

Western Australian Bird Notes

No. 3

Reports of Meetings.

Perth, June 3, 1946

EIGHTH MEETING—JULY 1945

The following members and visitors attended at a meeting on July 20, 1945, at the National Fitness Council Rooms, William Street, Perth: Major H. M. Whittell (chairman), Misses O. Seymour and N. Kniep, Dr. D. L. Serventy and Messrs C. B. Palmer, L. J. McHugh, V. N. Serventy, L. Glauert, S. Fowler and F. Doepel.

STORM-DRIVEN SEA-BIRDS.

Mr. Glauert gave a report on the sea-birds found on local beaches following the recent severe stormy weather. Never previously had such a large number of specimens been received at the Museum and, by a fortunate accident, the Museum taxidermist (Mr. A. Douglas) having a month's leave from the Army and being thus able to attend to the preparation of the skins, many of them were able to be preserved.

The following is a list of the specimens received: Southern Fulmar (*Priocella antarctica*), 1; Little Shearwater (*Puffinus assimilis*), 7; Great-winged Petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*), 2; Soft-plumaged Petrel (*Pterodroma mollis*), 1; White-headed petrel (*Pterodroma lessonii*), 9; Giant Petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*), 18; Cape Petrel (*Daption capensis*), 21; Dove-Prion (*Pachyptila desolata*), 5; Thin-billed Prion (*Pachyptila belcheri*), 1. Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Diomedea chlororhyncha*), 2; Grey-headed Albatross (*Diomedea chrysostoma*), 2; Sooty Albatross (*Phoebastria fusca*), 2; a total of 71.

The Cape Petrel, once a very rare visitor, has become relatively abundant in recent years and he attributed their appearance to the wartime cessation of whaling activities in the South, as they used to congregate around the factory ships to feed on the scraps and oil. A feature of the Sooty Albatross was that the mandibular sulcus was purple, not yellow, and, as the specimens appeared to be birds of the year, it seemed that, in immaturity, the two species of dark albatross resembled each other in this respect.

Generally speaking, there was a preponderance of large birds on the beaches; it would appear that, owing to the prolonged nature of the gales, the smaller birds, like the prions, had succumbed further off-shore, the bigger ones being driven before the gales until they reached our lee shores.

Mr. Fowler, who is engaged on aerial observations of pelagic fish shoals for the Fisheries Division of the C.S.I.R., said that his flights had been largely made within 10 miles off the shore, as the fish he was investigating rarely occurred far from shore. In South Australia, in May, he found Gannets especially plentiful, one party comprising 1,500 birds, the biggest flock of this species he had ever seen. Small flocks were observed up to the Head of the Bight, beyond which his aircraft was not able to go. In Western Australian waters he saw 200-300 in King George Sound and then they were very scarce until one or two were seen near Garden Island. Albatrosses were plentiful in South Australia and also on the south coast of Western Australia, especially between King George Sound and Cape Naturaliste. He was puzzled about the identity of one species which had a white mantle; it seemed smaller and did not appear to be the Wandering Albatross in the opinion of himself and Mr. G. P. Whitley, who made one flight with him. He had noticed that among the huge shoals of pilchards and mackerel observed in the vicinity of Israelite Bay there were very few predators, few that is in relation to the enormous masses of fish.

Dr. Serventy said that the cause of the mortality in Western Australia among sea-birds was quite different from that characteristic of eastern Australia in the spring and early summer, when hydrographic factors appeared to be involved in the wholesale destruction, apparently by starva-

tion, of petrels. The extent of the mortality varied from year to year. In this State the birds washed up on the beaches were outright victims of the gale; the birds struggled against the wind on a lee shore until exhausted.

Mr. Glauert illustrated his remarks by a number of specimens of marine birds from the Serventy-Whittell collection.

BEHAVIOUR OF THE BIRD AS A MEMBER OF A FLOCK.

Mr. V. N. Serventy opened the discussion with a brief talk on the social psychology of birds. He said: This branch of psychology deals with the behaviour of an individual leading from his contacts with other members of the community. In some forms of society, the individual can hardly be said to exist in a psychological sense, as in termites and colonial jelly-fish like the Portuguese Man-of-war. Societies may exist in various forms, the most common being those which show some type of matrimonial pattern: 1, Polygamy; 2, Monogamy and, 3, Polyandry, which was not common. There were four varieties of these three patterns: (a) A solitary seasonal mateship, as in ducks; (b) A solitary permanent mateship; (c) A seasonal mateship within a herd or flock, and (d) A permanent mateship within a herd or flock. Only in category (b) can an intimate family life develop where the young will be included. When no sexual drive is present individual liking must exist, though possibly this is a form of sexual liking but of little strength. In a polygamous relationship the vigilance of the male kept the females attached. The family may be (1) both parent family, (2) mother, and (3) father family. Essential societies are often referred to as being of this type. However, it is possible that large breeding societies may be just as essential to some species. The large society may provide the stimulus to keep the pairs together until breeding is complete.

