

soon lessen them by smashing all the eggs on both islands, without the slightest fear of being found out, which would certainly be the death-knell of this fine bird, but we have not the slightest intention of doing so, as we all admire them as a somewhat unique bird, and I understand these are the only places in Bass Strait where they breed.—Yours, &c.,

Clarke Island, 23/5/08.

J. D. MACLAINE.

South Australian Ornithological Association.

THE eighth annual meeting of the South Australian Ornithological Association was held at the residence of Mr. A. H. C. Zietz on Thursday evening, 5th March. Mr. Zietz presided. The hon. secretary reported good progress during the year, several new members having joined. Interest in the study of native birds had not abated, but much had been done individually and collectively in the protection of useful birds, notably the little Kestrel (*Cerchneis cenchroides*), a species of the Hawk family, which had been totally protected, with other birds. The association had also used its influence in recommending the national reserve on Kangaroo Island. The financial report showed a good credit balance, and was adopted. The chairman read interesting notes by the late Mr. F. W. Andrews on bird life in the earlier days in the Mounts Compass and Jagged districts, and a pamphlet upon the meat-eating Kea Parrot (*Nestor notabilis*) of New Zealand, by G. R. Marriner, F.R.M.S. Mr. F. R. Zietz showed plates of Petrels and other illustrations of bird life. Mr. M. Symonds Clarke read a letter from Mr. W. C. Skipper, advocating the introduction of native birds into Botanic Park. A number of interesting exhibits were shown, including a series of Nightjars by Mr. A. H. C. Zietz, F.L.S., the White-throated Nightjar (*Eurostopodus albogularis*), Spotted (*E. argus*), and the Large-tailed (*Caprimulgus macrurus*), also specimens of the Flame-breasted Robin (*Petroica phænicea*), and the Scarlet-breasted (*P. leggit*), and an interesting zoological collection. Mr. E. Ashby showed several birds from Port Keats, Northern Territory, notably a new Pigeon—the Lilac-mantled, which has just been described by Mr. A. J. North, of the Sydney Museum, as *Chalcophaps occidentalis*. Mr. Ashby also exhibited a Nightjar from New South Wales. Captain White showed nest and eggs of Rufous-breasted Shrike-Thrush from Tweed River. The following officers were elected :—President, Mr. A. H. C. Zietz ; vice-president, Mr. M. Symonds Clarke ; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. J. W. Mellor.

The next meeting of the Association was held at the office of Messrs. Saunders and Ashby, Adelaide, on the evening of 7th May, Mr. A. H. C. Zietz presiding. The hon. secretary read a letter from the Commissioner of Crown Lands relative to the total protection of Black Swans and the Kestrel. Several members bore testimony to the extreme usefulness of the latter bird in killing mice and small vermin. Mr. Ashby reported that the Government had refused to set aside an area at the western end of Kangaroo Island as a National Reserve and Park, and were only willing to consider the Cape Borda lighthouse reserve. The subject for discussion was "The Malurus Family," commonly known as "Wrens," and noted for the beautiful plumage of the males of all the species. The family is purely insectivorous, and therefore extremely useful in keeping down blight and small insect pests. The chairman showed 14 species of the male birds in illustration of some interesting remarks made, which were supplemented by 10 species exhibited by Mr. Ashby for comparison. Mr. Ashby also showed the Rainbow Pitta (*Pitta iris*), from the Northern Territory, the Western Australian Grass-Bird (*Megalurus striatus*), and the Western Field-Wren (*Calamanthus*

montanellus). Mr. J. W. Mellor exhibited eggs from Central Australia, being those of the Black-banded Whiteface (*Xerophila nigrocincta*), Chestnut-crowned Babbler (*Pomatorhinus ruficeps*), and the Black-faced Wood-Swallow (*Artamus melanops*). Mr. Ashby reported that several species of Honey-eating Lorikeets were now plentiful at Blackwood. Captain White noted the Flame-breasted Robin (*Petroica phænicea*) common now at the Reedbeds.

Bird Observers' Club.

THE usual quarterly dinner was held at the Mia-Mia Tea Rooms, Collins-street, Melbourne, on Wednesday, 12th February, when thirteen members were present. At the business meeting there was a good attendance. Mr. A. J. Campbell occupied the chair. Apologies were received from Dr. C. Ryan, Messrs. F. P. Godfrey, Donald Macdonald, and Surgeon-General Williams.

After the minutes had been read and confirmed, the chairman, in an apt speech, welcomed as guest Mr. D. Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., London, editor of *The Avicultural Magazine*. Notice was also taken of Mr. D. Le Souëf's return from abroad. Mr. Seth-Smith, in responding, thanked the company for the hearty reception accorded him, and spoke at length on the pleasure it afforded him in being able to study the birds of Australia in their natural haunts. His first love for Australian birds had been inspired by the perusal of Gould's beautiful work. Nature notes were received from Mr. J. Christian, of Raywood, while Mr. T. H. Tregallas contributed a note on Cuckoos. Mr. Cole exhibited a well-preserved mounted Grey Goshawk, shot at Upper Hawthorn, Victoria, 27th February, 1870. The hon. secretary showed a beautiful series of eggs of the Pilot-Bird, the colouring varying considerably. After the conclusion of business Messrs. Nicholls and Mattingley showed some very fine lantern slides, depicting birds, beasts, fishes, and reptiles in their natural surroundings, some of the pictures being as rare as remarkable.

The Birds of Bass Strait.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

THE Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria organized three expeditions to the islands of the Strait—1887, to King Island, per s.s. *Lady Loch* (leader, Mr. A. J. Campbell); 1890, to Kent Group, per s.s. *Despatch* (leader, Mr. D. Le Souëf); 1893, to Furneaux Group, per s.s. *Alert* (leader, Mr. J. Gabriel).

During the next (November) session of the A.O.U., which is to be held in Melbourne, the Council hope to organize an expedition to visit some of the remaining unexplored and little-known islands of the Strait, notably Hogan Group and a small Albatross "rookery" never yet visited by ornithologists.

For members who dislike the tossing of the Strait, a quieter camp-out excursion will take place on Cape Wollomai, Phillip Island.

Members intending to join either expedition or excursion are invited to send their names to the hon. secretary, Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley, so that early arrangements may be made. The expedition can only take place if there be sufficient members to share the expense of a small steamer. *Such a trip is the chance of a life-time for an ornithologist or bird-lover.*



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