

Observations on White-breasted Robins Breeding near Manjimup, W.A.

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From observations of White-breasted Robins *Eopsaltria georgiana* in the Manjimup region of Western Australia during 1975 we obtained a strong indication that a pair had double brooded, but without any means of individually identifying the birds we could not be certain.

The next season a pair again took up the same territory as that occupied in 1975 by the suspected double-brooded pair. This territory was about 60 m x 20 m in size and situated between a road and swamp in a stretch of Karri and Marri trees with an understory of Karri-hazel, sword grass, bracken and bramble.

On 8 September 1976, a nest with two eggs was found in a tangle of Karri-hazel and partly concealed by hanging dead bracken. The nest was camouflaged on the outside with dead bracken and placed about one metre above the ground, a similar height to that of the two nests found in 1975.

On 16 September the eggs hatched; on 19 September the male was banded* and the next day the two pulli and the female were banded. The pulli fledged successfully on 29 September. One of the banded runners was seen feeding independently in the ground litter in the nesting territory on 27 October and the following plumage details were recorded:—

Head and wing coverts: Mottled brown.

Primaries: Blue-grey, tipped brown.

Back: Blue-grey.

Breast: Mottled brown and grey with clear grey clouding at the sides.

Abdomen: White.

Our impressions gained the previous year that White-breasted Robins may raise more than one brood were confirmed when on 4 December about 40 m from the site of the old nest the banded

female was discovered again sitting on two eggs. This nest was about 3.5 m from the ground in an upright fork of Karri-hazel camouflaged on the outside with bark and bracken. Between 16:00 hours on 12 December and 16:30 hours on 13 December one egg disappeared; the remaining one hatched on 15 December.

As late as 24 December one of the juveniles from the first brood was still feeding in the territory unmolested by the adults and as far as we could see taking no share in the feeding of the nestling. The nestling fledged successfully on 28 December.

Five other nests of White-breasted Robins were discovered in the locality; four were from 2.5 m to 3 m above the ground, and one less than 1 m. The higher nests were camouflaged with bark and lichen but the lower one used bracken. All the low nests under observation in 1975 and 1976 successfully fledged two pulli but only one of the high ones was not predated.

The latest edition of *Birds of Western Australia*, Serventy and Whittell (1976), in its discussion of the White-breasted Robin states that—
'two or more broods may be reared.'

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Reference

Serventy, D. L. and H. M. Whittell, (1976) *Birds of Western Australia* (5th ed.) Univ. West. Aust. Press, Perth.

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