The sexual drive although binding the family together tends to disrupt the larger community. A balance has to be struck so that the gregarious drive and the sexual drive are not mutually destructive to each other. If such a balance is impossible, then the society must be a family society at least during the breeding season. Two additional types of society are migration flocks and pure feeding flocks.

The break-up of the family pattern, in the case of the common domestic fowl, which has been most intensively studied, and which represents a fair sample of the average behaviour, may be outlined as follows: 1. The chicks keep within a few square yards in the first two days; 2. During the succeeding 10-12 days there is fluctuating contact; 3. For the next 6-8 weeks there is dispersion, but a return to the mother on signs of danger; 4. The hen pecks at the young; 5. The hen began laying again. Social isolation developed neurotic behaviour with stereotyped movements continually repeated.

Dr. Serventy followed with a brief discussion on social hierarchies, or rankings, in bird groups. The Danish animal psychologist, T. Schjelderup-Ebbe, was the first to publish in modern form in 1922 what had been long known to watchers of ordinary barnyard hens, that all individuals of a flock of hens were not socially equal. Any aggregation of birds, or other animals for that matter, including human beings, soon sort themselves out according to degree of dominance or submissiveness. Among bird flocks the most conspicuous external sign of this ranking is shown by what is called "peck order"—a bird high in social ranking will peck without suffering retaliation from birds lower in the scale, and lower birds will not peck higher ones. The order of ranking in a bird flock may be established quickly, on the result of an initial contact or combat, as in hens, or as the result of several such encoun-

ters; as in pigeons, budgerigars and canaries. Birds will alter social position from a variety of causes, including bodily health, and it has been found that promotions in status can be artificially induced by supplying individuals with male sex hormone, the substance commonly used by experimenters being testosterone propionate. Such relationships tend to integrate the behaviour of a flock; to make it behave as an organised whole instead of as a mass of independent units. There is reason to believe, however, that the violent despotisms of the hen run are due to artificial conditions, for there is some doubt whether the wild jungle fowl (the progenitor of the modern fowl breeds) was naturally a polygamous species. As Mrs. Nice says: "The fact that hens depend so much on fighting rather than on intimidating ceremonies points to a low development as a social bird." In nature the disruptive effects of despotisms of this sort are avoided by territorial behaviour, and within their territories the owners are mostly dominant in their reactions to others of their species.

Little has been contributed by Australian observers to this aspect of bird behaviour, but recently Mr. M. S. R. Sharland ("Social Breeding Birds," the North Queensland Naturalist, vol. 12, No. 73, December 1944) had given an interesting local slant to the subject. Major Whittell drew attention to the paper and read extracts from it. Sharland referred to the nesting behaviour of the Grey Jumper (Struthidea) and the Chough (Corcorax), neither of which occurred in Western Australia, but somewhat similar habits might be found to hold with the Babblers (Pomatostomus). Mr. Sharland explained that the hub of the life of these birds was the nest, and proceeded: "That different individuals do share the work of nest construction, incubation and tending of young I have proved more than once from close observation. When it comes to deposition of eggs, I consider that females with the strongest 'personality' are able to obtain priority, and although the various individuals usually exist in complete harmony together, at this period it is the birds which are relatively most pugnacious that succeed in laying. A bird in possession of the nest will counter the approach of another by raising its wings, snapping its beak, and creating a display of anger or resentment which is generally sufficient to drive the unwanted individual from the tree; but this same sitting bird will unhesitatingly give way to another member of the flock who will come, possibly to lay, or to take its share of incubation. Probably here, a 'pecking law' exists as in domestic fowls, individual birds possessing certain rights, according to age or temperament, which are acknowledged by inferiors."

NINTH MEETING—SEPTEMBER 1945

The following members and visitors attended at a meeting held on September 28, 1945, at the National Fitness Council Rooms, Perth: Major Whittell (chairman), Miss Kniep, Dr Serventy and Messrs McHugh, Palmer, A. H. Robinson, K. G. Buller, I. C. Carnaby and L. Burgess.

