

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE0052

## Fletcher, Jane Ada

(1870 - 1956)

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<b>Born</b>	18 September, 1870, Penshurst Victoria Australia
<b>Died</b>	15 April, 1956, Eaglehawk Neck Tasmania Australia
<b>Occupation</b>	Ornithologist, Poet

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### Summary

Jane Fletcher published a number of books on nature and nature study, and broadcast on 7ZL Hobart and 3LO Melbourne. In 1934 she became the first woman to lecture to the Royal Society of Tasmania. She was an outstanding bird observer with a particular interest in crakes and rails.

### Details

Jane Fletcher began work on an aunt's farm in Wilmot, north-western Tasmania, from 1892-96. From 1896 she worked as a sewing teacher (initially without pay) at West Kentish Primary School. By 1899 she had qualified as a head teacher and was appointed to set up a school at Upper Wilmot. She later taught at Cleveland (Tasmania), Springfield, Woodbridge and Forcett.

Fletcher undertook fieldwork for Gregory Mathews (q.v.) until 1936. She was the first woman to deliver a lecture to the Royal Society of Tasmania (in 1934), of which she was a member. She was a foundation member in 1901 – and life member from 1945 – of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union.

She wrote a number of children's books, including *Stories from Nature* (London, 1915) and *Little Brown Piccaninnies of Tasmania* (Sydney, 1950), her most popular children's book. She also wrote books and articles for adults on Tasmanian history, Aborigines and ornithology, her final book being *Tasmania's Own Birds* (1956).

On retirement, Fletcher opened part of her house at Eaglehawk Neck as a Youth Hostel.

### Published resources

#### Book

First in Their Field: Women and Australian Anthropology, Marcus, Julie; Lepervanche, Marie de; McBryde, Isabel; Prior, Mary Ellen Murray; White, Isobel; Morris, Miranda; O'Gorman, Anne; Marcus, Julie and Cheater, Christine, 1993

#### Resource Section

Fletcher, Jane Ada (1870-1956), Wall, Leonard, 2006,  
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A140198b.htm>

#### Resource

Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,  
<http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Archival resources

**John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection**  
[OM67-02 Jane Ada Fletcher Papers 1915; 1917; 1933; 1939](#)

**Author Details**

Elle Morrell

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