

SACRED KINGFISHER

Mr. D.M. Purchase of the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Wildlife Research Laboratory, Canberra, has recorded a very interesting banding record of the Sacred Kingfisher. The bird was banded as a fledgling on December 31, 1964, near Chain of Ponds in South Australia, by a Mr. M.H. Waterman. It was found alive at Tuart Hill on March 16, 1968, but died two days later. Dr. D.L. Serventy's interpretation of this is, that the bird had gone northwards on its migration and, on its return, either in the first year or last year, had mingled with Western Australian birds and made the southern passage with them.

The Sacred Kingfisher (Halcyon sancto) occurs all over the State, except in the far inland portion. In the south it is found inland to Tammin, Lake Grace, and Norseman, while in the North-West it penetrates along the rivers to their upper reaches frequenting the eucalypt belts.

In the southern portion of the state the Sacred Kingfisher is a migrant, arriving during the first half of September when it insistently reveals its presence by its "ki-ki-ki" note - one of the characteristic sounds of the spring and summer bushlands. In their handbook "Birds of Western Australia", Serventy and Whittell also say that the majority of birds leave again in early March and most have gone by the first week in April, but a few individuals continue to remain behind for the winter; these however, are usually silent. Some of our birds migrate to Timor and adjoining islands of Indonesia.

AUSTRALIAN FAUNA TO BE SHOWN IN FILMS

The Commonwealth Film Unit is at present in the initial stages of research for a series of films on Australian Wildlife. The films will be in colour and will be given a wide distribution at mainly an interested lay audience. Mr. John Shaw, Film Director of the Commonwealth Film Unit has been nominated as Director of the films. Mr. Ronald Strahan, Director of the Taronga Park Zoo, Sydney, has offered his services on general scientific liaison for the films. Before each film is commenced a vast amount of research will be made and the film unit will rely upon specialist knowledge within the field of its coverage. Dr. Tom Spence, Director of the Zoological Gardens, South Perth, has indicated that he would assist in the location of animals and sites suitable for filming.

It is hoped that these films would help the public to a better understanding of our unique fauna and what is actually required to maintain the species still surviving on as wide a distribution pattern as possible.

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This could include areas of study on ecological research, survey research, survey research management, habitat, manipulation and reserve management.

Initially the accent will be on mammals, and will include the following species found in Western Australia; the Banded Anteater or Numbat, Bilby or Rabbit-eared Bandicoot, Northern Native Cat, Western Native Cat, Scaly-tailed Possum, Central Jerboa Marsupial, Honey Possum and Pigmy Possum.