

QUAIL THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

M. M. CROUTHER¹ and K. W. CROUTHER¹

¹Post Office, Darymple Heights, Eungella, Queensland, Australia 4757

Received: 1 September 1998

Annual irruptions of quail and button-quail, mostly Red-backed Button-quail, have been observed at Eungella township, elevation 725 metres in the Clarke Range near Mackay, Queensland. The birds appear at night, usually after about 2200 hours, but they seem to move only on certain nights in thick fog with a little light rain. Over an eight year period, 200 individual birds of six species have been hand captured when attracted to lights. They were measured and banded, and released alive. Summarized morphometric data are presented. The paper covers observations of this phenomenon and discusses the possibility of a migration pattern. Some comparisons are made with reported similar occurrences overseas.