
LITERATURE REVIEW

Effect of timing of banding on reproductive success of Tree Swallows. E. H. Burt and R. M. Tuttle. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(3), 1983, 319-323.

Banding procedures can significantly reduce reproductive success. Female Tree Swallows banded early in the nesting cycle abandoned their clutches significantly more often than females banded late in incubation, whereas reproductive success was unaffected by the time of day of banding.

A new attachment method for patagial tags. R. B. Stiehl. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(3), 1983, 326-328.

A general note to describe design and attachment of patagial tags in the study of Common Raven *Corvus corax* and the effects of markings on birds and tag durability. The patagium was pierced with a small bore leather punch about 2 cm behind the webcord. The tag was wrapped around the leading edge of the wing. Reinforced eyelets in the tag were aligned with the hole in the patagium and the tag attached with 3 mm diameter x 19 mm aluminium "pop rivet" with a pair of 3 mm back up plates.

Wing markers: Visibility, wear and effects on survival of Band-tailed Pigeons. P. D. Curtis, C. E. Braum and R. A. Ryder. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(4), 1983, 381-386.

Plastic wrap-around type tags were placed on both wings between the tertials and body, without piercing the patagium. This paper describes tag design and attachment. Most tags lasted only about one year. It appeared that patagial tagging may have reduced Band-tailed Pigeon survival. Feather wear and callousing were found on the wings of some pigeons where the strap made contact with the humerus. This apparently had no ill effects and tagging also had no effects on mobility of the species.

Cloacal lavage of sperm: a technique for evaluation of reproductive activity. W. B. Quay. *N. Am. Bird Bander* 9(2), 1984, 2-7.

Describes a method of cloacal flushing and examination of the contents to ascertain whether spermatozoa are present as an indicator of reproductive status.

A technique for making custom-sized coloured plastic bird bands. B. T. Thomas. *N. Am. Bird Bander* 8(4), 1983, 138-139.

Describes a method of cutting-down large colour bands to custom fit birds which are intermediate between commercially available band sizes. To achieve natural closing, so that the butt ends of the cut-down band meet, the band is placed around a nail of appropriate diameter, held closed with pliers and dipped in near-boiling water for up to 10 seconds.

A radio-control method for trapping birds in nest boxes. M. P. Lombardo and E. Kemly. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(2), 1983, 194-195.

A short note to describe a radio-controlled apparatus devised to enable the nest-box capture of specific individuals for marking.

A laboratory study of cranial pneumatization in Indigo Buntings. P. B. Hamel, J. L. Beacham and A. E. Ross. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(1), 1983, 58-66.

Repeated observations of the crania of individually-caged Indigo Buntings indicated both peripheral and median-line cranial pneumatization patterns. Female buntings completed pneumatization earlier on average than did males. Ageing criteria based on cranial pneumatization are discussed.

A system of easily manipulated, elevated mist nets. J. F. Denjonghe and J. F. Cornuet. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54(1), 1983, 84-88.

A short note describing all aspects of the construction and erection of mist nets used as high as 50 metres above the ground to capture migrating birds in the French Alps.

Review

What Bird is That? Neville W. Cayley, revised by T. R. Lindsey, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1984 xxviii; 802pp. \$59.95.

"A completely revised and updated edition of the classic Australian ornithological work — Neville W. Cayley's *What Bird is That?*" So reads the cover. Indeed it is an apt introduction to this much improved version of the book.

When *What Bird is That?* was first published in 1931 it represented the most significant work on Australian birds published to that time, as it was the first book to illustrate every known species. Five editions were published up to 1968, the last two being extensively revised. An abridged "field edition" which was first published in 1973 is still in print.

Until the late 1960's Cayley's book retained its distinction of being the only complete bird guide. Few people interested in Australian birds would not be familiar with the book and most will recognise and appreciate the considerable influence it has had on ornithology in this country. Mr A. R. McGill, O.A.M., M.L.O., F.R.Z.S., F.R.A.O.U., in his introductory appreciation of Cayley, acknowledges the widespread and beneficial impact that Cayley had on Australian ornithology. The price, size and weight of the current edition have, unfortunately, moved the book into the luxury or "coffee table" category of books. Nevertheless, the original function envisaged by Cayley of his book serving as a guide to our birds is preserved and to an extent an unfulfilled ambition of Cayley is realised. The high cost and the increase in size of the book has resulted from the inclusion of 430 hitherto unpublished paintings prepared by Cayley for his "Big Bird Book"

project, which remained unfinished because of his death in 1950. Although he had not prepared the text for this project, the paintings are believed to have been completed. Thus the new book is the culmination of a need felt by many to see Cayley's paintings published. Their incorporation into *What Bird is That?* has been achieved admirably and indeed a "Big Bird Book" is the result.

To match the quality reproduction of the paintings, new colour separations were made from the original artwork to restore the clarity of the guide plates, and these are reproduced in a larger format than in previous editions. Mr A. R. McEvey has pointed out in his introductory section on Cayley's art that this edition is an invaluable contribution to the history of Australian bird art.

