

## **An albino Scarlet Robin?**

**M**MARGARET SCOTT of Duranillin noticed a very unusual bird, it was white with a rose-coloured breast. It was hopping along with two Scarlet Robins, so she said: could it be an albino?

Senior Zoologist, Peter Mawson, confirmed that it could be an albino. The genes that control different colours in feathers operate independantly. The 'failure' of a gene for one colour can result in that colour being replaced by white (albino) or black (melanistic) forms. How long the animal survives probably depends on whether it becomes more conspicuous to predators.

(Mary Bremner has noted an albino Willy Wagtail on the eastern side of Lake Monger, where it had established a territory.)

*Has anyone else noticed any odd colour variations? - Ed.*