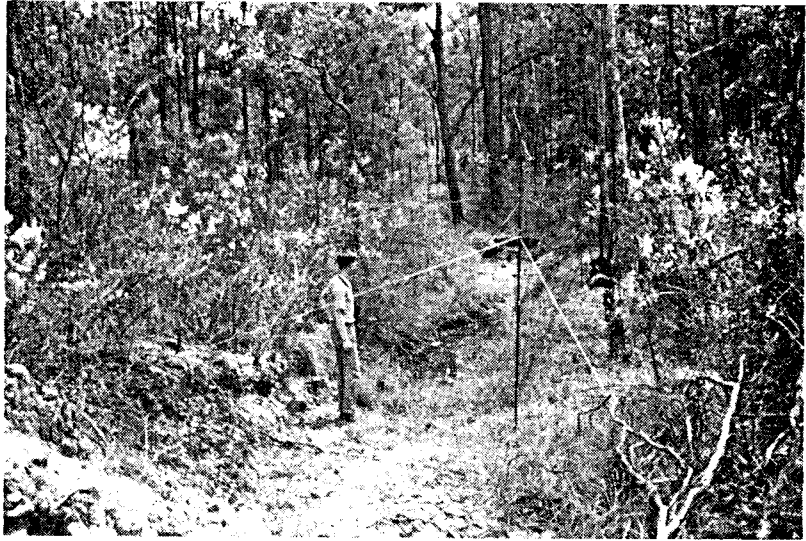


Longevity Of Fuscous Honeyeaters

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• One of the netting sites at a pool in the watercourse.

Photo: S. G. Lane

On 28 and 29 December 1958 in extremely hot weather, the authors mist netted at Cattai near Windsor, N.S.W. The locality is situated in the Wianamatta shale area and consists of dry sclerophyll forest habitat.

One 30 foot by 4 foot Japanese mist net was set at right angles to what appeared after brief observation to be the most popular of a number of small waterholes along an otherwise dry watercourse. During the two days, 128 birds were banded, including 88 Fuscous Honeyeaters (*Meliphaga fusca*).

Banding was continued in the area for a few years at not very regular intervals during the summer months. Encroachment of human habitation and the construction of an earth dam across the watercourse resulted in the cessation of these activities.

A problem with Fuscous Honeyeater plumages caused us to consider a return to the area during the summer of 1966/67 and, with the co-operation of the owner, a number of visits were made.

Apart from the home building about 100 yards from the watercourse and the construction of the small dam, little change had been made to the habitat. In fact, the construction of the dam probably helped as the watercourse was

completely dry on some occasions. The birds prefer to drink and bathe at the small waterholes scattered along the watercourse but when these were dry, successful banding was carried out among the vegetation near the larger artificial waterhole formed by the dam.

The outstanding result of the visits during the past summer was the retrapping of five Fuscous Honeyeaters and one male Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*)—see Recovery Round-up p. 40—which had been banded on that first visit in 1958. For the honeyeaters this represents an unusually high recovery rate of 5.7 per cent, about eight years after banding and in the case of the Rufous Whistler, as it was the only one banded during the first visit, a 100 per cent. recovery over eight years later!

Other "old" recoveries at this site during the season included a Brown-headed Honeyeater (*Melithreptus brevirostris*) 85 months, other Fuscous Honeyeaters 84, 87 and 95 months, and a Rufous Whistler 72 months after banding.

We wish to record our thanks to Mr G. Tollis, the owner of the property who so kindly permitted us the necessary access, and to Helena Doyle, Clive Campion and Peter Spurge who provided details of their banding at this location.

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