

Additions to the Vertebrate Fauna of Bendering Nature Reserve

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The survey of Bendering Nature Reserve formed part of the biological survey of the Western Australian Wheat Belt (Kitchener 1976). Data on the vertebrates of the reserve were published (Kitchener *et al.* 1977) and the methodology for surveying vegetation and floristics was developed on this reserve (Muir 1977). The vertebrate survey was conducted in November 1972 and March 1973 prior to the major work of Muir and before the construction of firebreaks in and around the reserve. An examination of the Bendering vertebrate data subsequent to the submission of the manuscript and a comparison with other reserves sampled in the Wheat Belt suggested that the assemblage of birds and reptiles at Bendering was incomplete. This was presumably a consequence of timing of the survey when many non-resident species may have been overlooked and a lack of access to the heterogeneous northern part of the reserve which was illustrated by Muir.

As data on species richness and habitat preferences of Wheat Belt vertebrates was to be analysed, it became necessary to re-examine Bendering Nature Reserve to complete the list of vertebrates. Further work on 8-9 December 1977 and 1-2 October 1979 added 4 reptile species and 16 bird species. The total number of species but not the individual data have been used by Kitchener *et al.* (1980, 1982), Kitchener (1982) and Humphreys and Kitchener (1982). Data on additional species are listed below with habitat indicated by vegetation location numbers which are directly referable to Muir 1977.

New Birds

Mountain Duck (*Tadorna tadornoides*) 2 over loc. 1.1 at night; Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*) 1 in swamp near loc. 1.9 (Muir pers. comm.); Wood Duck (*Chenonetta jubata*) 2 at dam on edge of reserve; Brown Goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus*) 1 in loc. 4.17; Collared Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*) 1 in loc. 3.14; Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) 1 calling near loc. 1.1 at night; Crested Pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) 1 in loc. 2.164 and others in road verges; Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*) 1 in loc. 3.24; Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx basalis*) 1 in loc. 4.16; Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) 1 in loc. 2.34; Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) 1 in loc. 2.2; Western Flyeater (*Gerygone fusca*) 1 in loc. 2.84; Chestnut-rumped Thornbill (*Acanthiza uropygialis*) 1 in loc. 1.1; White-fronted Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris albifrons*) 2 in loc. 3.10; Magpie-lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*) 1 at dam on reserve boundary; Little Crow (*Corvus bennetti*) 1 over loc. 4.16.

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New Reptiles

Diplodactylus pulcher 1 in ecotone between loc. 1.9 and 2.34; *Delma australis* 1 in each of loc. 1.8, 2.50 and breakaway near loc. 1.12; *Delma fraseri* 2 in loc. 2.50 and 1 in loc. 2.72; *Menetia greyii* 1 in loc. 1.1.

Further breeding data collected on 1-2 October 1979 on species previously known from the reserve are: *Crenadactylus ocellatus* — 3 females with 1 egg in each oviduct; *Diplodactylus granariensis* — 3 females with 1 egg in each oviduct, *D. maini* — 1 female with 1 egg in each oviduct; *D. spinigerus* — 1 female with 1 egg in each oviduct; *Ctenophorus maculatus griseus* — 1 female with 2 eggs in each oviduct; *Cryptoblepharus plagioccephalus* — 1 female with one egg in each oviduct; *Ctenotus pantherinus* — 1 female with 3 eggs in each oviduct. Males of *D. granariensis*, *D. pulcher*, *Gehyra variegata*, *Ctenophorus cristatus*, *C. maculatus griseus*, *Cryptoblepharus plagioccephalus*, *Ctenotus schomburgkii* and *Morethia obscura* had enlarged testes in October. Twenty-three reptile species are now recorded from Bending Nature Reserve and reproductive data are available for 16 species.

A total of 71 species of birds are now recorded for Bending Nature Reserve and the adjacent farmland; this is little different from the 73 species recorded from the nearby West Bending Nature Reserve (Dell 1977). The October survey coincided with prolific flowering of several eucalypt and other myrtaceous and proteaceous shrubs; accordingly nectar-seeking birds such as Brown Honeyeater (*Lichmera indistincta*), Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga virescens*), Tawny-crowned Honeyeater (*Phylidonyris melanops*) and Red Wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*) were more common than previously recorded. Red Wattlebird was breeding, one nest had 2 fresh eggs and another had a young bird nearly fledged.

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