

thought that these birds might have been taken for magpies, but both men maintained that the birds causing the trouble really were magpies.

BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF LIZARDS

For some time now, research into a phase of lizard ecology has been conducted by The Western Australian University under the direction of Dr. A.R. Main. It has comprised an investigation into the extraordinary ability of lizards to exist on massive rock outcrops, such as that at Boyagin in the Brookton district, where the surface temperature fluctuates between what is to us unbearably hot and unbearably cold. The March meeting of the Royal Society of Western Australia, held at the Western Australian Museum, after the formal business of the evening had been transacted, took the form of a symposium on the results so far obtained from this most interesting research.

With the kind permission of the Society, we reproduce below a synthesis of each speaker's remarks. While some of the terminology may well be beyond the understanding of our readers, in most cases the average reader can follow the trend of the text fairly adequately. The contributor of the general remarks was Professor W.R. Dawson, Professor of Zoology of the University of Michigan, U.S.A., who is here on a Guggenheim Grant. The next two contributors, Messrs. Paul Licht and S. Donald Bradshaw, were graduate students from Professor Dawson's University, while the third, Mr. V.N. Shoemaker, is an honours graduate of our own University.

BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF LIZARDS

General Remarks - William R. Dawson

Lizards are among the most common residents of hot, arid regions. Their success in such places depends on a complex interplay between behaviour and strictly physiological capacities. Among behavioural patterns of importance are basking and selection of favourable micro-climates, which allow the animals to achieve a surprising amount of control over their

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body temperatures during activity. Physiological capacities of importance reflect a variety of adjustments to temperature which are evident both in processes within the intact animal and in the performance of individual tissues under in vitro conditions. The nature of these adjustments indicates that temperature adaptation in lizards has involved wholesale physiological modifications rather than just changes within the central nervous system.