

An annotated species list of birds
* recorded from the Recherche Archipelago, mainly records ~~of birds~~
collected during the summer of 1950, ~~is public~~ was published
by Serenby (1952). Storr (1965) ~~public~~ gives a species list
of birds recorded on Bald Island during six days in late May early
June 1959

Birds

By A. N. Sclat.

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This account of the birds recorded during the expedition to Bald Island and some islands of the Recherche Archipelago is compiled from the observations of all members of the expedition. The list is intended as a record of the birds seen and no attempt has been made to review earlier work although some pertinent records are referred to in the discussion.

The sequence and nomenclature follows that used by Dr G. M. Storr of the Western Australian Museum. The narrative section of this publication details the islands visited, the length of stay ~~and~~ on each island and the relevant dates, as well as describing the routes followed at sea.

Table I summarises the distributional data recorded here. Most records were sight records but one species, ~~Kochebura~~ Dacelo novaeguineae was identified from its call only. ^{on Bald Island and} Two specimens of Emblema oculata were collected ~~for the~~ deposited in the Western Australian Museum. Remains of dead birds of the following species were recovered and identified by staff of the Western Australian Museum. Eudiptula minor (Bald and Mondrain Islands), Petrodiroma macroptera (Bald Island), Puffinus assimilis (Corbett Island) and Coturnix ypsilophora (North Twin Peaks Island).

Little Penguin Eudyptula minor (Forster)

Penguins came ashore each night on Bald Island and North Twin Peaks Island where their presence was betrayed by loud braying calls. On both islands birds were frequently observed sheltering under large rocks on the shore. Extensive whitewashing in these shelters suggested regular use. On Bald Island two birds were found more than 100 m from the shore climbing the steep side of a gully. On North Twin Peaks Island two birds were located in a burrow about 50 m from the shore.

Remains of two dead penguins were found in a Melaleuca pubescens woodland on Mondrain Island and whitewashing in rock crevices on the shores of Wilson and Corbett Islands suggested penguins land there.

Black Browed Albatross Diomedea melanophrys Temminck

A single bird was positively identified over the sea between Esperance and Corbett Island on May 5, 1976.

Yellow Nosed Albatross Diomedea chlororhynchos Gmelin

Single birds or groups of two or three were frequent over the sea between Two Peoples Bay and Bald Island and over all the waters covered in the Recherche Archipelago. They occasionally settled on the water. Two or three birds were noted several times flying close inshore at Barker Bay, Bald Island and one was seen just off the northern end of North Twin Peaks Island.

Great Winged Petrel Petrodroma macroptera (Smith)

Commonly seen over the sea or resting in large flocks on the water between Two Peoples Bay and Bald Island where huge numbers arrived at dusk each evening. Most departed before dawn but a few remained in their burrows all day. No burrows were excavated, but single fresh eggs were found at the entrances to two burrows. One flock of about 100 birds was seen resting on the sea near Duke of Orleans Bay and single birds or small flocks were seen at sea throughout the area visited in the Recherche Archipelago.

Fleshy footed Shearwater Puffinus carneipes Gould

Remains of dead birds were found on Wilson, Mondrain and North Twin Peaks Islands. On Mondrain young birds that were almost fully fledged but which still retained small patches of down were found in or near burrows at night. No adults were seen coming in to the Island at night and very few were seen at sea during the day ~~at sea~~.

Little Shearwater Puffinus assimilis Gould

Remains of one dead bird were found on Corbett Island.

Australian Gannet Morus serrator (Gray)

Several young birds with predominantly brown plumage were seen between Two Peoples Bay and Bald Island. One young bird was seen between North Twin Peaks Island and Esperance on May 11, 1976.

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Black Faced Cormorant Phalacrocorax fuscescens (Vieillot)

A single bird was seen flying at sea between Duke of Orleans Bay and North Twin Peaks Island on May 8, 1976.

White Faced Heron Ardea novaehollandiae Latham

One bird was observed by a fresh water soak on Mondrain Island and three more were seen together on the shore of North Twin Peaks Island. The latter flew towards the mainland when disturbed.

Cape Barren Goose Cereopsis novaehollandiae Latham

Only six birds were seen, three on Wilson Island, two on Corbett Island and one on Mondrain Island.

