

# BIRD-BANDING AND THE MIGRATION OF YELLOW-FACED AND WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATERS THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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*Received 21 October, 1984*

Between April 1961 and June 1983, 21 540 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters *Lichenostomus chrysops* and 7 057 White-naped Honeyeaters *Melithreptus lunatus* were banded at thirty-four places in the Australian Capital Territory. The bands were provided by the Australian Bird-Banding Scheme. CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Rangelands Research.

## *Banding along the Murrumbidgee River in autumn*

Six of the places at which honeyeaters were banded were along the Murrumbidgee River where 12 927 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and 3 677 White-naped Honeyeaters were banded in March, April and May during the autumn migration of these two species. The banding was undertaken in an attempt to discover the origins and destinations of the Yellow-faced and White-naped Honeyeaters which migrate along the river in autumn. Banding took place in most years from 1963 through to 1977; the majority of birds (88%) were banded in 1964, 1965, 1969 and 1970 (Table 1).

The number of honeyeaters banded along the Murrumbidgee River in autumn varied considerably from year to year. As no information is available on the numbers of honeyeaters which were observed to be migrating at the time, or on what effort was put into capturing them, no explanation can be offered to account for the variation in the numbers banded. Wilson (1963) considers that the weather conditions prevailing at the time have an influence on the number of honeyeaters which move along the river e.g. few migrate when it is overcast.

Although 16 604 honeyeaters were banded along the Murrumbidgee River in autumn, only four Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and two White-naped Honeyeaters were subsequently recovered (Table 2).

In addition to the honeyeaters which were caught and banded, five Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and one White-naped Honeyeater which were already wearing bands were caught along the Murrumbidgee River in autumn. These had been banded some time earlier, either at places along the Murrumbidgee River, but outside of the autumn period, or at places away from the Murrumbidgee River (Table 3).

These twelve recoveries are too few to provide any conclusive information about the origins and destinations of the Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and White-naped Honeyeaters which migrate during autumn along the Murrumbidgee River in the Australian Capital Territory.

## *Banding at other times and places*

In addition to the honeyeaters banded along the Murrumbidgee River in March, April and May, 8 613 Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and 3 380 White-naped Honeyeaters were banded at other places in the Australian Capital Territory, or