The original layout of the book has been retained, with birds being grouped into habitat classes rather than taxonomic (or systematic) order. Mr T. R. Lindsey, a prominent ornithologist and accomplished bird artist, revised the text and had the onerous task of integrating it with the plates and paintings to keep the relevant illustrations and text on each species as closely together as possible. The text has been supplemented by the inclusion of a distribution map for each species. As an additional and welcome feature, the individual portraits from the guide plates are reproduced alongside the species account in the text. It is also pleasing to note that the derivation of scientific names has been retained in the text for each species.

Unfortunately, Cayley did not prepare a plate of the established bird introductions. In order that the book maintains its status of being as complete a guide as possible to the birds occurring in Australia, Brian Bertram's plate covering Birds Introduced to Australia, which was first incorporated in the 1968 edition, has been retained. Also, as many additions have been made to the Australian species list since 1931, Lindsey has provided at various points in the book supplementary paintings, in his own distinctive style, of additional resident species. These are placed on the caption pages opposite the guide plates. However, the substantial increase in the number of migratory waders and seabirds for which there are Australian records prompted the Publishers to replace, rather than supplement the three Cayley plates covering these species. This is most unfortunate and with the loss of Cayley's work we have a conflict of interests between an art showcase and a bird guide book. The five replacement plates are unsigned and although I have found it nowhere stated as such, these are also Lindsey's.

A supplementary list of fifty species, for which there are few records in Australia, is published toward the end of the book. Most species listed are not illustrated, but substantially reduced reproductions of paintings by Cayley of 11 species which are regarded as either rare vagrants or are no longer accepted on the Australian list, have been included in this section. Lindsey explains in the introduction to the supplementary list that most of the species listed are vagrants known only from a few records. However, several of the species included in the general species account (with a complete text and Lindsey's replacement illustrations) fall into this same category of birds. Hence, there is a degree of inconsistency in the coverage given to species recorded only as vagrants to Australia. It is difficult to appreciate why the relatively small additional production cost was not expended so that all species recorded in Australia were afforded similar treatment, with both text and

illustrations. After all, probably fewer than 20 additional pages would have been added to a book which already contains over 820 pages.

A valuable summary of the data (where available) given by Cayley on the back of his paintings has also been included and Lindsey has provided annotations for some of Cayley's data.

English and scientific names have been updated by Lindsey. Although, the official publications of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union are generally applicable, Lindsey has not strictly followed any standard work, but has used his own judgement in many cases. For this reason, and because of the format of species coverage, a summary bird list in systematic order could have been a valuable addition to the book. It is pleasing however to note that in a book which will no doubt appeal to a great diversity of readers, including those with only a passing interest in birds, the index and text provide a comprehensive cross referencing of alternative English names.

I do not propose to provide here a detailed critique of the book. It certainly would be inappropriate to criticise Cayley's art work and the text which, as already mentioned, is superb. Though it may be inconsequential because the book is unlikely to be used as a field guide, some of the portraits of waders in particular, would be of little assistance for field identification. It is also in this area that an obvious editing error has occurred which deserves mention. On Plate 35 the individual portraits for the Sharp-tailed and Pectoral Sandpipers have been transposed.

As mentioned previously, the price, size and weight of this edition will severely restrict its use as a field guide. Nevertheless, the updated text ensures it will be consulted either as a primary or secondary reference by casual observers, regular bird-watchers and serious ornithologists alike. As a vehicle for publication of a collection of Australian bird portraiture, the book is a monument to Cayley's ability and style. One can only look at this edition of *What Bird is That?* as succeeding in its objectives of providing a valuable addition to any bird enthusiast's library.

J. W. Hardy, Springwood, N.S.W.

New Members

ANNELS, R. A., Canberra, A.C.T.
 BAKER, E. M. P., Collaroy Beach, N.S.W.
 BALMFORD, M. J. Murdoch, W.A.
 BLABER, S. J. M., Hobart, Tas.
 BLADE, K., Asquith, N.S.W.
 BRUCE, P. J., St. Lucia, Qld.
 BURTON, T., Magill, S. A.
 CHARLEY, D. L., Broken Hill, N.S.W.
 COX, R. J., Taree, N.S.W.
 EXNER, A. C., Aldgate, S.A.
 FALKENBERG, I. D., Nuriootpa, S.A.
 FRY, G. R., Hurstville Grove, N.S.W.
 FLETCHER, A. W. J., Bellerive, Tas.
 HIGGINS, P. J., Sydney, N.S.W.
 OAKES, M. A., East Hills, N.S.W.
 RICH, C., Glen Osmond, S.A.
 RUMBLE, B. J., Walcha, N.S.W.
 WHEELER, L. M., Crafers, S.A.
 WILLIAMS, D. J., Glenalta, S.A.
 YOUNG, J., Springfield, N.S.W.