Recent Literature

ANALYTICAL STUDIES

Food of the Black-backed Magpie, *Gymnorhina t. tibicen,* **at Canberra.** W. J. M. Vestjens and R. Carrick. 1974. *Aust. Wildl. Res.* 1: 71-83.

During 1954-65 at Canberra, stomach contents of 1319 Black-backed Magpies of known age, sex and social status were examined.

A wide range of ground invertebrates is eaten, mainly insects supplemented by spiders and earthworms. Seasonal fluctuations in diet correspond with observed abundance of some species, and the effects of weather on others. There are differences between territorial birds in savannah woodland and flock birds in open pasture; the latter showed a higher intake than the sedentary territorial individuals.

Observations have been made on the rate of digestion of some food items.

Studies of a Declining Population of Brown Pelicans in Northwestern Baja California. Joseph R. Jehl, Jr. 1973. *Condor* 75: 60.

From 1969 through 1971, the reproductive success of Brown Pelicans was studied at Los Coronados, San Martin Island, and the San Benito Islands. These are the only pelican colonies in northwestern Baja, California, north of Natividad Island, with the exception of a small colony on Cedros Island discovered in 1971. Large-scale reproductive failure was found in all colonies. In 1969, 1300-1400 pairs produced 200 young; in 1970, 200-250 pairs produced 4 young; in 1971, 900 pairs produced 300 young. Thin-shelled eggs that collapse and break during incubation are the major factor contributing to nesting failure, although human disturbance is important particularly at San Martin. Shell-thinning is inversely related to concentrations of DDT compounds, principally DDE, in the egg yolk. It is most pronounced at Los Coronados, but to the south, where chlorinated hydrocarbon levels average lower, shell thickness increases.

The pelican population of this area had declined from an estimated 2000 pairs in the early years of the century to 1000 pairs in 1971. The long-term survival of colonies at San Martin and Los Coronados is in doubt but may be enhanced by declaring nesting islands as sanctuaries during the breeding season.

Survival, Pair Bond Retention and Nest-Site Tenacity in Buller's Mollymawk. Richdale, L. E. and Warham, J. 1973. *Ibis* 115: 257.

Adult Buller's Mollymawks *Diomedea bulleri* banded in 1948 and 1961 at the Snares Islands south of New Zealand have been recovered between 1961 and 1971. Survival curves are presented which indicate the existence of a constant annual mortality rate of not more than 11.1% with a mean expectation of further life at the time of banding of not less than 8.5 years.

Breeding birds show a strong tendency to retain both the pair bond and the nest-site. One pair was still breeding in 1971 at the same nest at which it bred 23 years earlier. No re-matings were recorded while the original partner was known to be still alive.

The dimensions of eggs laid over the years by particular females are presented. These enable some general indications to be given of the effects of the age of the female on the dimensions of the eggs which she laid.

TECHNIQUES

Criteria for Ageing and Sexing New Zealand Oystercatchers. Allan J. Baker. *N.Z. Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research,* 8: 211-221.

Criteria based on external characters are presented for ageing and sexing the three New Zealand species of oystercatcher, *Haematopus ostralegus finschi* Martens, 1897, *H. unicolor* Forster, 1844, and *H. chathamensis* Hartert, 1927. Four classes are discerned: juveniles have brown dorsal plumage, a brown iris and grey legs; second-year birds have an orange-red iris and pale pink legs; sub-adults have a dull red iris and pink legs; adults have a scarlet iris and bright coral-pink legs. The three species can be sexed by discriminant analysis of the sexually dimorphic characters, based on bill length, depth and width. Linear functions and discriminating values for predicting sex of adult *H. unicolor* and *H. chathamensis*, and adult and immature *H. ostralegus finschi* are given.

MISCELLANEOUS

Colony Location by Leach's Petrel. Thomas C. Grubb, Jr. *Auk* 90: 78.

Leach's Petrels flying over the treetops of a nesting island in the dark were attracted to the playback of tape-recorded petrel calls and also to the scent of nest material. The results suggest that young petrels may use the senses of hearing and smell to locate nesting colonies concealed from sight under a forest canopy, there to begin nest building.

