REVIEWS

The Birds Outback: A 10 inch 33⅓ r.p.m. micro-groove recording produced by the N.S.W. Gould League, 1965. Price 36/6, plus 2/- postage.

This is the second record produced by the N.S.W. Gould League in a proposed series devoted to the calls of Australian birds.

The recording, divided into sections covering the calls of morning, mid-day and late afternoon, takes the listener to western N.S.W. to hear the bird chorus as dawn breaks. The narrator singles out a distinctive call, describes the soloist, then moves on to another and another as the sun rises higher into the sky. The recording concludes with a medley of calls without commentary.

The recording, which contains the calls of 39 species, has been edited by P. E. Roberts from tapes recorded by himself, Norman Chaffer, J. N. Hutchinson, Harold Pollock, Donald Taunson and the C.S.I.R.O. A useful 12 page booklet, by G. R. Gannon, accompanies the record and gives a description of each bird and notes on its habit and voice.

Reproduction is excellent and the commentary has been kept to an essential minimum. This is a well produced and soundly edited record which will have a wide appeal to all nature lovers at home and abroad.

This and the previous record, "The Birds Around Us", are available from — The Secretary, N.S.W. Gould League of Bird Lovers, Public School, Crown Street, Sydney, N.S.W.

R. G. LONNON, Sydney, N.S.W.

"The Use of Mist Nets in Australia," by S. J. Wilson, S. G. Lane and J. L. McKean, Division of Wildlife Research Technical Paper No. 8, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia, 1965.

This excellent pamphlet is a happy result of the combination of official and volunteer effort so typical of Bird Banding Schemes wherein the scientists of a Government department team with the enthusiasms of amateur ornithologists.

The theme that runs through it details a very effective way to be practical about the desire to gather scientific data concerning wild birds, but always with the basic condition that the birds themselves are not expendable and are to be kept alive and well. Mist-netting is a technique which will expedite the collection of data and make possible the publication of information concerning live wild birds instead of that based mainly on skins.

The whole range of mist-netting, from the Australian viewpoint, is covered in sequence. This includes its historical background, its possibilities as a bird study technique, the necessary material equipment, field methods from all aspects and even details of how to cope with the inevitable damage to nets. The information conveyed is greatly extended by apt dimensioned drawings, sketches and field photographs. Full references are listed.

Whilst the issue of this pamphlet to licensed banders has made them wish that they had had it available before they commenced operations, they are discovering that there is still plenty to be gleaned from it.

Others interested in birds will find it answers most of those queries about netting, bird banders and their outlook, concerning which, in the past, the answers have been elusive.

Fig. 11, on page 19, illustrating a bird being banded, and titled "Correct method of holding a small passerine for banding", is likely to provoke most discussion. Overseas publications generally concede that as hands vary in size and shape so the best position varies too. The answer to this, as to many other things, is found in the last sentence of the paper ". . . it is up to the bander to ensure that his methods are acceptable to the public at large."

J. S. ROBERTSON, Brisbane, Qld.

[The authors are anxious to make it known that they would welcome criticism or suggestions from other banders.—Editor.]

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