



Food items recorded during this study were characteristic of both aerial and terrestrial foraging. Most invertebrates recorded could have been hawked in the air or gleaned from foliage or bark. The presence of a single centipede in one bird's stomach and the large number of ants and any pupae suggest that some time was spent by both birds foraging on the ground. From this and previous studies it would appear that Australian Owllet-nightjars are opportunistic feeders taking whatever food is available.

## REFERENCES

- Blakers, M., Davies, S. J. J. F. and Reilly, R. N. (1984). The Atlas of Australian Birds. Melbourne University Press, Carlton.
- Frith, H. J. (ed) (1969). Birds in the Australian High Country. Reed, Sydney.
- Lea, A. M. and Gray, J. T. (1935). The food of Australian birds. An analysis of the stomach contents II. *Emu* 35: 63-98.
- Rose, A. B. (1973). Food of some Australian birds. *Emu* 73: 117-183.
- Schodde, R. and Mason, J. (1980). Nocturnal Birds of Australia. Lansdowne, Melbourne.

---

*Corella*, 1989, 13(3): 91-92

## OCCUPANCY OF LAND-BASED TERRITORIES BY CLAMOROUS REED-WARBLEDERS IN CANBERRA DURING A DROUGHT YEAR

M. LENZ

8 Suttor Street, Ainslie, A.C.T. 2602

*Received 4 April, 1989*

During the breeding season, Clamorous Reed-Warblers *Acrocephalus stentoreus* inhabit the reed belts in wetlands and along watercourses, 'living entirely within the cover of reeds and feeding on insects and small aquatic animals there' (Reader's Digest 1986). However, at least while the adults have young in the nest, Reed-Warblers frequently leave the stands of reeds and forage on bordering dry land. Brown and Brown (1985) stressed the importance that dry habitats close to the nest sites in marshes have as sources for food for this species when rearing young in south-west Australia. Birds in Canberra, A.C.T., at the campus of the Australian National University (ANU) and at Commonwealth Park, are often encountered collecting insects in bushes and the lower parts of trees up to 30 m or more away

from the reeds in which they nest, but only within the period during which they are feeding young. Occasionally, during spring migration, one can hear a bird singing out of shrubs with no water in sight. This was also noted in Armidale (S. J. S. Debus, pers. comm.).

In 1982-83, during a widespread drought in eastern Australia, the more than 30 Reed-Warbler territories along Sullivan's Creek in the campus of ANU were occupied as usual by early October (unpublished data). In late November several additional Reed-Warblers were singing at various sites scattered over the campus, each located well away from water (150-500 m). Birds settled in thickets of shrubs, either *Grevillea*, *Leptospermum*, *Cotoneaster* or mixed stands of native and exotic bushes.