The Occurrence of the White-tailed Black Cockatoo, *Calyptorhynchus baudinii,* **in** *Pinus* **Plantations in Western Australia.** D. A. Saunders. 1974. *Aust. Wildl. Res.* 1: 45-54.

The occurrence of *C. baudinii* in pine plantations near Perth in Western Australia was surveyed from 1965 to 1970. Results were compared with earlier observations of cockatoo numbers in Mundaring pine plantation and with observations of birds in jarrah forest near Mt Helena.

The birds regularly concentrated in plantations near Perth after the breeding season, completely stripping the cones from the small plantation before moving out to the other larger plantations north of Perth. In contrast, in eucalypt forests they occurred irregularly and in smaller numbers.

Obervations were made on the way the birds drop uneaten pine cones and green twigs while feeding. Pine cones are similar to fruits of native species regularly eaten by cockatoos.

Age and Sex Differences in the Black-and-Blue Jays of Middle America. John W. Hardy. 1973. *Bird-Banding* 44: 81-90.

The plumage and soft part colour changes from juvenile to full adult for four allopatric *Cyanocorax* jays are described and illustrated.

Homemade Gadgets for the Handyman Bander. Conducted by Arthur J. Wiseman. 1973. *Inland Bird Banding News*, 45: 26-38.

A series of gadgets which can be readily made or adapted by a versatile bander are described and illustrated. These include band holders (giant safety pin type; plastic bucket holding a series of strings of bands, which are carried in the bucket; portable racks), markers to distinguish band sizes (dymo tape; colour codes), pliers, awl to pre-open bands to correct size, holding bags (brown paper with clean paper in bottom; nylon laundry bags) and wooden carrying boxes of several designs. The gadgets have been culled from a variety of publications.

New Members

Full Members:

BENNET, Mrs W. M., 22 Echuca Road, Greensborough, Vic.
CROSSMAN, D. G., National Parks Branch, Dept. of Forestry, Evans Road, Salisbury, Vic.
DAVIDSON, D. H., P.O. Box 282, Murwillumbah, N.S.W.
LILL, Dr A., Zoology Department, Monash University, Clayton, Vic.

Associate Members:

FOREST, Mrs B. S., 144 Prince Charles Parade, Kurnell, N.S.W.
GRAY, Mrs D. E., 5 Holtze Street, Fannie Bay, N.T.
KLAPSTE, J., 6/15 Southey Street, Elwood, Vic.
PATTEMORE, Miss V. J., Lisbon Street, Maroochydore, Qld.
SMID, P., P.O. Box 102, Gordon, N.S.W.

Junior Member:

CHLADIL, M. A., 18 Belmont Road, Mosman, N.S.W.

Old Banding Records

During the 16th International Ornithological Congress in Canberra in August, Mr W. R. Wheeler presented to Dr H. J. Frith, Chief of the Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO, for safekeeping, the banding records covering the first bird banding carried out in Australia.

Mr Wheeler informed those present that, at one stage, the records had almost been destroyed, and were rescued from disposal at the last moment. Professor Dorst, President of the Congress, spoke briefly on the importance of such records and thanked Mr Wheeler for his concern and interest in the matter.

In addition to Mr and Mrs Wheeler, those preesnt at the function were Professor J. Dorst (France), Drs H. J. Frith, R. D. Etchecopar (France), D. S. Farner (USA), D. L. Serventy, Messrs J. Calaby, C. J. R. Robertson (New Zealand), D. Purchase and S. G. Lane.

Recovery Data

Items for Recovery Round-up are obtained from:

1. The Secretary, Aust. Bird-banding Scheme
2. Individual banders
3. Miscellaneous sources

The Secretary of the ABBS kindly provides most of the data involving recoveries away from the banding place and these constitute the largest part of Recovery Round-up. However, for a number of reasons, longevity information is not readily available from this source. Most longevity items included in Recovery Round-up are forwarded by a few banders in response to previous requests.

Banders are asked to forward to me details of longevity items which they consider may be suitable for inclusion in this section. As a guide in deciding suitability, items for the particular species should be checked in recent issues. If in doubt send the details anyway.

Hon. Editor