A TRIP TO TOLLGATES.

Eric Wheeler, Sydney.

Four banders were fortunate enough to visit the Tollgate Islands, a faunal reserve at the entrance to Bateman's Bay on the south coast of New South Wales on January 19-20, 1963.

The banders, Bill Lane, Harry Battam, Ray Lonnon and myself were taken out to the island by Peter Amour, the local Fisheries Inspector and arrived there at 6 a.m. We soon had our first introduction to the birds on the island, when we found that the cave in which we were stowing our gear contained the remains of several Little Penguins (Eudyptula minor), and a few burrows of White-faced Storm Petrels (Pelagodroma marina) in the sandy floor, occupied by nestlings which we promptly banded and returned to the security of their burrows.

We next set out to climb to the top of the island, because it is on the 150 feet high plateau that the most suitable areas for bird study are to be found; even though we had been advised of the easiest route to the top it was still a strenuous climb. The top of the island is covered with several patches of quite different vegetation and it was found that the areas covered with pig-face were the easiest to investigate.

The ground is riddled with bird burrows so it wasn't long before the three species nesting there were unearthed. These were the White-faced Storm Petrels, Short-tailed Shearwaters (Puffinus tenuirostris), and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (P.pacificus). (Storm Petrels far outnumbered the others, at least in the area of pig-face.) No Storm Petrel eggs were found but the nestlings ranged widely in age from newly hatched ones, still being brooded by an adult bird, to large fully feathered young apparently almost ready to leave the burrows. Some of the adult Shearwaters were alone in their burrows while others were brooding eggs or small young.

Most of the day was spent on top of the island but later it was decided to experiment with mist nets on the lower part after dark, and it turned out to be a very interesting evening. Two mist nets were erected just behind a sheltered beach in the lee of the hill, and a storm lantern was placed in front of them. We interested ourselves watching the "penguin parade" for a while, but about 8 p.m. the first Shearwaters and Storm Petrels started to arrive and many were attracted by the lantern and flocked around it. It wasn't long before Storm Petrels were being caught in the nets and others were picked up by hand after being so attracted by the lantern that they landed beside it. Harry Battam was a bit concerned over the possible damage to his nets by Shearwaters, but after catching

several we were pleased to find that they were quite docile and easily handled.

Ray Lonnon was still able to study the Storm Petrels after he had bedded down for the night - they apparently decided that he was a welcome addition to the landscape and as each bird in the area emerged from its burrow it walked along Ray's body and launched itself into flight from his head. Ray reports that this Storm Petrel activity ceased about 1 a.m.

We awoke at 4.15 a.m. on Sunday, just as the last Shearwaters were leaving the island. The gear was soon packed and it didn't seem long before Peter Amour arrived in his boat to pick us up. On the trip back to Bateman's Bay we compared notes and found that 221 birds had been banded by the party.

The total was made up as follows:

White-faced Storm Petrel	189
Short-tailed Shearwater	26
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	6

BIRD-BANDING IN TOOLOOM SCRUB, NORTHERN N.S.W.

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During the period 5th to 14th December, 1962, John Disney, the Curator of Birds at the Australian Museum, Sydney, and I were engaged in a study of birds of the Tooloom Scrub. Our plan of work was mainly concerned with observations of the considerable avifauna of this area but limited banding was envisaged and as far as possible completed; mist-netting and consequent banding was attempted on three days. In addition, some birds were caught in bat nets, while two Buff-breasted Pittas (Pitta versicolor) were trapped in spring-door traps.

The area comprises a ridge some 20 miles long with its axis running N.E. to S.W. from the Macpherson Ranges region; the height of this ridge averages 2,100 ft. but reaches 3,500 ft. as a maximum. The vegetation on the steep N.W. slope and the lower S.E. slope consists of dry sclerophyll while the upper and middle areas of the S.E. slope are covered in rain forest. Two days of observations showed that the best netting areas would occur in the transition region at the top of the ridge between the sclerophyll and rain forest. Results confirmed this conclusion.