

ANGAIR NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTION RECENT ACQUISITIONS (Part 2)

Text and photos by Kaye Traynor

Two of our smallest local birds are part of the latest additions to our natural history collection. They are regular visitors to local gardens, as well as being commonly found throughout the nearby heathy woodland and coastal forest environment.

4. **Red-browed Firetail**, *Neochmia temporalis*



The tiny Red-browed Finch is generally a communal bird and small groups are often seen moving across the ground, while feeding on seeds, small herbs, berries and insects. Their overall grey-olive colour blends perfectly into the surroundings. The brilliant scarlet on the rump and bill is a stunning contrast. A foraging group can be almost unnoticed, but when disturbed, will suddenly rise up with a high pitched and drawn-out *tsee tsee* call, take flight then settle in nearby vegetation. The Red-brows have adapted well to the human environment and are frequently to be found in gardens and picnic grounds.

Wendy Crebbins came across this little bird in the garden at her home in Anglesea in 2018.

5. **Striated Pardalote**, *Pardalotus striatus* subsp. *striatus*

The addition of this specimen to our collection means we now have a representation of the two local species of Pardalote – Striated and Spotted.

They are widespread and inhabit a varied environment which can include eucalypt forests, woodlands, scrublands, semi dry areas, rainforests, mangroves, parks and gardens.

There are six subspecies of Striated Pardalote. Four are present on the mainland, one can be found in the Tiwi Islands, and the other in Tasmania.

The differences are generally of a minor nature. This particular bird is the Tasmanian subspecies, *striatus*. One of the points of difference is the yellow wing spot. All the others have a red wing spot. These birds spend winter on the mainland and then return to Tasmania for the breeding season later in the Spring.

The bird we have here was found by Gail and John Slykhuis at their property near Bells Beach in September 2018.



Our fauna Collection has become a valuable resource and is also made available for loan to other environmental and educational organisations. It presently houses a total of thirty-four mounted animals. In addition, there is a variety of marine specimens, artefacts and spirit material.