

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.

Now that the fact is established of a regular and considerable traffic of exulans between the breeding island of South Georgia and the N.S.W. coastal feeding area, the retrapping of birds previously banded here is providing most interest and information. Of the 102 birds so far caught, 22 have been previously banded (18 at Bellambi and 4 at Malabar). Notes on the development of plumage pattern over the years are providing data of extreme interest though the story is still far from complete. One recent retrap, 140-02713, banded at Bellambi in July 1959, has checked in on each of the three subsequent years.

+ (This information has since been received: we hope to hear more about this from Doug in our next issue. - Editor)

ALBATROSS BANDING AT MALABAR

S. G. Lane, Sydney.

(Bill Lane sends us the following note on the one and only albatross banding foray/sortie which it has been possible to launch in the Malabar area during this past winter. For those readers not familiar with the albatross banding work, we should mention that, albatrosses - mostly Wandering Albatrosses (Diomedea exulans) - and Giant Petrels (Macronectes giganteus) come to feed on the refuse from the Malabar sewer outfall (one of the main Sydney sewers), and that during the winter months some hundreds of these birds may be counted from the cliff top when conditions are favourable. Advantage of this fact has been taken to extend to this area the albatross banding pioneered by Doug Gibson and Alan Sefton at Bellambi since 1956. For further details see their first and second reports in EMU, May, 1959 (page 73) and May, 1960 (page 125).)

Early on 7th July last, Fred Hersey, Clive Campion and I sailed out of Botany Bay in a 12 foot launch feeling much like Bass and Flinders must have felt in the Tom Thumb - that is until two of them became more interested in feeding fish than catching albatrosses.

Conditions were far from favourable but nearly four hours on the "high seas" resulted in a total catch of 22 Wandering Albatrosses and 4 Giant Petrels. Of these, 4 "Wanderers" and 1 Giant Petrel were already banded. Details of the "Wanderer" retraps are as follows:

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|-----------|----------------|---------|
| 140-00613 | banded Malabar | 9-8-58 |
| 140-02978 | " Malabar | 20-8-60 |