

Together with the 16 quite superb colour plates, these 252 pages of text will be the most quoted and most used accounts of Australasian waterfowl over at least, the next 30 years. Take a bow Rory O'Brien for a job very well done!

M J Williams

Procellariiformes

The species accounts run from pp. 263-735, i.e. cover about $\frac{2}{3}$ of Vol. 1A and deal with 72 species - 70% of those living today. Without checking each separately, the diagnostic features of every species seem well brought out, as are the points of possible confusion with other species. Brief descriptions of plumage are later expanded to feather-by-feather ones with colour chart numbers added where appropriate. In this and other sections the writing is not telegraphic so the accounts tend to be long, even verbose. Measurements from many sources are tabulated and efforts made to separate the data according as the birds were live or skins, by sex, and with means \pm S.D. and nos. in samples. These and similar data will be very useful to many users.

Knowledge of behaviours is well summarised considering the little known when the texts were assembled (only one poor drawing though). Some sonagrams are included, none of sexed birds, and seldom more than one per species, even for those like the 'great' albatrosses that have extensive repertoires.

The nomenclature is conservative. Kerguelen & Tahiti Petrels are still in *Pterodroma*, although the possible use of *Lugensa* and *Pseudobulweria* is mentioned. The compilers were evidently in a quandary about the family name for the storm petrels. They head that section family Hydrobatidae (Oceanitidae) and use the latter for the running head. Thankfully that problem is solved by the recent I.C.Z.N. Opinion 1696 supporting Hydrobatidae. But *Garrodia* has been superseded by *Oceanites* without explanation.

Maps show the ranges independently of seasonal shifts, breeding places and vagrant records being arrowed. The plates are mostly good, not cramped, and the postures look right. Some birds look too 'squeaky clean' for this reviewer, almost stark, e.g. the foreheads of Providence Petrels are shown as snow white not freckled. The prions are all grey on their upper-parts, with hardly a hint of blue even on the bill. The storm petrels have their wings far too pointed (a common fault), the artist evidently not having realised that the outer functional primary is not the longest as it is in other tubenoses. These are nothing like as true to life as in "BWP", for example.

Literature citations are very thorough: even your reviewer read things he'd written but long forgotten! At least one reference is dated 1990 but mostly these run out about 1988 and a few, even from the "Emu", have been overlooked. A good deal of material has been drawn from 'standard' works like "Oceanic Birds of S. America" and "The Handbook of Australian Sea-birds", compare for instance Fig. 1 p. 265 of HANZAB with Fig. 32, p.69 of the sea-birds book.

In places great detail is given. For example, a full page table lists the squid species eaten by *D. exulans* based on 4 analyses, and, separately, the rostral lengths of these molluscs from S. Georgian material.

Some omissions are strange. For instance, in the account of the Wandering Albatross, the plumages of 7 different stages to maturity are described in fine detail filling over two pages and the Gibson Scores cited, but neither Gibson's diagram nor the expanded one by Jouventin *et al.* are reproduced. Although most of the 7 stages are shown in the plates, Gibson's simple figure would have been a significant additional aid for the user and perhaps enabled some of the verbiage to be trimmed. The writers also seem to have had trouble believing that our Antipodes/Campbell I. birds breed in dark neotenus plumage and they fail to warn the reader that such birds are common in Australasian seas and too easily scored as immatures.

Despite such minor blemishes, this volume contains a vast store of information into which workers on tubenoses will be delving for a good many years to come.

John Warham



A Field Guide To Australian Bird Song: Cassettes 6 7 & 8. Available from the Bird Observers Club of Australia, P O Box 185, Nunawading, Victoria 3131, Australia. \$Aust 11.00 plus packing and postage.

This series of tapes are the only ones available presenting most of the birds of Australia in systematic order and are well worth the cost even if we disagree over some of the vernacular names.

Volume 6 in this major series on the Birds of Australia is of considerable interest to New Zealand ornithologists as it contains eight species that are on our checklist. Species covered range from the Owls to the Cuckoo-shrikes, including the many species of Kingfisher and the astonishing mimicry of the two species of lyrebirds. A golden opportunity exists here for those interested in comparing the sounds made by different populations of a species such as the Welcome Swallow *Hirundo tahitica* on both sides of the Tasman Sea, or if you are interested in a wider perspective, Richards Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae* of Australia and Africa along with the New Zealand birds. Good long recordings are given in most cases for the 44 species assembled by Len Grice in this volume.

Volume 7 brings us a further 36 passerines, four of which are on the New Zealand list (Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* and Blackbird *T. merula* Red-vented Bulbul *Pyconotus cafer* and White-winged Triller *Lalage tricolor*). Many melodious species including most of the attractive Robins and Whistlers are given centre stage on this magnificent cassette assembled by Rex Buckingham and Len Jackson. Anyone interested in learning the songs of the Australian passerines would find this cassette an absolute must.

Volume 8 presents a further 34 species including at least two that are now on the New Zealand lists. (Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca* and