr C. Douglas Deane, Deputy Director, Ulster Museum, Belfast, for kindly making available the excellent photograph of the Common Tern at its nest—**Hon. Editor.**



• These terns photographed at Moreton Bay near Brisbane, Queensland in February 1967 are almost certainly Common Terns in eclipse plumage, probably of the race *S. h. longipennis*. Note the Little Tern (*S. albigrons*) in the left foreground. Silver Gulls (*Larus novaehollandiae*) are in the background.

Photo: B. and J. Morgan

## Approved Projects (additional)

200. **LITTLE PENGUIN:** Life History.  
Phillip Island, Vic.  
Mrs. P. N. Reilly, 1 Exon Street, Hampton, Vic.
201. **DIURNAL BIRDS OF PREY:** Life histories.  
New South Wales.  
R. D. Anderson, Flat 1, 226 Sydney Road, Fairlight, N.S.W.
202. **AREA SURVEY:** Seasonal movement, longevity, plumages, measurements.  
Brown River, Port Moresby, T.P.N.G.  
R. H. Donaghey, c/o D.A.S.F., Konedobu, T.P.N.G.
203. **AREA SURVEY:** Movements, parasites, ranger training.  
Ku-ring-gai Chase, N.S.W.  
K. R. Ayers, 1 24 Challis Avenue, Turramurra, N.S.W.
204. **MIGRANT SPECIES:** Migration.  
Jandowae, Qld.  
L. A. Nielsen, Box 12, Jandowae, Qld.
205. **WATERHENS:** Social organization and population dynamics.  
Armidale, N.S.W.  
Miss V. A. Parry, Zoology Department, University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W.
206. **GULL-BILLED TERN:** Breeding status.  
Lake Goldsmith, Beaufort, Vic.  
J. R. Wheeler, 19 Roslyn Road, Belmont, Vic.
207. **BANDING STATION:** Life history studies and population dynamics of five species of passerines.  
Ferny Creek, Vic.  
Mrs. F. R. Vasey, "Puck's Hollow", Ferny Creek, Vic.
208. **PILOT BIRD:** Life history and population dynamics.  
Sherwood, Vic.  
Mrs. J. Zwart, Clarkmont Road, Sassafras, Vic.
209. **AREA SURVEY:** Altitudinal movements between two banding stations.  
Aldgate, S.A.  
Mrs. H. N. Laybourne-Smith, "Willowdene", Aldgate, S.A.