

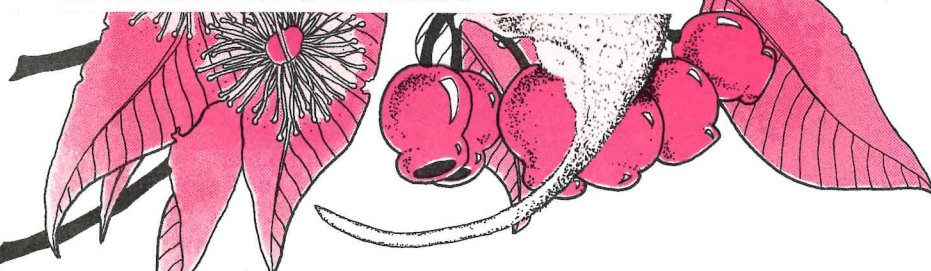


JOURNAL
RESOURCE NOTES

2 (1987)
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Resource Notes

Number 2 March 1987
Department of Conservation
and Land Management, W.A.



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DEPT. CONSERVATION AND
LAND MANAGEMENT
20 OCT 1988
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BIRDS YOU ARE LIKELY TO SEE OR HEAR IN THE JARRAH FOREST OF W.A.

Over 70 different species of birds live in the jarrah forest. However, not all live in all parts of the forest; for example some live in swamps and on river banks, and others only inhabit the dense shrubbery which develops following a fierce fire.

Some you are unlikely to see because of their secretive habits, and others because they are largely nocturnal.

This note gives guidelines for the identification of the 16 species you are most likely to see or hear on a walk through the forest.

IDENTIFICATION HINTS

You will find it helpful to carry a notebook and pencil with you, and to note down the characteristics of the bird you see. You can then check your notes against this guide.

The characteristics to watch out for and to note are these:

Size: Judge the size of the bird by comparison with a species you are familiar with. Sizes in these notes are classified as:

- SMALL - like a blue wren
- MEDIUM - like a honeyeater
- LARGE - like a kookaburra

Shape: Is the body and general appearance tubby, normal, or sleek?

Does the tail appear short, normal or long?

Colour: Where possible note the colour of the head, back, breast and belly. If the bird is flying away from you, note the colour of the rump (the lower back).

Habits: Where did you see the bird? Was it: In the tree tops, in the lower canopy (leaves) of trees, perching on tree trunks, or in the shrubs on the forest floor.

Note the type of activity: Is the flight fast and direct, is the bird flitting from place to place, or is the bird soaring around the tree-tops? When not flying, is the bird just sitting on a branch or twig, or is it moving about among the leaves of the tree?

FIELD IDENTIFICATION

There are two methods of identifying birds in the field. One is by actually seeing them and noting down your observations, the other is by identifying the bird by its voice or song.

BIRDS IDENTIFIED BY SIGHT

Small Birds

Thornbills - Two species occur in the jarrah forest. Both are brown, but they can be separated if you can see the breast and chin clearly, or can see the rump in flight.

Broad-tailed Thornbill - Chin and breast grey with dark streaks, rump chestnut.

Western Thornbill - Chin and breast uniformly fawn, rump greyish-brown with pale base.

Thornbills move about amongst the leaves of shrubs and the lower leaves of trees.

Tree Martin - Black with white underparts and rump, tail slightly forked.

Continually soars around tree tops hunting insects. Rarely settles on branches.

Medium Birds

Grey Fantail - Light brownish-grey; white stripe across the eye.

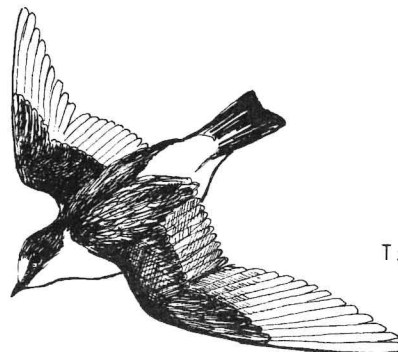
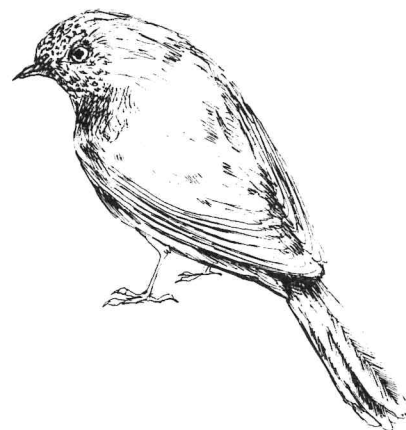
Flits from tree to tree frequently fanning its long tail.

