

due east of the nest-tree, show that the young associated with the adults until, at least, the end of February. This is a period of 11 weeks which closely approximates the time from hatching until leaving the nest.

On two occasions the eagles were seen feeding on the ground. On February 12 the two adult birds were feeding on rabbit and the young were in the vicinity. On February 25 two adults and two young birds were feeding together, and again the food was rabbit. This may suggest that the adults kill for the young throughout this period. If this is the case, the adults are occupied with nest building, incubating the eggs and rearing the young for approximately ten months.

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## The Status and Breeding of *Artamus* spp. on King Island

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#### SUMMARY

Four *Artamus* species have been recorded for King Island over the past ten years (Green & McGarvie, 1971, *Birds of King Island*). In 1972 *A. superciliosus* and *A. personatus* were found breeding for the first time, while *A. cyanopterus* was found breeding for the first time in the past 16 years, although it was reported by old residents to have been a regular breeding species at Pearshape in the past.

#### GENERAL

Dusky Woodswallow, *A. cyanopterus*. Regularly observed in small numbers, two to six, during summer, normally November. One flock of 19 was present in July 1970. In March/April 1973, flocks of up to 25 passed through Martha Lavinia and Egg Lagoon, with small groups present throughout the island. In November 1972, a nest with three eggs was found at Bob Lagoon, in the north of the island. A flock of 30+ at Boulder Point in May 1973.

White-breasted Woodswallow, *A. leucorhynchus*. The only record was four at Martha Lavinia for several days from June 15, 1961.

White-browed Woodswallow, *A. superciliosus*. Over a period of 15 years odd birds have been recorded in every month, but normally from November to February. In early November 1972, about 30

were present on pasture, 600 m wide and 1500 m long, set among coastal heath at Martha Lavinia, on the northern end. The eastern and northern adjacent land comprised coarse native grasses and tussocks, with occasional stunted trees, while the land to west and south was well vegetated by Silver Banksia, *Banksia marginata*, Coast Tea-tree, *Leptospermum laevigatum*, Manuka, *L. juniperinum*, with small stands of Manna Gum, *Eucalyptus viminalis*.

On November 10 a nest, containing two eggs, was found in a banksia on the western side of the pasture. On November 17 between 100 and 200 birds were present, feeding on and over the pasture, and two more nests, with one and two eggs, were found near the first nest. On December 5 many of the birds had dispersed over adjacent areas. The three nests found on the previous visits were empty. Seven additional nests, one empty, one with two eggs, and five, each with two recently hatched chicks, were found on the south and west side of the pasture. On December 15 three additional nests, two with chicks and one with two eggs, were found in the same vicinity. Eight fledglings were banded.

Of the 13 nests, 11 contained either two chicks or two eggs. All but one, which was built in a *E. viminalis* within the pasture, were in heathland 1600 m long by 20 m wide, on the west and south side of open pasture. Five nests were in *B. marginata*, three in *L. laevigatum* and four in *L. juniperinum*, and were all built from one metre to three metres above the ground. Far less concentrated breeding, no doubt, occurred over a greater area. Fledglings just out of the nest, were observed 2 km south-east in burnt-out areas in January.

Masked Woodswallow, *A. personatus*. First record was of two sighted with White-browed at Martha Lavinia, on November 26, 1963. Six adults and three juveniles were present in the same locality on February 2, 1964, indicating that they may have bred locally that season. On July 15, 1970, one was found dead at Egg Lagoon.

On November 17 three pairs were present with White-browed at Martha Lavinia. On December 5 two nests, each with two recently hatched chicks, were found in Coast Tea-tree, on the edge of open pasture, and 50 m north of the White-browed nests. One pair was also present on the east of the pasture. On December 15 each nest contained one fledged chick. The nest of the third pair, containing two eggs, was found in a clump of Tea-tree within the pasture area. Another pair was observed 1 km to the west.

All records of Masked and White-browed Woodswallows on King Island have been from the same locality, where they were found breeding during 1972, which is the northernmost area of heathland. Grouping together of both species was noted in February 1973, and by late March all had departed from the area.

In the Bird Observers Association of Tasmania's Newsheet, 11, there is a report that Ray Good found White-browed Woodswallow breeding at Penguin, Tasmania, in 1972, indicating that some passed through King Island to Tasmania, to be recorded there for the first time.