

heath-lands on the east side of Shallow Inlet, and they appeared to be unusually tame. The Little Grassbird (*Megalurus gramineus*) and the Golden-headed Fantail-Warbler (*Cisticola exilis*) were also recorded.

Dusky Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cyanopterus*): On the road from Fish Creek to Shallow Inlet on the outward journey, over 100 birds were seen, perched on a dead tree by the side of the road. It was the great noise that the birds were making that claimed the attention of the observers. Possibly this was a pre-migratory gathering as the birds seemed extremely agitated.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater (*Gliciphila melanops*): Four birds of this species were seen in heath-land on the east side of Shallow Inlet. The birds were calling in a manner somewhat reminiscent of a small boy learning to whistle. Other members of the honeyeater family noted were the Eastern Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris*), Brown-headed Honeyeater (*Melithreptus brevirostris*), Yellow-faced Honeyeater (*Meliphaga chrysops*), White-eared Honeyeater (*Meliphaga leucotis*), White-plumed Honeyeater (*Meliphaga penicillata*), Crescent Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris pyrrhoptera*) and the Yellow-winged Honeyeater (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*).

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The Sanderling in Tasmania

By LEONARD E. WALL, Hobart.

During a recent visit to the east coast of Tasmania I made a special search of the mouth of Anson's Bay, about 20 miles north of St. Helens, where Legge reported numbers of waders many years ago. On two previous visits to the bay I had searched the head of the bay and the northern shore, which appeared to be the most likely spot for them, but I had not been to the mouth.

Anson's Bay is three or four square miles in extent with only a narrow outlet to the Tasman Sea. On the north side of the entrance there is a long sandy beach culminating in a sand-spit, and on the south side there is a rocky outcrop with another beach beyond. My visit was made on February 28, 1965, a fine clear day with a strong north-west wind.

On an extensive area of clean white sand exposed by the low tide, lying just inside the entrance of the bay, were about 20 Red-capped Dotterels and two Double-banded Dotterels, but no other waders. It was only when we walked down to the rocks in the early afternoon, that a considerable flock of small waders was seen to be feeding on the sand in the shelter of the rocks. Most

of these birds were Little Stints, about 200 of them, but there were also a few slightly larger birds which appeared for brief intervals from behind rocks. My first thought was that they were Curlew-Sandpipers, but a careful watch convinced me that they were not, although I could not think of an alternative. The length of the culmen was not noticeably longer than the tarsus as is the case with Curlew-Sandpipers, in this case I consider the ratio to be 1.1 : 1, as against 1.3 : 1, in the Curlew-Sandpiper.

Eventually I put the birds to flight and noted that the centre of the rump and tail were the same colour as the back, with white sides. There was a prominent white wing-bar. The mixed flock of waders flew a few hundred yards south to another small rock-outcrop on the otherwise sandy coast, and from there commenced to feed along the edge of the water. I followed them along the beach and I was able to obtain a clear view of them as they fed. There was no doubt that they were Sanderlings (*Crocethia alba*) the first recorded from Tasmania.

J. R. Napier, of St. Mary's, has made a number of visits to St. Helens and Anson's Bay in recent years and he has told me that several times he had seen some small waders which he had been unable to identify. It seems likely that this was the species concerned. Unfortunately he was unable to accompany me on this occasion.

Possible avian flying errors in Australian alpine passes. The 1964 Australian winter was characterised by very heavy alpine snowfalls, so that in the spring the main alpine ridges were still heavily snow-covered. The residual winter coverage was heavily reinforced by repeated south-westerly blizzards in the first fortnight of October.

During the second and the fourth weeks of October, at an altitude of approximately 5,800 feet, in the snow on the ridge between Mt. Hotham and Mt. Loch, and on the ridge between Mt. Higginbotham and Mt. Little Higginbotham, I twice observed marks which suggested that a medium-sized bird in flight had accidentally grazed the snow. The marks were clearly etched, suggesting that they were very fresh, and that I was observing them within an hour or two of their occurrence.

The markings on the Hotham-Loch ridge showed body impact and a single stroke of the right wing, and they were headed into the wind. Those on the Higginbotham ridge showed a single stroke of the right wing, body impact, and then a heavy stroke of both wings, and they were headed directly downwind. No footprints to suggest a landing were present (Plate 31).

I am unable to explain the phenomenon.

The great rounded mass of Mt. Hotham and its adjacent ridges consist of heavily weathered shale, and on the ridge separating the watersheds of the Cobungra and Dargo Rivers there are flat-