

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 Shancomore, 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, ●. (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.

Darrel Larkins
 Turramarra NSW

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.

M. D. Murray
 Pymble NSW