

ADDITIONS TO THE AVIFAUNA OF THE PRINCE REGENT RIVER NATURE RESERVE

By P. J. FULLER and A. A. BURBIDGE, W.A. Wildlife Research
Centre, P.O. Box 51, Wanneroo, W.A. 6065.

INTRODUCTION

In July 1977 we took part in a survey of the status of the Salt-water Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) in some river systems of the north-west Kimberley. This work was carried out from the University of Sydney's Research Vessel *The Harry Messel* and the results are reported elsewhere (Messel, *et al.*, 1977).

During the survey we had the opportunity of observing birds which frequent the estuarine portions of the Roe and Prince Regent Rivers and adjacent country included in the Prince Regent River Nature Reserve. Storr *et al.* (1975) list 134 species of birds recorded in this reserve during an August 1974 survey. We are able to add a further 16 species.

We were in the Roe River on July 23-24 and the Prince Regent on July 26 and 27, 1977.

BIRD LIST

Australian Pelican, *Pelecanus conspicillatus*. Small parties of up to five individuals observed on both rivers.

Brown Booby, *Sula leucogaster*. A single bird was observed at the mouth of the Roe River.

Little Black Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*. A flock of 15 was seen in the Prince Regent River well upstream.

White Egret, *Egretta alba*. Occasional birds were encountered in both rivers, mainly on mud flats adjacent to mangroves.

Little Egret, *Egretta garzetta*. In small groups of up to four feeding on mud flats adjacent to mangroves.

Jabiru, *Xenorhynchus asiaticus*. Single birds and pairs observed along both rivers.

Grey Teal, *Anas gibberifrons*. A single bird seen on the bank of the Roe River near its mouth.

Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*. A single bird seen in the upstream estuarine section of the Roe River where it passes through a gorge.

Sooty Oystercatcher, *Haematopus fuliginosus*. Two birds seen on a mud bank in a creek flowing into the Roe River.

Grey Plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*. Three seen on an exposed mud bank in the Roe River.

Eastern Curlew, *Numenius madagascariensis*. Scattered birds sighted throughout both river systems.

Little Greenshank, *Tringa stagnatalis*. Two seen on mud flats in Roe River.

Common Sandpiper, *Tringa hypoleucos*. Occasional birds observed in both river systems.

Red-necked Stint, *Calidris ruficollis*. A flock of 40 seen near the mouth of the Roe River.

Crested Tern, *Sterna bergii*. Observed flying and feeding along both rivers. The Lesser Crested Tern, *S. bengalensis*, outnumbered this species.

White-breasted Wood Swallow, *Artamus leucorhynchus*. A flock of about 25 was seen in mangroves near the mouth of the Prince Regent River.

DISCUSSION

A total of 150 species of birds have now been recorded for the Reserve. Doubtless further visits, especially during the wet season, will add to this number.

Most of the additional species recorded here are birds which frequent the margins of the Roe and Prince Regent River estuaries. This type of

habitat was not thoroughly explored by Storr *et al.* (1975) who worked on foot. Because we were working from boats we were able to search large areas of the river banks in a short time. Additional to the species listed above we observed a number of Great-billed Heron, *Ardea sumatrana*. Storr *et al.* only recorded a single bird.

The only breeding bird we noted was the Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*. A nest on an islet at the mouth of the Prince Regent River inspected on July 27 contained one newly hatched chick, one egg which was chipping and another egg. A nest of the White-breasted Sea-Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, in a *Bombax* tree just outside the Reserve near the mouth of the Roe River contained a single almost fully fledged chick.

REFERENCES

- MESSEL, H., A. A. BURBIDGE, A. G. WELLS and W. J. GREEN, 1975. The status of the Salt-water Crocodile in some river systems of the north-west Kimberley, Western Australia. *Dept. Fish. Wildl. West. Aust. Rept.* No. 24. (Dept. Fish. Wildl.: Perth).
- STORR, G. M., R. E. JOHNSTONE, J. DELL, and L. A. SMITH, 1975. Birds of the Prince Regent River Reserve, north-west Kimberley, Western Australia. In: Miles, J. M. and A. A. Burbidge, A biological Survey of the Prince Regent River Reserve, north-west Kimberley, Western Australia, in August 1974. *Wildl. Res. Bull. West Aust.* No. 3. (Dept. Fish. Wildl.: Perth).

NOTES ON THE REPRODUCTION OF THE SHARK BAY MOUSE, *PSEUDOMYS PRAECONIS*, IN CAPTIVITY

By C. H. S. WATTS and LESLEY SPENCER, Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, Frome Road, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

ABSTRACT

The Shark Bay Mouse, *Pseudomys praeconis*, is known only from Bernier Island off Western Australia. Few specimens have ever been collected. In April 1975 we received two males and one female which subsequently produced two litters in the laboratory. Details of the growth and development of these litters is presented as well as data obtained on the gestation period (28-30 days) and the oestrus cycle (less than 14-16 days).

INTRODUCTION

The Shark Bay Mouse is one of the least known of Australian rodents. Until the collection of the present specimens, it was known from only five or six specimens few of which had been collected in the last fifty years (Robinson *et al.*, 1976). One early specimen was collected from Peron Peninsula W.A. but the species is now known only from Bernier Island in Shark Bay, W.A., an "A" class nature reserve. The mouse is a small (30 g) nondescript rodent greatly resembling the more widespread Plains Rat, *Pseudomys australis*, from which it differs in having a mottled appearance, shorter ears, the apical rather than basal half of the tail darkly pigmented dorsally and in characters of the skull.

Since our only female has died and it is unlikely that further specimens will be obtained for some time, the few details that we obtained of the breeding biology of this rare species are presented here.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Two males and one female were caught on Bernier Island, W.A. on April 21, 1975 and sent to Adelaide (Robinson *et al.*, 1976). All were adult. One male died shortly after arrival. The remaining pair were housed in a 91 x 61 x 33 cm wooden and glass cage containing two nest boxes. They were fed on mixed bird seed supplemented twice a week with diced vegetables. Water was provided *ad. lib.* The room was under natural lighting with the temperature controlled at $21 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$.



Fuller, Phillip J. and Burbidge, Andrew A. 1978. "Additions to the Avifauna of the Prince Regent River Nature Reserve." *The Western Australian Naturalist* 14(2), 42–43.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/273338>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/311186>

Holding Institution

Western Australian Naturalists' Club (Inc.)

Sponsored by

Atlas of Living Australia

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Western Australian Naturalists' Club (Inc.)

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Rights: <http://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.