ORD RIVER BIRDS

Mr. K. G. Buller exhibited a series of birds collected in the vicinity of Argyle Station on the Ord River, in the East Kimberley, during his recent visit. He left Perth on April 24, 1945, and travelled overland by truck via Pithara, Mt. Magnet, Nullagine, Marble Bar, La Grange, Broome Derby, Noonkanbah, Fitzroy Crossing, Hall's Creek and along the Wyndham Road, arriving at the main camp on May 30 after travelling 2,400 miles. He left for Perth again, by air, in the middle of August.

Among the birds exhibited or discussed were: Azure Kingfishers, Painted, Crimson, Black-heart, Double-bar Gouldian and Masked Finches, Little and Silvery-crowned Friar-birds, Great Bower-birds (none seen with the lilac nuchal adornment), White-gaped and White-fronted Honeyeaters and Lovely Wrens. These latter were far shyer than most blue wrens, particularly the males, and appeared to like the spinifex and rock country inhabiting the deep crevices among the granite hills. No magpies were collected, but some were seen and, though the glasses, were definitely indentified as white-backed birds. He recorded 15 individuals in a radius of 60 miles. The birds were ex-

ceedingly shy and it was impossible to approach them closer than 200 yards. An interesting species observed was the White-quilled Rock Pigeon, a species which was extremely hard to flush: it had a very noisy flight and always ascended in a vertical manner to reach a higher perch in the rocky cliffs.

BIRD SONG.

Mr. Angus Robinson initiated a discussion on the purpose of bird song, with a review of overseas work and illustrated by his own work with local species. He emphasised the fact that most European definitions of song were based on species in which the male alone sings, and any song by the female was so insignificant as to be termed 'subsong.' The Rufous Whistler and Musk Duck were good local examples of such behaviour. In the Rufous Whistler the male was very vocal, but the female only sang a few low notes which could be recorded as subsong. This species, however, was not typical of Australian birds as a whole, as in many cases males and females were equally vocal such as Magpie larks, Magpies, Butcher-birds, Kookaburras, Willie Wagtails, etc., and many also sang duets. The definition used by Nice (bird song is a sustained more or less uninterrupted, repetition of one or more notes conforming recognisably to a constant specific type) seems to be the most appropriate. The difference between 'song' and 'call notes' was that the former was always specific but the latter were often similar in different species and were socially serviceable. So the calls of feeding flocks of Honeyeaters, Sittellas, etc., could be termed call notes, and so also could the calls of travelling birds such as Banded Plovers, Ground Cuckoo-Shrikes, etc., and the rallying call of the Magpie could also be included. There were, furthermore, other vocalisations, such as alarm notes, which were an expression of individual reaction to something in the environment.

Bird song was always specific but the more developed the song was the greater the degree of variation. An example of this was the Rufous Whistler, one of our best songsters, which had a great range of songs. The conditions causing variation were immaturity, seasonal sexual development and isolation.

The chief purpose of song was to avoid unnecessary fighting over territories and in those species where the male alone sings it acted as an advertisement to females. In the species where both sexes were vocal each sex usually defended territory all the year round. The most prominent songs as a rule were advertising or territorial songs. 'Awakening song' for the most part was territorial in function. 'Whisper song,' as distinct from 'subsong,' had been heard in a number of birds such as Butcher-birds, Magpies and Silvereyes. There was a great variation in the low notes of these songs which were often heard in a shade on a hot summer day and seemed to be sung purely for the bird's enjoyment. Courtship songs were generally in a lower tone and were in most cases a prelude to coition. The Rufous Whistler, Coots, Herons and Kookaburras had definite courtship songs. 'Mimicry' could not be called true song as it was not specific. The Western Bower-bird was a wonderful mimic but its own song was very harsh and undeveloped, but mimicry was used at times as a definite threat. Singing was influenced by light, extremes of cold and heat, heavy rain, strong wind, and lack of humidity. So that we saw in 1944, a very mild winter, bird song was at a maximum and in 1945, the heaviest winter on record, song reached a minimum. Some birds made use of other sounds, such as the drumming of the beak and wing noises, and possibly the noise made by the Magpie adult males in flight will be found to have some biological significance.

