

THE PARADISE PARROT REVISITED

A MORNING AT THE MUSEUM WITH JUNIOR MEMBERS

By Tony Melbourne, Junior Programme Co-ordinator



SOME OF THOSE PRESENT
From left: Greg, Emma and Jay Johnston,
Philippa Haughton, Liam Mounce
and George Pollis

Sunday the 8th of November 2009 saw the revival of the Junior Programme with a visit to the Adelaide Museum's Ornithology Department. We are greatly indebted to Philippa Haughton, who runs the Ornithology Section and Greg Johnston for the effort they put in to make the day a success.

Prior to Sunday, both hunted through the thousands of specimens on hand to come up with a very interesting selection. These included Sunbirds, Hummingbirds, Birds of Paradise, Honeyeaters, Flowerpeckers and even a collection of Zebra Finches that spanned over a 100 years and represented birds from all regions of Australia.

Other specimens of interest included the Night Parrot, a Kakapo (New Zealand's night parrot), a beautiful specimen of a Tragopan, still in excellent condition even though it came to the Museum back in the late 1890's. Of course the highlight was a very nice specimen of the Paradise Parrot, it still looks as good as it did last visit.



L. PARADISE PARROT
R. HOODED PARROT

We were shown various nest made by a wide variety of birds, egg collections, skeletal remains of birds and the wings of the Wandering Albatross, eagles and many other birds.



GREG WITH THE
ALBATROSS WING

Greg Johnston led the tour, explaining to those present the reasons behind the collection and what we could learn about birds from studying these exhibits. I am sure both the Juniors and adults came away very much wiser and had a different outlook on birds and what they are all about. Feeding habits and beak changes have been noted in birds that now frequent metropolitan areas and have changed food sources.

The tour lasted double the time we had anticipated and cameras worked overtime all morning. Following the tour, members adjourned to the banks of the Torrens for lunch, with discussion of what we had seen continuing for another couple of hours.

Philippa and Greg certainly provided an entertaining and informative morning.



PART OF THE EXTENSIVE
EGG COLLECTION



BIRDS OF PARADISE



A HUMMINGBIRD



OMLETTE ANYONE?