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## ORNITHOLOGICAL NOTES.

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I.—ON THE EXTENSION OF THE RANGE OF *CALAMANTHUS FULIGINOSUS*, AND *EMBLEMA PICTA*  
TO NEW SOUTH WALES.

During the months of August and September, 1896, the Ornithological Collection of the Australian Museum has become enriched by the receipt of specimens in the flesh of *Calamanthus fuliginosus*, and *Emblema picta*. The former species was obtained on Boloco Station, near Buckley's Crossing Place, New South Wales, on the 19th August by Mr. E. Payten, who killed it with a stone. It was then taken to Mr. Reuben Rose, the owner of the station, and was by that gentleman presented to the Trustees of the Museum. Buckley's Crossing Place, situated on the Snowy River, is about 296 miles south of Sydney and 34 miles as the crow flies to the nearest point of the imaginary line between Cape Howe and Forest Hill, which separates the south-eastern corner of New South Wales from Eastern Victoria. The natural or artificial boundaries of the Continent of course do not form any barriers to birds, but hitherto *C. fuliginosus* has been recorded only from the southern parts of Victoria and South Australia; Tasmania being the stronghold of the species. From typical examples of *C. fuliginosus*, the bird procured in New South Wales differs in the following respects: the bill is shorter, the throat is buff instead of white, although similarly streaked with black, and the outer webs of the primaries are externally edged with ashy-white. These slight differences may be due to immaturity, or climatic variation, the locality in which it was obtained being over 2,000 feet above the level of the sea.

On the 23rd of September, Mr. A. M. N. Rose presented to the Trustees three adult male specimens of *Emblema picta* in splendid plumage. These birds were shot the previous day by his nephew, Mr. Arthur Payten, at Campbelltown, an agricultural and dairy-farming district, 34 miles south-west of Sydney. Mr. Payten saw altogether five specimens, which kept together in a small flock while searching for grass-seeds on a hill devoid of any cover. Previously this rare bird has been recorded only from North-west Australia where the type was procured; from Derby and Cambridge Gulf by Mr. E. J. Cairn and the late T. H. Boyer-Bower, and from several localities in Central Australia,

where it was obtained by the members of "The Horn Scientific Expedition." Why this small flock should have wandered so far south-east instead of pursuing the usual course of migration to the north-west it is difficult to conjecture, unless the birds followed in the track of an abundant rainfall so common to Central Australia, with its rapidly accompanying growth and profusion of rich grasses, thereby causing a plentiful food supply. There is no doubt whatever that reaching the western border of New South Wales the excessively dry season now being experienced there has driven this small nomadic flock from the withering and burnt-up grass lands to the cooler districts near the coast. This is only a repetition of the effects of last year's drought when many birds whose habitat is the dry inland districts of the Colony, were obtained near Sydney, among which may be mentioned *Falco hypoleucos*, a typical Central Australian species.

Roughly estimated, the nearest recorded locality in Central Australia in which *Emblema picta* has been obtained, is 1,300 miles in a direct line from Campbelltown, in New South Wales, where the present specimens were procured.

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## II.—ON A CURIOUS NESTING-SITE OF *ANTHUS AUSTRALIS*.

(Plate iv.)

The Trustees of the Australian Museum are indebted to Mr. A. M. N. Rose, for a nest of the Australian Pipit or common "Ground Lark," *Anthus australis*, placed in a very curious position. It is built inside an old rusty preserve tin, measuring four inches and a half in length by three inches and a half in diameter. The entrance to the nest is narrowed to two inches, by a small platform of dried grasses which protrudes out of the mouth of the tin. This nest was found on the 24th of November, 1896, by Mr. A. Payten at Campbelltown in the same paddock as he shot the specimens of *Emblema picta*, and contained two slightly incubated eggs. The tin, which has the lid still attached, but bent at a right angle, was lying exposed on the ground, without shelter or concealment of any kind, beyond a few short blades of dried grass. The eggs are of the usual type, a greyish-white ground colour thickly freckled all over with pale brown markings; length (A) 0·8 x 0·67 inch; (B) 0·84 x 0·67 inch. As will be seen on reference to the accompanying plate, it is a curious site for a bird to select which builds an open cup-shaped nest concealed only by an overhanging tuft of grass, or the surrounding herbage.