In conclusion he said: "We badly need information about the songs of our birds with song charts showing exactly what time of the year birds are singing and when they are not. But just to note a bird singing is not enough when you have species singing all the year round; we must know what it is singing as some birds may vary their singing at different times of the year according to the emotions

set up by organic changes. So we must have some method of rendering song on paper. There are a number of methods, the most appropriate seem to me to be by phonetics or symbols. I find it easier if one can find some foundation song or call for a species. In this way I take the 'Canary song' of the Rufous Whistler as a basic song—it is heard all the year round but particularly during the non-breeding season. This song will be heard in conjunction with the 'whip-crack,' 'ascending' and 'chu-chu-chu' songs. To this we must add the courting song. So we must have a graph showing those five songs. With the Magpie I take the carol and divide it into three types—dual carol, ordinary territory carol and the triumphant carol. I think it will be found most of the songs have their own particular significance."

Major Whittell criticised a tendency he felt growing up to apply overseas theories too closely in explaining local conditions. He drew attention to the calls of some birds in Australia which cannot be fitted into any accepted theory of bird-song and territory based on the conception of the use of bird-song among birds in Europe. He mentioned several instances and put forward as a suggestion that observers in Australia should not accept European dogma in its entirety as applying to Australian conditions. They should not build up their Australian data altogether with the European theories as a basis, but should rather work on independent lines and, after sufficient data have been collected, see then how such fit in with European conceptions of bird-song and territory.

Dr. Serventy replied that local observers were using the theories developed overseas as working hypotheses and local data were examined according to whether or not they agreed with these theories. He personally believed that the theories of Howard and others, proved to hold in Europe, America and Africa would also apply here—it would be extraordinary if they did not, and the supposed differences seen to occur in Australia would prove, on investigation, to be in essential agreement with these theories. Thus in Europe female song was rare: here it was more frequently met with. It would be found, he thought, not that the territory significance of song would not hold for Australia, but that we had more species in which female birds actively partook in territory defence. The same applied to the difficulties about the long duration of bird-song in Australia compared with Europe. It would be found probably that our bird fauna comprised a greater proportion of resident species which defended territory over a large part of the year, and hence would sing during that time. He considered that the study of the Californian Wren-tit by Mary Erickson (reviewed in *The Emu*, vol. 38, January 1939, p. 423) would be found more applicable to Australian species than the accounts of the many migratory species which were so often quoted as types illustrating territory theory. Hence Miss Erickson's publication should be more attentively read by Australian bird observers on the subject.

Mr. V. N. Serventy said that to maintain that one could not accept the findings of British and American ornithologists in investigations on territory as being applicable to Australian birds, seemed to him to be completely wrong. Many species of our birds were very similar to English forms, but one could not accept similarity of structure without accepting its logical corollary of similarity of behaviour form. Evolution of mind went with evolution of body. For example, if a certain behaviour pattern was necessary for the English grebe or coot to rear a brood successfully a similar behaviour pattern must be necessary for the Australian representative. Because if the Australian bird in an almost identical environment does not need a complex series of display and territorial actions then neither does the English bird. In other words the English bird is wasting energy performing a useless series of acts. However it could be safely said that nature was not so wasteful. To his mind the overseas workers had proved the biological utility of the various forms of display and since we were dealing in many cases with practically identical species we could take their conclusions "en bloc" and apply

them to Australian birds. We did it without hesitation in the case of insect behaviour.

The only reason that the English observers came to their conclusions sooner than the Australian observers were coming to theirs, thought Mr. Serventy, was that in England behaviour patterns were much more sharply defined owing to a similar sharp definition of the seasons. Nesting ran to a much closer schedule than in Australia where many species had a protracted breeding season. Behaviour pattern therefore would appear at first almost hopelessly mixed up in our birds. But by careful observation we could separate out the same broad pattern of behaviour as found in overseas workers. For example, Mr. Robinson's conclusions on Magpies and Magpie Larks had led him, the speaker, to take far more notice of their behaviour than previously. "I am amazed," he said, "at how meaningful their actions have now become and how gradual changes in behaviour are. It is only when I knew what to look for that I began to see it. Cynics may assert that that is a natural result of having a preconceived idea. My only answer is that it will not be the first time in science that an array of facts has all of a sudden become more meaningful when some worker has produced a theory to explain them."

BREEDING OF THE BANDED STILT.

Mr. I. C. Carnaby announced that the Banded Stilt had nested this year at Lake Grace, the first occasion since the initial discovery in 1930. A full account will appear in *The Emu*.

