

LITERATURE REVIEW

Compiled by B. Baker

This section is compiled from journals which are often not available to non-professional ornithologists in Australia. The following criteria are used to select papers for review:

- They relate to species which occur in Australia and its Territories;
- They provide details of techniques and equipment that may be of use in Australia;
- They provide details of studies that may be of general interest to Australian ornithologists.

This Literature Review is a selection taken from the following journals: *American Scientist*; *Auk*; *CRC Reef Research Centre Technical Reports 11 & 12, Townsville*; *Journal of Avian Biology*; *Journal of Zoology*; *Stilt*.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Scanning and tail-flicking in the Australian Dusky Moorhen (*Gallinula tenebrosa*). Ryan, D. A., Bawden, K. M., Bermingham, K. T. and Elgar, M. A. (1996). *Auk* 113: 499–501. (Suggests that tail-flicking represents both an interspecific signal of alertness and an intraspecific signal of social status.)

Natal and breeding dispersal in a co-operative, extra-group-mating bird. Mulder, R. A. (1995). *Journal of Avian Biology* 26: 234–240. (Dispersal by yearling male superb fairy-wrens *Malurus cyaneus* was promoted mainly by breeding vacancies in nearby territories. All females dispersed in their first year, in two discrete phases. Early dispersal appears to be volitional, late dispersal is forced by aggression by mothers.)

Why do bowerbirds build bowers? Borgia, G. (1995). *American Scientist* 83: 542–547. (Best explained as a trait that attracts females because of the protection it provides them from forced copulation by bower owners.)

Effects of blood parasites on sexual and natural selection in the pied flycatcher. Dale, S., Kruszewicz, A. and Slagsvold, T. (1996). *Journal of Zoology* 23: 373–393. (No relationship between male plumage brightness and *Trypanosoma* infection, but males infected with *Haemoproteus* tended to be brighter than uninfected males, partly because first-year males were less often infected than older males.)

SEABIRDS

Evolutionary relationships among extant albatrosses (Procellariiformes: Diomedidae) established from complete cytochrome-B gene sequences. Nunn, G. B., Cooper, J., Jouventin, P., Robertson, C. J. R. and Robertson, G. G. (1996). *Auk* 113: 784–801.

Populations, movements and site fidelity of brown and masked boobies on the Swain Reefs, Great Barrier Reef, as shown by banding recoveries. O'Neill, P. O., Heatwole, H., Preker, M. and Jones, M. (1996). *CRC Reef Research Centre Technical Report 11, Townsville*: CRC Reef Research Centre, 36 pp. (In both species strong breeding colony fidelity appears to occur. Most extra-limital recaptures were of young birds, with most masked boobies mostly being recaptured along the Queensland coast, whereas brown boobies were recaptured in Papua New Guinea and in the Solomon Islands.)

Long-term population trends of seabirds on the Swain Reefs, Great Barrier Reef. Heatwole, H., O'Neill, P. O., Jones, M. and Preker, M. (1996). *CRC Reef Research Centre Technical Report 12, Townsville*: CRC Reef Research Centre, 50 pp. (Data collected from 1982 to 1994 for three species, brown booby, masked booby and silver gull were analysed for trends in number of adults and number of nests counted. Significant declines in brown booby and silver gull were detected. Reductions in food probably associated with elevated sea temperatures induced by El Niño appear to be the most likely cause.)

MIGRATION

Bird migration at different latitudes in eastern North America. Newton, I. and Dale, L. C. (1996). *Auk* 113: 626–635. (Relationships between migration and latitude exist because latitude is a good surrogate measure of factors likely to directly influence migration such as climate and daylength, which in turn control the amplitude of seasonal changes in food supply.)

Movements of little terns *Sterna albigrons* between Japan and Australia. Minton, C. (1996). *Stilt* 29: 53.

The migration of the Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*. Minton, C. D. T. (1996). *Stilt* 29: 24–35. (Analyses all available banding recoveries and colour leg-flag sightings of Stints marked in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway up to mid-1996.)

Comparison of flag sightings versus recoveries for waders marked in Victoria, Australia. Minton, C. (1996). *Stilt* 29: 39. (There is clearly a far higher rate of reporting of movements emanating from Victoria via flag sighting reports than via conventional recovery reports.)

SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER
Puffinus tenuirostris
ON MUTTONBIRD ISLAND, COFFS
HARBOUR, NEW SOUTH WALES

While banding Wedge-tailed Shearwaters *P. pacificus*, caught on the surface at night, on Muttonbird Island on 31 October 1988, I captured a Short-tailed Shearwater *P. tenuirostris*, also on the surface. It was banded with band number 162-10663.

On 2 November 1988, again at night, two Short-tailed Shearwaters were captured together in a burrow (banded with Nos. 162-10700 and 162-08179). No further captures of this species were made during that season.

On 29 October 1990, three burrows were each found to contain Short-tailed Shearwaters (banded 162-20012/13, 162-20021/22 and 162-20052/53). A fourth burrow contained another Short-tailed Shearwater (banded 162-20014). These birds were heard calling from the burrows at night.

On 10 December 1990, at about 0930 hours two Short-tailed Shearwaters (162-20012 and 162-20052) were recaptured, each in a separate burrow, each incubating an egg. Again, a week later, at about 0900 hours, two birds (162-20013 and 162-20052) were recaptured, each in a separate burrow brooding an egg.

Subsequent visits during that season failed to reveal any Short-tailed Shearwaters or any eggs.

On 7 October 1992, at night, two more Short-tailed Shearwaters were captured on the surface (banded 162-17201 and 162-17202). These two birds were recaptured together in a burrow at night on 1 February 1993 but no egg was present.

Since that date, I have made 37 visits to the island (to December 1996) but no Short-tailed Shearwaters have been found or heard. It would appear that attempts to colonize Muttonbird Island by this species were unsuccessful.

Muttonbird Island is the most northern island on which Short-tailed Shearwaters have been recorded nesting. Broughton Island and Little Broughton Island (Lane 1979), some 260 kilometres to the south, are the most northern regular breeding islands for the species. Delicate Nobby, near Crescent Head, is the only island between Broughton Island and Muttonbird Island which may be a possible breeding island. I visited Delicate Nobby on 30 November 1969 with H. Battam and B. Jones. We spent 1.5 hours on the island in relays, rotating one of us at a time looking after the boat as no anchorage was available (Lane 1976). There were an estimated 500 burrows of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters. Most burrows examined contained an adult and an egg. A few burrows contained Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor*. The island could be a suitable island for Short-tailed Shearwaters and a few pairs may possibly breed there. Delicate Nobby is about 100 km south of Muttonbird Island.

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REFERENCES

- Lane, S. G. (1976). Seabird Islands No. 30. Delicate Nobby, New South Wales. *Aust. Bird Bander* 14: 39.
 Lane, S. G. (1979). Summary of the Breeding Seabirds on New South Wales Coastal Islands. *Corella* 3: 7-10.

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