

NOTES & NEWS

AUSTRALIAN WILD LIFE TOUR

There are a few seats left for the 28 day Australian Wild Life Tour, departing 21 July, returning 17 August 1972. This is a camping-bus tour. Further details from Mr C. Searle, P.O. Box 2577, Auckland, C.I. Camping equipment and food will be provided.

CONSERVATIONISTS UNITE

CoEnCo, the Conference on Environment and Conservation, was formed in Wellington on 4 December 1971 as a body to unite 40 New Zealand conservation groups and will represent nearly 50,000 conservation-minded people in New Zealand, hopefully giving them one voice for the first time. The Minister of Lands and Forests (Mr Duncan McIntyre), opening the meeting, explained the need for a combined body rather than "a multitude of sectional voices competing for a share of public support." Mr F. D. O'Flynn, QC, was elected chairman of the group and Mr Lloyd Woods, Secretary of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, was appointed acting secretary. The future of CoEnCo will be of interest to many OSNZ members.

THE AUSTRALIAN SEABIRD GROUP

At a meeting in Canberra in November 1971, a gathering of Australian ornithologists decided to form an Australian Seabird Group.

The aims of the group are envisaged to be, with geographic modifications, those of the original "Seabird Group" in Britain.

- (1) To support and promote the study of seabirds.
- (2) To maintain a list of people interested in the seabirds of Australasia, Antarctica, and Oceania; to discover the nature of their current interests and activities; and to make them known to each other.
- (3) To build up a national and international network of active workers prepared to co-operate in the development of studies of all aspects of seabird biology.
- (4) To circulate a newsletter containing news and views of work in progress.
- (5) To encourage new work in fields which receive inadequate attention.

The meeting, when considering a motif, decided to adopt the White-faced Stormed Petrel, *Pelagodroma marina*, as its emblem. This bird is both distinctive and common in much of the area.

Anyone interested in further information is asked to write to:—

The Acting Secretary,
Australian Seabird Group,
P.O. Box 235, Civic Square,
A.C.T., Australia, 2608

TAIAROA HEAD ALBATROSS COLONY OPENED

The albatross colony at Taiaroa Head, Otago Peninsula, has now been officially opened to the public. The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr D. A. Highet) performed the ceremony on 23 February and praised "the joint efforts of individuals and organisations who collaborated in the protection of the colony and the construction of the look-out shelter, which ends years of restricted public access to the cliffs where the birds breed."

NEW NATIONAL FILM UNIT SERIES

Television viewers in New Zealand will have enjoyed seeing the new productions of the National Film Unit in their "Nature Series" ("Birds of a Single Flight" and "The Home of the Takapu") which have recently been screened. These will be shown overseas in colour and are bound to attract favourable comment. Dr R. A. FALLA, doyen of New Zealand ornithology, provides the "front" for the series and the standard is equal to the NFU's best. Dr Falla was recently the subject of a "Saturday Profile" in Wellington's newspaper *The Evening Post* in which a most interesting biographical sketch was given with his personal philosophy of nature, man, and conservation. A previous profile, including an historic photograph of the young Falla of *Discovery* days, appeared in the same paper about 15 years ago. Dr Falla has just been re-appointed as Chairman of the Nature Conservation Council for a further three years. The same issue of *The Evening Post* of this year also gives (p.13) a useful account of the work of the NCC taken from a talk given by Dr Falla to the Wellington South Rotary Club.

Sources: BECK, S. 1972. Saturday Profile. Museum director, explorer and lively scientist. *The Evening Post*, 29 January 1972: 16; FANNING, L. 1958. Many parts of New Zealand helped to shape museum director. *The Evening Post*, 13 December 1958.

Dr R. C. MURPHY RETURNS

Visitors to New Zealand late last year were Dr & Mrs Robert Cushman Murphy renewing old friendships and their memories of New Zealand which they visited previously in 1947 and 1949. Dr Murphy, now aged 85, was Lamont Curator of Birds in the American Museum of Natural History and is still regarded as the greatest authority on seabirds of the world. His famous work "Oceanic Birds of South America" is also still of great value as an authoritative source of information despite much subsequent work in this region. Dr & Mrs Murphy were members of the 1947 expedition to the Snares Islands and were later at the 7th Pacific Science Congress. Dr Murphy was elected to honorary life membership of the OSNZ in 1948. They left an impression of friendliness and scholarly attainment with many younger members of the OSNZ whom they met including the present editor of *Notornis*.

STOP PRESS ON SWALLOW SIGHTINGS

An NZPA report of 14 January 1972 has given a photograph of an "Australian male white-browed wood swallow" found near Naseby, Central Otago. A subsequent report (19 January) gave an account of the sighting of a second swallow identified, however, as a "female masked wood swallow." Although this is the first "published" record of these two alleged additions to the New Zealand list, we await confirmation and a full account from Mr John Darby and other Dunedin members who were involved in what the newspapers called the "swallow mystery."

Sources: *The Dominion*, 14 January 1972, p. 32 (photo.); *The Press*, 14 January, p.1 (photo.); *The Dominion*, 19 January, p.8; *The Evening Post*, 19 January, p.13; *The Christchurch Star*, 19 January, p. 2.