

As yet I have said nothing about the extensive banding carried out in Victoria because I am less well-informed about what is going on there, but the sterling efforts of Miss Gracie Bowker at Port Fairy, who is the second Silvereye bander to reach four figures, have already resulted in two very interesting recoveries (see page 12). There is reason to believe that there is a real prospect yet of Silvereye recoveries between Victoria and New South Wales (or A.C.T.).

Another important gap in the Silvereye project is that to date very few nestlings have been banded. This is regrettable for two reasons, first because of the desirability of getting some reliable longevity data, and secondly because nestling recoveries away from point of banding are incontrovertible evidence of point of origin. So it is to be hoped that some experts at finding Silvereye nests will come forward and give us a few tips.

BANDING OF LITTLE WATTLE BIRD (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*) AT WEENEY BAY.

H. Battam, Cronulla, N.S.W.

Weeney Bay is a small bay inlet on the eastern side of Botany Bay, N.S.W. The banding locality is on its eastern shore, access being gained from Captain Cook Drive, the Cronulla-Kurnell Road.

The vegetation in the immediate vicinity is a mixture of Lantana, Casuarina and *Banksia integrifolia*, the last species being of major importance, as it is abundant in the area and would be the main source of food for the Little Wattle Bird, being in flower the year round; it provides both nectar and insects. It is also a favourite nesting tree.

These factors would account for the high concentration of this species in the area. It is always plentiful and whilst it appears to be sedentary, there is also the possibility that migration and/or nomadic movement take place, the latter being the more likely.

The birds come to a water hole to drink and bathe. This is approximately 12 feet in diameter, and the water in it is maintained more by high tides filtering through the surrounding sandy soil than by rain water. The hole has never been dry over the last four years. The birds move to this hole in all weather conditions, the movement being more pronounced in warmer weather.

A large mass of lantana overhangs low on one side, into which the birds fly. They work down to the water, under the bush, which is only 2 to 3 inches deep. A mist net spread across the hole catches birds which fly across it into the lantana, and birds which come in from other directions can be surprised into the net.

I commenced banding the species at Weeney Bay on 8-11-59 and up to 7-8-60 had banded 35 birds and had had no recoveries. For such a well used water supply and considering that the banding had been spread over nine months, this seemed unusual.

On 14-8-60 I commenced colour banding the species and up to 29-7-62 some 114 birds had been banded; of these 80 received a white plastic band on the left leg in addition to the metal band on the right leg.

Up to the present date I have had two recoveries. Both were retrapped at the banding place, one three months after banding and one nine months after banding. This is a recovery rate of 1.7%.

No observations of birds wearing colour bands have yet been recorded, so the movements of this species remains to be determined. Perhaps continued banding will provide the answer.

ALBATROSS NEWS FROM BELLAMBI

J. D. Gibson, Thirroul, N.S.W.

Albatross banding started inauspiciously at Bellambi with the catching of only three Wandering Albatrosses (Diomedea exulans) on July 15. This, however, was a considerable improvement on the previous trip, a week earlier, when a thorough search failed to provide even a sight of the quarry. Since then things have improved and up to the time of writing (21-8-62) 102 Wanderers have been caught in the course of eight excursions. This gives a rather small average catch per trip and it is obvious to us that the birds are considerably less numerous than in the corresponding period of the past four years.

Two more Wanderers have been taken wearing rings applied in South Georgia by the United States Antarctic Research Program (USARP) team and W.L.N. Tickell has informed us that no fewer than 22 New South Wales birds were on South Georgia last summer though band numbers and other details have not yet been forwarded.