

## Australasian Ornithologists' Union.

### EIGHTH (MELBOURNE) SESSION.

ON Wednesday, 18th, and Thursday, 19th November, 1908, the official delegates appointed by the Governments of the States of the Commonwealth to attend the session, and visiting members of the Union, arrived in Melbourne, and were met by some of the Victorian ornithologists. At 4 p.m. on the afternoon of the 19th the official delegates met at the Board Room, Department of Public Works, Treasury Gardens, Melbourne, and were welcomed on behalf of the Government of Victoria by the Hon. D. E. M'Bryde, Minister of Public Works and Administrator of *Fisheries and Game Acts* of Victoria.

The following were the delegates, namely:—Victoria—Mr. C. W. Maclean, Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game, Victoria (elected chairman); Western Australia—The Right Hon. Sir John Forrest, K.C.M.G.; South Australia—Mr. J. W. Mellor; Queensland—Mr. E. W. Archer, M.H.R.; Tasmania—Mr. A. L. Butler; whilst the Union was represented by Messrs. A. J. Campbell, Col. Mem. B.O.U., D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., and A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S.

In the evening, at the Athenæum Hall, a public lecture, entitled "The Birds of Riverina," was given by Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S. His Excellency Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, K.C.M.G., Governor of Victoria (who was accompanied by Lady Gibson-Carmichael), presided. There was a good attendance. A magnificent series of 130 slides of the birds of this fertile area was exhibited. The lecturer, who had a wealth of information at his command regarding the life-histories of the birds of this part of the Commonwealth, which is situated in New South Wales, dealt with his subject in a popular manner. He showed that birds were Nature's insecticide, and that the work performed by birds was annually worth many millions of pounds sterling to the Commonwealth. They were indissolubly linked with our domestic economy, to such an extent that the time was not far distant when it would be incumbent on the Commonwealth Government to establish an Ornithologists' Bureau similar to that established by the Government of the United States of America. His Excellency, in thanking the lecturer, stated how valuable such a lecture was in educating the people, and he was convinced that all that had been said regarding the value of birds in keeping Nature's balance level was true. One was apt to overlook the usefulness of our feathered friends, but nature study was gradually educating the rising generation as to the proper position of birds with regard to mankind, and their relative value to the community. Much praise was due to the lecturer and his society for carrying on such useful work in such an unselfish and unostentatious manner. Sir John Forrest moved a vote of thanks to His Excellency for presiding, and stated that the excellent views shown that evening, especially of the Black Swan,



reminded him of a visit that was paid to Western Australia some years ago by Mr. A. J. Campbell, who, upon observing that there were no Black Swan on the Swan River, suggested that some should be obtained and placed thereon. This was done, and now the Swan River was the pride of Western Australians, and many thousands of people enjoyed the pleasure of watching these graceful birds swimming and flying about the river.

On Friday, the 20th, the official delegates again attended at the Board Room, and proceeded with the discussion of the articles of an improved Game Bill, designed to regulate the inter-State traffic in game, which had been submitted by the Council of the Union.

*Business.*—At 7.30 p.m. the annual general business meeting of the session was held in the Royal Geographical Society's Rooms, 421 Collins-street, the president, Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., being in the chair.

The minutes of the seventh annual session, held in Sydney, were read, confirmed, and signed, on the motion of Capt. S. A. White, seconded by Mr. J. W. Mellor.

The annual report of the hon. secretary was then given *extempore*, since, owing to stress of work, he had been unable to write it. It was shown that the Union's affairs were in a flourishing condition generally. The past year had been a momentous one in the Union's history. Much had been accomplished in advancing ornithological matters. A "Handlist to the Birds of Australasia" had been published as a supplement to *The Emu*. Ornithologists representing the Commonwealth had joined together in a deputation to the Prime Minister regarding the provisions of a Plumage Bill to be introduced into our Federal Legislature; whilst the Council of the Union had been engaged on the articles to be submitted to the Government delegates at this session.

The president, Mr. Le Souëf, stated few knew of the enormous amount of labour that had devolved upon the hon. secretary during the past twelve months.

The hon. treasurer's report and balance-sheet followed, read by Mr. Z. Gray in the absence of the hon. treasurer. The financial statement showed that the Union was financially in a prosperous condition. Mr. Z. Gray moved its adoption, which was seconded by Mr. A. L. Butler, and carried.

*Correspondence.*—Several letters on bird protection were read, as well as letters of apology from members for their unavoidable absence.

*Presidential Address.*—A paper, entitled "The Most Useful Bird in Australia," was given by Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., as his presidential address. The president was strongly of opinion that the Ibis was the best bird found in the Commonwealth. It held the premier position owing to the sum standing to its credit in the Bank of Nature. Messrs. E. B. Nicholls, Chas. Barrett, and F. R. Godfrey supported the address.

