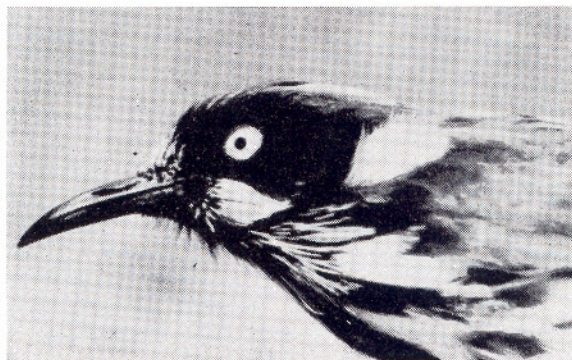


NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATER



• *New Holland Honeyeater.*

Photo: S. G. Lane

New Holland Honeyeater *Meliornis novaehollandiae*

Ageing

Juvenile

Iris: Dark grey.

Bill: Dark brown-black.

Gape: Obvious, whitish yellow.

Crown: Dark brownish with indistinct dirty white streaks.

Mantle: Brownish with no black and white streaks.

Rump: Brown without dark streaks.

'Beard': Indistinct and greyish.

Breast: Greyish white with dark brown streaks.

Belly: Dirty white.

Wing coverts: Dark brown, primary coverts often with slight yellow edging.

First Winter (post juvenile)

This plumage is obtained by a moult of all feathers except the primary coverts, which are usually either not moulted or only partially moulted. Moult starts 3-4 weeks after the young leave the nest. After about a month the body plumage is very similar to that of the adult, except that some juvenile feathers are usually retained on the back of the crown and rump. Moult is complete after about three months.

The presence of juvenile rump feathers is often a good ageing character in other species of honeyeater (e.g. Yellow-faced Honeyeater *Meliphaga chrysops*).

Iris: White.

Bill: Black.

Gape: Not evident.

Crown: Black with well marked white streaks.

Mantle: Streaked black and white.

Rump: Brownish with dark streaks.

'Beard': Long and white.

Coverts: The primary coverts are usually still juvenile, brown and often with a slight yellow

edging. In contrast the new secondary coverts, and any primary coverts which may have moulted, are black.

Adult

Similar to first winter, but primary and secondary coverts entirely black and not contrasting. (Primary coverts with no yellow edging). All wing feathers may become very brown before renewal.

Sexing

It is well known that males are larger than females, and that this can be readily seen in paired birds. However, there is an overlap between sexes in such measurements as total length, wing and tail. The measurement which is easiest to take and separates the sexes most readily is that of stretched wing span.

Total Length

Female: 160-176 mm, usually 165-172 mm.

Male: 165-193 mm, usually 175-185 mm.

Tail Length

Female: 67-78 mm, usually 72-75 mm.

Male: 67-85 mm, usually 79-82 mm.

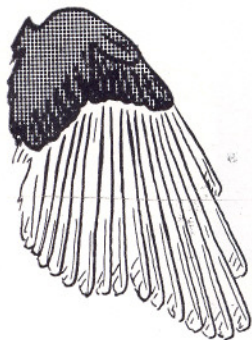
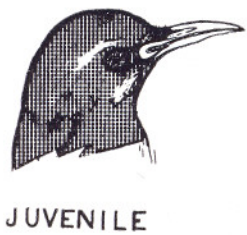
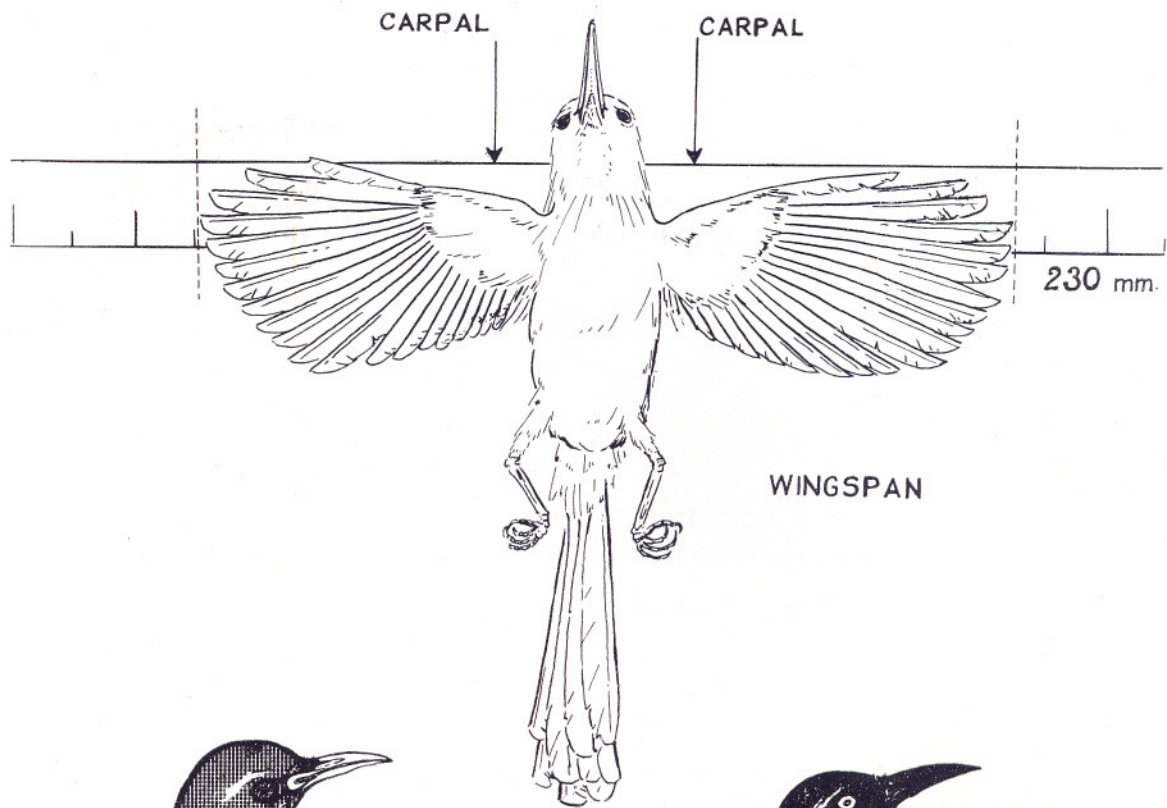
Wing Span

Female: Juvenile and first year—under 230 mm; second year—usually under 230 mm, occasionally to 233 mm.

Male: Juveniles: Over 230 mm, usually 231-232 mm; first year—over 230 mm, usually about 235 mm; second year—over 230 mm, usually over 240 mm.

WARNING: *The above sex and age characters may not be valid for other species of honeyeater, however closely related. Differences must be found and checked for each species.*

Drawings by S. Beresford





• *New Holland Honeyeater at nest.*



• *White-cheeked Honeyeater showing differences from *M. novaehollandiae*—the blackish brown iris, large white cheek patch and the continuous white eye stripe.*

Photos: K. A. Hindwood