TENTH MEETING—JANUARY 1946

The following members and visitors were present at a meeting held on January 25, 1946, at the National Fitness Council Rooms: Major Whittell (chairman), Dr. Serventy and Messrs Buller, Carnaby, Robinson, Palmer, Glauert Doepel, Serventy, Weller, W. R. Hill, A. Douglas, B. Shipway, and C. F. H. Jenkins.

SCIENCE CONFERENCE: Dr. Serventy was appointed the R.A.O.U. representative on the local committee of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. The Association will meet in Adelaide in 1946 and in Perth in 1947. In a discussion on the date of the next R.A.O.U. conference in Western Australia, it was decided to request the council to reserve 1948 for this State.

ABROLHOS ISLANDS: The announcements regarding plans for making the Abrolhos Islands available for organised tourist traffic were discussed. The British Phosphate Commissioners after removing about 15,000 tons of guano between 1943 and the end of 1945 had now ceased operations and it was proposed to use the huts erected by them on Pelsart Island for tourists. It was decided to protest against the proposals to the Commonwealth Department of Works and Housing and also to the State Premier's Department. The following letter has been forwarded to these authorities:—

"It has been announced in the Press that certain buildings left on Pelsart Island, in the Abrolhos group, off Geraldton, by the British Phosphate Commissioners, have been taken over by the Commonwealth, and will be handed over to the State Government which, in turn, will make them available to the Abrolhos Islands Board of Control for the purpose of developing the islands as a tourist resort.

"This matter was discussed at a general meeting of members of this organisation on January 25 and it was unanimously resolved to protest strongly at the proposed commercialisation of the islands as a tourist resort with residential facilities. These islands are world famous for the bird life occurring on them, and, as a matter of fact, it is the presence of the large tern colonies on them which constitute the major tourist attraction of the islands. Experience has shown that opening up the islands in the manner contemplated, especially if they are commercialised and run for private profit, will eventually lead to the local extinction of these interesting bird colonies.

"One has no need to go further than the Abrolhos Islands themselves to provide an example in illustration. The case

of Rat Island in the Easter group is an instance of devastation which can follow human interference. This island has been worked for guano many years ago, but the birds continued to exist there. From observations made in 1889 Mr. A. J. Campbell wrote the graphic account of Abrolhos nesting birds in his standard book "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds" published in 1901, which has been quoted in many books since. He computed that 1,450,000 birds were present on the 300 acres of the island then occupied by birds. Professor W. J. Dakin and Mr W. B. Alexander made similar observations during their expeditions during 1913 and 1915. The guano operations ceased shortly after Dakin's visit, and the island was then used for cray-fishing, and an intermittent tourist resort, THE NESTING TERNS HAVE NOW COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED, though it is known they lingered until about the middle 'thirties. At present the island presents a most desolate and barren appearance.

"Pelsart Island, the location of the buildings under discussion is the last remaining island in the Abrolhos group which has extensive nesting colonies of terns.

"It is not only the bird-life, however, but the other fauna which contributes to the high scientific interest of the Abrolhos. The Abrolhos Island wallaby, for instance, was the first Australian marsupial to be made known to Europeans as its habits were studied by Pelsart in 1629. Furthermore, there is an interesting assemblage of land-birds, some of which have evolved into local races, which would also be threatened as the result of commercialised tourist exploitation.

"We appeal to you to aid in preserving these islands as a strict faunal sanctuary by not permitting the buildings to be used for tourist purposes."

LIFE CYCLE OF THE LITTLE SHEARWATER.

Mr. L. Glauert gave an account of some very excellent work undertaken on Eclipse Island, near Albany, by light-house-keeper A. Newman, under his direction.

For three years Mr. Newman has been studying the habits of the Little Shearwater, *Puffinus assimilis*, which breeds there. He found that after being absent at sea for some time the birds return to the nesting site early in January, commence to lay towards the end of June and incubate their single egg for a period of about 52 days, the birds sharing the duty in shifts of about two days. For over 60 days the chick is fed by both parents and then deserted, to remain in the nest for a further eight days or so when hunger urges it to put out to sea. Older birds begin to leave in September, followed later by those having young to attend to. By November all, young and old, have left the island. A detailed paper on the subject will appear in *The Emu*.

