

The collapse of a local population of Spotted Doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) in southern California. McClure, H. E. (1991). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 16: 34–36. (No explanation could be found for the collapse.)

New species for the Auckland Islands. McClelland, P. J. and Moore, P. J. (1991). *Notornis* 38: 80. (Includes Shining Bronze-Cuckoo.)

Behaviour of New Zealand Kingfishers feeding chicks. Hayes, L. M. (1991). *Notornis* 38: 73–79. (Chicks were fed by both parents, predominantly on lizards, crabs and insects.)

The survival rate of Australian passerines. Yom-Tov, Y., McCleery, R. and Purchase, D. (1992). *Ibis* 134: 374–379. (The survival rates of 35 species were calculated. Overall, the survival rate of Australian passerines is at least 1.2 greater than that of equal-sized British passerines. There was no difference between the “old endemics” and “new invaders”. However, it is suggested that the survival rates of birds younger than one year is different between the two groups.)

[Four successful broods of a Blackbird in the same nest.] Camici, M. (1991). *Ornis. Beob.* 88: 74. (All were in the same season. In German.)

Use of resources and play back experiments in the genus *Acrocephalus* in a marsh area of Piedmont. Palestrini, C. and Rolando, A. (1991). *L'Oiseau RFO* 61: 27–38. (Ethoecological aspects of the coexistence among three species, including the Great Reed-Warbler. In French.)

Preference for nest site height in the Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* — an experiment with nest boxes. Svensson, S. (1991). *Ornis Svecica* 1: 59–61. (Boxes were placed at 1.5 m, 3.0 m and 4.5 m. There was a preference for the higher boxes. Breeding success was also greater in these boxes.)

Breeding, mass and primary moult of European Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* at Dassen Island, South Africa. Cooper, J. and Underhill, L. G. (1991). *Ostrich* 62: 1–7 (Fifty nestlings, 181 juveniles, and 445 adults were banded; 224 recaptures were recorded. Totals of 682 primary moult scores and 434 masses were obtained. Twenty-eight nests were examined.)

TECHNIQUES AND ANALYSES

Band opening and removal by House Finches. Stedman, S. J. (1990). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 15: 136–138. (Of 230 birds recaptured within 90 days of being banded, one was without its band and 72 had bands that had been partly opened.)

[Evaluation of the consequences of ringing on a breeding population of Swifts (*Apus apus* L.).] Gory, G. (1991). *L'Oiseau RFO* 61: 91–100. (It is recommended that adults be captured on the nest during the short period preceding chick fledging. In French.)

A simple, effective net for capturing cavity roosting birds. Jackson, J. A. and Parris, S. D. (1991). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 16: 30–31. (A hand-held net made from the frame of a fisherman's landing net, an embroidery hoop, and a clear plastic bag.)

Techniques for locating and capturing nesting female Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*). Leasure, S. M. and Holt, D. W. (1991). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 16: 32–33. (A method using a mist net held horizontally between two people that may be of use for capturing other ground nesting birds.)

An alternative method of netting shorebirds in the Canadian Subarctic. Otnes, G. L. (1990). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 15: 139–140. (A mist net was held horizontally between two people, who were positioned between two flocks. As birds moved between the flocks they were caught by swiftly elevating the net to a vertical position.)

[Space utilization by the Middle Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos medius*: usefulness of radio-tracking.] Villard, P. (1991). *L'Oiseau RFO* 61: 101–110. (The territory size is smaller during the breeding season than it is during the non-breeding season. The usefulness of radio-telemetry in this type of study is clearly demonstrated by the results. In French.)

Footpad dimorphism as a possible means to determine sex of adult and juvenile Northern Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis caurina*). Fleming, T. L., Buchanan, J. B. and Irwin, L. L. (1991). *N. Amer. Bird Bander* 16: 66–68. (Adult birds could be sexed on the basis of the length of the footpad from the tip of the middle toe to tip of the hallux with an overlap of 12.5 per cent. Its possible use for sexing juvenile owls is discussed.)

[A new method of evaluating owl densities and their habitat use.] Verheyden, C. (1991). *L'Oiseau RFO* 61: 17–26. (A spotlight version of the point counts census technique. In French.)

The value of atlassing: local seasonal movements. Harrison, J. and Oatley, T. (1991). *Birding in Southern Africa* 43: 66–68. (The use of reporting rate to show local movements.)

BOOK REVIEWS

The Birds of Sydney 1770–1989 2nd Edition

E. S. Hoskin (K. A. Hindwood and A. R. McGill), 1991. Surrey Beatty & Sons Pty Limited, Chipping Norton, NSW 2170. 292 pp., map, line drawings and colour plates; 150 × 225 mm. Retail outlets or publisher. \$39.00 plus postage.

For those who remember the County of Cumberland when Bush Thick-knees *Burhinus magnirostris* could be found relatively easily but Galahs *Cacatua roseicapilla* were uncommon, Ern Hoskin's updating of Hindwood and McGill's 'The Birds of Sydney', (published by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales in 1958), is an historic review and nostalgic reminder of the changes in the avifauna of the county over the last 30 years.

