Recent Literature

ANALYTICAL STUDIES

Subspeciation in the White-tailed Black Cockatoo, Calyptorhynchus baudini, in Western Australia. D. A. Saunders. 1974. *Aust. Wild. Res.* 1: 55-69.

The nomenclatural history of the two forms of White-tailed Black Cockatoo is discussed. Their correct names are *Calyptorhynchus baudinii baudinii* Lear for the long-billed form, and *C. b. latirostris* Carnaby for the short-billed form.

C. b. latirostris differs from *baudini* in having a slightly shorter wing and shorter culmen, there being virtually no overlap in the range of culmen lengths between adults of the two subspecies. The adult skull of *baudini* is wider and higher, with a longer culmen, lower mandible and gonys than *latirostris*. *C. b. baudinii* is found in areas with an annual average rainfall of 750 mm or more, whereas *latirostris* occurs where it is 300-750 mm. *C. b. baudinii* appears to be resident throughout the year whereas *latirostris* moves to the higher rainfall areas during the non-breeding season, returning to the drier areas during the breeding season. For food *baudinii* depends on the seeds of the marri, *Eucalyptus calophylla*, whereas *latirostris* depends on seeds from the small hard fruits of species of Hakea and Dryandra.

A mechanism for the separation of the two forms during the breeding season is suggested.

Colony Visitation Behaviour and Breeding Ages of Sooty Terns (Sterna fuscata). Brian A. Harrington. 1974. *Bird-Banding* 45: 115-144.

This paper is based on a massive banding and recapture programme on various Pacific Ocean islands, and over a million terns were banded. On Johnston Atoll, over 280 000 were banded, and some 10 000 banded birds were recaptured there; 118 of these had been banded elsewhere, and the eight breeding birds had been banded on Wake, Midway, Kure and Laysan Islands.

Adolescents visit the natal colony when at least two years old, and a few breed at four years. Most breed at between six and eight years, and a few do not breed until ten years old. Young birds, as is usual with colonial seabirds, nest later in the season, and are thus forced to nest in different areas, which are less suitable.

Survival of some Common Passerines in a Pennsylvania Woodlot. Irvin R. Savidge and David E. Davis. 1974. *Bird-Banding* 45: 152-155.

Survival rates are based on recaptures over a six year study. 'Corrected' survival rates vary from 0.53 to 0.69 for the seven species studied.

A Ringing Study of Migratory Barn Swallows in West Malaysia. Lord Medway. 1973. *Ibis* 115: 60-86.

The Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* is a non-breeding winter visitor to West Malaysia (Malaya), abundant in season, by day feeding aerially over a wide range of habitats and by night normally roosting gregariously in trees, reed-beds or on service wires in towns. Records of ringed birds have demonstrated that those reaching Malaya breed in the Palaearctic region from 108° Eastwards and between 37° and 51° N. Recoveries south of the breeding range suggest that migrating birds may follow a Continental course of a more easterly track through the Philippines and Borneo. Counts at roost sites in a reed-bed and in towns demonstrated a seasonal increase in numbers from late July to a peak in November, followed by a decline of about 20%, to a level maintained until mid February when departure commenced. Most birds had left by early May, but a few lingered and possibly overlapped with the first returning migrants in June. There was no evidence that any individuals remained in Malaya throughout the nuptial period. Repeats during winter at three regularly sampled urban roosts indicated that many birds on passage were present until November and again in March and early April; from December to February the winter population was relatively stable and comparatively sedentary. Although the distances between towns were small in relation to the demonstrated foraging range of Barn Swallows, only 17% of 1955 repeats of ringed birds represented a shift in roost site. Most shifts were towards the centrally situated and most populous roost of the three; interchanges between the outer pair of towns were few.

Data and discussion on other aspects such as moult, survival etc. are also given.

The Food of Waterfowl (Anatidae) in the Southern Coorong Saltwater Habitat of South Australia. L. B. Delroy. 1974. *S. Aust. Orn.* 26: 157-163.

Results are tabulated and analysed for oesophagus and gizzard specimens collected from 36 Grey Teal *Anas gibberifrons*, seven Chestnut Teal *A. castanea* and 14 Mountain Duck *Tadorna tadonoides* in the southern Coorong from March 1965 to January 1966. It is shown that the main food consumed came from two aquatic plants, Wigeongrass *Ruppia spiralis*, and Muskgrass *Lamprothamnium appulosum*.

Specimens were collected separately from the oesophagus and the gizzard, in most instances from different birds, although all from the Southern Lagoon. Marked differences were found in composition of those specimens. These differences were taken to indicate that the specimens collected from gizzards from the above species of waterfowl did not accurately reflect the food eaten by ducks in the study area. This is significant because most research in Australia on the food of ducks has been assessed on gizzard samples.

