

BIRD IN THE HAND

BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER *Entomyzon cyanotis*

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This Bird in the Hand has been determined mainly from specimens banded on the north coast of New South Wales. Birds from other areas may differ in some details, for example the northern race *albipennis* possesses white wing patches, and race *harteri*, from Cape York and New Guinea, is smaller.

AGEING

(Based on face colours, Fig. 1).

Juvenile (J)

Facial Patch: Generally yellow, sometimes with a small blue area below or in front of eye, often flushed with pink (blood).

Bill Base: Yellow.

Gape: Yellow

Iris: Grey/brown.

1st Year (1)

Facial Patch: Generally yellow, sometimes greenish or with green areas.

Bill Base: Yellow.

Gape: Yellow.

Iris: Pale brown to creamy brown.

1st-2nd Year (2-) (acquired by 6 months of age)

Facial Patch: Yellow above eye, dark blue below eye, overlap area of green usually present.

Bill Base: Yellow, later turning light blue.

Gape: Yellow, later turning grey.

Iris: Cream.

Adult (2+) (acquired by about 16 months of age or later)

Facial Patch: Light blue above eyes, dark blue below eye.

Bill Base: Light blue.

Gape: Dark grey.

Iris: Cream.

SEXING

Wing Span: Sexed museum specimens. Males: 475 mm-485 mm (n = 2); Females: 435 mm-456 mm (n = 4).

When all available wing-span measurements of aged birds were graphed, two peaks, presumably reflecting the clustering of male and female measurements respectively, were obvious. It appears reasonable to conclude that birds, other than nestlings and juveniles, that have a wing span of 485 mm or greater are males and birds with a wing span of 460 mm or less are females (Clancy and Lane 1994).

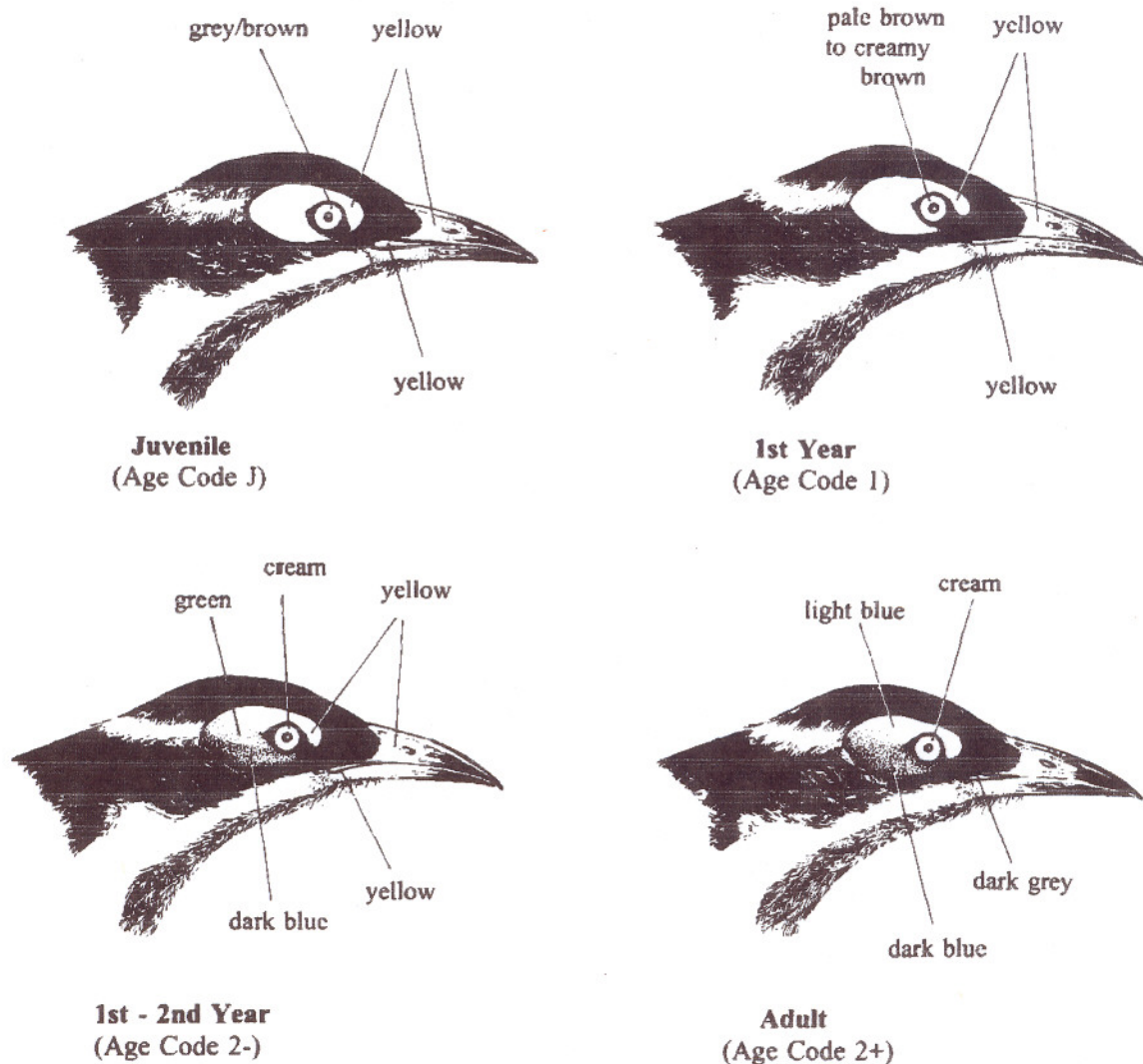


Figure 1. Facial colours of juvenile, first year, first to second year and adult Blue-faced Honeyeaters. Illustrations by Marion Westmacott.

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REFERENCES

Clancy, G. P. and Lane, S. G. (1994). A report on the Banding of Blue-faced Honeyeaters *Entomyzon cyanotis* on the New South Wales North Coast. *Corella* 18: 25-27.