

SOME LIFE HISTORY COMPARISONS OF SMALL LEAF-GLEANING BIRD SPECIES OF SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA

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Breeding biology, longevity and dispersal are compared for six species of thornbills *Acanthiza*, three gerygones *Gerygone*, two pardalotes *Pardalotus* and the Weebill *Smicromis* from south-eastern Australia. The pardalotes and two thornbills (Buff-rumped and Chestnut rumped) lay relatively large clutches and have the highest nesting success. Incubation and fledging periods are longest for the pardalotes. The breeding season of the Weebill and both pardalotes are much more extensive than those of thornbills of gerygones. There is a pronounced peak in the breeding period for all gerygones (between October and December) and for all thornbills (between August and October). Both pardalotes and two gerygones show seasonal dispersal which is extensive relative to the marked sedentary nature typical of thornbills. Longevity in thornbills may be greater than that for pardalotes. These differences in life history are related to both food availability and nest-site selection.