*New Members.*—On the motion of Capt. S. A. White, seconded by Mr. J. W. Mellor, the following new members were elected:—



New South Wales—S. W. Jackson, H. Keene, H. Burrell, Mrs. H. Burrell, J. Brennan. Tasmania—H. Baker, R. Archer, H. L. Pottenger, A. W. Swindells. South Australia—P. T. Sandland, J. W. Hosking. Queensland—W. J. Harvey. Victoria—C. W. Wilson, Scott Morrison, O. W. Rosenhain, I. Batey, E. J. Christian, A. P. Ingle, C. L. Cameron, E. R. Grimwade, G. M. Robertson, J. M. Thomson, A. H. Chisholm, H. H. Peck, G. E. Aldridge. New Zealand—G. R. Marriner, F.R.M.S. America—Chas. S. Thompson, A.B., A.M.

*Election of Office-bearers.*—Dr. H. Bryant moved, and Surgeon-General Williams seconded the motion, that the following office-bearers be elected for the ensuing year:—President, D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., &c.; vice-presidents—J. W. Mellor, A. J. Campbell, Col. Mem. B.O.U.; hon. treasurer, J. A. Ross; hon. editors, A. J. Campbell, Col. Mem. B.O.U., Scott Morrison; hon. secretary, E. B. Nicholls;\* hon. librarian, A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S.; hon. press correspondent, C. L. Barrett; members of Council—L. Harrison (New South Wales), A. L. Butler (Tasmania), E. Stead (New Zealand), W. M'Ilwraith (Queensland), B. H. Woodward, F.G.S. (Western Australia), Col. C. S. Ryan (Victoria). Adopted.

*Papers.*—Mr. A. G. Campbell contributed a monograph of much interest to ornithologists on "The Flame-breasted Robin (*Petræca phœnicea*)"; Mr. L. C. Cook dealt with the habits of the Victoria Lyre-Bird (*Menura victoriæ*); whilst Mr. E. B. Nicholls contributed a paper on "The Proper Choice of a Vernacular Name."

*Next Annual Session.*—It was unanimously decided, on the motion of Mr. A. L. Butler, seconded by Captain S. A. White, to leave the choice of South or Western Australia, as the next State for the annual session, in the hands of the Council.

*General Business.*—Mr. E. B. Nicholls moved, and Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley seconded, the following motion:—"That, in view of the fact that for the first time in Australian history delegates nominated by the Governments of the several States are present to discuss a comprehensive Bird Protection Bill, and to bring about unification of the Game Laws for the whole of the Commonwealth, and inasmuch as other matters dealing with the value of our bird-life as a national asset from a purely economic standpoint will be discussed, the Government be approached with the object of ascertaining if it would print, for the Union and the delegates conferring, the transactions, which will be of value to the whole of Australia." The motion was adopted.

*Exhibits.*—By Mr. F. R. Godfrey.—A copy of the original chart of insectivorous birds of Victoria, prepared for use in State schools.

By Mr. C. W. Maclean.—A rough skin of apparently a hybrid between a Lyre-Bird and an Andalusian fowl.

By Mr. H. L. White.—A small collection of skins from North-West Australia, including—*Eremiornis carteri*, *Mirafra secunda*, *Emblema picta*, *Ptilotis heartlandi*, and a new Pardalote. Mr. White

\* Mr. G. F. Hill was subsequently appointed.



## STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS

For Year ending

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	RECEIPTS.
			28	0	9	Balance brought forward—General Fund
			14	15	6	Col. Figure Fund
42	16	3				
			46	7	0	Subscriptions—Arrears
			80	9	2	Year ending 30th June, 1908
			12	0	0	” 1909
138	16	2				
12	3	3				“ Handlist ”—Supplement to part 3, vol. vii.
11	7	0				Sales of <i>The Emu</i> (including 6d. postage)
0	6	6				Partial payments in advance
			5	11	10	Col. Figure Fund—Donations
			3	0	0	Advertising in <i>The Emu</i>
8	11	10				
0	19	0				Exchange
215	0	0				

(Signed) J. A. ROSS, *Hon. Treasurer.*

4th November, 1908.

## BALANCE

Year ending

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	ASSETS.
						The <i>Emu</i> in Stock (exclusive of Supplement to part 2, vol. v.)—1,615 parts at 2s., and 148 “Handlists” at 2s. 6d.
180	0	0				Library (estimate)
15	0	0				Illustration Blocks
6	10	0				Arrears of Subscriptions (estimated good)
15	0	0				Cash in Bank—General Fund
			18	7	5	Coloured Figure Fund
			23	7	4	
41	14	9				
258	4	9				

## AND EXPENDITURE

30th June, 1908.

