

REGENT BOWERBIRD



• *Regent Bowerbird (adult male) at bower.*

Photo: J. A. Purnell

Regent Bowerbird *Sericulus chrysocephalus*

Ageing and Sexing

This guide is limited to the separation and ageing of male and female 'brown' birds, the black and gold adult male being unmistakable. So far no definite plumage differences have been observed between the sexes and differentiation is based on measurement, the female being the larger bird.

Usually a single measurement such as mass, tail length or wing span will determine the sex, but since there is slight overlap other measurements, including the bill, may be required.

Iris colour and presence of some yellow feathers on the crown or nape cannot be used as sex characters.

Ageing

Juvenile

Body feathers soft and loose textured, quickly moulting into first year plumage.

First Year

The obvious juvenile body plumage is replaced with the new 'brown' plumage but the juvenile flight and tail feathers are retained.

Iris: Very dark brown.

Bill: Blackish.

Tail feathers: Pointed.

Second Year

Similar to first year birds but with tail feathers squarish.

Older Birds

Similar to second year birds until the iris and bill start to turn yellow. The iris change occurs with both sexes but probably at different ages.

The bill measurements were taken with calipers as follows:

Length: Measured from feathers at base of bill to the tip.

Depth: Measured from front of nostrils on upper mandible to tip of the angle beneath lower mandible.

Width: Measured across the bill in the same place as the "depth".

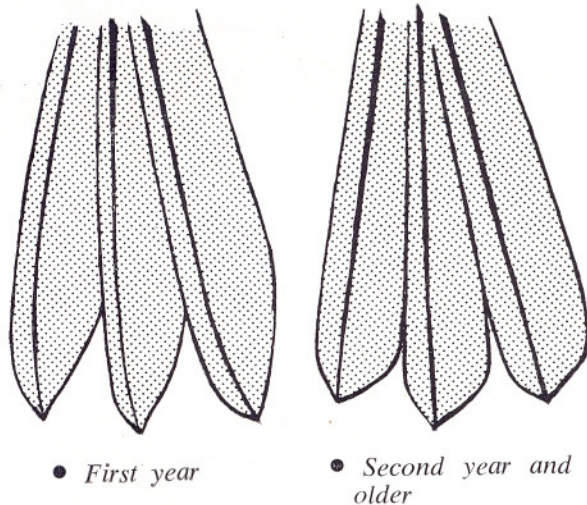
NOTE: Further information and discussion of these characters is given by Disney and Lane (1971).

References

Disney, H. J. de S., and Lane, S. G. (1971) 'Moult, Plumage and Banding of the Regent Bowerbird', *Aust. Bird Bander* 9:11-13.

Drawings by J. Boddy

TAIL FEATHERS



Sexing

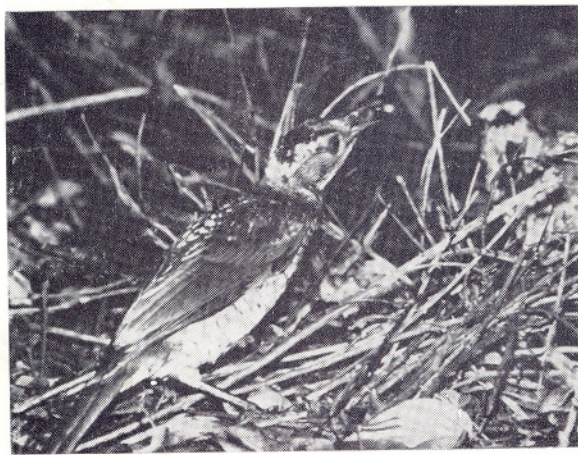
	MALE		FEMALE	
<i>Mass</i> (birds all taken between Sept. & Dec.)	84- 96 g	14 weighed	95-134 g	18 weighed
<i>Wing Span</i> (stretched)	410-425 mm	13 measured	417-445 mm	18 measured Those below 425 mm all had very worn primaries.
<i>Wing</i> (straightened)	124-137 mm	16 measured usually 131-132 mm.	129-139 mm	22 measured usually 134-135 mm.
<i>Tail</i>	95-103 mm	16 measured	103-110 mm	22 measured usually 104-108 mm.
<i>Bill Length</i>	23- 25 mm	16 measured usually 24 mm or less.	23- 29 mm	22 measured usually over 24 mm.
<i>Depth</i>	6.3-7.5 mm	usually 6.8-7.2 mm	7.3-8.5 mm	rarely below 7.5 mm. usually 7.8-8.2 mm.
<i>Width</i>	5.0-6.4 mm	rarely over 6.0 mm.	6.1-7.5 mm	usually over 6.5 mm.
<i>Shape</i>	Rather narrow and thin; culmen flattish.		Rather thick and broad with a well pronounced down-curved culmen of the upper mandible.	



(Arrows indicate where depth and width measurements of the bill were taken).



• *Regent Bowerbird (female) at nest.*



• *Regent Bowerbirds; an immature male displaying to another 'brown' bird at the bower. Although not obvious in this picture, the yellow eye and bill of the immature male is clearly seen in the original colour transparency.*

Photos: J. A. Purnell