

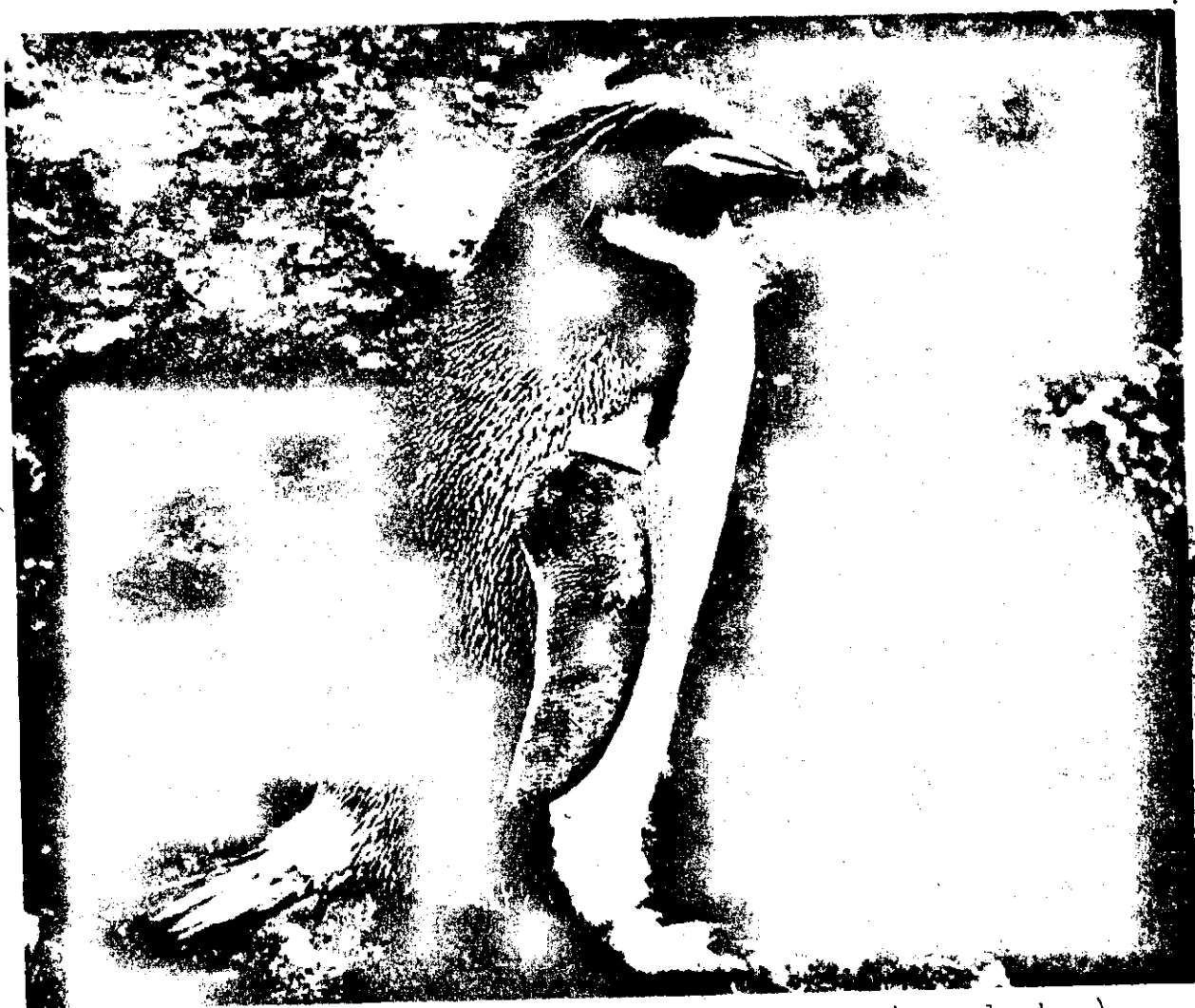
THE BIRD BANDER



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BANDED MACARONI PENGUIN (*Eudyptes chrysolophus chrysolophus*)
Heard Island. Photo: J.M. Bechervaise.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

