

AUSTRALIAN PELICANS IN FIJI — A NEW BIRD RECORD

During 1978, Fiji experienced a minor invasion of Australian Pelicans (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*), a species not recorded there previously.

In August 1978, Litiana Senilaci photographed a pair of pelicans just off the mangrove-bound shore of Moturiki Island, which lies off the south-west coast of Ovalau. These photographs are now in the Fiji Museum. A group of several more pelicans was also seen there but not photographed.

On 7 October 1978, Albert Threadingham and Barry Lee observed a pair of pelicans swimming in coastal waters off Verata Point, south-east Viti Levu. Mr Threadingham is familiar with the species in Australia and is positive of his identification. These pelicans could quite possibly be the pair observed earlier at Moturiki.

A photograph and article in the *Fiji Times* of 14 October 1978 further confirmed the presence of these pelicans in Fiji waters, a Fijian illegally shooting a pelican from a rock off the Malau coast of northern Vanua Levu. The bird was unfortunately not preserved. According to its killer it had been in the area for some six months. The same newspaper article quoted Robin Mercer as saying he had been told of a pelican in the Lau Islands of eastern Fiji several months earlier.

By year's end, Osea Kaloumaira of Moturiki reported that two pelicans were still present off the mouth of the Waidalice River on the east coast of Viti Levu, these probably being of the same group as those seen earlier at Moturiki.

FERGUS CLUNIE, *Fiji Museum, Suva, Fiji.*



FERNBIRD DUETTING WITH SPOTLESS CRAKE

By a Hawkes Bay farm lake in December 1977 my husband and I stopped to photograph Spotless Crake (*Porzana tabuensis plumbea*) and, opposite a tunnel in the raupo, started to play the taped crake calls. Immediately two Fernbirds (*Bowdleria punctata*) appeared. They duetted together and went through their whole repertoire, their bodies vibrating as they gave the "ticking" call.

When I played the Crake's single *pit* note, a Crake answered, which really excited one of the Fernbirds which sat beside me, reared itself up and duetted with the Spotless Crake! Fortunately, I was able to tape this. The sequence began with the Crake's *pit, pit, pit* reply to the tape followed by the *U-tick* of the Fernbird; then the Crake's *pit*, then the Fernbird's *U-tick*; then the Fernbird's *U* and the Crake's *pit*, and so on. At times, the *pit* of the Crake coincided with the *tick* of the Fernbird's *U-tick*.

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