

CLIFFS AND CLAWS: BANDING OF THE PEREGRINE FALCON.

Max Waterman, Murray Park, S.A.

The Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus) is a fairly rare bird in South Australia and appears to be restricted to certain localities. In September, 1962, we received a report of a pair nesting on a cliff face, on the banks of a stream which runs into the River Murray near Mannum.

On October 13th I lead a party of Bird Banders to the site, with helpers and camera men. It was a cold grey day, and the nesting place was reached at about 10 a.m. At this place the precipitous cliffs are over 350 feet high, with a swift flowing stream and rocks at the base. The cave in which the birds had built their nest was situated about halfway down the cliff face. On a visit the week before ordinary climbing methods by one of my helpers, Roy Masson, were unsuccessful. It was decided that it would be necessary to employ a 200 ft. rope, and lower the climber from the top. This was done. Roy reached the cave, placed the three young fledglings in a bag and lowered them to another party at the



Whilst assistant John Jenkins gently restrains two of the vigorous young Peregrines, the third is banded by the author.

base of the cliff. The birds were then photographed, and banded with size 120 bands, after which they were restored to the nest, where they immediately settled down as if nothing had happened.

The whole operation took a total of 5 hours. During all this time the parent birds remained in attendance, made frequent swoops and dives at the nest, and uttered a high pitched chatter, which echoed loudly in the gorge. The actions, flight, cries and swift movements were quite unlike any other hawk species I have encountered.

Altogether the project was accomplished and watched by 17 people, including 4 ladies. Those present included H. T. Condon of the South Australian Museum, and Mrs. N. R. Daley, a well-known ornithologist. A film of the proceedings was made for the A.B.C., and subsequent publicity on television has aroused wide interest in the Australian Bird-Banding Scheme and has brought in a number of new helpers.

FIVE ISLANDS FORAY

B. S. Carter, Sydney

The Five Islands faunal reserve is, as the name suggests, a group of small islands, five in number, scattered off the approaches to Port Kembla on the south coast of New South Wales.

After an unexpected phone call and some hasty arrangements, the morning of the 3rd November saw Ron Mellor, John Edge and me, new chums to the Islands, up in the early hours and on our way with Harry Battam to rendezvous with Bill Lane, his son Trevor and John Disney, these latter two also being on their first visit. We headed for Thirroul and breakfast with Doug Gibson prior to meeting some of the members of the Illawarra Natural History Society at Red Point where a few trips in the Fauna Protection Panel's boat saw us safely on Island No.1.

The purpose of the trip was twofold. Apart from the Sydneysiders' banding operations the I.N.H.S. members began a survey of the sea-bird breeding populations, plant, animal and insect life and a geographic survey of the Islands. It is too early to give the results of these surveys but a note from