White-breasted Sea-eagle Haliaeetus leucogaster (Gmelin)

Sea Eagles were seen on all the islands visited. On Bald, Corbett and Mondrain Islands no more than two birds were seen simultaneously. Only one bird was seen on South Twin Peaks. On Wilson Island four adults were seen simultaneously while on North Twin Peaks up to two adults and two sub-adults were observed together. A nest was located but not examined on Corbett Island.

Wedge Tailed Eagle Aquila audax (Latham)

A single bird flew over the north west end of Bald Island on April 29, 1976.

Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus Tunstall

One bird was seen twice on the north end of Bald Island.

Stubble Quail Coturnix pectoralis Gould

Remains of a dead bird were found on North Twin Peaks Island. This is the first record for the Recherche Archipelago (Quail, doubtfully identified as Brown Quail, Coturnix australis (Latham) were flushed on Bald Island and Corbett Island. This species has been reported from the Recherche previously (Serventy 1952).

Rock Parrot Neophema petrophila (Gould)

A flock of six birds was seen near the shore of Mondrain Island and a similar flock regularly visited Poa tussock grassland and low Melaleuca globifera thickets near the shore at the north end of North Twin Peaks Island.

Sooty Oystercatcher Haematopus fuliginosus Gould

Single birds and flocks of two to six were commonly seen on all the islands visited except Corbett and South Twin Peaks Islands. Landings on these two islands were very brief and the species was probably overlooked.

Southern Skua Stercorarius skua (Brunnich)

Single birds were occasionally seen over the sea in the Recherche Archipelago.

Birds

Silver Gull Larus novaehollandiae Stephens

A common bird on all the islands we visited. No precise counts were made but numbers were apparently far greater than noted by Serventy (1952).

Pacific Gull Larus pacificus Latham

Small numbers of these gulls were present on all islands we visited except Bald Island.

Crested Tern Sterna bergii Lichtenstein

Nowhere numerous, but this species was seen on all the islands we visited except Corbett and Wilson Islands.

Brush Bronze Wing Phaps elegans (Temminck)

Fairly common on Bald Island and present on Mondrain Island. On both islands it was met with in heavily wooded country. One bird, almost certainly this species but possibly P. chalcoptera (Latham) was flushed from thick low scrub on Wilson Island.

Fan Tailed Cuckoo Cuculus pyrrhophanus Vieillot

Birds were heard and seen in thick woodland on Bald, Mondrain and North Twin Peaks Islands. This species has not previously been recorded from the Recherche Archipelago.

Barn Owl Tyto alba (Scopoli)

None were seen but a large collection of regurgitated pellets were found in a rock crevice on North Twin Peaks. These were associated with feathers of T. alba. The pellets mostly contained remains of Rattus fuscipes, the only small mammal recorded on the island by this expedition (Mammal section, this publication). There were a few bird remains in some pellets.

Laughing Kookaburra Dacelo novaeguineae (Hermann)

One bird heard calling on Bald Island.

Sacred Kingfisher Halcyon sancta Vigors and Horsfield

One bird was seen regularly on the rocky shore at the northern end of North Twin Peaks Island.

Welcome Swallow Hirundo neoxena Gould

A common bird on all the islands we visited except Corbett Island where it may have been overlooked. Several nests were located under rock overhangs but none contained eggs or young. One bird captured on a nest at night on ~~Bald~~ Mondrain Island on April 29, 1976 had been banded about 300 m away on February 23, 1976 (I. Abbott pers. comm.).

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike Coracina novaehollandiae (Gmelin)

One bird was seen perched on a dead stick over thick scrub on Mondrain Island. This species has not previously been recorded from the Recherche Archipelago.

Birds

White Breasted Robin Eopsaltria georgiana (Quoy and Gaimard)

Seen once in tall open woodland on Bald Island.

Golden Whistler Pachycephala pectoralis (Latham)

Frequent on Bald, Mondrain and North Twin Peaks Islands. It was also recorded on Corbett Island. These Islands all had dense woodlands.

Grey Fantail Flycatcher Rhipidura fuliginosa (Sparrman)

Common in woodlands on Bald Island.