A brief description of environmental factors affecting the growth of Wigeongrass and Muskgrass is given.

MISCELLANEOUS

Recoveries of Banded Argentine Waterfowl. C. C. Olrog 1974. *Bird-Banding*, 45: 170-177.

Recoveries of waterfowl over the past ten years are tabulated. Recoveries of some species are mapped.

Organochlorine Residues, Eggshell Thinning and Hatching Success in British Sparrowhawks. I. Newton and J. Bogan. 1974. *Nature* 249: 582-583.

The authors present a study of 325 nests of the Sparrowhawk *Accipter nisus* during 1971-1973 in Dumfriesshire, southern Scotland. Eggs from 130 clutches were collected for analysis. The main organochlorine residues found were DDE (metabolite of DDT), PCB and dieldrin. Compared with eggs from 71 clutches collected in pre- DDT times, there showed an 18% reduction in shell index, confirming the results of earlier studies in Britain. The eggshell index was found to be inversely correlated with DDE and PCB content. Among the 325 study nests, 34% showed normal hatching success, 31% showed partial success, and 35% failed completely. Hatching success was found to be inversely related to organochlorine content.

The authors found that, in spite of widespread shell thinning, egg breakage was a less important cause of unsuccessful breeding than failure to lay having built a nest, while desertions and embryo deaths also accounted for a large proportion of failures in chicks. Clutches failing owing to egg breakage or embryo death showed organochlorine levels significantly higher than those showing normal success.

Retraction of a Longevity Record for a 36-year-old Herring Gull

'An Additional Longevity Record' in vol. 6, no. 1 (March 1968), p. 9 of this Journal gave details of a Herring Gull reported to have lived over 36 years. The following extract from *Auk*, vol. 91, p. 432 (1974) stated that the 'record' had resulted from an error.

'The longevity record for a 36-year-old Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus* (Pettingill 1967, *Auk* 84: 123), is erroneous. Herring Gull with band number A-676871, the basis of the record, was found dead on 20 June 1966 on the shore of Little Traverse Bay near Petoskey, Michigan, and reported to the Bird Banding Laboratory. The laboratory then mistakenly advised Pettingill that this gull was banded by him on 29 June 1930 on coastal Maine. He actually banded Herring Gull number A-676871 as a young bird on one of the Beaver Islands in Lake Michigan on 8 July 1948. The gull was thus 18 instead of 36 years old.—George M. Jonkel, Bird Banding Laboratory, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Laurel, Maryland 20810, and Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., Wayne, Maine 04284.'

Reviews

Bird Guide of Thailand (2nd Revised Edition) by Boonsong Lekagul and Edward W. Cronin, Jr. 1974. Association for the Conservation of Wildlife, 4, Old Custom House Lane, Bangrak, Bangkok. Pp. 316; plates (paintings) coloured 107, black & white 5; line drawings 1; maps 2 plus individual species maps. Price $10.00 (US).

With the Western World's yet further increasing affluence, and the consequent travel explosion, it is not surprising that more ornithologists are visiting South-east Asia. While Australians have as yet not descended upon the region in organized bird-watching tours, as have the Americans, it will not be long before they do. Thus the publication of this book is, to us, timely.

The task facing the authors must have been daunting indeed. With 849 recorded species Thailand's avifauna is richer than that of the Australian continent. The discovery in 1968 of a new and striking species of swallow, *Pseudochelidon sirintarae*, the lack of seabird research and proximity of Eurasian migration routes make it likely that the list is by no means complete.

As the title implies, the book is a field guide in the Peterson tradition. Apart from a brief introduction and some appendices it sticks strictly to identification, with just a line or two of text about habits. In this respect the authors avoided the frequent mistake, in areas where no handbook exists, of trying to get the best of both worlds by producing what is, too often, both a cumbersome field guide and an incomplete handbook. The authors in fact draw attention to the great works of Salim Ali & Ripley, Robinson & Chasen, Smythies *et alii* for further reading by the more serious ornithologist, and generously acknowledge their debt to those workers.

The introduction explains the zoogeography of Thailand, gives a very brief resume of the past history of ornithology in the country, lists a few of the most suitable (?accessible) bird-watching spots and explains how to use the book. The zoogeographical discussion gives reasons for the great diversity of resident species and delineates regions of predominantly indigenous (the northern and central), Burmese (the eastern), Indo-Chinese (north-eastern and south-eastern) and Malaysian (Peninsular Thailand) affinities. Regrettably the accompanying map does not live up to the text and, for anyone unfamiliar with Thailand's geography, is difficult to follow. Unfortunately the zoogeographical content lacks any discussion of the Eurasian migration routes, which contribute greatly to Thailand's species list.

The arrangement of species follows the Wetmore pattern except where, as the authors explain, families of similar appearance are grouped together for comparison.