

REVIEW

The Birds of Sydney, by K. A. Hindwood and A. R. McGill, The Royal Zoological Society of N.S.W., 12/6d.

Since the ornithology of Sydney begins with the visit of Captain Cook and the naturalists, Banks and Solander, to Botany Bay in 1770, the authors have felt that the time is ripe to provide a concise account of the birds of the Sydney district in the county of Cumberland, N.S.W. Both are first-class field naturalists and as they have a scholarly interest in the history of Australian ornithology, they are well qualified to carry out their considerable task; for of the 700 or so species on the Australian list, 377 have occurred within their area and though it is the most closely settled part of the continent, despite some inevitable losses caused by urbanisation, the 'fount of ornithological interest never runs dry.'

An excellent introduction with a clear geological map stresses the importance of habitat, of which six types are recognised, with the wise proviso that the distinctions are seldom, if ever, absolute.

After a description of the dominant field characters of each bird, there are brief notes on its status, distribution, migrations and ecological requirements within the area concerned, and the reader is referred to a coloured illustration in Cayley's "What Bird is That?" The book concludes with admirable photographs of some typical local breeding birds.

All bird-minded New Zealanders who may be visiting south-east Australia will find this a thoroughly reliable book to have in the pocket. Local pride has given the authors immense local knowledge and they have spared no pains in their search for the truth. 'The Birds of Sydney' is also a most useful reference book to all in N.Z. who are watching with interest the establishment in this country of Australian species and are expecting others. Herein they will be able to find out exactly what species breed and what birds occur as regular migrants or as drought-driven refugees along that part of the Australian coast which faces the west coast of New Zealand. — R.B.S.

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CORRECTION

In the caption to Plate XXXH (bottom), 'best' should be corrected to 'least.' The Allied Shearwater is not at all well known.