THE LATE MR. WILLIAM PLUMB

Late in 1945, a R.A.A.F. casualty list announced that W/O William Plumb, of Narrogin, W.A., who had been reported missing after air operations on November 6, 1944, was presumed dead. Although the passing of Mr. Plumb will be regretted by members throughout the R.A.O.U. the loss is of particular significance to West Australian members, a number of whom knew him and had worked with him in the field. Mr. Plumb's interest in ornithology dates from the time that he was at the Teachers' Training College, Claremont, and came under the influence of Mr. T. J. Milligan and Mr S. R. White. By the time Mr Plumb was appointed head teacher of the Government School at Wellard, Peel Estate, in 1939, he had acquired a good working knowledge of the bird-life of the South-west and he proceeded to take full advantage of the special opportunities that his new appointment offered. With the writer he visited the islands of Warnboro Sound and later took a keen interest in the more detailed investigations carried out by Messrs S. R. White, V. N. Serventy and A. Poignant—an enterprise terminated by the war, though not before interesting results had been obtained (see "Birds of Warnboro Sound, Western Australia," *The Emu*, vol. 43, pp. 81-95). Thus it was Mr. Plumb was one of the five members who identified the Double-banded Dottrel on Penguin Island, thereby helping to establish what appears to be a

new record for the west coast. At a later date he interested himself in the petrel rookery discovered by Messrs S. R. White and V. N. Serventy on Bird Island and, by the discovery of a well-developed fledgling on February 15, 1941, confirmed the hypothesis that this was a breeding ground of the White-faced Storm-petrel.

I shall long remember our last visit to Penguin Island on August 16, 1941, when Mr. Plumb over-ruled my opinion that the "tail-end" of a storm—a real storm—was no time to attempt a crossing to the island. We launched a boat at the third attempt—the only thing not considerably dampened by this hazardous passage was Bill's enthusiasm, which was duly rewarded by the discovery of a derelict Soft-plumaged Petrel under the lee of the island.

In addition to sharing in the foregoing enterprises, Mr. Plumb devoted much energy to observing the birds of the area adjacent to his residence at Wellard. It is hoped that his notes relating to this investigation will be published in the near future. Both at Wellard and Narrogin Mr. Plumb was more than ordinarily successful in arousing the interest of the rising generation in bird study—an interest evident from the school Bird Club magazines, "The Robin" and "The Whistler" produced under his supervision and by his inspiration.

—E. H. SEDGWICK.

STATESMEN AND BIRDS

During his recent tour of the State, the Leader of the Federal Opposition, Mr. R. G. Menzies, visited Narrogin on May 13, 1946, and by a coincidence he and his party (comprising Senators Collett and MacDonald, Mr Ross McDonald, M.L.A., and Mr J. L. Paton) were guests of the Narrogin Apex Club at the Cornwall Hotel, where Mr. V. N. Serventy was guest speaker for the evening. Mr. Menzies in an after-dinner speech took as his theme Mr. Serventy's address. The following report is reproduced from the "Narrogin Observer."

Mr. Menzies said that it was a great pleasure to listen to an address such as that given by Mr Serventy and he could not help being impressed by the obvious sincerity of the speaker's interest in wild life, his vast knowledge of the subject and the extremely interesting way in which it had been presented. He could not help feeling how little he himself knew of the wonderful flora and fauna of Australia and he felt that his ignorance was fairly general, so that he was led to conclude that there was something wrong in the educational system which did not provide such necessary instruction. Only that afternoon, in his trip from Perth, there had been an argument as to the exact species of a particular tree which had attracted attention, but nobody had been able to say definitely what it was. He remarked how different Australians were from the English in this respect.

To bear out this point, Mr. Menzies recalled how on a visit to England prior to the war this love of nature coupled with a precise knowledge was found often in the most unexpected quarters. He remembered a memorable week-end, spent in the company of Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, when they engaged in a walking tour along Hadrian's Wall, in Northumberland. At the end of a morning's walk, Mr. MacDonald had asked him if he had "seen it all." He was at a loss to understand what was meant, but Mr. MacDonald was referring to the bird life. Mr. Menzies replied that he had seen two grouse but could not remember having seen anything else. Mr. MacDonald then said that he had seen no less than 32 different varieties of birds and, to prove his point, he pointed out the same number during the course of the afternoon's ramble. Another revelation came when he walked through the Yorkshire moors with the late Neville Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain, he said, looked like a country accountant; "he had a well-audited appearance." But throughout the walk he entertained Mr. Menzies with a detailed description of the trees and flowers encountered. He went on to say that he envied Mr Serventy his life work which was far removed from the endless controversy of politics. Such an excursion into a more peaceful and satisfying atmosphere was indeed a pleasure and he felt that he was privileged to listen to such an address.