The friendly bird of the forest - it is unafraid, and will fly close to you.

Golden Whistler - Male has startling colours: breast is brilliant yellow, head is black and white; female is a dull greyish-brown.

The golden whistler has a distinctive call (see section on bird voices), and inhabits the lower canopy of trees.

Broad-tailed
Thornbill



Tree Martin

Grey Fantail



Golden Whistler



Yellow Robin



Yellow Robin - Grey colour with yellow lower breast and belly, and a yellow rump.

This tubby bird perches on low branches or on the trunks of trees; it flits to the ground periodically, to pick up an insect, and then flies to another perch.

Dusky Wood-Swallow



Dusky Wood-Swallow - Dark grey coloured; narrow white stripe on leading edge of wing; white spot on either side of end of tail.

Soars and glides above and between trees hawking insects, like a tree martin. Distinguished from the tree martin by broad wings (tree martin's are narrow), and its habit of frequently perching.

Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike

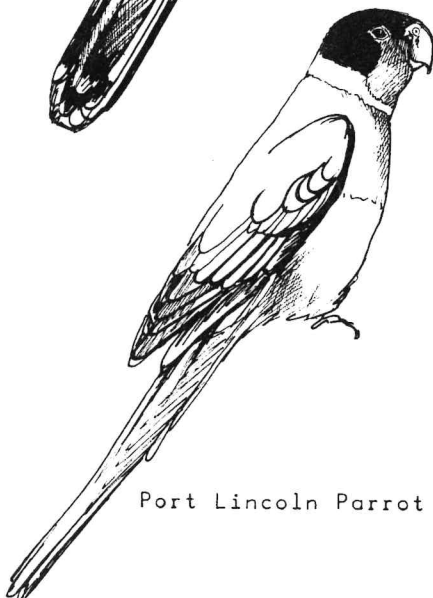


Large Birds

Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike - Uniformly pale grey in colour; black face.

Generally seen flying in pairs from tree-top to tree-top.

Port Lincoln Parrot ('28')



Port Lincoln Ringneck ('28') - When flying appears brilliant green and has a green rump; top of head brown, neck yellow. A sleek bird with a long tail, it has a distinctive "twenty-eight" call.

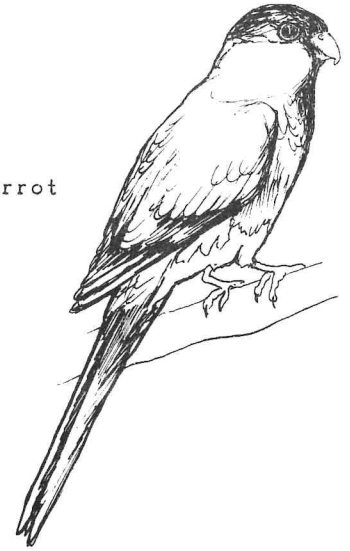
(Note that the Port Lincoln Ringneck you see in Perth has a yellow breast; the one in the jarrah forest has a green breast).

It is generally seen in the tree-tops. Its flight is fast and straight.



Red-capped Parrot - When flying appears greenish with a yellow rump; top of head brilliant red, breast violet coloured, belly brilliant red, back and tail green. It is also a sleek bird with a long tail and is generally seen in the tree tops. Its flight is fast and straight.

Red-capped Parrot



Black Cockatoo - There are two species, distinguished by the colour of their outer tail feathers (which are sometimes hard to see) as the Red-tailed black cockatoo and the White-tailed black cockatoo. Both are otherwise black.

Larger than the parrots, with long wings and tail, they are very noisy birds. They fly above the tree tops, periodically perching in tall trees.



Black Cockatoo

BIRDS IDENTIFIED BY THEIR VOICE OR SONG

Noisy Birds

Golden Whistler and Grey shrike-thrush - Both species have similar calls: a loud whistling cry; whee-ooo-WHIP.

Striated pardalote - A small bird generally confined to the tree tops and infrequently seen. Has a distinctive and monotonous call of; chip, chip -- chip, chip -- chip, chip.



Song Birds

White-tailed Warbler - The song sounds distant, and consists of a rather tuneless succession of notes on a descending scale.

Brown Honeyeater - This is the only jarrah forest bird with a powerful, tuneful song. It is very similar to the singing honeyeater which is common in Perth.

POSTSCRIPT

It is often useful to be able to learn a bit more about the birds you have seen, and to see a coloured picture of them. The best reasonably priced book on the subject is "A Field Guide to the Birds of Australia" by Graham Pizzey, published by Collins of Sydney.

Written by Peter Kimber who, for several years, studied the effects of burning on birds of the southern forests, as part of a Forests Department research program.