

in classification such as downy plumage, courtship and display; nesting habits and voice. Thus the work of field naturalists and aviculturists has been called on as an aid to classification, supplementing the older bias in favour of structure and plumage.

The work is undoubtedly one of the most important reviews in recent ornithological literature.

R. A. F.

"Emu," Vol. XLV, pt. 2, October, 1945.

This number contains an article by R. T. Littlejohns—"Some Random Observations Regarding Incubation"—describing variation in the habits of birds, mainly dottrels, under different weather conditions.

A paper of similar general interest by Angus Robinson discusses the theories of territory as they apply to some Australian birds, including magpies and ducks.

The second and concluding part of Dr. W. R. B. Oliver's long paper on "Avian Evolution in New Zealand and Australia," appears and calls for a fuller review than can be attempted here.

Still another general paper, "The Nature of Bird Activities," by G. R. Gannon, helps to make this number unusually full of theoretical discussions, which are, however, of great interest.

Additional papers are: "The Wood-Sandpiper in Western Australia," by D. L. Serventy; "The Banded Stilt," by Jack Jones, and the usual "Stray Feathers," including photographs of golden plover and bar-rumped godwit.

R. A. F.

Michael Sharland: "Tasmanian Birds—A Field Guide to the Birds Inhabiting Tasmania and Adjacent Islands, including the Sea Birds." Oldham, Beddome and Meredith, Ltd., Hobart, 1945, I-VI and 120 pages.

The Tasmanian avifauna differs largely from that of New Zealand, but the members of the O.S.N.Z. will be surprised to find how many New Zealand birds are to be found in Tasmania.

As stressed in the introduction, this little book contains all the information necessary to identify Tasmanian birds in the field. After the scientific and vernacular names follows the description of the most important features with a concise description of the habitat, nesting and general field notes of each species. Excellent photographs of several more important and characteristic species will be of great assistance to any bird student.

Let us hope that this excellent little book will not only find its way to the bookshelves of New Zealand ornithologists but also will serve as an incentive for the publication of a similar field guide to New Zealand birds.

K. A. W.

R. A. Falla and G. Stokell, "Investigation of the Stomach Contents of N.Z. Fresh Water Shags." *Trans. R.S. of N.Z.*, Vol. LXXIV, Part 4, pp. 320-331.

Although the authors of this first paper on the stomach contents of New Zealand Shags could not, for several reasons, comply with all the requirements of such an investigation, the paper should be widely perused by the members of the O.S.N.Z. It is actually the first paper to deal with the important subject of the cormorant's place in the ecology of New Zealand fresh waters; it also brings valuable data with regard to the distribution and biology of the shags. It is sincerely hoped that the authors will soon be able to complete their work in the way shown by Wetmore and Serventy on American and Australian cormorants respectively.—K. A. W.

"*The South Australian Ornithologist*," Vol. XVII, Parts 1-8.

"*The Elepaio*," Journal of the Honolulu Audubon Society, Vol. XIII, Nos. 8-12; Vol. IV, Nos. 1-9.

"Birds of Hawaii," by G. C. Munro, Honolulu, 1944; 189 pages, 20 plates. It is interesting, in view of the situation in New Zealand, to see that 94 species are included in the section dealing with introduced birds, though many of these did not establish themselves.

"The Problem of Partial Migration," by D. Lack. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVII.

"Report On the Bird Song Inquiry," by H. G. Alexander. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVI.

"The Migration of the Sandwich Tern," by A. L. Thomson. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVII.

"The Index of Heron Population, 1942," by W. B. Alexander. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVI.

"The Age of the Blackbird," by D. Lack. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVI.

"The Age of Some More British Birds," by D. Lack. "*British Birds*," Vol. XXXVI.

"Birds Collected During the Whitney South Sea Expedition. Fifty-three Northern Shore Birds in the Pacific," by E. H. Stickney. *American Museum Novitates*, No. 1248, 1943.

"Results of the Archbold Expeditions, No. 50: A Preliminary Life History Study of the Florida Jay," by D. Amadon. *American Museum Novitates*, No. 1252, 1944.

"Bird Weights As An Aid In Taxonomy," by D. Amadon. *Wilson Bulletin*, Vol. LV, 1943.

WHITE PHASE OF THE REEF HERON OR MATUKU-MOANA *Demigretta sacra* (Gmelin) AT WAIRAU BAR.

By K. A. WODZICKI and JAS. R. EYLES.

The first occurrence of the white phase of the reef heron at Wairau Bar, in April, 1944, was one of the highlights of bird observation in New Zealand during the last year. A detailed description of the Wairau bird and a record of observations made up to the end of November, 1944, have been given elsewhere (Wodzicki and Eyles, 1945), as well as a discussion on the origin of the white phase bird. As stated by Oliver (1930) the New Zealand population of the reef heron consists