

CRESTED GREBES OBSERVED

About 30 to 40 rare Crested Grebes were sighted on Mr. W.R. Wedge's property, Wooka Wooka, Dandaragan, twelve miles west of Caro Swamps by Mr. H.J. Horton. This is about as far north as they have been seen.

Set out below is an extract from Birds of Western Australia by Serventy and Whittell:

CRESTED GREBE

(Podiceps cristatus)

Native names: Ka-lee, Kali (Perth)

Upper brown, with a white band in the short wing; under parts a gleaming white. Around the head is a striking adornment, consisting of elongated feathers, chestnut at the base and black at the tip, forming an erect ruff or "tippet". Iris, red; beak, dark horn colour; legs, dark olive-green, with pale yellow soles to the feet. Length, 20 in. Weight 1 lb.

Distribution: This grebe is confined to the South-West corner, from Gingin to Bremer Bay. It has been reported at Lake Matilda.

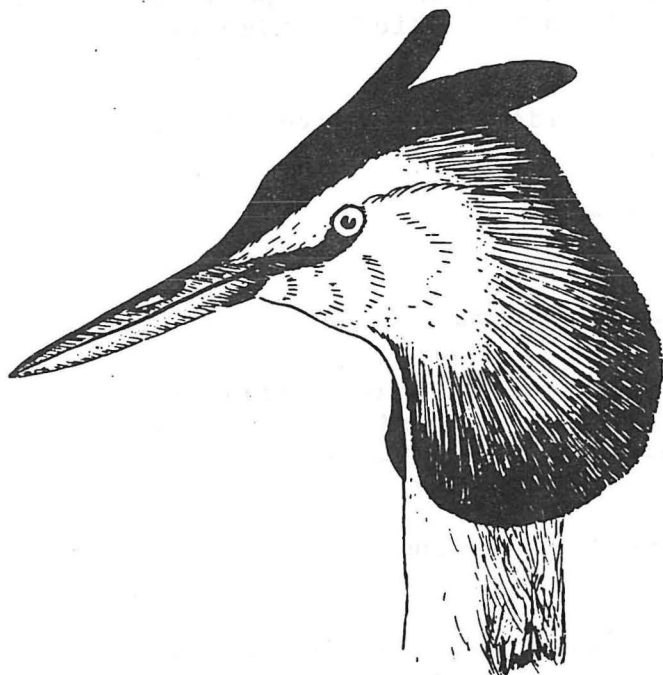


Fig. 18.—Crested Grebe.

Nesting: A nest at Lake Jandakot in December 1941 (K.G. Buller) was approximately 50 yards from the edge of the lake, and was a platform of rushes and other aquatic plants interlaced one over the other. A quantity of mud assisted to stabilise the nest. At the back of the nest was a depression, intended, presumably, for one of the birds to rest on when not engaged in incubation. The nest was about 4 feet in circumference and was entirely independent of standing rushes, but pieces of broken rushes and other

debris formed a link with the standing rushes and prevented its drifting away. In it were 5, nest-stained, incubated eggs. The eggs are actually a glossy greenish-white but that colour is obscured by a dull white limy coating which soon becomes stained and dark in colour as incubation proceeds. Size, 50-52 x 34-36 mm. As with other members of the genus, the eggs are elliptical in shape.

The Crested Glebe is definitely an uncommon species, but individuals appear from time to time on reservoirs and larger bodies of water, including brackish estuaries. At Wilson's Inlet, Denmark, we have seen them more regularly than anywhere else. In diving, the bird remains submerged from 22 to 28 seconds (Cooloongup Lake, Rockingham).