

Because of the scarcity of beach-washed specimens, and the small size of the colony on Figure of Eight Island it had been assumed that the short-tailed shearwater had only recently colonised the Archipelago of the Recherche. However the large colony on Ben Island indicates that they have been breeding here for a considerable time.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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— R.E. JOHNSTONE and L.A. SMITH, Western Australian Museum, Perth.

**Flock Pigeon Observations** — During April, 1985, we stayed at Anna Plains Station (121° 30' East, 19° 14' South) for several days.

There are two hot artesian bores on the station property. One follows the usual bore drain pattern and eventually disappears into the sandy soil. The other, however, has formed and maintains a swampy area of about 200 x 200 m. There is also a considerable amount of shallow open water in the centre of this marsh. This bore water wetland attracts an unusual variety of bird species in an otherwise quite dry pindan woodland.

On the morning of 13 April 1985 we observed two pigeons flying in. While circling overhead we clearly identified them as Flock Pigeons. Headmarkings and size were unmistakable. Subsequently they dropped down into the middle of the open water, sat or floated on it, drank twice and rose again immediately after. This manner of drinking appeared to be very unusual.

Three days later, while crossing Roebuck Plains, just east of Broome, adjacent to a mangal belt, we also recorded a single bird flying past us.

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**Bridled Tern breeding on the Western Australian mainland** — Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) is a circumequatorial species which has increased its breeding range southwards in Western Australia this century (Serventy *et al.* 1971. *Handbook of Australian Sea-birds*). The only known breeding locations are continental islands.

On 1-3 January 1985 at Knobby Head (34°15'S, 115°01'E) near Cape Hamelin, four nests with single eggs were located in fissures in granite or in holes in overlying limestone. On 25 January 1986, two nests each had one egg; one nest was in a limestone nodule on granite, the second was in a horizontal fissure between limestone and granite. Adult birds which were incubating the eggs continued to fly around or perch on nearby rocks after being disturbed. In January 1986 at least 100 birds were flying around the nearby Honeycomb Rocks and Scotsman Rock. Similar



numbers of birds were still present at these rocks on 14 February (G. Harold pers. comm.). It is possible that the birds breeding on the mainland were unable to find suitable nest sites on the adjacent small islands.

Our dates of summer breeding are also interesting. Serventy *et al.* indicate that birds breed only in spring in southern Western Australia and by late summer are migrating north. They note, however, that this species has recently colonised Baudin Rocks in South Australia where it breeds in January.

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**Chestnut Whistling Duck in the Perth Region** — The Chestnut Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) was seen on the eastern side of Lake Herdsman (31° 55'S, 115° 48'E) on 11 November 1985. Two birds were present and were observed intermittently until January 1986. The last observation was made on 9 January. Generally, the ducks were very retiring and difficult to discern over an average water distance of 100 m. Only good binoculars or a telescope revealed their identity.

Over time they were seen camped and/or preening amongst coots, black ducks or grey teal on what may be called the far shore. Only rarely were they noted swimming in front of the bulrush-dominated foreshore and were never observed feeding. No sound was recorded nor were they seen flying. At times, depending on light and water conditions, their rufous brown underparts from the chest downwards, as well as the oblique flank plumes, were quite obvious. Bill and legs were black, face light brown with a dark brown crown stripe; only rarely the white undertail was noted. Only once were they on the observer's side of the water, and their upright stance while swimming was quite distinct from the other local ducks. This is only the second published record of this tropical species in the Perth area. A specimen had been collected at Wanneroo in 1899 (Serventy & Whittell, *Birds of Western Australia*).

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**Notes of Reproduction in Captive *Lialis burtonis*** — On 19 January 1985 a gravid *Lialis burtonis* (snout-vent-length 176mm, total length 365mm; weight after oviposition 13.0gm) was collected at Kings Park, near Perth. It was active on a bicycle track in the early evening among Jarrah and Banksia woodland.

The lizard was housed in a 60 cm vivarium using light yellow sand as substrate; cage furnishings consisted of a fragmented clay tile for shelter and an overhanging branch for climbing. An artificial light consisting of a 60 watt incandescent lamp was used and *Cryptoblepharus plagiocephalus* skinks were offered for food but no interest was shown in these.

Two eggs were laid on 28 January. Immediately after weighing and measuring, (Table 1) the eggs were placed in a margarine container on dampened vermiculite with 'cling wrap' being pulled



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