The present volume is the result of Hoskin's loyalty to Hindwood, demonstrated by his faithful maintenance of Hindwood's records since the latter's death in 1971, and by the zealous research required to keep up those files, referred to by Hoskin as the 'Keith Hindwood Bird Recording Service' or the 'Memorial Bird Recording Service'.

While the Introduction and Species List of the earlier work have been updated, there are also major additions to the original volume. These include changes of status since 1958, extension of range, and discussion of some species listed as becoming rare. The chapter 'Birds of Similar Appearance' should be useful to all field observers, particularly newcomers. Trees and shrubs attractive to birds are listed, but some exotic species, e.g., Camphor Laurel *Cinnamomum camphora* and Cotoneaster and Crataegus spp. are doubtful starters as they attract Pied Currawongs *Strepera graculina* and are bush invaders.

Although the introduction is basically that of the 1958 edition, Hoskin has inserted his own comments. Some of these interlocations sit uneasily beside Hindwood and McGill remarks. For instance, the first edition authors were cautiously optimistic about the future of birds in the County, particularly in the shale areas. However, Hoskin adds, *inter alia*, 'The Shale birds, except the Weebill, are all but extinct in the County', and his overall view emerges as less optimistic than that of the earlier authors. Hindwood could not have foreseen the vast expansion of suburban Sydney, although McGill lived to witness much of it.

Since the closing date of 1989 Hoskin's hope for a Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* sanctuary adjacent to Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport has been overwhelmed by the decision to construct a third runway into Botany Bay. (K. Egan and G. C. Smith, in press *Corella 17*).

In the Upper Lane Cove River Valley (ULCRV) White-headed Pigeons *Columba leucomela* have occurred regularly in recent years, but the suitability of this habitat is now uncertain since the extensive clean-up of privet along the upper river. Also recorded in the valley are Gang-gang Cockatoos *Callocephalon fimbriatum* which are thought by residents of North Epping to have arrived after bushfires in the Blue Mountains some 20 years ago. My records of the Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua* in the ULCRV date from 25 years ago, and the valley would seem to have always been suitable habitat for this species.

Population growth of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos *Cacatua galerita* is another subject for discussion. In fact this species was present in large numbers in 1788, as were other parrots and lorikeets. First Fleeters shot cockatoos for food as well as skins at Sydney Cove. Governor Phillip supped on a White Cockatoo and two 'crow' soup near present Parramatta on April 22, 1788 (White 1790). First Fleeters also admired Rainbow Lorikeets, or Blueys *Trichoglossus haematodus* which were very common at Botany Bay and Port Jackson. White illustrated all these species. There were complaints that the birds' calls made conversation impossible at times. On March 19, 1833, Mrs Felton Mathew recorded in her Journal (Havard 1943) that near Blaxland's bridge at Wallacia 'the shrill chirpings of Parrots was quite a nuisance' and at Shacomore, on the right bank of the Nepean near Bent's Basin, where there was extensive clearing, 'the hoarse incessant screams of the Cockatoos are a still greater annoyance: thousands of them

are about, in large flocks, and their snow-white plumage glittering in the sunshine is very beautiful . . .'

Ern Hoskin has illustrated small brown birds and other difficult to separate species with his own work and some attractive colour plates are included. Alan Foster, winner of the 1991 Field Ornithologists Club Photograph competition, contributed the photograph of a Chestnut-rumped Hylacola *Sericornis pyrrhopygius*, and the brilliant cover photo of a Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae*, outstanding over a duo-tone panorama of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Taxonomic arrangement and nomenclature generally follow Morris, McGill and Holmes (1981).

The first edition of 'The Birds of Sydney' has been unavailable for over 20 years, apart from occasionally being offered in catalogues of rare books for about \$60. This interesting new publication will inevitably lead us to reflect on the future status of birds in the County of Cumberland.

References

- Havard, O. (1943). (Ed). Mrs Felton Mathew's Journal. *J. Royal Aust. Hist. Soc.* 29: 100-101.
 Morris, A. K., McGill, A. R. and Holmes, G. (1981). 'Hand-list of Birds in New South Wales.' NSW Field Ornithologists Club.
 White, J. (1790). 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales.' (Ed. A. H. Chisholm). Royal Australian Historical Society and Angus and Robertson.

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Birds of the Australian Capital Territory, An Atlas

McComas Taylor and Canberra Ornithologists Group, 1992. COG and NCPA. 272 pp., maps and line drawings throughout, A4 format, soft cover. ISBN 0 642 17555 1. \$25.00 plus postage.

This is an atlas of a small region of Australia where there are many ornithologists. Consequently, the grid is smaller and was examined more frequently. The presentation is innovative and imaginative.

This book should be studied carefully by those interested in birds of the ACT, and even more so by those who are interested in presenting data derived from atlasing. It shows what can be done once there is an adequate database, and one can easily imagine the next step in the presentation of the data on computer disks with appropriate programmes. Not everyone may agree with emphases but it is the ideas that are important. This is a refreshingly different and stimulating book which will undoubtedly be the starting point of many discussions on data presentation in the future.

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