EXPENDITURE.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>The Emu</i> —Printing, &c., including Supplement .. ..		132	19	6			
Illustration Blocks and Prints ..		8	8	10			
		<hr/>			141	8	4
Registration of <i>The Emu</i> .. ..		..	..	..	0	3	0
Binding <i>The Emu</i> .. ..		..	..	..	0	17	6
Purchase of <i>The Emu</i> (for sale at same price) ..		..	..	..	1	14	6
Presentation to Proof Reader of <i>The Emu</i> ..		..	..	..	2	10	0
Congress .. ..		..	..	..	1	9	0
Stationery and General Printing .. ..		..	..	..	4	13	0
Photographs of Egrets for Advertising ..		..	..	..	0	6	6
Postage and Duty .. ..		..	..	..	17	5	0
Exchange .. ..		..	..	..	1	15	6
Book—"The Kea" (Library) .. ..		..	..	..	0	7	6
Fire Insurance .. ..		..	..	..	0	5	5
Bank Charges .. ..		..	..	..	0	10	0
Balance in Bank—General Fund .. ..		18	7	5			
Coloured Figure Fund ..		23	7	4			
		<hr/>			41	14	9
					<hr/>		
					£215	0	0
					<hr/>		

Audited and found correct.

Z. GRAY,  
JAS. HEDDING, } *Hon. Auditors.*

6th November, 1908.

## SHEET,

30th June, 1908.

LIABILITIES.		£	s.	d.
Subscriptions paid in advance .. ..		12	0	0
Other payments in advance .. ..		0	6	6
Balance .. ..		245	18	3
		<hr/>		
		£258	4	9
		<hr/>		



also exhibited series of eggs of *Strepera graculina* and *Gymnorhina longirostris*, the latter being new.

(For further remarks on these exhibits see "Annotations," p. 142, this issue.)

On Saturday, 21st, the official delegates met at 10 a.m. in the Board Room, Public Works Department, and concluded their labours.

In the afternoon members visited "Graylings," the residence of Mr. F. R. Godfrey, St. Kilda, and passed a pleasant afternoon viewing the collection of birds and other specimens that Mr. Godfrey and his wife had collected and mounted.

On Sunday, 22nd, at 11 a.m., a trip was made by rail to the National Park, Ferntree Gully, about 24 miles out from Melbourne. A large number of members attended. The day was beautiful, and the picturesque scenery, composed of tall timber, scrub, tree ferns, and flowering shrubs, was greatly admired, while the cadence of myriads of *Cicadæ* filled the air with sound. A deserted nest of the Pilot-Bird (*Pycnoptilus floccosus*) was shown to the visitors, who marvelled how such a securely-hidden home could be found. Other nests were also pointed out, notably those of the Leaden Flycatcher (*Myiagra rubecula*) and Laughing Jackass (*Dacelo gigas*). Whilst some enjoyed the cooler glades of the forest, others roamed over the open, park-like country adjacent, where the nests of the Orange-winged Sittella (*S. chrysoptera*), Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Graucalus melanops*), Scarlet-breasted Robin (*P. leggii*), Mud-Lark (*Grallina picata*), and many other varieties were seen. Dinner and tea were partaken of at "Vogel Sang," and served up *al fresco*, amidst enchanting scenery. After a most enjoyable outing, the party returned in the evening to the metropolis.

Monday, 23rd.—In the morning the Zoological Gardens and in the afternoon the National Museum were visited. In the evening a dinner was given to the official delegates by the Bird Observers' Club, at the Mia-Mia, Collins-street. There was a large attendance, presided over by Mr. Donald Macdonald, editor of "Nature Notes" in *The Argus*. The toast list included "The King," "The A.O.U.," "The Inter-State Delegates," "The Expedition," "The Birds," and "The B.O.C." Many interesting ornithological exhibits graced the tables.

On Tuesday, 24th, at 8.10 a.m., some members, in charge of Mr. A. J. Campbell, left for a camp-out excursion for a week at Phillip Island to study the Mutton-Birds (*Puffinus tenuirostris*).

At midnight the s.s. *Manawatu* left Queen's Wharf with 25 members and friends on an expedition to Bass Strait islands, details of which will appear in a subsequent issue of *The Emu*, together with the report of the Phillip Island camp-out and the proceedings of the Inter-State Conference for the Better Protection of Birds.



1909. "Australasian Ornithologists' Union." *The Emu : official organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union* 8(3), 163–168.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/mu908163>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/88007>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1071/mu908163>

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