

various times and which were designed to facilitate the identification of species, sex and age. Make use of this book and recommend its use to others.

Beginning in March 1973, we have published in the journal a number of reports on Seabird Islands. These reports are already proving of practical use and have been commended in various quarters. For instance, Dr W. R. P. Bourne writes, in the Ninth Report of the (U.K.) Seabird Group: "The Australians have . . . started to publish a series of systematic accounts of their seabird colonies in *The Australian Bird*

Bander which might serve as a model for us as well".

Most of the reports so far published have dealt with islands off the coast of New South Wales, but reports on islands in other parts of Australia are being prepared. Your Committee plans to accelerate the publication of this series by a special issue of the journal, as part of the 1975 volume.

A re-definition of our priorities will be needed in the coming year and a preparedness to work for them. Your Committee's task will not be easy. Evidence of your support will not only ease the task but will make their efforts worthwhile.

The White-winged Widowbird near Windsor, N.S.W.

During the 1930's a number of observations were recorded of the White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus* in the Hawkesbury area near Windsor, New South Wales. On one occasion in 1937, K. A. Hindwood recorded ". . . some 80 in an open field at Cattai" and further spasmodic observations of small numbers were made up to 1953.

In *A Hand List of Birds of New South Wales* (1960), A. R. McGill stated "Very rare. Native to Africa. Liberated in N.S.W. about 1931 and for a few years was observed breeding in rank vegetation near the Hawkesbury River, but may have since died out."

However, in March 1967, a few males and some 50 birds in brown plumage were reported a few kilometres from their former haunts. On 1 April 1967, two adult males in full plumage were caught and banded. Two months later K. A. Hindwood observed three males in partial eclipse plumage in the same area; one of them was wearing a band and apparently was one of the two banded when in full plumage on 1 April. In the same location on 20 January 1968, McGill *et al.* saw a male in full plumage 'courting a female'.

As an adequate description has not been published and as no specimen has been collected, it seemed desirable that some check of the species identification should be made as there are a number of *Euplectes* species with yellow wing patches. Accordingly, a colour transparency of one of the birds banded was forwarded to Mr J. L. McKean who has had some experience with this group. He stated (in litt.) that the bird depicted could only be *E. albonotatus* because of the distribution of the yellow and white wing



• White-winged Widowbird (male in breeding plumage) photographed near Windsor, N.S.W. on 1 April 1967.

Photo: S. G. Lane

markings, and suggested that the photograph should be published. A copy of the slide has been lodged in the collections of the Division of Wildlife Research, CSIRO.

No further observations of the species have been reported from the area to date (July 1975).

I am grateful to Mr E. S. Hoskin for details of the observations from K. A. Hindwood's records.

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