Spotted Scrubwren Sericornis frontalis (Vigors and Horsfield)

A common bird in tall woodland and dense undergrowth on Bald Island and Mondrain Island.

Brown Thornbill Acanthiza pusilla (Shaw)

A common bird in tall woodland on Bald Island.

Singing Honeyeater Lichenostomus virescens (Vieillot)

A common bird on every island we visited in the Recherche Archipelago, but not recorded on Bald Island. It was commonly seen perched on prominent boulders or small thickets on the rocky, windswept, western sides of islands (e.g. Wilson Island) as well as in more heavily wooded areas.

New Holland Honeyeater Phylidonyris novaehollandiae (Latham)

Recorded on Bald, Mondrain and North Twin Peaks Islands, where it was usually met with in small flocks, frequently associated with Silver eyes, Zosterops, Lateralis in flowering trees or shrubs. (see Z. lateralis)

Silver Eye Zosterops lateralis (Latham)

Small flocks, often associated with New Holland Honeyeaters, Phylidonyris novaehollandiae, were recorded on Bald, Mondrain, North Twin Peaks and Corbett Islands. They were usually found in flowering trees or shrubs e.g. Albizia lophantha (Mimosaceae) Mondrain Island; Kunzea baxteri (Myrtaceae) Mondrain and North Twin Peaks Island; Eucalyptus lehmanni (Myrtaceae) Bald and Mondrain Islands.

Red eared Firetail Emblema oculatum (Quoy and Gaimard)

Several small flocks were seen in thick scrub on Bald Island. Two specimens are deposited in the U.A. Museum.

Australian Raven Corvus coronoides (Vigors and Horsfield)

Recorded on all islands visited in the Recherche Archipelago except South Twin Peaks Island. Not recorded on Bald Island.

TABLE 1

<u>Species</u>	<u>On Islands</u>						<u>At Sea</u>	
	Bald	Corbett	Wilson	Mondrain	North Twin Peaks	South Twin Peaks	Two Peoples Bay to Bald (H) Island	Recherche (2)
<i>Eudyptula minor</i>	X	?	?	X	X			
<i>Diomedea melanophrys</i>								X
<i>D chlororhynchos</i>							X	X
<i>Petrodroma macroptera</i>	X						X	X
<i>Puffinus carneipes</i>			X	X	X			X
<i>P assimilis</i>		X						
<i>Morus serrator</i>							X	X
<i>Phalacrocorax fuscescens</i>								X
<i>Ardea novaehollandiae</i>				X	X			
<i>Cereopsis novaehollandiae</i>		X	X	X				
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		
<i>Aquila audax</i>	X							
* <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	X							
<i>F cenchroides</i>					X			
<i>Coturnix pectoralis</i>					X			
<i>C australis</i>	?	?						
* <i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	X		X	X	X			
<i>Stercorarius skua</i>								X
<i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>L pacificus</i>			X	X	X	X		X
* <i>Sterna bergii</i>	X			X	X	X	X	X
<i>Phaps elegans</i>	X		?	X				
<i>Neophema petrophila</i>				X	X			
<i>Cuculus pyrrhophanus</i>	X			X	X			
<i>Tyto alba</i>					X			
<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i>	X							
<i>Halcyon sancta</i>					X			
<i>Hirundo neoxena</i>	X		X	X	X	X		
<i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>				X				
<i>Eopsaltria georgiana</i>	X							
<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>	X	X		X	X			
<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	X							
<i>Sericornis frontalis</i>	X		X					
<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i>	X							
<i>Lichenostomus virescens</i>		X	X	X	X	X		
<i>Phylidonyris novaehollandiae</i>	X			X	X			

<u>Species</u>	<u>On Islands</u>						<u>At Sea</u>	
	Bald	Corbett	Wilson	Mondrain	North Twin Peaks	South Twin Peaks	2 P.B. to Bald (1)	Recherche (2)
Zosterops lateralis		X		X	X			
Emblema oculata	X							
Corvus coronoides		X		X	X	X		

NOTE.

1. 2 P.B. to Bald 1 = Birds seen at sea between Two Peoples Bay and Bald Island.

2. Recherche = Birds seen at sea in the Recherche Archipelago.