

This year Cattle Egrets should return to the island but some of the other species might not be seen again for many years. *J. S. Whinray, Flinders Island, Tasmania, 28/3/76.*

REFERENCE

Green, R. H., 1969. "The Birds of Flinders Island." *Records of the Queen Victoria Museum*, 34.

Red Wattlebird bathing in dew-laden foliage. On the morning of April 10, 1976, at approximately 08.30 hours, a Red Wattlebird, *Anthochaera carunculata*, was observed bathing in an unusual manner in the back garden of my home at Camberwell, Victoria.

The morning was fine, but cool with a nip in the air, and a heavy dew had fallen through the night. The air was calm as I sat over a breakfast coffee. A sudden rustling directly above my head drew my attention to the Wattlebird in the nearby trees. It dived amongst the upper area of two densely foliated trees which were heavily coated in moisture, Lillypilly, *Syzygium crebrinerve*, and Spotted Gum, *Eucalyptus maculata*.

The bird flew back and forth between the two trees and with each contact with the leaves it shook its body in a typical bathing motion. After 4-5 trips to each source of moisture the Wattlebird flew to a more open-foliaged tree and perched on a horizontal branch. It then shook off the excess water from its feathers and began to preen. *F. T. Morris, Camberwell, Victoria, 11/4/76.*

How rare is the Grey Falcon? The frequency with which I have sighted the Grey Falcon, *Falco hypoleucos*, on field trips between May, 1973, and October, 1975, (although not conducting a planned search for the species) seems indication that this falcon is not as rare as is supposed.

Grey Falcons were sighted on eight occasions, in three instances as pairs, giving a total of eleven birds. The localities and dates of the sightings were as appearing in the following list. The sexes and state of maturity, with the times of day to the nearest half-hour when sighted, and the behaviour of the birds is given, with detailed descriptions which follow.

SIGHTINGS

May 10, 1973: adult male; Quambone, northern NSW; 1830 hrs — flying.

May 27, 1973: adult pair; Ivanhoe, west-central NSW; 1230 hrs — perched.

October 27, 1973: juvenile female; Clare, west-central NSW; 1000 hrs — flying.

July 12, 1974: adult male; Woocalla; south-eastern SA; 1500 hrs — perched.

July 14, 1974: adult pair; Wauchope, central NT; 1530 hrs — perched.

July 15, 1974: adult female; Daly Waters, north-central NT; 0900 hrs — flying.

March 18, 1975: adult male, Logan River, south-eastern Q; 0800 hrs — flying.

October 11, 1975: adult pair; Raglan, eastern Q; 1730 hrs — flying.

Quambone sighting: the single bird hunted high above the Macquarie Marshes, gliding in wide circles which were broken occasionally by four or five fluttering flaps.

Ivanhoe sighting: adult pair, perched close together on a partially dead tree.

Clare sighting: a female in juvenile plumage seen hunting above a lignum swamp.

Woocalla sighting: a single adult male perched in a dead tree.

Wauchope sighting: adult male and female perched about two kilometres apart on the topmost branches of dead trees.

Daly Waters sighting: an adult female was observed attacking two Black Kites, *Milvus migrans*, which were presumably within its territory. The falcon stooped rapidly at the kites, twisting between them with each pass.

Logan River sighting: an adult male seen flying very fast in level flight, about 10 m above the ground.

Raglan sighting: an adult pair were seen hunting together. They were flying at about 3 m above the ground and travelling rather slowly, about 20 m apart but in the same course and into a strong headwind.

As a comparison to the eleven Grey Falcons seen between 1973-75, on the same field trips, only two sightings were made of the other 'rare' falcon, *Falco subniger*. These were on May 25, 1973, at Tartna Point, Darling River, western NSW, and March 4, 1974, at Bellbrook, north-eastern NSW.

It would seem, therefore, that *F. hypoleucos* is more numerous than *F. subniger*, at least in the areas visited. It would also seem that the former species, although well-dispersed, is of a less uncommon occurrence than would be expected.

F. T. Morris, Camberwell, Victoria, 11/4/76.