Undoubtedly the most important announcement we have to make in this issue of "The Bird Bander" is the good news that Queensland has at last decided to come into the Australian Bird Banding Scheme. At this point it is unnecessary to dwell on the reasons why it took the Queensland authorities eight years to make up their minds to permit Queenslanders to take an active part in the Scheme. It is sufficient that we can now welcome the decision, send our warm felicitations to all prospective Queensland banders, and look forward to hearing the results of their participation in due course.

Queensland is ornithologically one of the most interesting provinces of Australia, including as it does so much of our sub-tropical avifauna, and from the bird banders point of view it is of critical interest for two other reasons. First, quite a number of species with breeding populations in the southern States undertake partial migrations which must bring them into Queensland in large numbers; this has been proved in the case of Silvereyes, and must also be true of an uncertain number of other species. Secondly, one of the main streams of migration into and out of Australia probably passes along the Queensland coast, up Cape York, and over to New Guinea across Torres Strait. As yet we know of few places in Australia where the annual migration tide can be observed with predictable certainty; there is good reason to state that there are places in Northern Queensland where this can be done, but this is as yet a field whose possibilities are virtually unexplored.

Speaking of migration, we should like to draw attention to Steve Wilson's very interesting article on migration of several species of honeyeater as observed in and near Canberra. By a fortunate coincidence we are also able to publish a short note from Miss Helena Doyle which illustrates well how observations in a small way may serve to illuminate much more extensive observations. The agreements between the two accounts suggest that honeyeater migration is a phenomenon which may be observed in a wide variety of situations, especially under certain climatic conditions. We should also like to congratulate Miss Doyle on her initiative in demonstrating that bird-banding can be a stimulating extra-curricular activity, and that interesting and useful natural history studies are no prerogative of big schools.

One of our readers has taken us to task for a comment in our last editorial on Don Walker's analysis of three years' Silvereye banding - we must admit that the statement "While everyone may not agree with the form of his analysis" is

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both vague and unhelpful. However, we hasten to point out that this vagueness was not entirely unintentional. While Walker's treatment of his data is interesting and instructive, there must be many different ways of handling any given body of data, and we wished to discourage banders from the idea that they must follow any set pattern in the analysis of their records. We take this opportunity to repair an omission from Walker's article - he asked us to insert an acknowledgment of the collaboration of David Griffin in the banding done in 1959 and 1960, but this request was received after the pages of our third issue had already been made up.

We should like to draw the attention of New South Wales members (and any others who may be in Sydney at that time) to the notice on p.62 of the meeting to be held in the Australian Museum on May 11th.

Finally, the fact that this issue is running a bit late has enabled us to include the following bulletin, which should give satisfaction to all members and should be of particular interest to their wives.

A ROYAL OCCASION.

His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh, is very interested in ornithology and conservation, and it is well known that he likes to fit private outings into his official tours. Canberra bander Steve Wilson, Mrs. Wilson and their sons were greatly honoured during the recent Royal Visit to Canberra when sources close to the Duke proposed that the Duke come along on a Wilson mist-netting outing. This was arranged for the morning of 12th March. The Wilsons set out early to have the nets up before dawn at which time the Duke and two companions arrived.

His Royal Highness displayed a very keen interest in the activity and took a few birds out of the nets. The occasion was completely informal and private and it was very obvious that our Royal visitor enjoyed the interlude very much. He was with the banding party from 4.45 a.m. till 7.45 a.m. at which time duty called. During his visit birds were fairly plentiful and many species that were not taken in the nets were pointed out to him.

The postman brought a surprise the following morning - a copy of "Birds from Britannia" by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh. The title page bears the inscription -

To Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Wilson
To commemorate an early morning on Lake George.
Philip,

Canberra. 1963